



LUMEN
XXXII
MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY 2026





DISPERSION BY AVA FORSYTH



GOALIE PREPARES BY JAKE MUMMERT



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FRUITS OF MY LABOR BY ALICYN EMLEY



FRUITS OF MY LABOR BY ALICYN EMLEY



FRUITS OF MY LABOR BY ALICYN EMLEY



FRUITS OF MY LABOR BY ALICYN EMLEY

The City

By Estelle Ferrari

This is a city
of hollow, soulless husks
lying underground,
forever cold and silent
in their slumber.
They are known
by the names and dates
etched onto their stones.
They are sealed off
by metal fences,
separated from those
who are soulful still.

The city is
littered with the
heartache of many;
families and friends
who carry the
city's residents
within their memories.
Piles of heartache
seeming like they
will never be cleared.

Among the piles,
there are tiny
scraps of hope
that the empty husks
are resting well,
that the souls
who left them
have moved to
a new home,
lively and vibrant.

Estelle Ferrari



If I were with you in autumn

By Matthew Lutz

Together, we would walk
Side by side
Or hand in hand,
Across a road that's freshly slick,
Gold and Pitch
Underfoot.

And in my bitten hands
I'd hold the flimsy plastic frame
Of an umbrella
Not used to holding strong.
I would think about that deal,
And how you're clinging to my arm,
And if I spared a few more cents
Your shoulders might be dry.

We would quicken up our pace
Above our heads the clouds would moan
A haunting tune
And then be swept away from view.

And when we finally reach the house
Catch our breaths
Beneath the eaves,
There's a pumpkin waiting
Still
Standing guard.
I think its face would rise
in the mid-November air,
It'd be grinning
like a tool
No longer rotting there alone.

I'd fumble with the lock
Or struggle with the key,
As if the door itself
Would have me wait around a little more.
I could linger in that moment
But I wouldn't think about it,
I'd just push
And it would open all the same.

I'd drop my keys inside a bowl
I'd kick my boots into a pile
I would neatly stack your shoes
And we would walk
In dampened socks
Through halls familiar to me
To a kitchen
And a kettle soon to boil.

And we'd wait with quiet breaths,
Watch the storm move overhead,
Or just listen to the drone
Beating down on speckled glass.

And on that dirty window
With our paltry frames reflecting,
My gaze affixed
I wouldn't turn,
You'd walk up next to me
And graze my forearms, softly.
Brush hair out of your eyes.
If the kettle whines
We wouldn't even care.



Generations

By James Heasley

James Heasley

Education

Jillian Althaus sits down in a musty room with the carved wooden walls of the oldest wing of the campus. She watches classmates do the same. People-watching always calmed Jillian before, and she needs a calming force now more than ever. After all the students claim their seats, a gray-haired gentleman walks inside and begins setting up the first class planned setup.

“Good morning, students! My name is Dr. Kolaczki. You all can call me Dr. Kol. Now, it’s time for attendance, but we can do things differently. More put names to faces and actually get to know each other. It will be useful later this semester. Okay, blondie?”

Jillian looks up to see his eyes directed at her, which she knew. Her extremely light hair always begged for that nickname. “Jillian Althaus, you can call me Jill,” she answers.

“Okay! Jill Althaus. Next, um...” His voice prattles through her ears until “open your Wallwart’s Trigonometry 2nd Edition to page .05, Basic Trigonometry.”

She turns the pages to something no different than Cyrillic to her eyes. She knows algebra and calculus, but this is a new beast. The class wears on as Dr. Kol explains each little formula, every theorem planned, but they fly through Jillian’s ear and out the other. A smack of a book closed quickly snaps her mind from disassociation.

“Now for your first homework assignment, I have a paper with the most basic aspects of the Pythagorean theorem. You are expected to turn in a finished version of these problems. Good luck, future mathematicians!” Dr. Kol finishes for the day.

He hands the paper to Jill first. As he leaves to continue distribution, Jill just stares at the paper. She recognizes some of the calculus features, but she hasn’t done that class since tenth grade. *What a start to the college experience.* She laments herself. *How am I going to do this in two days?*

War

Ulrich Althaus hasn’t even lived in the United States for a year when the war started. The new nation he was supposed to call home had torn itself in half. His family emigrated to Indiana in February of 1861. He turned 18 on the 8th of April, and the war started four days later. One month later, a letter found itself in the family mailbox, addressed to him. His sister, Klara, read “conscription, and a promise of citizenship.”

“Attention! Youse hordes of immigrants, no sense of loyalty to this country! In the next few weeks, I be making youse all into not only soldiers for the American army, but into American yourselves!” the drill sergeant shouts.

Ulrich was barely conversational in English. The drill sergeant’s accent was a loud, growly, thick vernacular. Ulrich couldn’t get the sergeant’s surname quite right.

“Shah-nazzy? Sha-nissy?”

“Shaughnessy, you gobshite tow-head kraut! If that’s too much for your humorless Fritz brain, just say Sergeant!”

If his spoken English was crude, reading English was much harder. He knew the basics, and his younger, more Anglo-savvy siblings helped him with more difficult phrases. But alone, he was lost. He couldn’t figure out the hammer system of the guns,

continue >

how to navigate the obstacle courses. He saw other recruits climb these wooden squares, he would just walk under. Sergeant would make him do pushups, then kick him in the ribs upon every screwup after each set. *English? Pain? War? Is this what it means to be American?*

Generations

For a good portion of the 21st century, the Baby-Boomers and the Millennials have had a fierce rivalry with each other. Mostly, as the last Millennials moved their way out of high school into post-secondary and the workforce, the Baby-Boomers have had nothing but criticisms for these new adults. Claims of poor financial managements, an entitled sense of self, Puritanical views towards alcohol, drugs, and sexual partaking, as well as “obsessions with sexual and gender identities” have been placed on Millennials.

The general attitude that the Baby-Boomers have towards the Millennials is that they are lazy, entitled brats who can't help but buy so many video games and avocado toast that they can't afford a house. But this is simply not true. In 1980, when most Baby-Boomers were buying homes, the average household price was \$76,000 dollars with a median income of \$21,020, only three times less than home prices. By 2020, when Millennials were looking for houses, homes were \$391,900 on average. Comparatively, the average annual income was \$56,200, which is six times less than average house prices. Hard work and frugality aren't bridging that gap.

Other criticisms thrown at Millennials are an inflated sense of self-importance and entitlement. Of course, a part of the entitlement accusation is due to the affordable housing previously discussed. But how accurate is it that Millennials feel self-important? Studies came out that, when asked about the opinion of their own

generation, Baby-Boomers generally have a favorable view of themselves, 83%, while Millennials don't have as much of any self-likability, 58%.

It is easy to view the younger generations as having no reason to complain. 35% of Baby-Boomers grew up below the poverty line, compared to about 15% of Millennials having grown up in the same income class. Several luxury products, including the avocados, have become cheaper and more available across many American supermarkets. While some Baby-Boomers have invested most of their life income on personal resources, like retirement luxuries, most have saved a lot of money for economic startups for their children. Many Baby-Boomers didn't grow up with such a massive benefit.

War

Ulrich walks back into his tent from another day, understanding things the same as the day he arrived. The tent is a sad, dirt-stained, puke-green little thing at the edge of camp. Inside, another man hasn't budged from his seat. Ulrich knew nothing of him, except the red and yellow stained cast on his leg. Ulrich didn't care that he was there that night. He put his face in his hands and whimpered.

“Was goin' on there, towhead? Was got you botha'd?” the man pried.

“Why people call me zat? What this towhead?” Ulrich begged.

“It's cause of ya alabasta blonde hair. It's called towheaded,” he responds.

Ulrich looked up at him, his eyes wide and glassy. The man still stared at a pack of cigarettes he had been fiddling with before Ulrich even arrived.

“My English not very good. I grew up

German,” Ulrich clarified.

“So what? I’m from Gary. Don’t see me complainin’ ‘bout my English,” he responded.

“Can you teach?” Ulrich quickly continued.

The man stopped and looked at Ulrich, studying the young immigrant intently. The squinted eyes sternly pieced at the “towhead”, meeting the young, naive expression on the boy’s face.

“I like ya, kraut. Ya got an honest face,” the man said.

“So you help me?” Ulrich asked.

“So will ya help me,” the man corrected him.

Ulrich chuckled at the instant correction, one that had no aggression behind the words. The man chuckled back at the humored young man.

“Thank you, friend,” Ulrich responded.

“Ya can call me Corporal Geoffery Chandler. Or ex-Corporal Geoff if ya want,” Geoff said.

