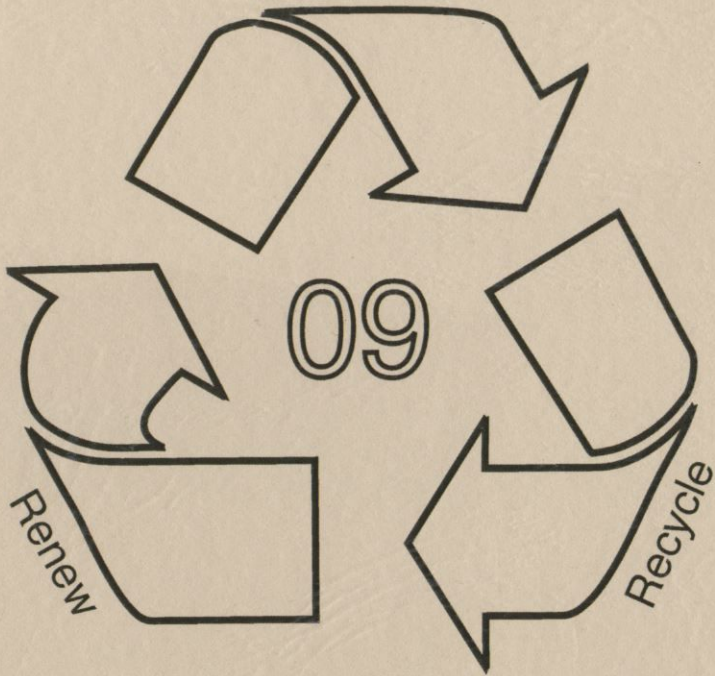


Rejuvenate



The Crucible

2009

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The Crucible

The Literary and Arts Journal of
Lock Haven University



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A special thanks goes to all of the contributing authors and artists, who have filled the pages of this magazine with incredible creations that will be enjoyed for years to come.

Thanks again to the English and Art departments. A majority of the prose and poetry in this journal were written by students in professor Marjorie Maddox Hafer's and professor Dana Washington's creative writing workshops offered by the English Department. Many students in studio courses offered by the Art department contributed their artwork. In addition, we would like to thank all of those students with various majors who submitted their work. You do not need to be in an Art or English classroom to create pieces like the ones that appear in this journal. We encourage everyone to share their masterpieces!

Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and encourages applications from minorities, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities.

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Preface

This year's *The Crucible* has re-emerged with a powerful message of rejuvenation. We renew our senses through creative outlets, letting thoughts pass through our minds like a replenishing stream, reinventing ideas from the past. Courageous individuals imagine, create, and share their visions with others. Creativity emanates directly from the spirit—the magic of the imagination. Together, we resemble the past, define the present, and devise the future in a continuous rebirth. The editors and designer would like to thank those individuals who contributed to this year's edition.

The Crucible has renewed the essence of our message this year by recording fresh art and literature onto recycled paper and hand-binding it with biodegradable twine. This year's editors and designer invite you to unleash your imagination and renew your spirit. Let go. Be free. Live!

Beginning of Fall and of Fears

Crushed leaves beneath my feet,
autumn breeze rushing passed my already-rosined cheeks,
the skies a blue-ish gray,
though the water's still clear.

A long road ahead,
countless benches are my guide,
as well as the orange light of the sky kissing the
mountains,
While often comfort on a day like this,
Where my fears catch up.

I feel alone,
though surrounded by people and nature,
running past,
running through,
what I used to be,
or that is,
what I am.

It becomes colder,
western winds gaining speed,
chilling my bones,
starting my heart.

In this moment I feel at ease:
no more thoughts,
just mere actions
I choose my path
and find my destiny.

By Sarah Cox

Across the Field

Across the field,
black lines parade,
frozen ground crunches,
dawn blooms.

Across the field,
brown sands whirl,
black leather boots creak,
day awakens.

Across the field,
blue, red and white colors fly,
canvas snaps in the wind,
dusk ends.

Across the field,
bay uniforms collide,
rifle stocks click,
darkness fades.

Across the field,
burgundy blood flows,
metallic bullets crack,
death delivers.

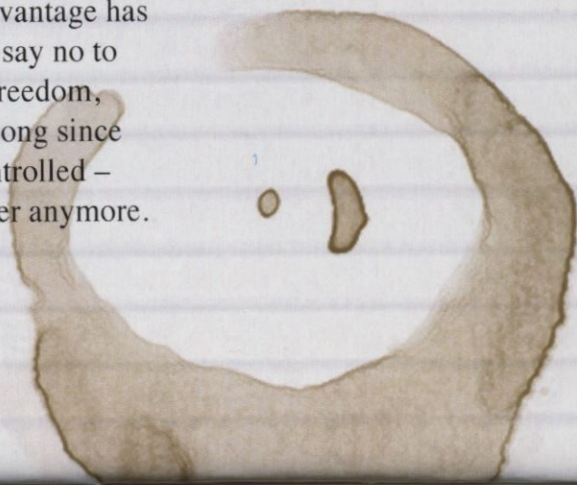
Across the field,
black, blue, bay, burgundy;
crunch, creak, click, crack;
dawn, day, dusk, darkness, death.

By Christina Tongyai

Amish at the Fair

By Abigail Smith

You stare longingly at the horsey-ride,
modesty cap covering your hair as
you cover your desire to climb on and
gallop away, or at least up and down –
but you can't; your mother's grip on your
hand is as strong as her Amish beliefs.
Your older sister is calm and collected;
three or four years' advantage has
given her the grace to say no to
horses and rides and freedom,
her desperate desires long since
caged, tamed, and controlled –
she has no gallop in her anymore.



Over the crushed fallen leaves,
squirrels scamper
twisting
their tense nimble bodies
like constrictors,
blended salt-and-pepper gray
tails like pipe cleaners,
movement
like whip-

lash,
they make their way to everywhere
at once.
We fed squirrels
shelled peanuts
when we lived
within city limits.
Domesticated,
naïve,
they snatched
sustenance
from our fingertips.
Someone else
skinned them.
I couldn't stand
the smell
of unnatural,
cold defeating death.
We ate squirrels,
battered, fried,
salted and peppered
after hunting them,
I aimed vertically,
an unnatural stance,
into their nests
where they curled,
constricted, desperate
with what feeble life was left, around branches and

Squirrels

By Roxanne Reeder

f
e
l
l

A Light to Renew the Earth

By Tasha Englert

Pure white petals fall
from the wilting flower
on a cold autumn day.
They sit like doves
in the brown grass,
ready to soar upwards
into the bright blue sky.
The delicate flower leans

as the wind pushes against it,
like a young horse's legs collapsing
beneath the weight of its laborious load.
While the dying flower droops down further,
bows, and surrenders to the frozen earth,
the breeze lifts its fine petals
swiftly off of the stiff ground,
and carries them above the clouds.

Winter's chill creeps into the roots
of daisies, goldenrods, and lilies.
The fatal poison pollutes the blossoms,
as each one withers from his icy breath.
His frost climbs its way up the trunks
of maples, pines, ashes, and hemlocks,
until it reaches the topmost branch,
and the trees have lost their last leaf.
A thick, solid layer of ice forms
on the now weak and brittle branches,
like the grave heaviness of a life's loss
as it settles over the mourners' shoulders.
The sorrow sinks down deep inside of them
and tears a huge hole through their hearts,
just as the pressure of winter's harsh hand
forces the strongest tree's branches to break off
or even the whole tree to snap and fall in pieces.
Spring's healing touch transforms

that same tree which had fallen
because of winter's choking grasp
until it becomes bigger, stronger and sturdier
as each dismal day brightens with the sun's rays.
Spring's gentle hand tenderly
nurtures the flowers to rise up
out of the soil and live anew,
joining a world made more beautiful
as each of mother nature's children is reborn.

Thank You, Ocean

By Joseph Chafardon

My foot penetrates the white foamy surface of the Atlantic,
frigid as it is wide; a tingle runs through my calf, races up my
thigh, and reaches through my body like a throw net hurled
over a school of baitfish. The icy sensation halts where my
wetsuit meets the top of my ankle—fabricated blubber. It is
my shield against a fluid giant. My sword: tucked beneath my
arm—a 6' 5" Channel Islands Sashimi, dotted with Ripcurl and
Chauncey's Surf Shop stickers. I continue in. I have to wade. I
lean forward when the waves arrive and lean back when they
suck back in. Waist deep, I drop my board and climb on, belly
down. My arms pump; they pull the water past me as glibly as
Michael Jordan dribbles a basketball or Tiger Woods tees up.
There's always a beginning—there's always a set-up.

I paddle. I paddle into stampedes of whitewater, pushing at
my exposed face like an alpine avalanche. It drives me back,
tries to rip me from my board.

Arms pumping harder, driving through the rushes of saline—
they grow, they gain speed, testing my ambition. Asking, "Do
you really want to pass, boy?" I respond with my arms; they dig
deep, elbow-deep into liquid; and pull hard. They force water
behind them and drive my board onward.

Calm.

A wall of water approaches. My arms drive deep, paddling,
like a duck's feet, headfirst into the icy white. Just before it can
bury me, I bury me. I gulp air, fill my lungs. I plunge

the nose of my board down towards the sandy bottom; my face enters, then my legs and feet, clinging to the submerged surfboard.

Calm.

Everything is still, noiseless, slowed. The freezing water pricks at my face like a welcoming Rottweiler to a kitten. The wave passes over, and I feel the force from beneath it, its strength a shockwave. I pop up on the other side and suck in air. I am beyond the set, in the open ocean now.

Calm.

My body bobbles. It hovers on this buffer between me, six pounds of rubber, and the sapphire abyss so clear when you're this close. Salty water runs down my face. I can taste it on my lips. Patterns of swell raise and lower me, natural elevators. My face, hands, feet are numb. I sit up, straddle my board and look into the horizon. It is like looking into forever. No matter how I look, there is nothing but vastness. I wait. Silent.

Calm.

I stare. My eye, trained to see swells, trained to pick and choose the right ones, spots an approaching hump of water. It is smooth and reflects the sun even in this overcast morning. It comes at me in haste. It is a bull, and I am the *torero*. I lay flat again and wait. It comes, it towers. I burst into motion, flailing my feet and churning my arms to catch this giant.

It takes me, accepts me; I am riding the back of a predestined beast. I flick my body upward and tuck my feet under. They meet the sand-laced wax smeared on the board, and I stand, knees bent, arms extended. I'm flying. The chase is on. The

wall of glassy water behind me, ever-trying to pull me under. But I resist. I am always just out of reach, and we agree. The wave gives in and lets me ride. It admits my presence. All those years of solitude, searching for land, it accepts a visitor. I am the lucky one, the chosen domesticator of this unique form.

I lean forward, lean back, turning into and away from the wave. I dance with this graceful giant, thank it for its consent. And it fades with a crash like thunder. Transforming into the frothy white, releasing its energy and becoming one again with the immeasurable band of wetness—its goodbye.

In my mind, I give thanks and smile. Another perfect ride. I give thanks for satisfying solitude. Only on the ocean can I truly be alone. It is out there I can be myself, no facades, and no judgment.

My arms are weak, burning with exhaustion. I sit and peer out into the sunset. The oranges and reds reflect off the changing tide. My face is tight from the evaporating water. The salt left behind works its way into my skin and collaborates with sunburn. My eyes and cheeks feel exposed, like raw pieces of flesh seasoned with the zest of lemon juice. As I point my board's nose to the solid sand of the shore, I steal one last glance over my shoulder from the ocean's vast panorama. Two fishing boat silhouettes silently make a beeline for the inlet's direction; their rooster-tails of whitewater faithfully follow. Onboard rests their day's catch. On my board rests mine, and I paddle in, fulfilled.

