


May 2015

## Full Issue

The Anthology

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WINTHROP UNIVERSITY'S 2015 LITERARY MAGAZINE

# THE ANTHOLOGY



THE ANTHOLOGY 2015



Winthrop University's  
2015 Art and Literary Magazine

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My GPA is bad.

I don't mean for that to imply I'm failing out, that I'm sitting in some lamp-lit room on the upper floor of DiGS with the Assistant Dean to Dean of Assistants speaking all soft and slow and stern about my "other available opportunities." I just mean I'm not as happy with my professional life as I could be. And I'm not as eager to have a perfect record because *man*, you don't want to play into *the system, man*, that's what they want! It doesn't make any sense. I love learning but want to bottle all that learning inside until I can impress hypothetical grandchildren with direct quotations from Southern Gothic literature. I'll feel all good and fancy about myself, but they'll say "Grandpa's experiencing his hallucinations again!" and go back to jacking in to their VR cyberspace worldwideweb mincraft endorphin shooters freetoplays. Don't make me write papers on the things I love.

viii

Summit Middle School separated their graduating classes in half. In sixth grade, students became either Bears or Dragons. Every group throughout the three years of service had a cutesy name and a half-cooked sense of identity. This was all a front, of course, perhaps driven by some legislation I knew and know nothing about, to teach A.P., or Advanced Placement, courses to the gifted few students who exhibited intellectual prowess. Perhaps there is a good argument to be made for challenging a middle school's most college-ready students, but Summit's problem was that instead of reserving advanced classes for a mere ten percent, or even twenty-five percent, of the student body, they made their cut at fifty percent. Fifty percent of Summit Middle School's graduating class was destined for greatness. The other half were as dumb as bricks.

Well, I was a Bear. And that meant I was as dumb as a brick.

See, the Dragons didn't just get a nice little perk at the end of the same long day. Their entire lives were formed differently. They had different teachers, they went to different classes, they



never interacted with the Bears, and they developed an air of snootiness and becoming adulthood. In the eighth grade, at the end of a long tenure at Summit, Bears were gifted the opportunity of testing in hopes they, even with their inferior resources, would be on the level of Advanced Placement courses once they moved across the street to Homestead High School. I was one of the Bears tested. And like every single other Bear in that cramped closet two hours after we should have already been home, I failed. Because nature is stronger than nurture, I supposed, and because none of us were nurtured so it obviously wasn't any good.

I do not intend for this lovely introduction to our wonderful book to be a downer, but I have lived with this resentment for a long time. Only recently did I sit in Winthrop's Writing Center and feel a little bit of blood rush cold under my skin when a tutor who has been a wonderful friend to me in the past mentioned that she was, more or less, a Dragon. This is all silliness. It all passes once you attend college or you reach the ripe old age of a quarter-century. Many Bears finally reach Dragonhood, many Dragons lower themselves to Beardom, but more than any of this, these creatures become complete, rounded people, identified not by cute team names but by the quality and content of their character created through the awful circumstance given to them by their middle schools. We are all past yet the effects still linger.

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The only education I really received, the only kind I cared about, specifically because it wasn't diluted from God's give-and-take system, was found with an internet connection and a library card. When I should have been reading some lukewarm young adult novel I could really "connect" to, I let the book grow mold at the bottom of my backpack and read *Les Misérables* instead. When I should have been filling in some handout from chemistry, I went to parties with my friends and I spent my allowance on the straight-to-DVD Blockbuster bargain bin and played the dumbest video games I could find until the controller's buttons broke because to a Bear you had to be either better than a Dragon or be away from the school system altogether.