He extended a hand at Ulrich, to which he did the same and gave it one big shake.

“Private Ulrich Althaus. Family calls me Ulli,” Ulrich said.

“I’m glad to meet ya, Ulli,” Geoff greeted him back.

Education

Jill, finishing her day, walks into her dorm room and drops her bag by her study desk, taking a seat. She slouches deep in her study chair, taking a big exhale of stress, looking at the ceiling in contemplation. She straightens herself, reaches into her bag and pulls out the paper due for Wednesday’s trigonometry class. She grasps her pencil

continue >



ROOTED IN REFLECTION BY JAMIE SENNETT

and holds the position on the first question. The little symbols and seemingly non-sequitur numbers phase her mind. She hyper-focuses on the acute angle, the SAN acute angle, the arc. Her train of thought veers off, her brain creating a fuzzy disassociation.

“Jill? Jill! Are you okay?” a voice calls.

Jill perks up, snapping out of the miasma. She sees Pranee. She’s her dormmate, who she met last week during orientation. They had fun on a big campus game night, but they still don’t know each other well.

“I’m fine. Just having issues focusing,” Jill answers, returning to her studies.

“Well, uh, good luck with your studies!” Pranee cheerily responds but with suspicious, watchful eyes.

As Pranee sets up her lap desk for her laptop, Jill continues to just stare at her homework. Both just sit, staring at their work. Sometimes Jill shifts her seating position; sometimes Pranee looks up at Jill. No writing, no typing, just sitting and staring.

“What class are you working on?” Pranee finally peeps.

“Trigonometry,” Jill answers, monotone and fatigued.

“Is it going well?” Pranee pries.

Jill whimpers a little, just quiet enough for Pranee to not hear, but enough to kill her spirit even more.

“No...”

Pranee frowns briefly, but she gets up, sets her laptop down, and walks over. Jill looks up to see Pranee hovering over.

“Oh, okay. I see. The acute angle is very simply finding...” Pranee starts.

Jill listens and follows each of Pranee’s instructions. While only five problems exist on paper, they require multi-faceted solutions. Pranee helps Jill follow from one problem to the other. After only 15 minutes, it is done.

“Thank you! I really owe you one!” Jill praises.

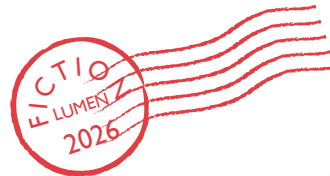
“Oh, don’t worry about it. It’s my pleasure,” Pranee responds.

“No, seriously. If you need any help, I’m here!” Jill insists.

“Oh, I’m... I’m doing fine now but I’m not the best with biology,” Pranee admits.

“No way! That’s my major! I totally got you covered! Just ask anytime!” Jill emphatically offers.

Jill extends her hand out. Pranee looks at Jill’s hand hovering between them. She grabs it and the two girls share one big shake, laughing when their hands break grip in their promise. ●





UNTITLED BY SERENA GODOY



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FIREBENDER BY ETHAN ADAMS



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WET BY REESE RZEPECKI



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BIRDS IN THE DESERT BY LAUREN TURNER



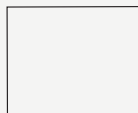
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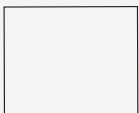
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Grow Out of It

By Sarah Breed

Anxiety attaches to me like a needy child,
Begging for more,
never leaving you alone,
making you question your past decisions.

But I like the sinking feeling it puts in my stomach,
The rock it places at the bottom of my throat,
And the way my heart flutters
causing breaths to be unsteady.

Assigning colors to school subjects:
red for english,
green for science,
yellow for history,
blue for math.
If the color is wrong,
my answers are too.

Coffee air consumes my lungs with urgency,
only to be let down
by the bitter-brown water
that decipheres how good my day will be.

The Counselor Christina tells me a sheet untucked
in the corner of a perfectly made bed,
shouldn't make me feel butterflies in my chest,
and a mind that could clock a speed of 100MPH-
all while I sit on her clean-round chair
with pillows neatly placed,
and not a speck of dust found with the swipe of a fingertip.
Maybe I don't like feeling this way,
But the fact is, it's all I know.

What I don't pay ode to is the organized chaos
Hidden with a closet door,
And a shortage of time
preventing an in-depth cleaning
of clothes I can never seem to find.

LOL was replaced with shut up,
As my mind overflowed
With millions of thoughts
I couldn't organize.

continue >



The screech of a red box on a wall
persuaded my little mind that danger was not our friend,
and stale air littered with disinfectant, despair, and sugar on a stick,
bribed me to believe
I was safe from what I could not see.

But She'll grow out of it



SELF PORTRAIT BY ALANIA MONTGOMERY

Ticking

By Trinity Magee

Time as we know it
Waits for no one,
But we wait for it.
As the clock ticks
And the moments
Pass by,
We must always
Wait on time.

Slow down and appreciate
Life's most precious moments.
When in reality, I can never
Be truly grateful for it,
Because time is never
On my side.
I don't have all the time
In the world—
No one does.

It's contradictory,
To say the least.
You only get one life:
Live it to the fullest,
Take your time,
But,
You must accomplish things
In a timely manner.

College by 22.
Career by 26.
Marriage by 27.
Kids by 30.

Everything has a timeline.
The clock is always
Ticking, as the numbers
Keep spinning,

Time will always evolve
As we should as well,
Only time goes at its own
Pace
While on the other hand,
We do not get that luxury.
What can you do,
Right?
The clock is always ticking.

Trinity Magee





AWAKE BY SAMANTHA MCDONALD



UNTITLED (IDENTITY) BY AMELIA STIPANOVIC



GIRL IN THE WINDOW BY ANNA MICALE

In the Night

By Rebecca Stanish

The wind was a soft caress
in the middle of the night.
I shared my room with a monster.

The dark smelled like a lake at dusk.
I could see stars peeking through clouds.
It tasted not of coffee, but of the grounds.
There were whispers. They made
My ears ring so badly, it was like blood
Was dripping from them.

I named him Luc, from a book I read,
But he wasn't really a monster.
I knew he would come every night
Because he simply always would,
But one day, he would come, and I
Would embrace him and understand.

The breeze told me its secrets as it
Slipped through the window.
The cool floor of melancholy
Was underneath my tired feet as
I danced across the room.

His touch felt the way moss
Looked in the light of the moon.
The coming of fall gave
New life, hope, and love,
But I felt so exhausted.
Yet, I was excited to live.

I was floating above myself
Holding your hand.
My fear was a friendly companion;
It all made me think of Paris.
I knew everything that I felt,
But nothing was there or gone.

I remember your touch
Because it is always there.
But the window has closed,
The wind trying to will you away.
I open it back up.
I want the night to enter.
I do not want you to go.

Rebecca Stanish





LUCIFER BY AURORA RISTO



LUCIFER BY AURORA RISTO



LADYBUG BY SERENA GODOY

Killdeers Return

By Carly Chapman

Wings far above me drifting through
the air as the sky clears of snowy clouds.
The long-gone birds have flown back home.
The cold and dark are chased back
somewhere toward the pole up north.
Birds' songs soon fill the air with life,
their singing serves to bring back joy.
The sun shall too brighten the sky
as spring is ushered upon frozen ground.
The warm red sun returns once more
to set us free as birds themselves.
As color paints the trees bright green
and snow shall give way to grass.
I welcome change in weather from
winter's day a new day break.
The birds will ring in each sun's rise
with chirp and song trill each day come.
Hope rising over dead and darkened days.



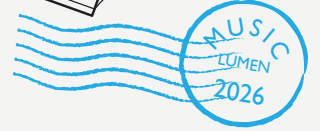
Silent World, Raging Mind

By Devon Burton

My mind is clear, calm and certain
until that daunting day descends upon me;
thoughts that haunt me endlessly thrashing about.
The world goes silent, mind full of worry and weakness.
Days pass by, perpetually pale and passive,
wonder diminishing, evolving into exhaustion and emptiness.
The sun no longer submits warmth, subdued by the mind.
Desire for reading and talking with friends gone, dead and driven away.
Night gnaws away at the mind, no sleep ever-present,
lost to the confines of the curious mind.
Time ticks away, tormentingly slow,
allowing torturous thoughts to prosper and proliferate.
Ideas blur into one another, blossoming and blackening the soul.
Fears flow freely now, frolicking in the mind,
simultaneously the safest and most reckless space.
Roots become grounded once again, bewildering, yet blithesome.
The catastrophic cycle shifting once again,
days looking brighter, boisterous and bold.