Guests

By Joseph Chafardon

Mist the wall, cool it down
to keep the paint from thawing
and oozing away like hurled mud
on a windexed window.
Don't spray too much. It'll wash away
and run into the carpet
and turn the fibers
into an unwanted off-white.
That'll upset the guests;
we can't have that.
They'll think we're mongrels,
or that we don't care to enjoy
a tasteful home.
Not that we obsess, but is it civil
to display such shipshapedness?
I mean, they'll come in their Sunday best.
dressed to impress us in their khakis
and sweaters tied about their
gold-decorated necks.
And when the evening is through,
they'll look at their polished watch,
ignoring the time. It doesn't matter
because "It's getting late."
A handshake, a goodbye.
We'll close the door behind them,
until it clicks into place.
I'll tug at my tie.
You'll kick away your heels
and let your hair down.
Soon, the TV glows in your face.
A drink of relief is tilted to my lips.
"The clean-up can wait," you'll say
as I stand at the window, hand on my hip,
watching their taillights fade away.

Sorry

By Coty Haddad

Placing her lunch down on the kitchen table, Lindsay resisted the fantasy urge to slip bleach into her mother-in-law's cream of potato soup. She had made the soup from scratch, like everything else she would make. Cooking was the only thing in which she truly took pride. The screeching of the old woman's aluminum walker coming down the hall caused Lindsay's left eye to spasm. Her teeth ground together as her fingers slowly curled into a tight fist. Each day was becoming more unbearable than the one before. As much as Lindsay loved her husband, no marriage was worth the agony this woman brought into her life.

Lindsay had been married to Joe for almost three years. Joe was a businessman – a provider – and he had promised her a new life filled with trust and security. He was a hopeful, yet desperate, entrepreneur with many "get-rich-quick" schemes that failed faster than they were conceived. When he and Lindsay first started dating, Joe was selling modular homes, while his friend at the time was manufacturing them. When that project failed, he tried to start a housecleaning service, but could not maintain employees; Lindsay was his one and only maid. She cleaned four houses a day, spending two to three hours on each. By the end of the day, she was exhausted. Joe did not offer any help with the cleaning. His job was to collect the money. After three months, Lindsay told him, "Either you're goin' to hire someone else to help me, or do 'em all yourself! I've had enough, Joe!" Her eyes were staring hopelessly out their kitchen window with her hands clasped around her elbows. Joe sat at the kitchen table, his eyes fixed on the budget sheet and cleaning route. His brows wrinkled over his black, beady eyes. Biting his bottom

lip, he finally spoke, "I hear the real-estate business is really booming...yeah... that's always been something I wanted to dig my hands in." Lindsay rolled her eyes, and continued to stare out the window.

After one phone call, Joe's friend asked if he wanted to invest in the renovation of a luxurious nineteenth-century home that was sure to leave them "swimming in the green," as his friend would say over and over, similar to the way Iago would manipulate Roderigo, when he repeated "Put thy money in thy purse." Joe gave his friend almost all the money he and Lindsay had been saving from her house cleaning. One month passed and no word from Joe's friend. Joe wasn't sure where his friend lived, and his phone had been disconnected.

Joe and Lindsay could no longer afford to live in their comfortable doublewide, so they moved into a low-income housing unit, four blocks down the street, and six blocks away from Joe's mother's house. Joe and Lindsay carried most of their possessions by hand to save money on gas and movers.

Shortly after they had moved in, Joe's father died from cancer, leaving behind possible millions hidden in several different stock market and bank accounts. Joe had spent the last year trying to find his father's money. Lindsay had been able to maintain her part-time job in maid services, while spending the rest of her time taking care of her mother-in-law. Joe promised Lindsay that once he found the money, they would be free from all their financial strains. Every time Joe would come home, Lindsay would be sitting in the recliner with her hands clutching the arms of the chair in anticipation. She would always dream of the moment he would walk through that door with good news – "No more worries, Babe! We're home free!" Then he would take her in his arms, and they would cleanse their hands from the burdens that had been slowly stripping their spirits down, layer by layer. But each day turned out to be another disappointment.

He would walk through the door empty-handed, looking down and shaking his head, whimpering the word, "Sorry."

Joe's father was a very intelligent, yet devious man. As a psychologist, he loved to play head games with everybody, especially his family, but mainly his adopted son, Joe. He forced his raging temper on his unsuspecting son. Fortunately, Joe's father wasn't home much, and when he was, he would spend most of the time on his office computer, playing the stock market. He never trusted his family with finances (or anything else for that matter). Everyone was left in the dark when he died, even his wife, who now was slowly losing her mind from Alzheimer's disease.

"What crap did you make me today?" the old woman slurred out, struggling to keep her teeth in her mouth. She had to tilt her head back when she talked to prevent her teeth from falling out again – she refused to go to the dentist.

"Now, *Mom*, you know I try real hard to make you good, nutritious food." Lindsay clenched her jaw, forcing a smile. The old woman always failed to appreciate her daughter-in-law's help. Although she had always been a cruel soul, things had worsened with her husband's passing and her disease. The doctor said that she was in the fifth stage of Alzheimer's. Lindsay wasn't sure what that meant, but noticed she was better on sunny days.

The old woman placed her teeth down on the table. She picked up the fork to eat.

"Mom, you might want to use that spoon I laid out for you instead. It might be hard to eat your soup with a fork."

"You don't think I know that, Stupid?" The old woman threw the fork on the floor and picked up the spoon.

Lindsay stood at the sink, cleaning dishes, until she could

not endure one more second of listening to the old woman smack around the glop inside her mouth. She would watch in disgust at the old woman gumming her food, creating an insufferable smacking sound that would send Lindsay rushing to the bathroom with her hands clasped tightly over her mouth.

After lunch, Lindsay would clean up the old woman's mess. If a stranger had walked into the kitchen at that moment, he would have thought a family with six small children had eaten there; crumbs were embedded in every crevasse within a five-foot radius. While Lindsay cleaned, the old woman would watch the local news. Her green-cruste eyes slowly rose and fell in rhythm with the nodding of her head, while she rocked in her recliner. When the old woman fell asleep, Lindsay would sneak outside for fresh air and a multi-cigarette break. This was her quiet time, the only part of the day she looked forward to. As the smoke entered her lungs, she would hold it there for a moment, then slowly exhale. Savoring each addicting inhalation, Lindsay's mind would drift.

It was 1984; President Reagan was still in office. Lindsay was living with her second husband on the outskirts of Iowa. Her hair was dyed blonde every six weeks to hide her dark roots, which her first husband used to make fun of relentlessly – along with her weight, wardrobe, job, friends, and family. Criticism was his hidden talent (hidden from the public at least). They had not been married more than one year when he'd decided to leave her for another woman who was naturally blonde and less flawed. He just picked up and left one day. Just like her second husband did when he changed his career and moved out of the country, sending her the divorce papers in the mail...

"Where in the hell are you?" Abruptly awakening from her monstrous slumber, like a hibernating bear aroused from a winter nap, the old woman bellowed for Lindsay. "Are you out there puffin' on those cancer sticks, Lucy?" Lindsay quickly

snapped out of her trance. "You know only hookers smoke those things, Lucy." She tried to ignore her mother-in-law's insults and deliberate attempt to call her by the wrong name. She may have had Alzheimer's, but she knew how to push Lindsay's buttons. Calling her by Joe's ex-wife's name was an intentional taunt that she had taken pleasure in from the moment they had met.

Stepping back into the house, Lindsay was engulfed by the woman's evil presence. Her grey, frizzy, unwashed hair was peeking over the top of the green, moth-eaten chair. Lindsay was happy not to have to look at her scarecrow face.

"I was just thinking about going to the store. Is there anything you need?" Lindsay asked in a sweet, quiet voice.

"It's about time you made yourself useful. Go get me a bottle of Jack," she replied.

"Now, you know you aren't allowed to have any alcohol."

"Then why the hell did you ask...Lucy?" The old woman scowled.

Lindsay, trying to keep her nerve, did not know what to say. She just stood there, absorbing the old woman's malevolent vibrations; she could feel them flow through her bloodstream the same way electricity flows through a cable line. Lindsay's eyes, which used to flicker a brilliant blue hue, now clouded over to a dim bluish-grey. Each day spent with that woman gradually chipped away pieces of her soul, replacing it with quiet numbness.

Later, Lindsay arrived home to her shoddy, one-bedroom apartment. She called to her husband. No answer. She knew he was home; his car was outside. As she approached their bedroom, she noticed the bathroom light was on. "Joe?" She called out for him again. Her hand pushed open the bathroom

door to reveal no one. Lindsay started to turn around when she noticed the curtain was pulled shut, encasing the bathtub. The curtain was normally left open, so she walked over to change it back. On her way over, she saw a sticky note in her husband's handwriting lying in front of the tub. It was soaking wet with one word materializing – sorry.

“Sorry?” she thought. “Sorry for what?” Pulling back the curtain, Lindsay shrieked in terror. Joe's mouth lay open, as if still gasping for air. His eyes were shut, his body submerged in tarnished tap water. Feeling her head spin and her body starting to fall backwards, she grabbed the edge of the sink and swung herself around towards the bedroom, disoriented.

With fear-filled eyes, she frantically looked around the room in search of answers. There on the desk, were unfamiliar account numbers to several different bank statements. As she hastily scanned through documents that were several weeks old, she quickly discovered that they were Joe's father's financial records. Written on the back of the last document were Joe's calculation scribbles, accumulating a negative total of \$120,000.

“How is this possible? Why didn't he tell me? He knows I wouldn't have cared about the money. How could Joe leave me abandoned in the dark?” Lindsay threw the papers into the air like confetti. But there was nothing to celebrate. She called 911, and went back into the bathroom. She sat down on the floor next to the tub, clasping her knees, rocking back and forth. She reflected on her marriage to Joe, but couldn't keep her mind from digging up a memory she had buried thirty years ago.

With her eyes stretched as wide as they could go, Lindsay stared at the blank wall. She began talking to Joe as if he were still alive.

“You know Joe; I never did tell you how much you remind

me of my father: same dark hair, same button nose, same jaw, and the same kind of self-centeredness that lures my mind even closer to insanity!” Her voice rose in anger, crackling as she began to scream. “He pulled this same damn stunt on me when I was ten! Did you know that? Did you? How could you do this to me? – to us? You fucking coward!” Lindsay moaned loudly, and threw her body onto the floor, weeping until the ambulance arrived.

A few days after the funeral, Lindsay was on her way back to Iowa. She decided to pay her mother-in-law one last visit. When she walked through the door, the old woman was asleep on her green, rotting recliner, still wearing the same black attire she had worn at the funeral. She woke up at the shut of the door.

“Who the hell is there?” she grumbled. “Oh, it's you, Lucy.”

Lindsay smiled and said, “I've come to say good-bye.” She was shocked to see the old woman's mean grimace turn into a sincere frown. Her voice even whimpered—much like Joe's used to—when she asked, “Well, who's going to take care of me? And cook and clean for me?” Lindsay's stomach tightened; she felt overwhelmed with sympathy. She looked at the old woman as if she were an abandoned fawn that had just lost its mother to a hungry hunter. Could she desert this poor old woman who had just lost her son? She turned to face the door, and the old woman begged “Please, Lindsay...don't go. I don't want to be alone.”

Lindsay paused for a moment, standing in silence. She took a deep breath, turned around, and looked at the old woman in her harsh, empty eyes for the last time and said...“Sorry.”

My Shelter

By Tasha Englert

At the beach,
standing on the soft sand,
I notice the grains starting to sparkle.
The shimmering sun strolls
elegantly out over the ocean,
surrounded by colorful clouds.

As the beautiful light fills my senses,
it soothes the sorrow inside of me.
I am the ocean recovering
after a long and dark storm;
as the sky slowly clears,
the waves begin to calm.

When a troublesome tide floods me,
and I am deeply drowning in its
intense waves of destruction,
desperate for relief, I will remember this day.
Traveling back to that quiet, tranquil place
to rest by the sea in the sun's warm rays,
I am underneath my shelter, shielded from the storm.