This year's Anthology is a collection of found material. Some pieces could be found in the front of a Norton Critical Edition. Others could be a pretty pattern found at the bottom of a leaking trash bag. Some could hang in national galleries and sell for seven figures. Others could be cute ideas that get second billing in fifteen-cent pulp magazines. They are all collected here as little pieces of what makes us tick, whatever they may be (perhaps they all hold significance to us, all at once). They let us all leave Summit Middle School with our pride intact and guided our bodies towards some future where the high art and the low art are just art and the Dragons and the Bears are just people. There is no pretense of objectivity here. This year's Anthology is different from Anthologies of years past and years future. Each edition is a special mixture made through pulling together six people into one little office and asking them just what they like about their lives. The Winthrop community provides their own unique ingredients, and then we have this book. I hope it does you justice.

The 2015 Anthology welcomes everyone, but this year is especially dedicated to the Bears and all Bear-like equivalents. Whether you set your goals too high or too low, whether you were ever pigeonholed and left to rot by others or by yourself, let this Anthology be a safe home for you. Your GPA will always look good to me.

Patrick Kay  
Editor-in-Chief

**AND NOW  
SOME ART  
AND  
LITERATURE**

xi

## Colloquial Coon Dick Toothpick

*Cassie Graham*

Cars swerve and horns honk,  
Slowpokes keep buzzards fed.  
Swift scurriers show up in trees-  
Bright beady specks of red.

Gray-Girl barks,  
Treeing like we rehearsed.  
Following the sound,  
My footsteps cross the leafy ground.  
Zacchaeus couldn't climb higher.  
Twenty-two aims, then fire.

12 In the black, ground breaks.  
Sure enough this will be  
The coon-dick-toothpick-talisman  
For my sweetheart and me.



**Your Thoughts**  
*Lindsey Bargar*

## Usurped

*Alicia Tosca*

“When is he going back to the hospital?” I ask, glaring at my mother as she burps the newborn baby. The black leather couch shrunk after Alex was born last week. She tells me he can’t go back because he is part of the family now. I continue to glare. No three-and-a-half-year-old girl jumps for joy at having her throne taken away by a square-faced, incessantly screaming baby boy who chokes on his own tears more than he suckles on her mom’s breast.

Mami lays Alex on his back on the couch cushion and asks me to “watch the baby” while she uses the bathroom. Her bedroom door closes. For five seconds Alex stares at the twirling ceiling fan before he is scooped up in my tiny arms and carefully placed at the bottom of the trashcan in the kitchen pantry. Shutting the lid means closure, good riddance, sayonara.

14 It unfortunately also means: “Oh no, where’s the baby?!”

I am still in the pantry, browsing for a snack. Mami’s voice shrills with panic. For me it sounds like trouble, the kind that leads to spankings and time-outs. I fling back the lid of the trashcan and reach for the baby, tugging up from his fleshy armpits. His squashy face begins to melt as his lips curl into his gums. He is heavy. Alex cries and screeches as soon as Mami yanks back the pantry door. His body droops in my hands mere inches in front of the trashcan. Mami grabs the baby, and, after I explain that I am hungry, she grabs me a pack of crackers. She plops back on the couch with relief; I return to glaring.

She told me being a big sister would be exciting—she even smiled as she said it. But now that Alex is born, “sister” does not excite me. It is a loathsome title and a label I am

confined by four years later as Alex yells at me to stay away from *his* mom.

His face boils with anger in the Florida heat as he informs me, “Papi is your mom and dad, and Mami is my mom and dad!”

“What? Mami is *our* mom and Papi is *our* dad.”

Although Alex is wrong, his observation is true. Every child gravitates to one parent more than the other. And the limelight of my childhood memories falls mainly on my dad and rarely flickers on to my mom. Papi would play with me and tickle me and talk to me about Jesus. Mami would cook and clean. Sometimes she would even ask me to clean for her. Papi is my favorite animal. When he plays he is a bear; when he laughs a hyena; when angry he is a man. He is a father, the kind the Navy Reserves recruits and spits out after twenty-four years of service.

When he comes home early from work once a week to take me to the YMCA’s Indian Princesses Program, or when he takes thirty minutes each Saturday to watch “The Amanda Show” with me, or when he spends hours on the weekends to teach me how to play basketball—he is my family. I know Mami by name only, usually when I want to go outside or need to know what’s for dinner.