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Tri-State Festival Prism Concert

Featuring D'Angelo Music Students

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Choir Concert

Featuring Concert Choir & Chamber Choir

Conductor: Dr. Christopher Petit

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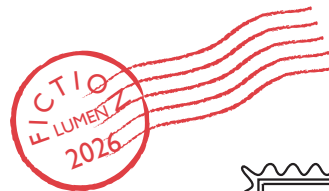
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Serenity

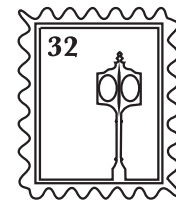
By Gabriel Sheldon

Exhaustion clouds my head; anxiety, a close companion, occupies the spaces between my eyes and the smile I feign to conceal the tears that fill my weary soul—overdosing on inappropriate sarcasm to distract from the stimuli that only I see when isolation confines me. Every attempt at sobriety is met with a romanticized self-mutilation of the aesthetic lingering at the bottom of a bottle of overindulgence. Stubborn reluctance to fall off the precipice in a resolve that holds loose meaning when the exasperated loneliness grips my shoulders, forcing the doubt of balance I maintain. I feel the tears welling, waiting to fall and fill the crinkled crevasses. Why do I refrain them from escaping? Perhaps I realize the toll I pay for their travels, a currency only paid in further fatigue. I do not fear vulnerability; instead, I am hesitant to embrace the hollowness that yields my submission.

I hear their whispers, beckoning me on the wind, seducing me into the chambers of green blades and organic foundation. They promise the rest will provide eternal respite, assure security in sheets of purity that only the heavens can bestow. These invisible fae see my fading resolve, and I their offer with lustful desire. Rationale steadies impulsivity and denies temptation. The whispers grace me with a gentle kiss, reminding me that they will never be far from me, patiently awaiting our subsequent encounter.



Gabriel Sheldon



EYE OF A NEEDLE BY MASSAI JACKSON



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MARY BY JAMIE SENNETT



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02/02 BY ADRIAN ROSAS ORNELAS



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WONDERING MAN BY ADRIANA LIKA



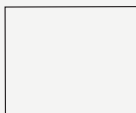
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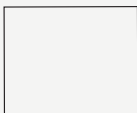
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Fallen Angel

By Estelle Ferrari

Your legless, slender
body covered in scales,
green with sickness,
with sin,
with poison.

A perfect complement to
your forked tongue
coated in the lies and
temptation dripping
from your pointed fangs.

Sickness, sin, and poison
are lies themselves, for
your fangs are dry and
your tongue untainted.
They describe you as
a devil, when you
are an angel,
like the devil
once was.



Estelle Ferrari



THE SHOOTERS: MASTER & CREATOR BY E.P. JOHNSON



THE SHOOTERS: MASTER & CREATOR BY E.P. JOHNSON



Home Sweet Home



By Ava Gamello



Another rat fell from the hole in the ceiling. It was the third one this week. Eugene supposed he should tell the guard about the hole, but he liked the company. The new rat was skinnier than the others. It had dark gray fur and a long pink tail; its beady little eyes stared in shock at his face. Eugene sat for a moment staring back at the rat before it scurried behind a stack of books in the corner of his small room.

He stood up from his place on his bed and stared out the little window that overlooked the sea. Sometimes Eugene would look out the window for hours on end without moving. The rhythmic crash of the waves against the rocks lulled him into a trance. Afterward, he would sit on his bed and select a book from his pile. They had all been read at least ten times through, but Eugene would forget the endings often, so the stories never bored him. Glancing out at the water, he suspected that dinner would be arriving in a few minutes. The sun had begun to sink into the sea while the sky turned into a painting he had once seen, although he'd forgotten where.

Eugene could hear the heavy footsteps of the guards as they came down the hall to deliver their meals. A guard named Raymond slipped a plastic tray through a slot in the door. Mashed potatoes and what looked like chicken, along with a glass of water, sat on the tray in front of him. He was decidedly not hungry and moved the tray to the corner where the skinny rat had disappeared. Eugene liked to imagine the different lives of the guards who passed by his cell. Raymond, he thought, had a son and a wife with a baby on the way. He and his family vacationed in a nice summer

home somewhere along the coast. Raymond's days were filled with laughter and salty air, warm meals and good sleep. Or when he was in a mood, Eugene would imagine that Raymond hated his life, he hated his job, his wife, his house, and his stupid summer vacation home. Sometimes he would secretly wish he could swap places with one of us, so he could be free of all the heavy weight of responsibility that he carried on his shoulders.

A shy squeak caught his attention. Eugene turned his head to see the skinny, gray rat sniffing at his cold meal. "Go ahead, I'm not gonna eat it," he said, motioning to the food. The little rat must've understood his words as it started nibbling at the chicken. "Better that it goes to you than gets tossed," Eugene stated, pivoting himself on his bed so he could lie down. He stared at the hole in the ceiling, which looked bigger than before, but maybe he was just imagining things. Most other prisoners would probably try to take this as an opportunity for an escape, but Eugene was content in his cell. He had his routine, and he didn't like that to change. Eugene had his books, a nice view, and some company, and the other prisoners didn't bother him. They were kind to Eugene; he supposed it had to do with how long he'd been in. He had given up trying to convince them of his innocence, and the length of his time here didn't exactly help prove his point.

More squeaks came from a corner of the room. Eugene lay on his side and watched the other two rats cautiously move their way to the tray of food. They stopped once they noticed the presence of the new rat, who was contentedly nibbling away. "Go

continue >

ahead, there's nothing to be scared of now, is there?" Eugene said, urging the rats to enjoy the food. The smaller brown rat joined the skinny one at the tray and began to eat.

Soon enough, the bigger white rat joined in on the feast. "I suppose I shall name you since I can't very well call you big and small anymore, now, can I?" The rats stopped and looked at Eugene, seemingly with a look of approval on their face. "I will name you Willie," he suggested, pointing to the small brown one. "You shall be called Virginia," He said to the white one, "And lastly, you will be Shirley." The new gray rat took a break from its food to consider its new name. "I think these names fit you all just fine." Eugene turned on his back again and pondered over other names in case more rats fell through.

The night was in full swing as the stars and moon danced in the sky. He thought it would probably be best to get some rest, so Eugene shut his eyes and fell asleep to the little squeaks of the rats.

The morning sun woke Eugene up from his deep sleep. His rats must have scurried behind something in the room, but had evidently enjoyed their meal, as all his food was gone. Eugene sat up on his bed, raising his arms to the sky and hearing his bones crack from the stretch. He then stood up and reached for his toes, although he only made it a little past his knees. He made his way over to the window to begin his routine. Wake up, stretch, look out at the sea, consider eating breakfast, read a book, look out at the sea again, consider eating dinner, stare at the hole in the ceiling, and go to sleep. Occasionally, if he was feeling inspired, Eugene would take the pocketknife he kept hidden in his pocket and carve pictures into the cell wall. The knife was a gift from an old guard named Carlos, who took pity on him when he first arrived.

Eugene reminded him of his son, he said, and the knife was so he could defend himself if need be. Though Carlos was the one who could've used it when he was killed in a fight in the prison yard, just a few years after Eugene arrived. He was real sad when he heard the news. Maybe if Eugene had been in the yard that day, he could have saved him. He twiddled the knife in his pocket as he took in the view outside the window.

The sea was in an unusual rage today. Waves struck the rocks with a violent, strident sound. Rocks high on the cliff were drenched in the salty water; these rocks were clear of erosion, but if the sea wasn't placated, they would start to shrink like their low-down counterparts. Eugene had studied these rocks and the sea every single day since his arrival. He knew their behaviors quite well and wondered what had angered the usually tranquil sea. "If this keeps up, we'd better be careful," he said to no one.

Hours passed until it was time for him to read (he had decided against breakfast). He grabbed the third book from his pile and sat down on his bed. He had only time to read a chapter before he heard heavy footsteps in the corridor. *How odd! It wasn't time yet for dinner*, he thought. Eugene saw the pale face of the guard, called Rory stopped in front of his door.

"You have a guest," she said, not meeting Eugene's gaze. "He says he's with the government, so we figured you better talk with him, maybe he's gonna get you out or somethin'." The door swung open, and Rory placed a pair of cold, metal cuffs around his wrist. "Just a precaution, ya know," she said with a smile.

Rory led him down the corridor, and Eugene could feel the loathsome gaze of the other prisoners. *They must assume I'm getting out*, he thought. The pair passed through

several sets of metal doors before stopping before a single door: this one looked older than the others. It had a few nicks and scratches.