Mommy

By Miranda Johnson

Forty-hour work weeks
weigh heavily
on her weary bones.
Like a lifter who has just
added ten pounds to the bar,
she pushes it up,
never hesitating.

Two a.m. phone calls
never go unanswered:
"Mom, I'm sad, I need to talk."
Like car keys left behind
while rushing to the driveway,
she is always where you last left her,
waiting until needed.

She stands at the kitchen sink
(in one of her bandanas
which hides her newly bald head)
scrubbing dishes.
Warm, wet washcloths
pressed to her daughters' foreheads,
gallons of grape Kool-Aid and saltines
sitting on nightstands beside sick beds.
She never could be the patient
after so many years of
playing the nurse.

Heavy head fallen into tired hands
when she hears of his infidelity.
Drying a daughter's tear-stained face,
telling her not to be scared –
it's easily cured these days.
More resilient than any mountain,
it will take more than this life
to cause her to crumble.

Exhaustion

By Abigail Smith

I am tired of writing
poems and of poets, of
poetry, of slaving away for
that golden phrase, that silvered
tongue, that voice of angels
pulling men out of this
mortal plane and into the
presence of eternal truth.

My words fall like bombs,
destroying whatever message
I try to construct below the
text, shades of meaning
blown to tiny bits –
melted pile of phrases here,
twisted husk of rhyme scheme there,
fires burning up syllables and sounds.

Past glories cannot yield
today's victories.

Raise the white flag;
call the retreat, General.
There is no poem to be
captured here.

The Purpose of Poets

Poets walk with a rhythm of their own in a world of chaos,
while people are being tortured, murdered and raped
as their blood stains sink deeper into the African soil,
poets are leading others in a new and more acceptable direction.
They know that there is only one true way to live in this world,
which is to follow the path of truth and sincerity
and serve as a guide for others to do the same.
Whatever challenges or obstacles land in front of their path,
they teach others to stand firm on the foundation of knowledge.

Poets light the way to a new world,
showing others that as the sun rises each day
we are given the chance for a new beginning.
As poets watch the sun climbing its way to the heavens
they take the colorful wavelengths of beautiful light
into their hearts and souls to fill them with peace.
Then poets will use their words to tap into that light
stored within them and let it shine out through the page,
to reach others overcome by despair and give them hope.

A poet's words flow like a waterfall
down the side of a mountain
that separates fantasy from reality.
They cascade carefully down the page
incorporating images into the imagination,
which are used in contrast with reality
to deliver a message to the reader
of a grand picture
that ties beauty with our perception of life.

Poets are observers
who study the world around them,
on a quest to provide answers.
Their words create a vision,
pulling the reader onto the scene
to uncover insight into existence.
So do poets inspire their readers,
revealing the meaning of life around them;
just as I, one of many poets, have done for you.

By Tasha Englert

After Faulkner

By Julia Pello

Wonder. Go on and wonder.
That faces trespass into hearts.
That words can haul asunder.
How does this stranger love a
world that passes on and over?
So wonder. Go on and wonder.
Traipse the hillock lost and found
to catch the light lace dimming.
Go drink on loneliness—your
pride—the event you're living.
Go wonder how a mountainside
can sleep ten thousand years.
Sometimes the universe feels dumb
and starlight rampages its lairs.
Oh wonder! Go and wonder how
words follow on the paths of tears
and swallows follow on the windless
train of some billion senseless years.
Go on and wonder twist and burn
what thoughts will stall on heels
of trembling moths and pastures
crossed by time's relentless gears.

---- and Jill

By Liz Regan

"Where's Jack?" Wolf asked.

"I don't know—I've been looking
for him my entire life." -Jill.

Jill's been going up the hill
to fetch a pail of water—tumbles
down, tumbles down, landing thirstier
still. She aches for a drop—just a lovely blue
drop—but the hungry hill devours
every sweet morsel, the pail,
the pail and all.

Jill cries in dismay, her thin body shaking,
shaking, sobbing harder still. Face wet, streaked
with dirt from the hungry hill she looks up to find
the Big Bad Wolf holding out a paw. He wears a red
cape and a kind grin, toothy in a wolfy nature, his claw
looking warm and soft.

"Where's Red?" she asks of his companion.

"Who can tell," the wolf answers.

"She's always going off searching,
searching,
searching through those woods."

"I wonder if she's found what it is she's looking
for," Jill ponders, sniffing, knuckling the rest of her tears.

"No," answers Wolf. "She hasn't."

He eyes her kindly. "Follow me, Jill."

He takes her to the wishing well
at the top of that very hill, but leaves the bucket
where it lay.

And in those waters, those lovely blue waters,
shines an image so bright Jill gasps.
Her body shakes in those shimmering
waves, but her eyes burn like stars, her hair flaming out
like ribbons of fire, casting sparkling shadows, throwing flecks of
rainbow into the reflected sky, landing
somewhere she has never been,
but where she is destined to go.
“There are no coins for this well, nor
buckets, nor...” Wolf quietly says,
letting the rest of his thoughts go unsaid.

“But where’s Jack?” she whispers,
her heart sad.

“You cannot go to him thirsty.
You cannot be with him thirsty,” Wolf explains,
and leaves it at that.

“But where do I find...
how do I...” tears choke her throat
in frustration.

“That is a story that is *not* a fairytale.
In it, there is also someone who had to climb
a hill, and He was as thirsty as you.
Look in the well again.”

Out pours an image of eyes of sky,
outstretched hands with scars that match
hers, and a smile that tells her
He likes her.

“After you know Him,
you won’t need that old dinged-up bucket,” Wolf says quietly.
He is her heart’s desire.

“What’s his name?” Jill needs to know.

“It’s not Jack, I’ll tell you that.”

III Disaster

A story of love,
and loss,
Hard to conquer,
but to be taken under is easiest.

A moment of passion,
or of lust,
Both cause consequences.

Minds restless,
hearts shattering,
skin crawling,
All with the emotion of failure,
of anguish.

Fought with everything,
Fallen with nothing,
I am bare.

My words are venom,
Often to my own being,
My thoughts,
Reckless to all I pose.

Why love,
if we lose?
Why care,
if we are just to die?
Why feel,
if we become numb?
Why see,
if they are all lies?

By Sarah Cox

Sweet Relief

By Rachael Nines

I find within me a peace so far
beyond that which defines the norm
and wraps them up in the shining star
dust that is innocence to last conform.
Yet in this distance, in time and space
an eternity tightens my chest and heart,
constricting my breath, a blue tint in my face,
draining the blush your affection did impart.
For what gaping hole my mind infuses
whilst sapphire icicles freeze my cheeks,
desperation is fond of when life refuses
submission of soul to truth when he speaks.
At last, it is thus, as I sink into flame
because without you in Hell I am forced to remain.
My insides are dust and what's left of me thrust
before the pendulum that swings, axe-edge gleams,
it sings of my downfall
through whispering walls that call the name,
encircling the sanity
left in broken shards of reality.
And like a phoenix, up from the ashes,
written, not unspoken, lamentations
from crazed ruminations
after euphoric recognition—an angel! But in disguise,
it was merely a look, and only from your eyes.