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Because of her stubborn refusal to leave Alex at the hospital after he was born, my now eight-year-old self is stuck with a belligerent four-year-old bellowing at me in the front yard. Alex is right. But he can’t be—he’s not supposed to be right. So I yell back, “She’s my mom too! I came out of her stomach!” I had seen the surgical scar below my mom’s navel before; I bit her there once to get her attention.

“Yeah, well, I came out of her butt!”

I shouldn’t laugh. I don’t even know yet where babies actually come from, but Alex’s proclamation lifts me back onto

my throne and makes him look like...well, not as good as me.

Alex runs back into the house and calls out for Mami. Still laughing, I race after him to make it clear that I haven't hit him or called him any names. I want Mami to laugh with me, to prove Alex wrong. Instead, she tells him that yes, he was born from her bottom and no, she is my mom as well.

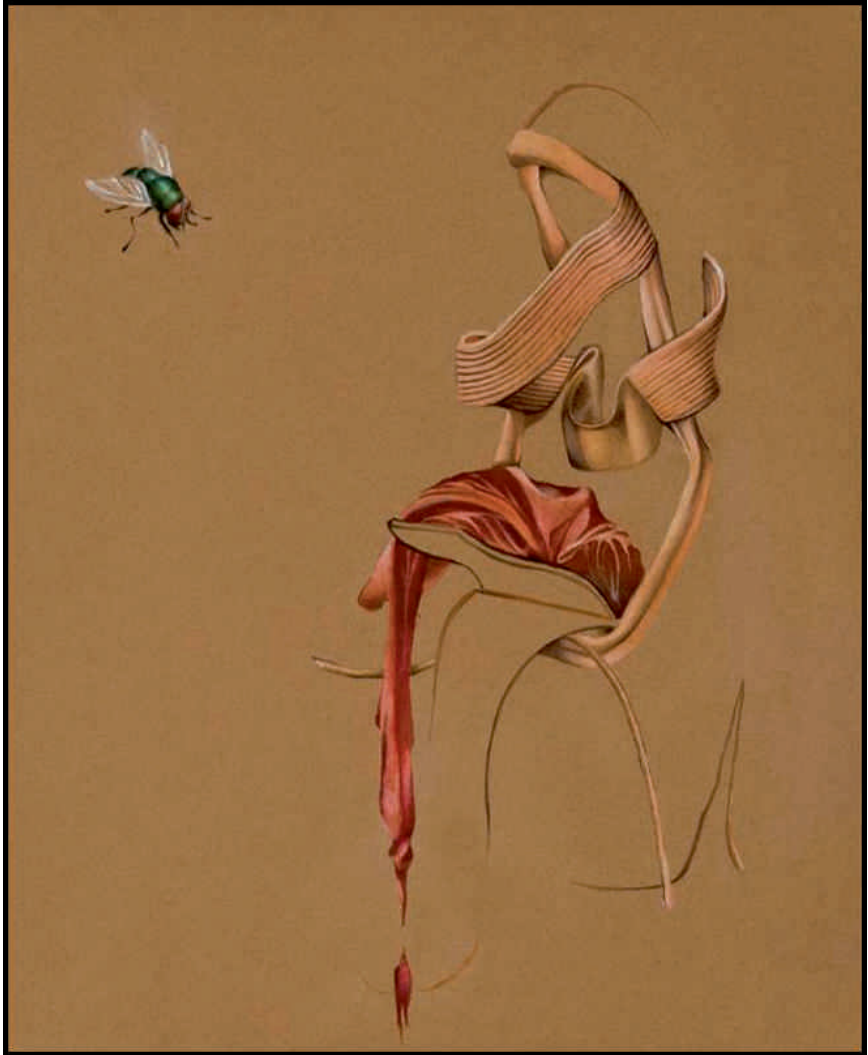
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## **Robust Bottle**