“He’s right through here,” Rory said, holding the door open before shutting it behind him.

Eugene stepped into what looked like an interrogation room. There was one rectangular wooden table in the center with two metal chairs on either side. A big mirror on one side and a bright fluorescent light hung above, which lit up the room. A man was sitting in the chair on the opposite side of the table. He had on a gray fedora hat and a long black coat. His graying hair that matched his graying beard peeked out from under his hat. He had his hands clasped, resting on the table, and his head bowed as if he was praying.

“Please, have a seat,” he said in a voice much younger than Eugene expected.

Eugene obeyed the man and sat down across from him. The man lifted his head and stared directly into Eugene; the man’s eyes were a light green mixed with a little gray. He had a rounded nose that a pair of round glasses sat upon.

The man cleared his throat a few times before opening his mouth to speak. “I’m Detective Wyatt, and I’m here to talk with you about your release.” The detective took a deep breath, “You’ve been exonerated, Eugene, you are now going to be a free man.”

Eugene stared blankly at Detective Wyatt, as if unsure as to what the words the detective said meant. Minutes passed as the detective sat waiting patiently for a response.

continue >



AFTER FRANCESCA BY ADRIANA LIKA

“Do you know what this means, Eugene? You can leave here and go home.” Detective Wyatt said, urging the conversation to begin.

The clock over the mirror ticked away minutes before Eugene shook his head, “No. No. I don’t think I want to leave. I’ve been here for so long.” He sounded exasperated by the thought. “I’ve been here for so, so long, detective. This is my home now.”

“Unfortunately, you don’t have a choice. You’ve been found not guilty, and I know this may be difficult to understand. I mean, forty-three years is a hell of a long time, but Eugene, don’t you want to experience the life of a free man?” Detective Wyatt was earnest in his response, but this didn’t matter to Eugene. None of it did. He had been locked up for something he knew he didn’t do. He had told them he didn’t do it, and *now* they believe him. Eugene didn’t even have a home to go back to; he had been told of his parents’ death five years ago. He assumed his childhood home now housed a stranger. The last time he was free, he was worried about final exams: now what? He didn’t have a house, or a family, or a job. He had nothing out there. Absolutely nothing. But in here, in here, he had the sea and his books and the rats. He had a home here and food. He didn’t have to worry about a thing. Not a thing.

“Detective?” Eugene said, meeting Detective Wyatt’s eyes. “What can I do to stay?”

Detective Wyatt met Eugene’s earnest glance with a look of confusion. He took a minute to actually consider the question. “Well, I mean, you *could* always commit a crime,” He said jokingly, “But I highly advise against it.” He added with a more serious tone. The detective pushed the metal chair back and reached out his hand to shake Eugene’s. Eugene pushed his chair back and stared at Detective Wyatt’s outstretched

hand. If he shook it, he knew it would be his last day here. Who knows how different the outside world was? What if people wore different things or talked differently? There was no way Eugene could acclimate himself to such a foreign world. Out there, he would be ridiculed, and who knows who would actually believe he was innocent. Forty-three years is a hell of a long time. Is anyone really innocent after that long? Eugene didn’t know, but he did know that existing in the free world wasn’t an option for him anymore. He lifted his head to meet the detective’s eyes. They were kind and made Eugene feel sick for what he was about to do.

“I’m real sorry, detective. I appreciate your efforts, but I just really cannot go back.” Eugene meant it; he *was* real sorry. He was real sorry as he took the knife from his pocket and pushed it through Detective Wyatt’s throat. He was real sorry as three guards rushed in, two dragged him back to his cell, and the third tried to stop the bleeding. “I’m real sorry, detective, but I just cannot leave.” He muttered all the way back to his cell, where the guards shoved him in and quickly locked the door, not even bothering to take off the handcuffs. As Eugene sat down on his bed, he heard a chorus of squeaking from the corner of the room. A small white rat emerged cautiously from the shadows. “I guess I get to stay after all,” Eugene announced as he lay down on his bed, listening to the waves crash against the rocks as he fell asleep. ●

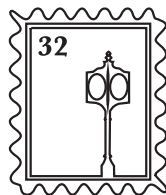


Banned Book Manifesto

By Zyla Lanham

We choose to read what we want to read; even if you *Ban This Book*.
In a classroom or in *The Jungle*, it is our choice to make.
You let us eat cake yet care what words we see.
You are *The Book Thief*.
No one gave you permission to dictate what words our eyes consume.
That is for us to decide.
Laurie Halse Anderson will tell you, "Censorship is the child of fear and
the father of ignorance."
Congratulations, you are a grandparent!
No wonder you coddle us so much.
We do not need to be pampered since, unlike you, we know *The Sun Also
Rises*.
Anytime we *Speak*, it is not tolerated by you.
You are enforcing the first rule of *Fight Club* onto us.
You aim for absolute silence and because of this, *I Know Why the Caged Bird
Sings*.
Luckily, we are not as fragile as the silence you try to force onto us.
You should stop living in *1984* and realize *The Hate U Give* to others.
Are you ready for this *Brave New World*?
Or are you prepared to turn into *The Outsiders*?
As *I Lay Dying*, I will fight for creativity.

Zyla Lanham





1 Peter 5:7
Casting all your care upon him, for he
careth for you.

PEACE BY JENNIFER CASERTA



THE WORLD OF GAMES BY KATELYN DETZEL



CLUTTERED STILL LIFE BY ALYSSA DROZDIEL

English Major Manifesto

By Rebecca Stanish

Language is EVERYTHING.
Words and writing,
Language is thought,
Feeling, and communication.
Yet, people ALWAYS
Seem to disregard it,
Call it unimportant,
Say it is USELESS to be
An English Major.
But if we take one word
Out of our language,
We LOSE much more
Than one little word.
We lose an entire RANGE
Of thought, feeling,
Ideology, expression,
Reflection, and OURSELVES.
Books have tried to tell us
This very fact, show us,
But what use is it if we don't read?
Language and words are NOT
Just writing, they are thought,
They are COMMUNICATION.
Feeling and emotion are certainly
Important, but how do we share
Without words? Perhaps
Other art, painting or music.
They can make us feel,
But they cannot always help
SAY how we feel.
How do we tell others
What or how we think?
We use our words.
How does someone
Take over a piece
Of the world and commit
Heinous crimes against humanity
Without people fighting back?
Words. They can use WORDS.
So why do we disregard
The most POWERFUL

Tool we all have?
We don't appreciate,
Don't understand,
The power and DANGER
Of language, knowing
How to use it, and not
Understanding its strength.
Words must be used WISELY.
So when they ask why
ENGLISH? What could
You possibly do? Who
Cares about that? Why
WASTE your time?
I know they don't understand.
But I will show them
That I will use words
And with them, I will
Create new worlds,
Keep the one we know
As safe as I can, and
MOVE MOUNTAINS—
Because words can.
And LANGUAGE
Is everything.

Rebecca Stanish



A Deal Hell Designs (ADHD)

By Sarah Breed



When asked my name
I try to tame
The thoughts that rattle every aspect of my brain.
“It’s just some extra energy!”
Some love to proclaim,
But in reality
My functionality
Falls short every day
When I make a decision so others will choose to stay.
I shove food down my throat,
Fighting the nausea, oh shit, I may choke.
After that, I come to--
A conclusion only some can make, but I hope you do:
I choose to swallow that half-white capsule;
The other half’s color this month is Carolina blue, reminding me of the sky
that holds the clouds
Is the same sky
That holds some guy
Who let the devil win.
The same sky that holds that Carolina blue
The same day I was born, that my God saw me & knew, I would cause
trouble?

Yes.
The same God who created others that ask,
“Who in their right mind?”
Unknowingly they don’t see I fight
for what is right in my own mind.
The blue is so deceiving
I have been told “You’re so lucky!”
Just for receiving,
A pill some pay so much for.
It’s addicting for most
But for me it’s just predicting
That at least today I won’t loudly boast.
No, I don’t just talk loud, smile often, & laugh hard Like every sign in a
Hobby Lobby aisle says.
In reality,
My mentality
Just tries to keep me afloat,
While my little boat
Sinks,

Sinks,
Slow.
The things that occur
From something so quickly spurred

Make my depression My oppression.
As I lie
Making lies.

My anxiety makes me wonder, If my sobriety
From a small little capsule Would take away these thoughts That weren't
previously bought- From the planner at Target

That is supposed to be a target, For all the things in my head I'm supposed
to spread
On a silly, little paper

With dates to help make me "greater",
Make me more organized, more calm, more normal. The OCD
Then takes a hold
Of how my empty hole
Can be filled with 3 taps on a door,
No, maybe its four.
Tap, Tap, Tap
No, that doesn't feel right.