Mark Wilson

Male Nude Model



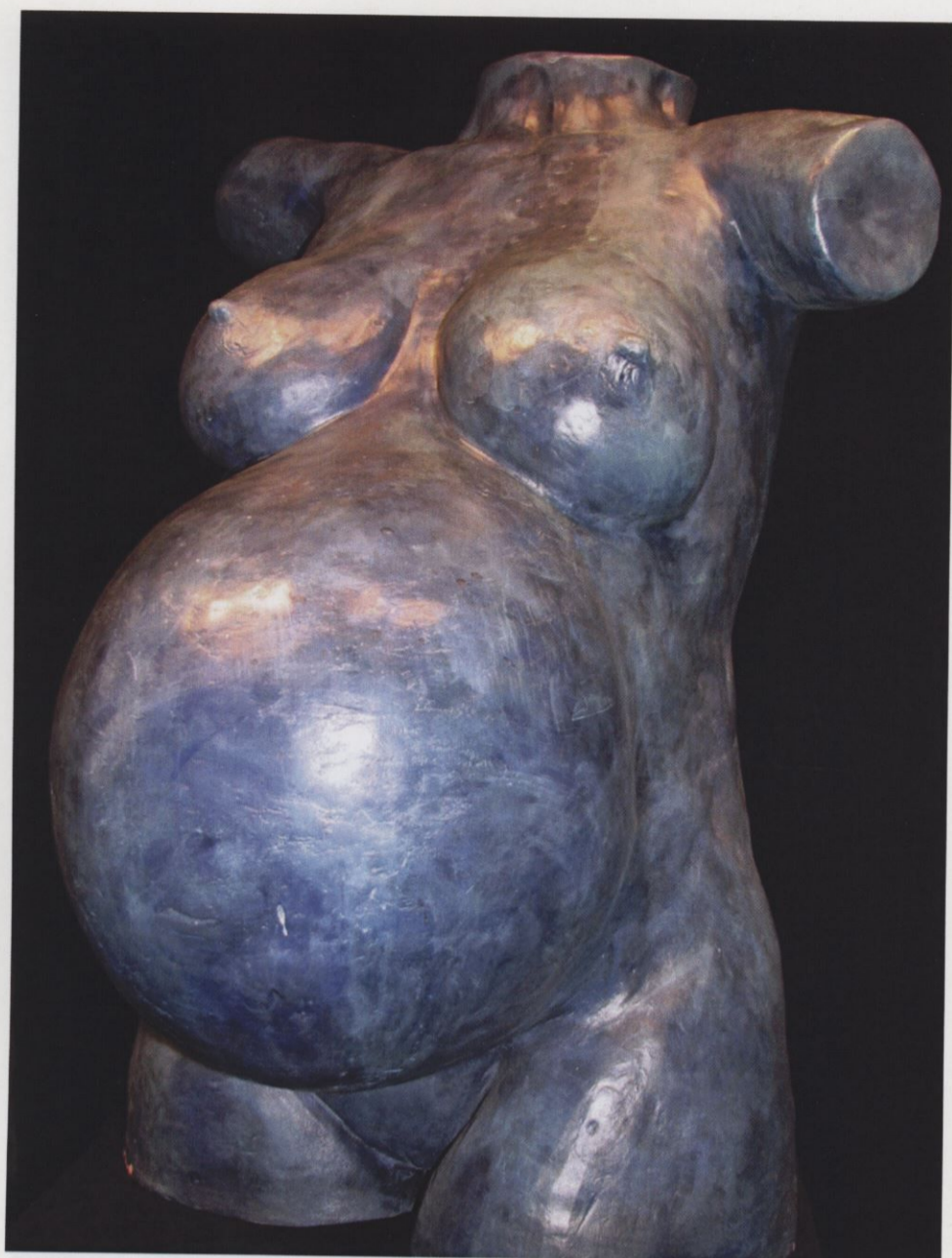
Michelle Mazza

Knock Out



Nathan Fought

Reincarnation



Jackie Zeisloft

Blue Woman



Jackie Zeisloft

Solo Portrait



Alice Alexandrescu

Red and Green



Adam Howard

Rumble



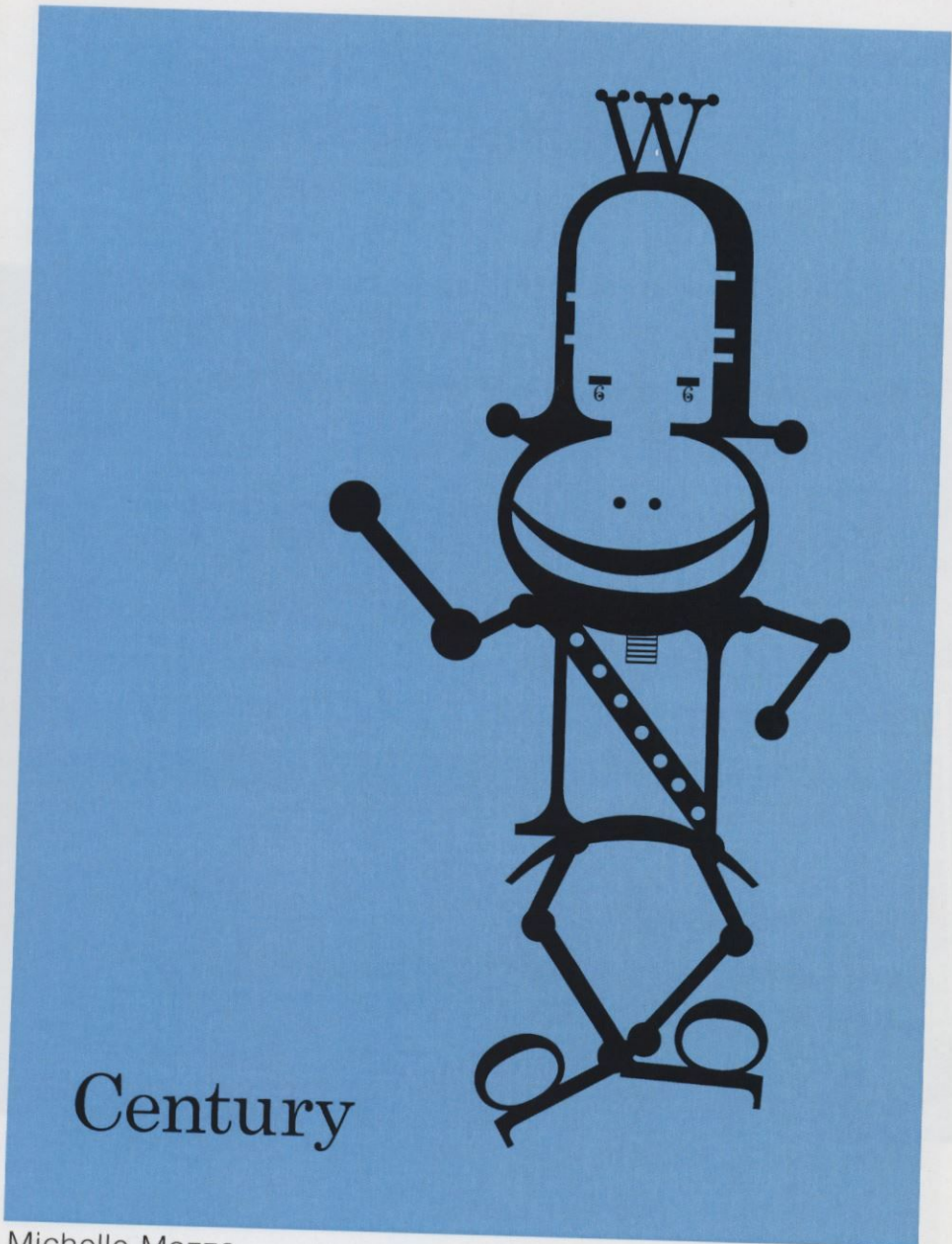
Kenton Clausen

Herz



Shanna Digan

Man at Uni-Mart Shooting



Michelle Mazza

Robot



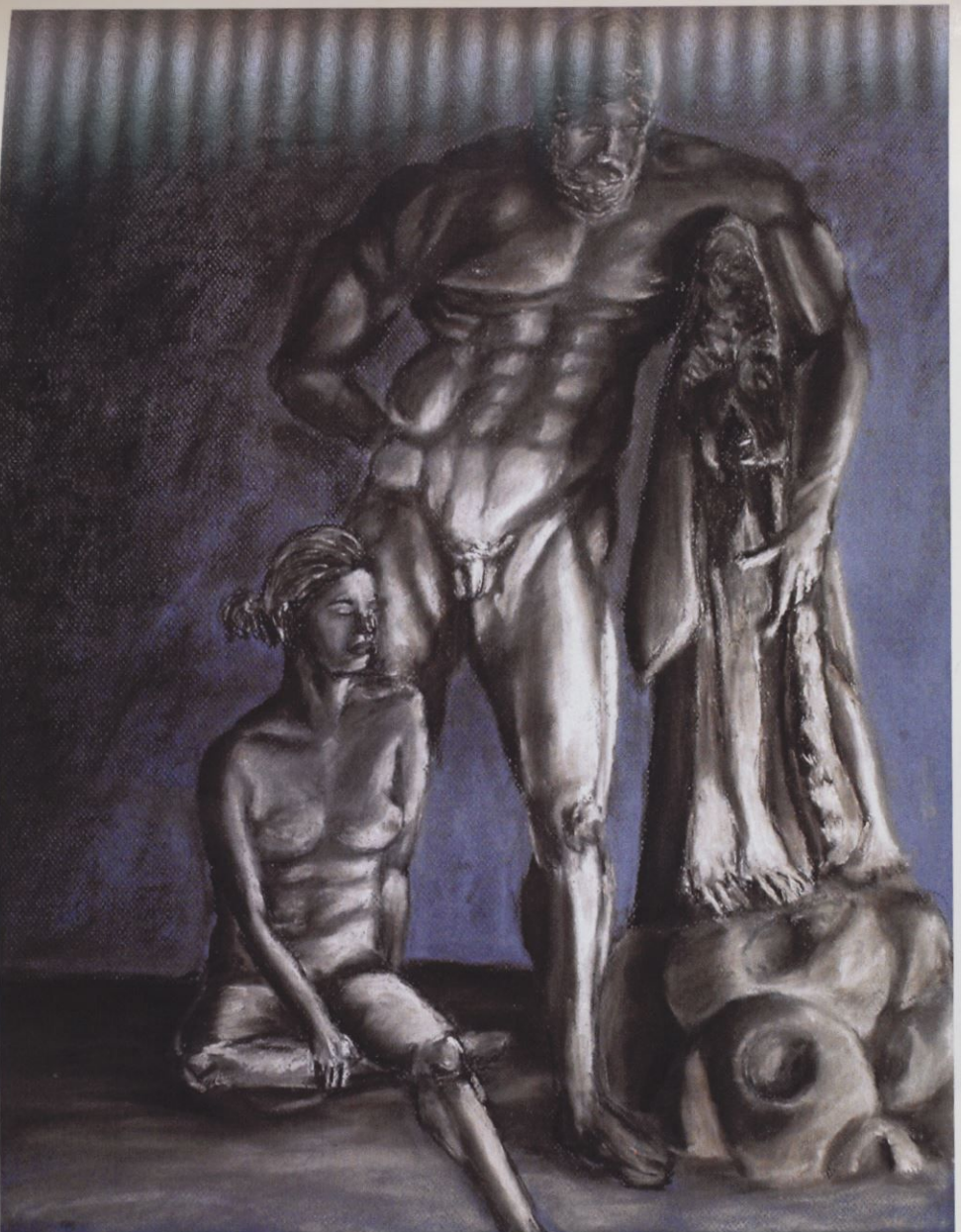
Nathan Fought

Driving In The Fast Lane



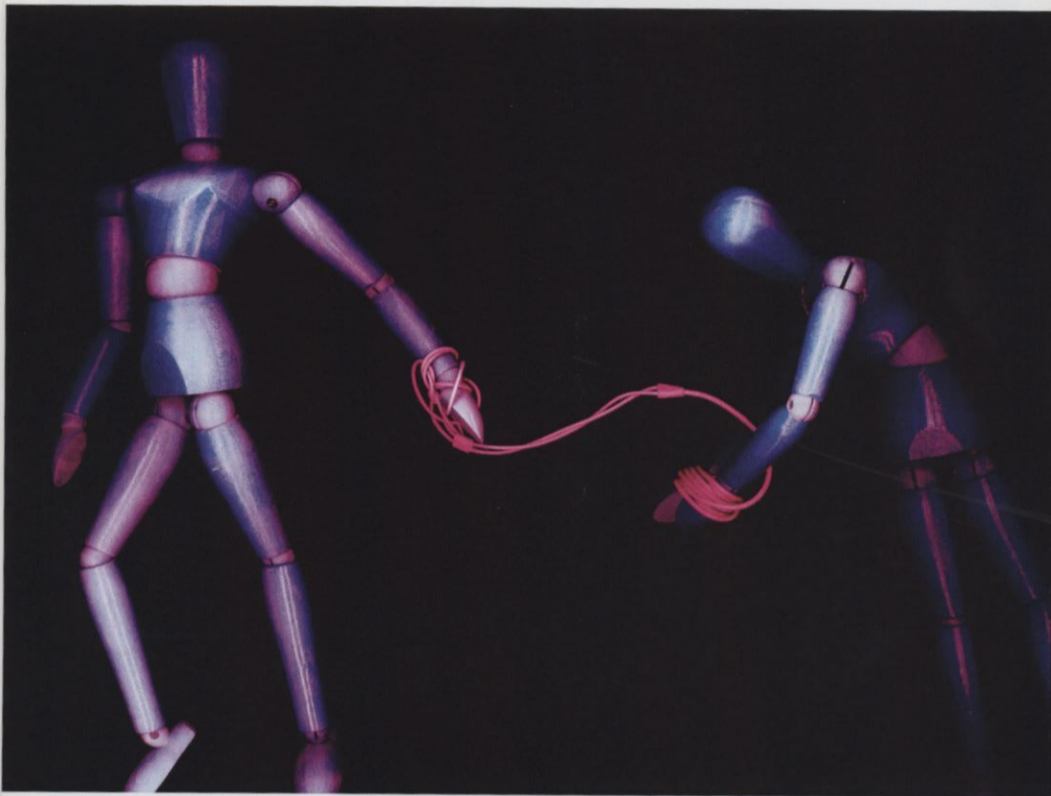
Alice Alexandrescu

Haniwa Gender Fense



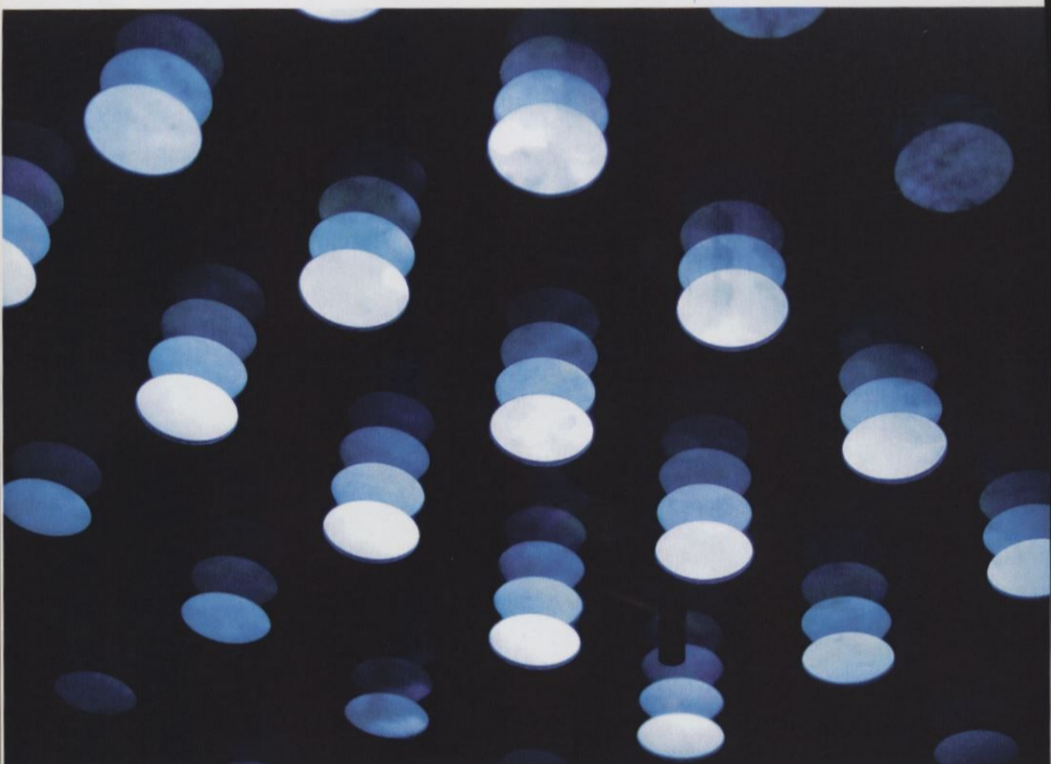
Mark Wilson

Hercules and Model



Mark Wilson

Audio Slave



Adam Howard

Falling Lights



Neil Simkanin

Tea for the Blue



Shanna Digan

Candy





Michelle Mazza

Untouchable



Caleb Haines

Vinyl

Jackie Zepherus

Preparing Consciousness 2



Adam Howard

Cheerful

1 Untouchable



Jackie Zeisloft

Preceding Consciousness 2



Marcella Bingham

Fruit Platter



Kristin Bone

Garden Gate



Neil Simkanin

Burnt Ink

The Other Side of the World

By Lydia Zellers

Five pairs of shoes guard a dark corner. Three of the pairs live as tan desert combat boots, each one a different shade according to the time they have been worn and the occupation of the wearer. Each pair varies in its size, shade, and style; each shares a common purpose. The next pair is an old set of logging boots, once a dark, even brown, but now mottled with wear and use. The pair that is on the right of these logging boots is a tiny set of loafers. Oh, if you could guess what each of these shoes has seen, done, and been party to.

The first set of tan combat boots is huge; the wearer was always called "Bigfoot" during his childhood. These boots saw combat on an Iraqi road, on a convoy from base to base. They carried him from his five-ton truck to the up-armored Humvee; they stomped on the gas pedal all the way to his next station. They have tromped sand and mud. They have tread guard, tasting the salt of the tears of a soldier far from home. They have been deafened by the roar of trucks and blasting gunfire. These boots have seen the other side of the world.

The second set of tan desert combat boots matched the first set in many ways; these boots have marched in the same Iraqi sand, the same training, but these boots have seen Afghanistan, too. These boots have covered the jagged mountains that make up another Middle Eastern country. They have listened to the tears of a husband and wife a half a world apart speak into the phone and on into the night. These boots have heard the sound of taps and stood at attention as the wearer grasped the handles of a fellow soldier's casket. These boots have clicked their heels in salute to a pair that sat with a rifle and a helmet. These boots have seen the other side of the world twice.

The last pair of matching boots has not seen the horrors that the others have. They sit waiting, ready to be called and wishing to go where their comrades have gone. They have taken the wearer through training, sand, mud, and dense woods. The salt lines from the sweat of the wearer mar the surface of the boots, a center line that divides the toe and heel

worn like a sash. These boots are marked, not marred, with blood; this is the evidence of the boot that has carried the wearer through much. These boots have listened to the war stories that wrack the dreams of the two previous sets of boots. They have listened to the sobs of the wives left behind. They have felt the tears that haunt the wearer for not having done enough. These boots want to see the other side of the world.

The logging boots stand as a sentry over all of the tan boots. They guard; they have seen this side of the world too clearly. These boots have spent hours leaning over felled trees to feed a family; they have listened to the stories of war and the dreams of the boots they guard. They have seen dreams shattered in the back of an ambulance; they have comforted a grieving child who asks, "Why?" These boots have been from house to barn, attempting to feed the household of five; these boots have seen the days that do not end and the days when they never come off the wearer's feet. They have listened to the questions as the wearer struggled to get by. They have felt the tears of frustration as the fight to provide seemed unwinnable. They have felt the sweat and the blood that were given to provide and to protect. These boots have seen so much of this side of the world.

The last pair of shoes is tiny. Their size gives the unmistakable stereotype that the wearer is weak. These shoes would tell a different story, though. These shoes hold the secrets of all the boots that guard the unlit corner; these shoes have seen three children make it to adulthood. These shoes have listened to the prayers of a parent desperate for a miracle healing of a child. These shoes have worked alongside the logging boots for 30 years, a helper, a friend. They have heard the cries of a parent unable to protect a child from the other side of the world; they have felt the drip of a single tear at goodbye. These shoes know that they are often stronger than any of the boots that they sit beside in the corner. These shoes have seen all on this side of the world.

All five pairs sit in solitude; each one has a different story. A family together again has united both sides of the world. If we could understand how they have witnessed, and have endured, and have triumphed, we would see how they have brought the world together.

My Shoes

By
Emily Smith

My shoes

Where have they been?

Have they hidden in closets,
factories, warehouses?

Did they scamper down conveyor belts,
through stores,
hands I've never seen?

Have they crossed state lines,
countries, continents and oceans,
dance floors, hallways, streets,
rooms?

Have they seen the Eiffel Tower,
Disneyland, the Coliseum?
Have they traversed the globe,
meandered down your street,
scaled the stairs to your front porch,
crossed the threshold?

Have they waited at the door
for a handshake,
hug,
hello?

Have they ever rested,
known
they're home?

Have I?

Tennis Shoe

You smell like a half eaten egg-salad sandwich left out all night, gross and moldy, old and soggy.

You look like a mud puddle and a tattered flag, dirty and ripped, sticky and flawed.

You sound like an old cellar door: creak, creak, squeak, squeak; thud, thud.

You taste like dog crap and licorice, munchy and squishy, crunchy and chewy.

You feel like a rubber duck and a leather jacket, smooth and grainy, polished and smooth.

You are like a Sunday morning drive to church with the windows down and a child screaming in my ear. You are like waking up, screaming from a nightmare in a cold sweat without any clothes on.

You aren't like the snow falling on Christmas Eve, soft and beautiful.

You aren't like a waterfall glistening in the breeze, wet and wild.

You are like the leaves falling off a tree; you last only a season and then you're through. Walk a mile...

I get it, everything revolves around you. Your opinions, activities, decision, your shoes.

By Jennifer Tanney

Untitled

In those moments,
you hold the weight of the world
not on your shoulders,
but in the palm of your hand.
Summer may feel like the shortest
season, minutes falling from your grasp
like grains of sand, but still you hold tight
to the possibility of tomorrow.

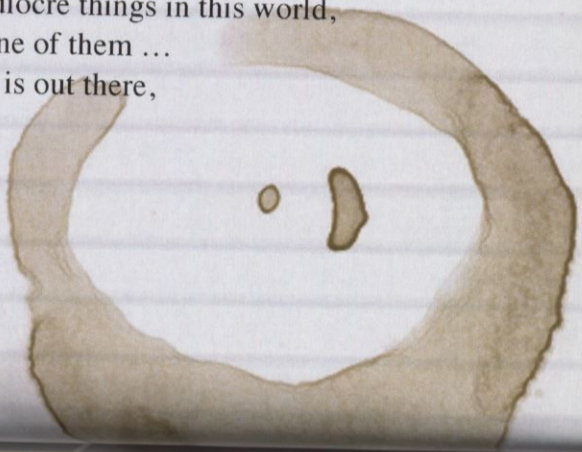
In those moments,
your nerve endings burn
with a fire that cannot be explained,
and your stomach is alive
with a brilliant kaleidoscope of butterflies,
colors that twist in bursts of warning,
like when you rub your eyes
to the point of pain,
yet can't seem to stop.

I believe in those moments ...

I believe
in feeling mad,
like you've lost your mind,
but you don't care;

By Danielle Tepper

in those passionate
embraces, the ones that
take your breath away;
in becoming extraordinary
together, invincible almost,
like nothing can touch you;
in finding unchanging
solid ground, upon which
you finally stand;
in the hope of that true, everlasting,
forever kind of love.
Some may call me naïve, saying it doesn't exist.
But between the heartache of not knowing,
and the days that almost broke me,
there were moments of my own.
I've danced in a thunderstorm,
and fallen asleep beneath the stars.
I've held the fingers of an infant.
and experienced kindness from a stranger.
I've seen hope in an almost hopeless world,
and watched those who have been beaten down
rise up with a new strength, never giving up.
There are so many mediocre things in this world,
love should never be one of them ...
and so, I believe that it is out there,
somewhere,
waiting for us.



Hold

By Jennifer Sine

She's holding onto her coffee mug like it's her last chance at reality gripping at it as though without it, she'll slip away and won't remember what she's supposed to do with life. It's her rescue ladder, swinging dangerously above the crashing falls, and she's not only gripping tightly, but lovingly. It's peaceful and serene, and it's something palpable for her to hold; she can feel it. Her thoughts are there, but she cannot grab them. She can reflect on them, adapt and change them, but sometimes, she needs something to hold. Something to tell her that she is here, that she is in class, she is conscious, that she does believe in what she's doing, and that the professor believes, too.

She needs to dig her fingernails into the thin rubber grip circling the cheap metal life and hold on tight, lest she be carried off in the wrong direction. She has to stay steadfast in her "maybe", sort of decisions and keep her head up in tossed, up waves, lest she be torn apart like a bad rough draft, just to be thrown over the author's shoulder to where the garbage can should have been placed.

And that cheap coffee mug from Wal-Mart, containing 25% sweet, syrupy creamer that lightens the taste of Columbian Blend, making it good to the last saccharine, make-a-face, drop; that is her hold. In her mind, for life to

also be good 'til the last drop, you need to enjoy the little drops. For the world to stop its spinning, she needs that hold.

Professors will lecture; she will respond. She'll hold that mug, sipping warm, liquefied intellect, tilting her head back, letting it flow down her throat, feeling the caffeine carry her to new ideas, hare-brained paper topics, and theories that she will never be able to prove. It will seize her fingertips, tiny pins and needles poking out to express themselves on a keyboard, or reaching for a pen and paper, wanting it as bad as needing it.

This hold that has her, this hold that holds her in plain view of her decisions, her aspirations, her triumphs, her failures, her should-have-tried-harders; it is her motivation. She won't let the author throw away her draft without her final edit, her final delete this filler, add this adjective. She won't spill that coffee out of the cup when it's cold. She'll warm it back up; for it is her hold, her grip on life, and she knows that even when it goes cold, there's a way to be warmed again.

Falling in Love

You are my name said in a smile;
you are the eyes that look long enough to see through the walls
and the kiss that speaks of loyalty.

Strong arms that will not harm, but only hold,
long and graceful hands that fit perfectly in mine.
The other half of my heart's duet under a
black velvet star-dusted Pennsylvania night.
You are warm tentative lips pressed against mine,
our bodies surrounded by snow, in the wee hours
of the morning.

You are secret smiles over shared lyrics,
the real reason for finding excuses to stay at the dinner table
just a little longer.

You are the only wake-up call I look forward to,
my very favorite goodnight,
nervous first kisses in black cars on December nights,
twilight walks in the cemetery
and texts in the middle of the day that make me smile
more than anything ever could.

The scent on my covers,
the black tee-shirt I fall asleep with
every night.

You are love, understanding and patience
even when I don't deserve it

You saved me, and for that,
you are my everything.

By Regina Gonzalez

Crushing

By Zachary Fishel

I shudder; I can taste it again.
Those broken piano keys: a gale through my nostrils.
Leaking into my cerebrum,
I'm taken to that lush intoxication
a choking obsession of hornets as they harvest the sun-spoiled
apples.
Chasing the scent as a twig travels the current
I'm led beyond sleeping giants gnashing the skies with crooked
teeth
to a sea of swirling blood flailing from sugar maples and
luminescent bulbs hanging from priestly oaks.
Discreetly with a notion sounding like butterflies,
Building flirtatiously in the must of dead leaves and earth
fiery secrets I keep from you.
As the valley fills with stale marshes of water-logged doubts
burnt pine sap smothers the words I'll never manage to say
to the soft petals of your lips, I crash like surf in a December
sunset.
My bleeding heart, road kill forsaken in a summer blaze,
is given to you like the unexpected snow,
desperately clinging to November grass, knowing I'll melt
away at any moment.
After the vapor of your form dissipates, Oh just to be the hole
in your pocket or the lost key to your tarnished trampled locket.