Tap, tap, tap, tap
Shit I did the last one wrong; start over.
I spend an hour in a room practically banging a door to a song, A rhythm
that needs a better system.

So I come to terms
That I need to terminate
I can't stop the debate
That the guy down in hell is trying to make.
If I don't take this pill...I will...
Be so mad at myself,
That I don't continue my resourced wealth.
Of a small, little pill
That still creates such a thrill.
If I don't take it,
I will participate in
A Deal Hell Designs
I am to take the blame
When someone asks my name.
Filled with continuous questions:
Do I say the truth?
Do I let him win?
It is what I am,
Who I am

It's never just Sarah
When the fact resigns,
I'm A Deal Hell Designs



Wistful

By Rebecca Stanish

Dreams come to me when I sleep and waking,
They do not end, but linger on lightly.
They can be pleasant or can bring aching.
Some nights, they come and can shine quite brightly.
The days after have a lustre, slightly
Blurring my sight with a rose pink that clings
To everyday objects and gives them wings.
But nights, when aches come, the days that follow
Are dark, miserable, and horrid things.
Without dreams, day and night, life is hollow.



Rebecca Stanish



CORITA KENT - THE POP ART NUN BY OLIVIA CONNOR



Western Wren

Katelyn Detzel

By Katelyn Detzel



Two bows and twenty-four arrows we share. We practice on the same target. My brother has always been there for me. He is great at teaching me everything I want to know. Ever since I saw him shooting arrows, I have been fascinated by it too. I dream of being an archer.

Seven arrows are on the target already, but none of them are mine.

“Soon, every one of your arrows will be on the target,” my brother encourages me.

We each shoot an arrow at the same time beside each other. Our arrows fly through the wind split by its point. They bend in the air, slicing through it until his punctures the target. His arrow adds another to the number on the target. Mine doesn't. Down to four arrows left, we shoot again. My arrow gains its speed, until...bullseye.

Pride fills me; I look at my brother with a smirk. He shakes my shoulder as a way to congratulate me.

“You're going to be a professional at this when you get older,” he explains.

•••

Fresh breeze flows alongside me as we slice the air in front of us like an arrow. My brother Weyland, beside me, leans forward against his horse's mane, gaining speed. The colored horizon is behind him; to my side are dark skies. I shake the reins, signaling to my horse to speed up. Lightning flashes, lighting up the fields and rocky paths. Zara suddenly brakes at the sound of thunder. I brace myself against his mane. Weyland's horse slows down without stopping, but speeds up again after Weyland signals. I

readjust myself and continue our race. I catch up to Weyland before he picks up more speed. When we reach our undisputed end mark: a prickly pear cactus beside the path, Weyland is leading. We both slow down after the mark, both of us breathing heavily.

We turn, pulling each of our left reins toward us, our horses following our signals. When our horses are side by side, I congratulate my brother on his win. I reach my hand out for him to take and then shake his hand.

•••

When we came back home, we were devastated to find that we had forgotten to latch our fence gate for the cattle. When our gate was unlatched, our cattle escaped. Because our father was ill, it was Weyland's and my job to catch them. We got our horses and climb up on them: me on Zara and Weyland on Onyx. We each had our own lasso, ready to be used. We raced after our cattle, looking for any sign of them. When we found them, Weyland herded them from behind, while I lassoed one in the front. Lassoing was one thing my father taught Weyland before Weyland taught me. I held the end of the rope tightly in my left hand and let the rest slip from my right hand when I threw it. I caught the horns of one bull and pulled him toward me as I turn my horse toward our farm. The bull fought me, trying to pull back against my grip. Weyland followed behind the herd, keeping them all together.

•••

My brother and I race our horses under the vast Texas sky again, telling our horses to go faster. The air is cool, curving around us.

continue >

The sun has not been out long enough to warm the air yet. When we reach the cactus, I am leading this time. We laugh and congratulate each other on the race.

I look again at the cactus, the one that had been there since before we started riding years ago. So focused on winning, we hadn't noticed the bird lying on the leaf of the cactus, without life. I lower myself from my horse. The cactus wren was near one of the fruits, in a puddle of its own blood. It was still replacing its youth feathers with its adult ones. It got its stomach caught on a needle of the pear cactus. It must have fought to escape the cactus for a while before the pain of its sliced stomach became too much to handle.

"Come on. We should get back home before it gets too hot," my brother tells me.

I nod and climb back up on my horse. The air is already heating up.

•••

My brother and I were out riding again: this time it was evening, but before sunset. We weren't racing that day. Instead, we explored the surrounding land, passing our family's property line. We toured the mountain line on our horses. We knew if we were seen trespassing on land that wasn't ours, we'd get shot, but we took the risk together. We hadn't seen anyone else following or watching us, but a horse is so much easier to see in the distance than a person. My brother followed me on my right, the side of me where fields were behind him. Rocks from the side of the mountain were behind me. Before I could move and before I could speak, there was a boom. My brother flicked his reins, so that his horse sprinted and Weyland blocked me. I realized at that moment that he had blocked me from a bullet. He had taken a bullet for me. Weyland fell off the side of his horse.

I used a rock to shield myself from getting hit while I dragged my brother behind the rock too, hoping to find the least possible damage from where the bullet sunk into his flesh.

Unfortunately, the wound was fatal, and his blood drained faster than I could reach him.

•••

I retraced the same course we used to race together. As Onyx and I galloped, I threw my lasso at the vast sky. I hoped that it would bring back the memories or lock them with me so I couldn't lose them. Maybe even capturing the memories that we never got to make and the time we never got to spend together. I imagined the moon as all the memories we made. I imagined each of the stars as an unexperienced memory, trying to wrap my lasso around as many as I could. I imagine my lasso wrapped around heaven, bringing my brother home. Maybe if I could catch heaven, he would come back too, to make the memories we never finished.

I felt stuck, trapped, and unable to move. I imagined myself making way for me to move on, like an arrow slicing through its obstacles.

When we get further down the path, my rope falls from the sky after a throw, getting caught in the prickly needles of our mark. I noticed the cactus hadn't looked as it had before. It was wilting. Its time had come. I reached into my pocket and felt for my pocket knife. I used it to cut a leaf off the cactus, the only green one left.

I took the pad to the other side of the path and dug the exposed side into the sandy soil, hoping that it will continue to grow.

A cactus wren began to sing in the distance, its voice growing louder.

•••

Two bows and twenty-four arrows; we practice on the same target. My brother beside me releases his arrow at the same time I do. When we get down to a few arrows left, I finally hit the center.

"You're going to be a professional," My brother congratulates me by shaking my shoulder; "I will always be there for you and supporting you," he assures me. ●



LANTERNS BY AINSLEY DUNNING



LUMEN XXXII

CROSS CULTURE BY ANTONELLA GENNOCK



LUMEN XXXII

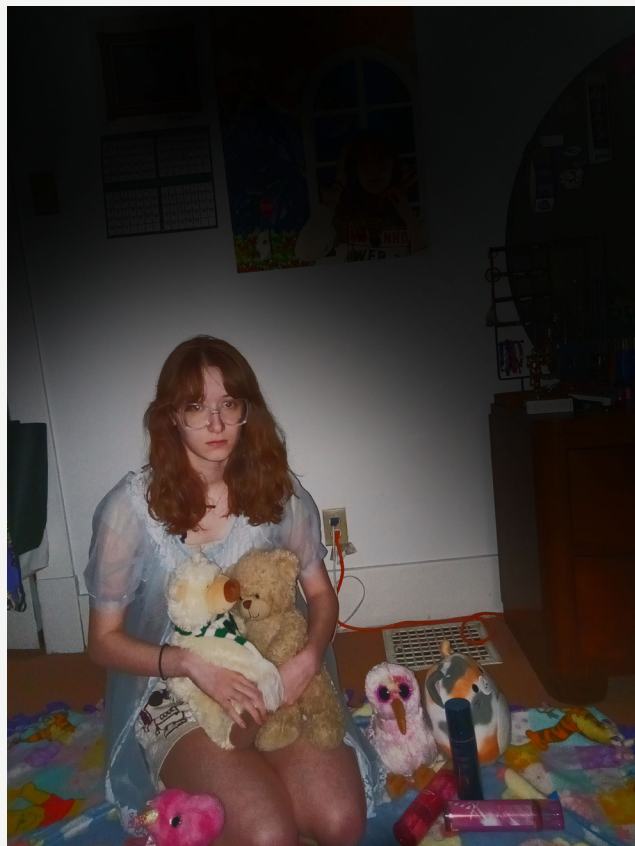
THE ILLUMINATION BY SERENA GODOY



LUMEN XXXII



PERFORMING FEMININITY BY ELEANDRA CASANE

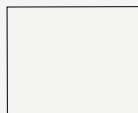


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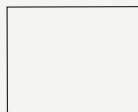
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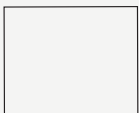
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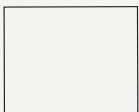
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POST CARD



Agape

By Devon Burton

You're F in love
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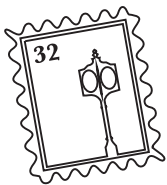
F a ll ing,
for the one who shines as bright as the sun
F a ll ing,
for the one who sees you like a mirror does
F a ll ing,
for the one who finds your missing puzzle pieces
F a ll ing,
for the one whose fire doesn't die because of your waves
F a ll ing,
for the one whose laugh you'd like to drown in
F a ll ing,
for the one whose voice calms your inner demons
F a ll ing,
except you aren't really falling at all

ing in love

ow

r

You're G
G r ow ing,
with the sun that lets the moon shine
G r ow ing,
with the one who can read your mind like a book
G r ow ing,
with the one who patches wounds like a patch maker
G r ow ing,
With the one who sees your thorns as roses
G r ow ing,
with the one whose laugh makes you forget your name
G r ow ing,
with the one whose voice diminishes every fear
G r ow ing,
into the most unconditional, everlasting love



What's to eat?

By Bleu Gavadin

A poor kid who grew up in the projects in a Rust Belt city,
my dad would always tell me stories about how he couldn't eat.
He and his three younger brothers would find a way to eat
making questionable meals just to get by,
mustard on pasta for a mac and cheese,
spam for a quick source of meat,
rice, pasta sauce, and cheap hot dogs for a fancy occasion,
a goulash that was dubbed an Arizona goulash which no one wanted,
government cheese sandwiches which were good,
government peanut butter which the taste is bland as can be,
plain hamburger with salt when in a rush.
My dad could tell you all the things he ate when he was a kid,
even now when he's 61.

B. Gavadin





CHOREOGRAPHY III SHOWCASE: ENTWINED IN CONTRAST

POST CARD



Once Upon a Time

Music: "They Were Villains" by Isabelle Garvey;
"Nostalgia" by Isabelle Garvey

Choreography: Isabelle Garvey

Dancers: Elodie Devos, Ainsley Dunning, Julia Lasseter, Madeleine Sipos, Annalise Weber

This is a love letter to the romantics and the kindred spirits, the ones who feel and yearn with every fiber of their being



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POST CARD

Scarab is inspired by Scarabaeus Beetles, also known as dung beetles. These insects symbolize many things such as rebirth and /or protection in the afterlife. When creating this piece I wanted it to feel as though we as people change and grow and in some ways we are reborn into a different version of ourselves whether that is in life or death, that is being represented by the Scarabaeus beetle.

Scarab

Music: "Flow" composed by Anja Lechner, Francois Coutirier

Choreography: MiKayla Sharp

Dancers: Abigail Chrin, Elodie DeVos, Nicole Hirsch, Abigail Lipa



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ARTY PARTY SHOWCASE



Not Your Time

By Trinity Magee

Too much remains
unseen,
unsaid, and
unheard.

The world quiets
too quickly without your
fire.
Your laughter hums softly
in the seams of my memory.
The part that I undoubtedly love most
about you.

You were a storm and a sunrise—
a roar that made my world survive.
I mistook forever,
as something promised,
not borrowed,
How to keep that lie,
alive.

The presence of our dreams
filling conversations
as if we had no concept
of time.
Just you and I
as the minutes
turned into hours.

My dear best friend,
now you've drifted into your new life,
and I'm left to rebuild mine
with the pieces
you left behind.



Trinity Magee

His Reputation

By **Katelyn Detzel**

ruthless and remorseless
known across kindred kingdoms
 it is
not him that is ruthless
 it is
the shadow of GREED that followed and
lingered in his path
he cannot escape from its presence
he cannot awake to find its absence
GREED
 it is
a mask of reality
 it is
to others, silence
but to its holder, it is deafening
 haunting the body
 consuming the mind
a constant longing for something undeserved
a craving for something in the unknown
for the unknown is not always pleasant

Katelyn Detzel





RUSH BY ADRIAN ROSAS ORNELAS



MADAGASCAR X KUNG FU PANDA
BY SAMANTHA ELWELL



BABY IN BLANKET BY EMMA JOHNSON

the kingdom

By Payton Churley

i will never understand the way your mind works.
stopping the effort because you believe you've already won.
what kingdom still stands because of that? not a single one. so tell me,
why should i stay? why should the bushes continue to be beaten?
why should i face the others,
knowing that they have judgment, not joy, written across their rosy cheeks.
give us the fight that you give the enemies. show us the love that you spend
on our riches.
what kingdom has nothing but happiness? certainly not ours, for she is
ridden with agony and heartache.
her skies dark and screaming its pain through the wind and rain.
not a single flower in bloom, for that would ruin the aesthetic of gloom.
for i, and the entire kingdom wish for little.
just your love, it's quite simple.



*Payton
Churley*



Our Secret History

By Ava Gamello

Maybe if the cliff hadn't been so steep,
he would've survived the fall.
If it wasn't for the cruelty of winter,
erasing the mistakes of five
guileful but promising students,
the frozen over body at the bottom
of the cliff would've been found sooner.

Maybe if the snow had waited
just another day, the search
would've been called off quicker
and everyone in the state of Vermont
wouldn't be concerned with
the disappearance of some college kid.

Maybe if he had been a better friend,
and lived the kind words said about him in death.
Caring. Loyal. Giving.
Then his friends wouldn't have been pushed
to such extreme measures.

Maybe if he hadn't been a leech
sucking his friends' pockets dry,
bleeding them of all their money
and hopes of his redemption.

Maybe if their classics professor hadn't
instilled them with ideals of a Greek tragedy,
they wouldn't have felt the need to recreate one.

Maybe if the professor hadn't fed
into the delusions of the wolf,
the rabbit would still be alive.



Ava Gamello





SEIZE THE MOMENT BY JENNIFER CASERTA



FUGUE OVERTIDE BY MICHAEL BRIEGER



FUGUE UNDERTOW BY MICHAEL BRIEGER

PATRICIA S. YAHN
JURIED STUDENT ART SHOW
HONORABLE MENTION

Shedding Antlers

By Ava Gamello

A part of me is left behind,
as the white melts to green.
What was once
a sword,
a map,
a tool,
lays worthless on the forest floor.
Soon a new crown will form,
declaring me king of these
boundless fields.
Until a new year rolls by
and as the daylight dwindles,
I give my crown up to the earth
and am left unarmed
once more,
dreaming of my rule.



Ava Gamello



513 LIBERTY STREET BY MASSAI JACKSON

There's Something We Have to Tell You

By Zyla Lanham

Unintelligible whispers waken me,
the usual snores in the next room silent.
My eyes focus on my closed door
with the assistance of my old nightlight.

I exit my room, floorboards creaking
and door clicking. My feet lead me
across the hallway to their darker,
tenser room. I join them on the bed.

I note her fetal position and register
his soothing hand rubbing constant circles
on her shaking back. Even in the blackness,
I see something glistening on her face.

The room is silent, yet there is a roar
in my ears, drowning out the unspoken
words being exchanged in front of me.
My eyes dart back and forth, questioning.

There's something we have to tell you.
I pick at my nails, waiting for them
to wake my sister, waiting for them
to finally tell me who had met God.



Zyla Lanham



The Holly Grove

By James Heasley

James Heasley

Many days o' me youth have been forgotten or blended, but one night A remember clear as me weddin'. One airy mornin' in the month of May, it begun like any other. A lived in the ole farmhouse me family owned for generations. Me faither was workin' in the house, chippin' away at the dirt floor for a new larder cellar. I dinnae know why, we had the bairn for the winter stocks, but faither knew the better. He loved all us weans, but aye called me his "wee fox;" A was the only hair o' red in the family, except me faither's mither. Her hair was o' mine and mine o' hers.