With the Click of a Shutter Button

By Christina Tongyai

Sometimes I wish I had a camera for every moment in life. My reasoning for this is simple; I want to be able to capture, in a perfect still image, the moment when the sun broke through the clouds of a snowy day, to relive the terror and joy of seeing my first grizzly bear in the wild, and to capture the breathtaking second of a first kiss.

I could look at those pictures and remember all of the minor beautiful details with which my life has been filled. I could stare at the beauty of the sun as it reflected red, orange, purple and pink off of the mounds of snow, the world a blend of colors like a Monet painting. I could feel the panic and wonder gripping my body again at a huge gnarled bear not in a concrete pen or locked behind iron bars, but frozen in time with the click of a shutter button. I could have my heart race and my palms go slick with anticipation at seeing the brush of another's lips against mine for the first time.

Alas, since I did not have a camera with me, those memories slowly fade from my aging mind like the color from autumn leaves. Soon memories will crumple like paper turning to ashes in the blaze of an inferno. Will the memories of pictures not taken haunt my waking step, much as the ghosts of the dead haunt the living—jealous of those still alive? Such memories as walking up the steps of the Lincoln Memorial whistling Lincoln's favorite tune, "Dixie," while people crunch up their faces at me, scowling, thinking I mean disrespect; running my fingers along names carved in black stone, while singing "Amazing Grace" as veterans try not to wipe away tears; hearing the click of perfectly polished boots as the changing of the guard takes place at a white

tomb for unknown soldiers who surrendered their lives in the line of duty. All these are doomed to fade away. Yes, sometimes I wish I had remembered to bring a camera along every day throughout my life's journey.

I am thankful for the times when a camera has been present in my hand or in someone else's, like taking a quick shot of the snowy caps of the Rocky Mountains after a hailstorm, the backdrop a vibrant green with a beautiful rainbow arced across their spiky peaks, or the first pictures of my baby recorded in black and white etched into a glossy pliable paper, five in a row of little fists full of little fingers and little feet with little toes. All the "firsts" in life were photographed by my parents: first Christmas, Easter, New Year's, birthday (complete with a chocolate cake hat), and the first day of school when I was so proud to be doing something on my own. Mom just had to have a picture of me juggling backpack, lunchbox, and nap mat as I walked to get on the bus. I am sure the list goes on and on, many examples of firsts that every parent tries to capture. I look at these photos, every shot and every moment captured to perfection from Rocky Mountains to a chocolate cake hat, and a sense of pride swells within my soul. Pride at having these moments to capture.

However, I have had those moments in life when a camera has been present and I wished otherwise—all of the bare-bottomed baby pictures, where I was constantly putting things over my head. Much to my utter despair, a monkey mask put on backwards, impairing my vision, gave my mother the perfect blackmail photos as she laughed and snapped away picture after picture. Or how about the times I thought no one was looking and no camera was in sight? The next thing I know, a picture of me picking my nose is sent to

my parents from a friend who thought it was cute and funny (I was seven going on eight at the time, contrary to how my parents tell the story).

After careful reflection, the idea of having a camera around twenty-four seven makes me shudder (no pun intended). I think I much prefer to let some memories fade and fly away to join the ranks of lost photo opportunities, than to be subjected to the horror and embarrassment of pictures doomed to last a lifetime. No matter how hard I wish and try to forget, those photos never fade away. Maybe I can burn them...

Villanelle

By Julia Pello

And death came knocking at my door
Or was it life that hanged me by its thread?
I gasped for breath before I hit the floor

I drank on sparkling oceans playing at the shore
As beasts of ghosts prowled deep inside my head
And death came knocking at my door

To speak! I speak to speak again no more
Harpooned in flesh by space that turned to dread
I gasped for breath before I hit the floor

Warm light, soft beams, before the frozen moor
Churned steam to dream atop my phantom bed
And death came knocking at my door

Reality breathes on me, forever more
And silence does not signify the end
I gasped for breath before I hit the floor

Perhaps I will not notice when I'm dead
That words made puppets of what was said
And death came knocking at my door
I gasped for breath before I hit the floor.

I Am Not Afraid of Dying

By Vincent J. Goodwin

I can imagine my mind
being crushed by ocean waves,
lying beneath the sky.
Knowing there IS something
outside of this world
So I cry out for my mother,
and she would reply
the only way that she knew...
tidal wave!
Tornado!
HURRICANE!
Just to make sure
I didn't rise out of this world
pure of damage.
And now...I am ready

Ready to bet a slaveship
that pirates still exist
and they are searching for gold.
Fire the cannons!
I'm willing
to bet a slaveship
that pirates
rule the sea
and now people
won't swim or dive in too deep
but I am ready.
I AM waiting.

And I have trouble believing
 I am free some days,
 knowing plans are jaded
 hope, wading in waters;
 it's like hurricanes are hitting me
 on all of my borders,
 and no wall can stretch that far.
 Because the reality
 is life behind bars
 with a never-ending list of statistics.
 So tonight--while the sun puts on its grand hood
 I will lie down calm
 Just as I would
 if it were my time
 to die.

A Portrait of the Bride and the Adulterer

Faces glowing like fireflies,
 the rarest twinkling illumines.
 Brilliant white dress, black suit and tie,
 Loosely piled curls sleeping beneath a veil,
 fresh flower pinned to his chest.
 Blindly,

she believed in his fairytale kiss
 (like the one a prince would give
 to awaken his sleeping beauty)
 bestowed only seconds before
 the click of the camera.

But what happened to the prince?
 Why'd he seek the arms of another
 when he once had a princess with dancing eyes
 that shimmered in the light?
 Did her beauty fade

as fast as the flower died
 that was adhered to his chest?
 Was her smile extinguished as quickly
 As the blink blink of a firefly's glow?

By Miranda Johnson

Black Beauty Dies

By Liz Regan

When he steps on you
like that, your eyes spread
in wide lids like brown pools
of blood, and your spirit breaks
like a wild stallion made to pull a cart,
made to be a workhorse.

When he whips you with his thorny tongue,
it cuts like a green beer bottle,
and you can hardly even cry out,
barely a soft whimper,
a slight neigh from the woman
whose eyes used to flash fury
at the sight of submission.
But you are his now,

and he pulls the reins tighter
'til the blood and sweat froth
together, and even after you've collapsed now
on the street—

there you are, and you're not getting up
— he keeps beating you, whipping you, killing
you, outraged that you would die on him,
even as the bystanders gape and limply
command that, "Hey—you can't do that."

Because who are we to interfere—
but his cart is his alone now to pull,
and we're all wondering—
How will he get home?

And we're all too scared to be dead.
After all, we've got our own carts to pull.
Good day, gov'ner, good day.

Garlic and the Rose

By Jennifer Tanney

The first turns up your nose,
salt water splashed on rocks covered with fish guts;
it's death, a dark and frightening odor.
The second is earth after rain,
sweet and erotic,
shy about its scent,
a smell like romance.
Combine the two:
pungent and strong, sweet and sensual,
death and life, birth and rotting corpse.

Hollow

Filled with Sorrow, Pain, and Loneliness.
Frozen in time, my heartache is everlasting,
Awaiting the day to be united with my Mr. Romantic.
Gazing out the windowpane I continue to feel the pain.
My heart is bleeding for my one and only all I want is for
someone to console me.
The day is near; it's a new year I will no longer shed my
lonely tears.
I will find a way to get through because I can't see myself
without you.
My mystery man will be far from bland; he will be my
Superman.

By Kandice Hargrove

Echoes

By Lydia Zellers

In a dark room, a solitary flame strives to dispel the webs of shadows that entangle the occupant. Death is whispered through the darkness; it touches the soldier that keeps her vigilance at the edge of the bed. *Mother* echoes, reverberating off the walls of silence as a tear falls on the fingers that clutch the raisin-like hand of her mother. The shadows haunt only one, though. The mother dozes, peaceful, serene, uncaring. The soldier keeps her post, yet startles at each subtle movement, each catch of breath. Death waits without question in this room for her mother, and it waits patiently for her. Death lurks, hidden in the web of darkness, a spider waiting for its prey to weaken and give up. It is an easy kill. Mother, there was not enough time to learn everything from you. The breath stops. Agony. A shuddering breath and her mother begins again the battle for breath. Each breath is slower, harder, painful, a prayer. It is a prayer to be done with this wait that is in every breath and each movement. Pain racks the body of the mother and the soul of the soldier. One prays for death, one fears it; both are feeling the same thing but will not acknowledge it. Shame is present; it stands guard in the hearts of mother and daughter. This shame is for the mother fearing death; this shame is for the daughter praying for death. The daughter knows what waits in this room. It is the same death mixed with fear that haunts her steps as she does her daily routine. Her mother is new to this game of running from death, and her inexperience is mortally displayed. Death is coming, creeping silently. Another breath of pain rattles the mother's frail chest and stops. Freeze. The world stops its endless swirl for a moment. Tears fall as a minute passes, and there is no more struggle for life. Tears fall not for grief, but from relief. Shame comes to the soldier as she recognizes why she weeps; there is too much elation that the fight is over for her to care about shame. Another battle has been fought by a soldier today; the one that is rarely noticed. Another battle is won with the casualty still bleeding.

I Will Never Stop

By NormaJean Keller

I spin lightly around in circles, with my lace brushing the soft ground. With every spin, he pulls me closer. I remember the vows we had professed to one another and his simple words, "Our love is blind. It is never ending. I will never stop loving you." I lift my head from his black tuxedoed shoulder, looking into his smiling eyes. "Do you really believe that our love is blind?"

"As blind as a bat in the pitch black."

"So if I gain one hundred pounds in the next year, will you still love me?"

"I will love you as much one hundred pounds from now as I love you today."

"And if I got in a horrible car accident and lost both of my legs, would you..."

"I would still love you. I might even love you more."

"And if I got third-degree burns over seventy-percent of my body?"

"I would caress your scars and love you with every inch of my skin." Pulling me even closer towards his warm body, he whispers in my ear. "Trust me when I say, I will never stop loving you."

Like a memory the warm tears roll down my cool cheeks. Slowly reaching for the words I longed to touch for the last year, 'BELOVED HUSBAND AND FATHER.' 'Seventy-five years since I heard you say those precious words to me, words that I questioned for so long. Now, it is I who can't help but whisper your name in the dark. It is I who can't let go. I always wanted to tell you this, but I never had the courage. I promise I will never stop loving you, never.'

By Coty Haddad

As usual, I sat in preferred solitude, snuggling against the plush micro-fibers of the café's corner couch.