Mither pruned 'er gairden, filled with ugly green stalks with the teensiest pink flowers on 'em. She told meself and the other weans they warded against spirits o' the dead. She knew ev'ry charm of any wee plant that grew in the glen. A aye believed she knew ole magicks, she nev'r got lost in those woods. Whenev'r we did our wood walks, we'd past by the ole watchtower, used for spottin' raids an' Romans back in days yore. "Find the tower, you nev'r lose sight o' home," Mither ayes told us. Wan place she told me brither an' A tae never go was the Holly Grove. When we asked why, she would wag her finger: "Nev'r talk back tae yer mither," and the talk would end there.

It was that airy May mornin', faither done with the door tae the larder cellar, three specters in ghostly white robes came tae the stead. Hind them were twa more figures; a carlin with hair o' dark grey an' a burly man with hair o' flaxen curls. "Beltaine is upon us. Youth is needed, an' the gods gave vision o' a fox trottin' tae yer home," the bearded robe talked. The white robes left, an' me faither's hands braced his face.

The crash o' clay breakin' caught me ear. A turned to see mither, an' her pottery in shambles at 'er feet. She ran tae 'er gairden like lightnin' flits across the sky at night. She came back with wan ugly stalk with the wee pink flowers.

"Dinnae dine on onythin' before ye eat this. Fold it up an' chew quick!" me mither told. We waited long 'til the sun settled to dusk. A knock, more dreadful than before, rung wan more time o'er the door. Barely lit by the fallin' sun, the white robes stood again. "The time is upon us." The bearded robe talked. Faither led me forward, an' the robes took me by me arm. They walked me through the village, down past the watchtower an' tae the Holly Grove. My heart afeared nae more than that night.

We met with more robes, the carlin, an' the flaxen man. Now lit by the moon, the Holly Grove lived tae its name. Nae other tree or bush grew there, just ancient hollies, trunks warped an' bark ragged. The walk went forev'r an' ev'r, where ev'ry step felt o' cuts on me feet. Me wimps o' pain fell on me heart in shame, for the others made nae wince in their pilgrimage. A begun to think of me fam; me mither, brither, and faither. For reasons beyond me, they felt but memories the mor' the walk went. The mor' they became memories, the mor' the fear weighed on me heart.

Darkness gave way tae orains an' a flarin' din drowned the clatter o' crickets an' owls. Robed shadows faced the ragin' ingle, chantin' "Lugh, Cruach, Morrigan, Brigid." O'er an' o'er. One robe, a young lass, her hair an' hide painted orains by the ingle. She held a bowl, standin' an' awaitin' an' starin'.

Meself an' the twa lined yairds from the ingle. The bearded robe beckoned with his hand tae the carlin. She stepped forwart. The bearded unveiled a wee 'shroom; broon in colour, poppin' it in her mouth. The lass presented the bowl, from which the carlin drank.

A slipped the herb me mither gave me out o' me pocket, an' popped it in me maw. A chewed for just a wee second, an' forced the wad down me gullet. The flaxen haired gent took his turn, consumin' his 'shroom and takin' his sip from the bowl. He stepped aside, an' the bearded robe gestured tae me. A stepped forward, the heat o' the ingle cookin' the hide o' me face. The 'shroom was placed on me tongue, tastin' of earth as A chewed. The lass's bowl was presented tae me face and A sipped, tastin' the drib an' it was o' fire an' honey.

The bearded robe held the hand o' the carlin an' led her down a hill from the ingle. The flaxen man followed her, so A followed him. A looked down the hill, an' could see a bog, barely lit by the moon above. We were pushed an' shoved down, stumblin' o'er the grass an' mud. As A walked down, me sight begun tae become o' wool, all shapes bled intae each other. Time swept away, deep voices grew husky an' echoed. The moon lit the bog just enough for me tae see what they did tae the carlin. The bearded robe took a hooped rope an' hooked it 'round her neck. He pushed her down intae the bunky waters o' the bog, an' the rope tightened.

Bubbles sizzled 'round her face an' her body barely wiggled 'bout. A could feel me skin freeze a dry cold; the wairm wet May night couldn'y comfort the chill o' watchin' the poor carlin. A turned an' ran. Ran off the beatin' path, intae the ole Hollys. A heard grown-ups, indubitably the robes, hollerin' "where is the wee fox girl" echoed through the grove. A nev'r looked back, just kept runnin'. A remembered me mither's words on findin' home. "Find the tower, ye

nev'r loose sight o' home." Ev'ry step nearly had me slip tae the ground or intae a holly. What made me sight woolly made me legs feel like the muck o' the bog. A lost me level but quick tae take the next step. A couldn'y fall in the grove, A had tae make it home.

As me chest felt like burstin' from me body, A spotted the ole watchtower. Before A reached the gates, A took wan look back. Torches burned among the hollys, men shouted for a wee fox; me. A turned away, ran through the village an' tae the stead of me fam'. A saw him awaitin', pacin' like a tied hound, me faither. He did turn his head an' ran tae me, embracin' me when we met. He dinnae stop with a faitherly hug, he picked me wee body up an' flitted like a wolf with his pup back to our home.

With me eyes buried in his chest, A felt the force o' him shoulderin' the door open. A felt him drop me ontae soft, loose soil. A looked up, with him lookin' down an' his hand was on the door tae larder cellar. "Keep quiet, me lass," he told as he shut that door. A heard the sound o' somethin' ragged drag across the only barrier between the cellar an' the world above. It wasna long 'til A heard a knock at the home door, then tromps o' feet, then voices goin' back an' forth like cacklin' magpies. The taps o' the feet then left an' A heard sobs from me dad. "She's home! Me wee fox is home!" A heard him.

In time, the robes were pushed out by a new God o' the Cross. When A became a young hen an' met the man A call me husband, A married in a kirk tae the Christ-God. Me own weans, wan a lass with hair o' mine, were born an' grew tae have weans o' their own. Joyous an' nae fear tae be taken by nae white robes an' their rituals. But A tell them, like me own mither, nev'r go down tae the wood where only ole holly trees can grow, even A nev'r bare me eyes tae the sight o' it. That ole Holly Grove. ●





GOLDEN GRIN BY JOANNA SAAD



WAITING BY MALLORY PARRINO



ANSWERS BY MAZMAL BABIKER



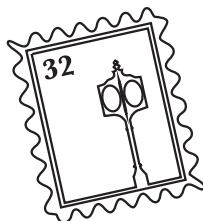
MY LAYERS BY KENZIE SOETY



Our Parting Glasses

By Rachel Ahrens

A woman with frail hands and wispy white hair molded us from Irish dirt.
She conjured us into a tree.
Our roots settled in rolling hills and verdant pastures near a house with no
mother and five children.
Our trunk was uprooted and laid a plane before it had its twentieth ring,
sinking its roots back down into the earth near the shore.
Our branches grew once the trunk put on more rings; three big limbs that
sprouted twigs of their own.
Our buds ballooned and unfurled and eventually sprouted their own leaves.
Our leaves returned every year, changing and falling, but always at the
same time dousing the world with color.
Every year the same, unfurling into shades of chartreuse and olive and
moss and sage, some leaves blowing away but always finding their way
back when they were called.
When our trunk shrank and withered, all the parts were summoned,
returning to their native places.
When our trunk died, surrounded by roots and leaves and branches, it had
85 rings and a hearty Irish accent.
Our roots still grow and spread.
The old house is no longer there but we remain, our branches and twigs
and leaves, thousands of miles to the west.
We remain, with our soda bread and skin that burns too easily and parting
glasses and Irish blessings.
We were forged into a family tree of gold, hammered into hearts and
hands. A family tree of gold claddagh rings branches down between our
fingers.



Rachel Ahrens

When the World Mourns

By Annie Worley

ACW

When Mother Earth mourns, she cares.
Her undying love, by sent the most High,
Allows for her sadness to help her inhabitants.

Her sadness spreads in shades of gray and white,
A blanket that covers her grief.
Except this blanket isn't meant to comfort or keep warm,
But show her sadness soon to come.

She then cries, sometimes it passes, sometimes heavier.
And those who walk her home are mixed with her grief.
Some dance in her misery, others feel her.
They all cover up and put on shields of protection
From the cold sadness that comes with her sadness.

Eventually, her sadness passes but other times it doesn't.
Some days, she would be angry.
Her roars loud as day, and some would see her angry beams flicker.
And on rare occasions, she would have cold sweat.

Other times, she would stop for a moment,
And sulk in sadness.
Allowing her breaths to calm her down,
Letting the sadness drip from her nerves.

When sadness ends, the grays part,
Allowing blue to fill her soul.
She's finally calm, as light fills her up,
And the grief finally passed.
However, we all know that's not true,
As we will feel her grief again.





IDENTITY/GROWING BY AMELIA STIPANOVIC



THINKING OF A SEAT BY REESE RZEPECKI



EMBRACE BY ISABELLA ACOSTA MARADIAGA



DOG CAR BY ETHAN ADAMS



NIGHT LIFE BY JAX BENDER



EMERALD TOWER BY E.P. JOHNSON



Zinj



By James Heasley

Lost and lonely, hiking the living fortress
of the rainforest, Robert Jones respirates to rest.
The Lost City of Zinj
was the wish, wonder of Robert's withering mind.
Now a distant memory, replaced by desolate desperation,
every step emaciates muscles, barely enduring the torment.
Venomous critters creeping around the Congo floor
sharpen Robert's senses, despite aching starvation.
Hiking over the hill, he slips down the treacherous slope,
thwacking his thigh, thrown against the trunk of a teak.
Picking his pulverized body up, the leg pricks in pain.
He knows not why, for he is no noteworthy doctor,
but with every bound burning pain brands his leg.
He checks his compass, chance reminder of civilization.
A year spent in the jungle yearning for success, not yielding.
The sudden snap of a stick, he swiftly swivels around-
a gorilla:
the great beast of brawn, fur blackened as burned char,
features in body of common fauna, face familiar of a man.
The gaze of the gorilla gives greetings to Robert's eyes.
The ape turned around, and Robert accompanies behind
to trail through the trees, travel the way creatures do.
The leaves grow ever larger; thickest bushes lurch in the way.
Plants finally pushed way; a clearing perched in the rainforest.
Golden walls of gilded stone, the glistening of a diamond eye
fixed within a stoic face, the feature of Solomon.
Robert drops in a daze, his dream finally discerned,
The Lost City of Zinj.

James Heasley



Blue-Eyed Beauty

By Sarah Breed

I hope you have my eyes. The same ones that get you countless compliments you'll never accept because they aren't as bright blue as others, that same blue that sparkles in the sun when it catches the light just right, never afraid to show their beauty, the same blue eyes that got passed down from generations before you. However, just because you have my eyes doesn't mean you have to see the world the same way I do-- honestly, I hope you do see things differently than me. I hope you know that just because you have my eyes doesn't mean you're me, or anyone else for that matter. Originality can never be duplicated. You are your own person, a masterpiece of art, sculpted through countless hard times, heartbreaks, and hard expectations.

I hope when you look in the mirror you don't critique the masterpiece you see. Instead, I hope through your eyes you see your legs and the strength they hold and the success they've carried you through. I hope you see the body that has done so much for you through so much hardship and health, and with every scar that paints your skin, I hope you see them as beauty marks that encapsulate your pretty self. When you look in the mirror, I hope you see the person you can become, and as you criticize and compare, just remember no two art pieces are the same-- even the Mona Lisa could never be duplicated.

I hope when you see your name on a piece of paper, you see the originality of your name and the person you make it. Just know, you may share the same name with countless of others, but nobody is the same person no matter how similar you may be.

I hope when you curl up in a blanket on the couch with me as we watch Nicholas Sparks movies, your eyes will not deceive your innocence. Love is not a tragic romance made to last, even though you swear "he's the one." Through your eyes, you will witness heartbreak that leads you to heartache. You won't be a part of the statistic that becomes high school sweethearts, and your first love is not your Prince Charming waiting to see if you fit into his expectations, like seeing if a foot fits in a glass slipper. Don't crunch your toes just to make it fit, someone else will have a shoe that fits perfectly, never shrink yourself for love that won't last.

I hope you have my eyes, and through them, I hope you see the masterpiece you are and the beauty of art and its originality. I hope you can see everything you can create yourself to be and all you are capable of, and I hope you when you look at your hands you see what you can hold: dreams, goals, beauty, and the world.





MOURNING DOVE BY AVA FORSYTH



LUMEN XXXII



THE WALLFLOWER BY ERMIN HUCIC



LUMEN XXXII

THINKING BY MAZMAL BABIKER



LUMEN XXXII



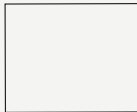
TEA SET BY ALYSSA DROZDIEL



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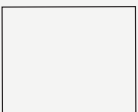
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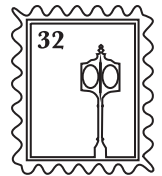
Anger

By Britan Marchinetti

Anger, rage
As red as the hairs on your head
As blinding as the light of heaven
I know they tell me to lay down my burdens
But I'm no longer seven
Tantrums at seventeen are frowned upon
Because I no longer am young like a fawn
So instead I'll sit here and play nice
I'll play into this fantasy
Of a happy family, a happy life
The standard is to forgive
They all say it's so easy
They say it's a part of life
But I won't play into that
Instead I'll write words I'll only read to the
crowd
Because the anger it is just too loud
It deafens me
Makes it hard to breathe
But there's a comfort in it
Almost as if it was a drug
But never a good fit
You forced me to hold your hand
But you've never held my heart
But yet somehow it's always my fault
You formed me in your womb
But deformed after birth

But to you you're the only one that is hurt
So I'll sit here with my words
And read them aloud to the birds
Because anger is a powerful thing
Something that tends to cling
Forgiveness is hard
And will sometimes leave scars
But I know that in the end
It will be my best friend

Britan Marchinetti



Mangia

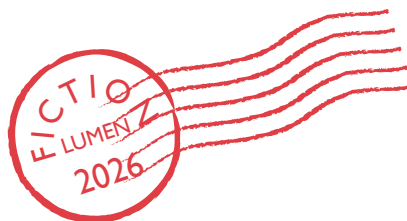
By E.P. Johnson

Magnificent music plays as the giant group of people siege the biggest longest table of an Italian restaurant [set is Olive Garden], and take their seats. Yes, a big-long table dressed in spotless silk sheets and shiny-plastic silverware. The dinner attendants—regular folks of all ages and creeds. Laughter is illustrated, bright white teeth-filled smiles are seen, with the dinner table trinkets and decorum showed in a *The Age of Innocence* style shot transition; key word: multiple exposures.

The Wonder-mused Waitress comes, bearing a large platter of extra-large drinks and the advertisers' baskets of breadsticks. Everyone at the table took a bite, be it bottoms up with gleaming glasses of water or chowing down on those breadsticks. One person picks up a stick of toasted crust and sinks their pearly whites in where blood jam oozes out on impact; the foodie giving a giggling grin colored in crimson. Joy is in the air, as the main course cometh via a soldierly slew of servers approaching the blood-blotched table. They carry canned, stainless-steel platters on their sharp-suited shoulders.

The waiters and waitresses of black set the meals on each point of strung-together dinner tables, taking away bloody little plates from their cursed customers. The workers exposing their restaurant's finest to be intolerable, icky, and utterly unthinkable. The customers are displayed blobs equally bumpy and on each dish. Where one could acknowledge the glittering greens and yellows found on the flared flesh. After every dish is passed around, knives and forks dig in, triggering transparent guttural gases to steam out. The Paste-like innards of the matching meals, colored in a muted magenta. All dinner goers gobble the mysterious monstrosities right up, shown through a series of multi-exposure shots, ending their meals with wiping their mouths and licking their fingers. The last sign of the living mouth-stuffers is a fat stack on a single check.

E.P. Johnson



Awards

P. BARRY MCANDREW AWARDS

Creative Writing

1st Place | “Fallen Angel” by Estelle Ferrari

2nd Place | “Western Wren” by Katelyn A. Detzel

3rd Place | “If I were with you in autumn” by Matthew Lutz

Literary Criticism

“Robert Browning and the Power of Blushing in ‘My Last Duchess’ and ‘Porphyria’s Lover’” by Nicole Walters

PATRICIA S. YAHN JURIED STUDENT ART SHOW

1st Place | “Mourning Dove” by Ava Forsyth

2nd Place | “The Illumination” by Serena Godoy

3rd Place | “Birds in the Desert” by Lauren Turner

Honorable Mention | “Corita Kent – The Pop Art Nun” by Olivia Connor

Honorable Mention | “My Layers” by Kenzie Soety

Honorable Mention | “Fugue Overtide” by Michael Brieger

The Jaworski Fund Excellence in Photography Prize | “Thinking”
by Mazmal Babiker

The Patricia Sontheimer Yahn Patron Prize | Serena Godoy for the
artworks “The Illumination” and “Untitled”



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SOFTWARE

Adobe InDesign 21.2

Adobe Photoshop 27.4.0

Adobe Illustrator 30.2.1

TYPEFACES

Kefa III

Baskerville

Gill Sans

PAPER

Explorer Digital 80# Silk Text, White

10% PCW, Recycled Content

Cover & Postcards: 130# Silk Cover

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