Pod People

Soupe du Jour

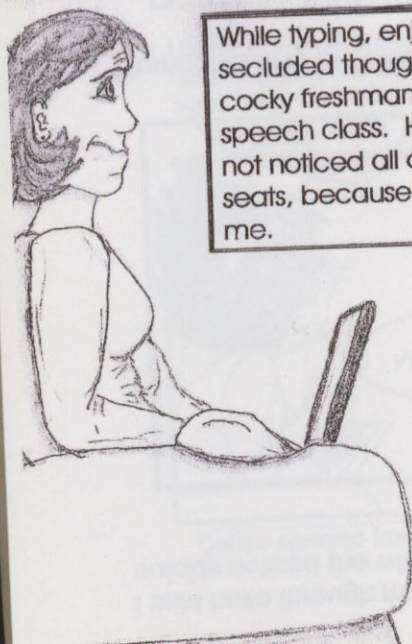
Cream of Potato
Cheese Vegetable
Beef Noodle
Tomato
Cup: \$1.99
Bowl: \$2.99
Sourdough Bowl: \$4.25

FLAVORS OF COFFEE

Almond Toffee
Amaretto
Blueberry Cream
Caramel
Chocolate Raspberry
French Vanilla
Hazelnut
Mocha
Vanilla Hazelnut

ORDER
→

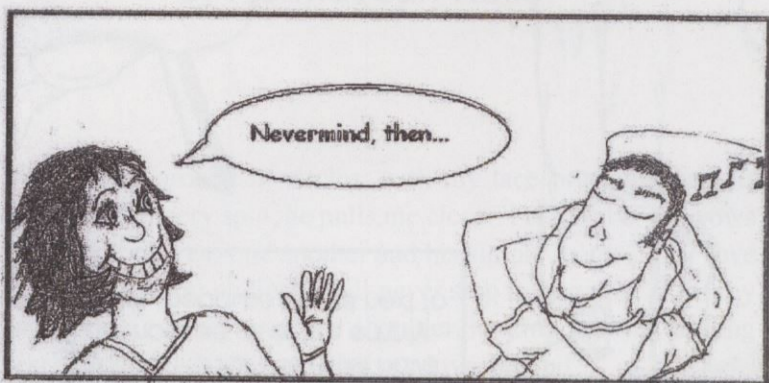
←
PICK-UP



While typing, enjoying my secluded thoughts, I saw the cocky freshman from my speech class. He must have not noticed all of the empty seats, because he sat next to me.

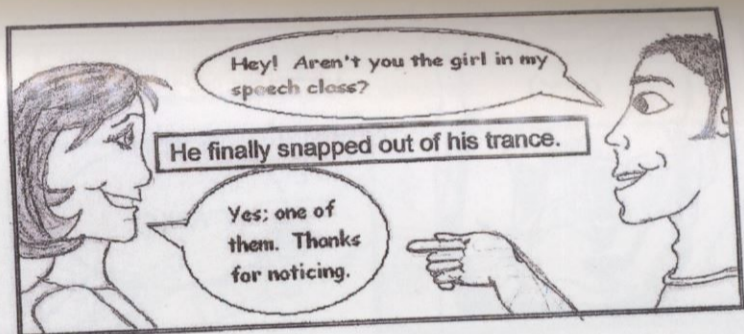
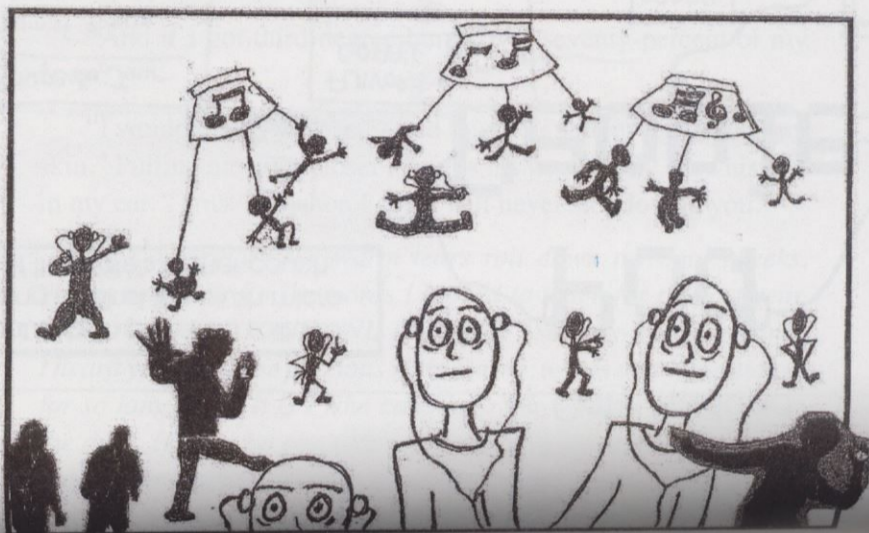


I said hello through my teeth, forcing myself to be polite. But I quickly noticed the white wires extending from his ears.

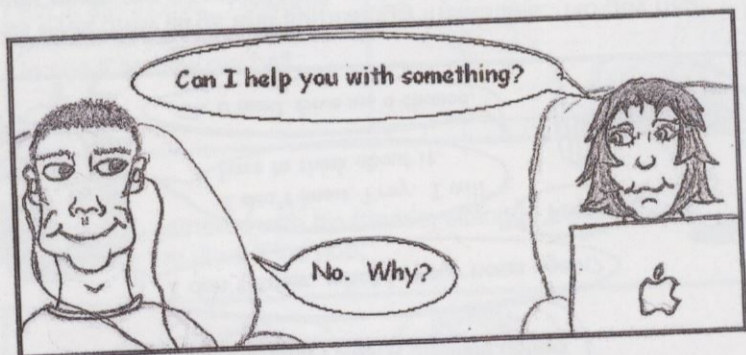


I turned back to the dust-filmed computer screen.

During my campus life, I've come to a theory about why those contraptions are called iPods. It's like aliens came down and took all the people between the ages of 17 to 23, and replaced them with these pod people that listen to messages from the Motherland through these mini mind-altering devices.

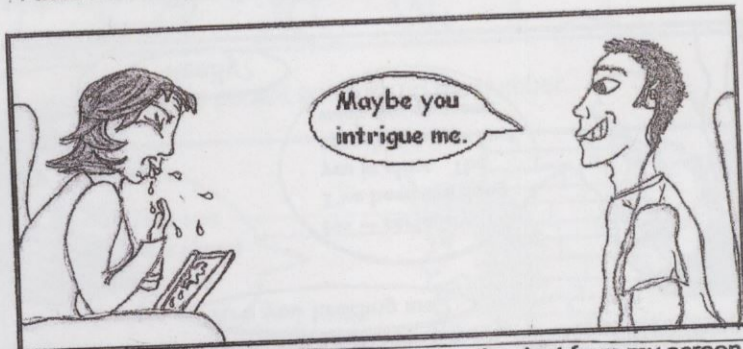


I resumed typing, but I could still see him staring at me from the corner of my eye.



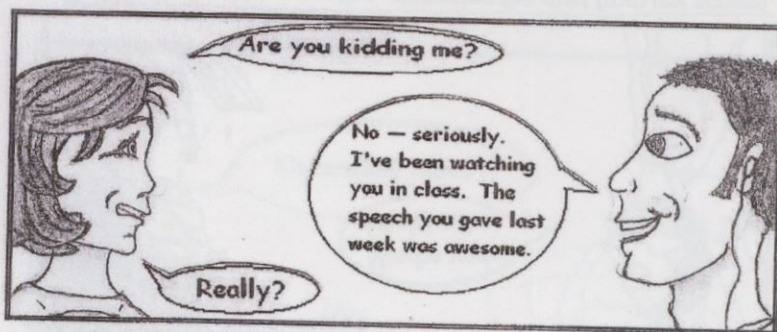
His perplexed expression led me to believe he must have still been recuperating from his latest self-imposed dose of hypnosis.

I asked him why he was still looking at me.

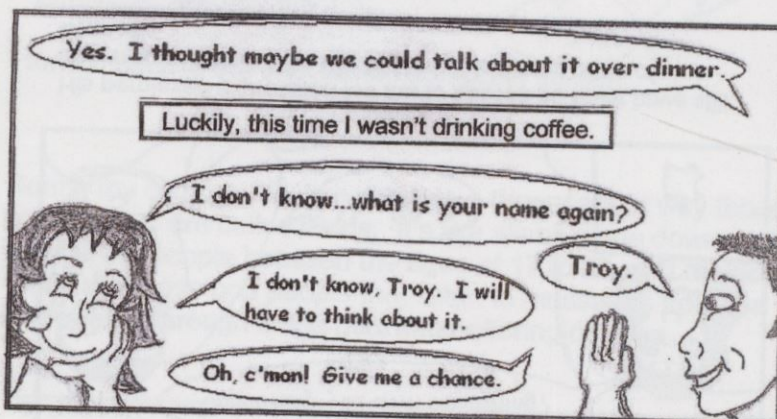


Coffee sprayed from my lips, cleansing the dust from my screen.

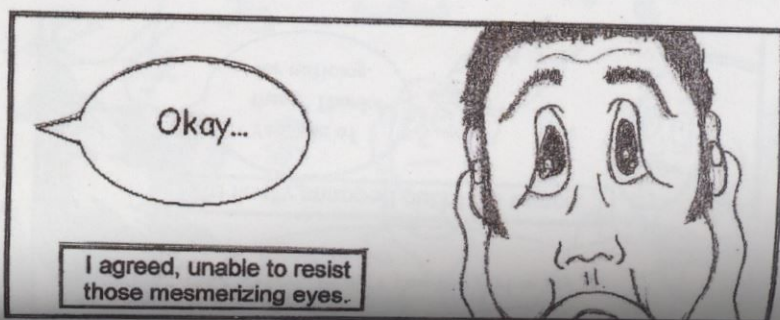
My suspicions of that being a brainwashing device were now confirmed.



Maybe I was wrong about this guy.



His eyes grew large and surprisingly irresistible. No guy had ever given me a second look on this campus, and now I was being asked out on a date? My heart started pounding as if the Energizer Bunny had jumped inside my chest and kept going and going...



After we exchanged phone numbers, I walked out the glass doors - I think - I'm not really sure. I felt like I was floating, until I tripped over my shoe laces and fell face-flat onto the cement patio in front of the café windows.



But he was gathered with his friends, sitting in a silent circle, performing the ritual "Pod nod."



I reached into my pocket and tore up his number.



One Night Of Fun

The blackness overwhelms her.

She sits alone.

Confused.

Scared.

Embarrassed.

How did this happen?

What will she do?

She told him.

He left.

Denial.

Guilt.

Fear.

It's not his.

The months go by.

Her secret begins to show.

Disgrace.

Dishonor.

Disowned.

Alone she faces the world.

Alone she stays.

Forever the question haunts her:

What if she had just stayed home?

By Tasha Hartley

Good-Bye

Fierce tears

Silencing screams

Deafening gasps

Why?

Why?!

What happened?

Blood trickles

the blade falls

lying on the cold wet floor

unconscious

yet conscious

Voices were not sounds

Colored words,

Different fonts

No faces

No identity

Slowly the two blue eyes open

And shut just as quickly

The light too bright

The shame too difficult to confront

By Tasha Hartley

It's your fault!
Blue italics.
Why didn't you stop it?
Same color, same style, but bold.

Just wanting colored words to disappear,
So sleep could come,
And leave life behind.



Meet The Writers

Joseph Chafardon is currently a sophomore, majoring in Bio-Chemistry/Pre-Med. Seated beside his love for science is his passion for the literary arts. Since his earliest years, he has been an avid writer of both poetry and fiction. His poem "Guests" is, in a nutshell, a commentary on the facades humans display and the discomfort these guises provide. We shouldn't have to be or have the best of anything—we should be judges only of ourselves. "Thank You, Ocean" is a dedication to surfing. It's an attempt at capturing the simple, yet mesmerizing emotions one feels while doing it. He has been surfing since his introduction some years ago, living in Virginia during the summers and weekends. Surfing has given him a lot, and it would only be fair if he returns the favor. As one of the editors, he'd like to thank everyone who made this year's The Crucible possible. He notes that it has truly been an honor and a blessing. —Editor

Sarah Cox majors in English with a minor in Journalism. She will graduate in 2010. "Beginning of Fall and of Fears," is about a day she spent on the levee. She says, "It was the beginning of Fall in Lock Haven. With the levee being seen to me as a desert place near campus, I was able to find peace, in emotions and thoughts that had for some time worried me. I was able, on this day, to determine how I was to live my life. I chose a destination of happiness and creativity. 'Ill Disaster,' is about a time in my life when I realized that with love comes loss. I had met someone who changed my life for the better, but as I continued to grow with that person, I lost someone very dear to me—my grandmother. I was torn in two. I felt like I had been given up on, and this made me doubt myself for some time."

Tasha Englert is a Psychology major with an English minor. Her focus is on poetry. She states, "I often try to write using imagery, and most of the images are nature-related. This is because, throughout my life, I have been inspired and comforted by the beauty of nature around me. This theme is evident in each of my poems published in this anthology."

Zach Fishel is a junior, majoring in Secondary English Education. He enjoys music, people, and most of all, coffee. According to Fishel, "'Crushing' is a poem written about a crush with whom things would never work out with."

Regina Gonzalez is an English major with a writing concentration, preparing to graduate in May 2011. According to Gonzalez, "This poem, as cliché as it may seem, came to me over my first summer away from my boyfriend. I wrote it as an anniversary gift and mailed it to him. It is very close to my heart, because it is as close to putting down in words how much he means to me. It will serve as a constant reminder of the love we share, a love that will last even beyond our relationship. It is my ode to one of the best times of my life, something to look back on and remember when I'm old and wrinkled."

Vincent Goodwin—formerly an English major and Psychology minor at Lock Haven University—wrote this piece during the summer of 2008, while working as a camp counselor. It was a time where he was beginning to take a step back from school temporarily in order to sort some things out in his life. Goodwin says, "School and activities were the only structure I ever really knew growing up. I was overwhelmed all summer with the anticipation, because I didn't know what to expect, what to do, or where to go with my life after I dropped out of school." This poem is about Goodwin's anticipation of the long road ahead.

Coty Haddad is a Secondary English Education major who will be graduating in December 2009. The short story, "Sorry," was based on a true story with some added exaggeration. The graphic short story, "Pod People," was something she had never attempted before. It pokes fun at people with iPods, which includes almost the entire student population on campus. She says, "I got the idea for the story by noticing how everyone with iPods seemed so disconnected from the world around them—an outsider—almost alien. Basically, one thought led to another and poof! 'Pod People' emerged from the depths of my mind." —Editor

Kandice Hargrove is a sophomore majoring in Computer Information Science.

Tasha Hartley is currently a second semester sophomore. She is majoring in Secondary Education with a concentration in English. Hartley has recently picked up a minor in Psychology which she is very excited to complete. Hartley states, "In writing 'Good-Bye,' I was working a lot with form. I am very proud of how it turned out. While writing 'One Night of Fun,' I was thinking of what it would be like to be a pregnant teenager. I tried to capture the fear and opposition of her life after finding out."

Miranda Johnson is a senior English literature major and will be graduating in May 2009. She was inspired to write the piece, "Mommy," because it reflects true events that happened to her mother. Johnson states, "She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005, underwent a double mastectomy, as well as chemotherapy and radiation; today, she is cancer-free. Throughout her entire ordeal, my mom never stopped being the amazingly strong and selfless person who she always was and I admire her more than I can explain because of this."

NormaJean Keller, originally from Williamsport, PA, recently switched her major to Psychology, and with the switch, she pushed her intended graduation date back a year to the spring of 2010. "I Will Never Stop" is a simple reminder to convey your love for those close to you, for tomorrow you may not have the chance. Let them know that you will never stop loving them."

Megan Meyers, an English Secondary Education major preparing for graduation in Spring 2009. — Editor

Rachael Nines is a sophomore majoring in English Secondary Education.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia In 1981, Julia Pello and her family immigrated to the US when she was eight years old. Pello received a BS in film from Boston University in 2003, after which she moved to New York City to pursue work as a video artist. Since then, she has shown her work at multiple galleries around the world. Pello has been writing poetry for over 10 years and received her first honor back in 2000 from University of Illinois at Chicago for her poem "Porcelain." "These days, I am finding new ways of bringing video art and poetry together in my work," says Pello.

Roxanne Reeder is a Secondary Education-English/ English-Writing dual major, graduating in May 2009. She wrote her piece for a poetry class after watching her mother prepare a stuffed beef heart for Sunday dinner. She exclaims, "I feel it expresses the conflict we face when eating such beautiful and peaceful creatures."

Liz Regan is an English (Writing) major and Mass Communications (Print) minor. She will be graduating in May 2009. Regan's insight on her pieces: "'---- & Jill' is essentially about the hunger that gnaws at each of us as we look for that perfect love who will fill all the holes. But what if what we're looking for isn't all that far off...but right here? What if it's not completely found in a man or a woman, but in something or Someone higher or perfect?" In 'Black Beauty Dies,' women should be strong, graceful, free, and loving. This is a story about that loss of freedom, of broken spirits, of abuse, and how there are no innocent bystanders. Even the most beautiful can be broken. Black Beauty can die."

Jennifer Sine is an English/Writing major who will graduate in May 2009. She says, "I was motivated to write "Hold" when I was buzzed on caffeine and confused about my future. My hold on coffee represents my love for literature and need to learn; it acted as a stable factor for me."

Emily Smith is an English major in her sophomore year at Lock Haven University. She spends an inordinate amount of time annoying the campus squirrel population with her writing. "My Shoes" was written during a brief hiatus when new sneakers and a new direction were needed. Both were eventually found, and despite nutty protests, she refused to relinquish her pen.

Jennifer Tanney is a dual Business Administration and English major due to graduate 2011. Her two poems were written from exercises in the Poetry Workshop taught by Marjorie Maddox-Hafer. Tanney: "I doubt that I would have stumbled on these two poems writing on my own, and I would highly recommend this class to other students interested in learning how to write poetry or improve their own work." "Tennis Shoe" was written to describe in the most possible detail an ordinary object (in this case, a tennis shoe), while "Garlic and the Rose" was written to compare two very different smells.

Danielle Tepper is a junior majoring in Communication Media. Her byline is frequently found in *The Eagle Eye*.

Lydia Zellers, now Lydia Brose, graduated in Spring 2008 with a degree in Health Sciences.

Meet The Artists

Alice Alexandrescu

I am a graduating BFA student. I focus interest on social theory, emerging art practices, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community fueled projects. In my art practice, I experiment with a variety of media. I enjoy the challenges of content and context of the process, material and concepts in my work.

In my sculptural work, *Haniwa Gender Fence* is exploring the idea of gender role, gender identity, creating a visual sliding scale of hyper-masculinity and and hyper-femininity.

My abstract digital print was a multi-step experimentation of transforming ink on paper image into an altered digital image.

Marcella Bingham

After growing up on a chicken farm in Delaware and wanting to see more of the world, I enrolled at Lock Haven University. I don't think I moved far enough. I started in the English department then moved to Psychology, and finally committed myself to the Art field where the competition is steep and salaries are rare. This area with all of its uncertainties and intimidating ideals provides a challenge not found in any other area. My concentration is 3-Dimensional art focusing in Ceramics, though I dabble in printmaking and painting. "Fruit Platter" was an exercise in light and color saturation. Be glad you were not there; the fruit started to smell after a few days.

Kristin Bone

I am a senior Art major specializing in Two Dimensions at Lock Haven University. Having no experience in art before college, I had a blank canvas as to which area I would delve into further. This journey through art has led me to experiment with photography. As a student in the Art department, I've come in contact with many mediums. Digital photography is one that I believe has no limits. Photography helps me to capture moments of my life that I could not communicate through drawings or words. It demonstrates that even the most mundane scenes can be made into something beautiful, and it takes more than just pushing a shutter button to make a great photo. I hope to continue my journey in the photography world for many years.

Kenton Clausen

I am a sophomore at Lock Haven University, currently working on a BFA in art. When I graduate, I hope to open up my own art gallery or further my education by achieving a master's degree in art. I am currently active in the Fine Arts Society and Phi Kappa Psi. My work derives from natural objects, such as nature and the human body. I am interested in nature and the human body because they both surround us every day. I work diligently to create new ideas using different styles and techniques that I have learned or taught myself. I am currently working on a couple of series; one involves paint, and the other sculpture. I plan to have the sculpture series finished within a year. I am very proud to be an art major and will always have a great love for art.

Shanna Digan

I will graduate in May 2009 with a BFA in Studio Art. My primary concentration is in painting, but I work in various mediums. I grew up in Williamsport, PA; many of my paintings are scenes from that area. I enjoy making artworks that deal with different social issues. I see something that makes me sad or angry, and I want to paint it. I like to capture candid moments and quick glimpses into people's lives, to explore all of our own personal vices and problems. I also have a series of works that deal with suicide, which were inspired by my close friend who committed suicide four years ago.

Nate Fought

In the past four years at Lock Haven University, I have discovered a true passion for art, which I might not have found at another school. In 2007, I experienced my first photography course, which opened my eyes to the art world tremendously. It was then that I decided to switch my career objectives from obtaining a bachelor's degree in Health Science to one in Fine Arts.

In addition to being a student in Lock Haven, I'm also a firefighter and EMT. I have always been fascinated with human anatomy and how the body works. In my photography course, the class had the chance to experience figurative photography, which is when I was inspired to photograph the female form. I also enjoy abstract photography, along with capturing the beauty of nature.

Caleb Haines

I've never thought of myself as an "artist" per se. Frankly, I find the title a bit pretentious. With that said, I've been drawn towards various art forms for as long as I can remember. Photography and poetry have been my main outlets of expression for the past few years, and I find that my spirits are highest while writing or shooting. As far as poetry goes, I was never the type to arrange my writings in a neatly kept binder. Instead, one would often find the poorly scribbled texts on the backs of receipts, huddled in the corners of an odd drawer. What first drew me to photography was the high-gloss, larger-than-life snapshots inhabiting the pages of the *National Geographic*. Although a wildlife photographer is ranked as high as astronauts and firefighters when it comes to childhood aspirations, it doesn't deter me from working towards a principal goal.

Adam Howard

I was born in Pennsylvania, but traveled around my whole life. Among the places I have lived are: Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Hawaii, and Iraq. I joined the U.S. Army immediately after high school, and was stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, for four and a half years. After Active Duty, I decided to further my education at Lock Haven University in Communication Media (formerly Journalism and Mass Communications), and joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. One of my long-term goals is to visit every country in the world. As of today, I've been to Canada, Thailand, Japan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Kuwait, Iraq, and Qatar; I hope to visit Germany before the end of the Spring 2009 semester. After I graduate in May 2009 with a B.A. in Communication Media and a minor in Art, I plan on going back on Active Duty as a Warrant Officer.

Michelle Mazza

Graphic Designer

I'm a senior who will be graduating in May 2009. As an art major concentrating in Graphic and Online Design, I love creating art that captures people's attention. I get my inspirations through other artists' works, such as posters, brochures, web pages, CD covers, and book or magazine covers; the resources are limitless. Graphic design is a competitive field that requires hard work and dedication. My education and passion for design have prepared me for that commitment in the graphic design world.

Neil Simkanin

As an artist working in clay, I've devoted most of my skill to tea pot construction. In doing so, I've been searching for tea pots that display a strong character in line and color while keeping in mind that I am creating tea pots that want to be nothing more than used for tea. Besides my early conventions of tea circles, the relaxing tempo and zen-like nature of throwing pottery seemed to culminate into my passion for the tea pot form.

It is a goal of mine as an artist to test my lack of control when looking for honest results. Some things in this world seem to work better when we step back and let be. For me, dripped ink can quickly become an emotion of gravity that has sought an artist's hand for fruition. I enjoy the opportunity to cater to art as the pawn, rather as the overlord; it's a very rewarding experience.

Mark Wilson

I am graduating with a BFA in two dimensional art and a minor in English. Drawing and painting are my primary skills, but I also have an appreciation for electronic art, sculpture, printmaking, photography--well, pretty much anything to do with art. I've always had an interest in art since a young age, but I haven't really tried to utilize my abilities until recently. I was originally a Marine Bio major, then an English Literature Major. When I nervously told my mother I had switched majors yet again to art, she responded by saying, "Hm, it's about time." I've yet to regret my decision.