*Sarah Stokes*





**Expired**  
*Jessie Rogers*



**Sanctioning of Gifts II**  
*Tom Seay*

## **Damask**

*Heather Bechtler*

In under three days  
You'll peel my skin away  
My flesh seeps menthol and freezes in your pores.  
Beneath this embrace we'll sojourn  
Between threaded calves and ankle-bones we breathe faint  
snores  
Clenching our eyes against the rising yellow of morn'.  
Within three weeks  
I'll have forgotten to eat  
Your caress rattles my bones and sparks a flame in my spine  
Curving against your slender torso in transit  
Your clockwise caress on my scalp bowering your fingers in  
vines  
Planting a firm kiss on my neck as if you're sowing a gambit.  
Entwined with the grey dawn we became aboriginal  
Beguiled in our hypnagogic state, candid and inexplicable.

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## When It Looks Like I Will Wilt

*Logan Moody*

When it looks like I will wilt  
or my prickles will fail me,  
take me  
(before sunrise)  
from the soil I am rooted in  
and remove my petals.  
Crush them. Steam them.  
Distill me.  
Collect my attar and contain it.  
The bottle will be almost empty,  
but that's okay.  
Fill the rest of the glass  
with memories  
and romance.  
When you start to feel low  
or lost  
open the vial and take in the aroma.  
You'll remember our wild mountain,  
the sound of voices in the night,  
and a dream riding along the burning tail of a star.  
You will remember me.



21

**Casting**  
*Chelsea Chao*

## End of the Season

*Rachel Burns*

Persy walked into the grocery store like a gust of wind, but her bluster died as she crossed the threshold. The creaking automatic doors sealed behind her, embracing arms confining her in a languorous bosom of florescent light and assured plenty.

She moved through the store, passing by chipper advertisements and bright packaging at a leisurely pace. From row to row she lingered, up and down the aisles, her eyes roving but not seeming to see all of the boxed goods the world had to offer.

She was not enticed.

As far away her mind may have been, the minds of those who watched Persy pass were very much present. With rolling curves hinted at through her end-of-winter clothes and her dark hair unbound, men and women alike let their gazes follow her simple march, lapping at her motions with their eyes. One figure in particular seemed especially moved and followed behind at a distance.

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Either willfully or naturally ignorant of the attention placed on her, she came at last to the produce section and began to shop with a purpose. Running her tan hands over a display of apples, she inspected their red faces for imperfections.

“Why, hello there, darling.”

Persy did not respond.

The figure laid a pale hand on top of hers.

“Persy. Hello, honey.”

She tensed and cast her gaze up but still did not respond, her face immobile, her breath stolen.

“I knew that was you,” the figure said, his voice dripping with a smile. “How have you been, love?”

“Fine.”

“I’m glad to hear it! I thought you were still away at school. What year are you again?”

“I was a sophomore.”

Persy shifted so that his cold skin no longer touched hers.

He smiled even wider. “You look well, practically blooming with health! Your hair has grown so long, I don’t remember it touching your waist. I will admit, though, you do seem tired.”

He inclined his face closer to hers.

She stepped back.

He inclined forward again.

She stepped farther away until the back of her legs grazed a pile of pomegranates on display.

“I don’t sleep much anymore. I have responsibilities now,” she said to the floor.

“Well, you were always a light sleeper. I have not forgotten that. I have not forgotten anything.”

“I’ve tried to forget.”

He shook his head, a wistful sigh escaping from his twisted smile. “One should not try to forget love.”

“Then it must not have been love.”

“Or you could be lying to yourself.”

“Like you lied to my mother?” Her voice shook at the end.

“Ah, yes. Demi. Tell her I said hello.”

“She’ll just tell you to go back to hell.”

His mouth, a sensitive hollow in the center of a salt-and-pepper goatee, opened in an inappropriately raucous laugh.

“Look at these pomegranates,” he said. “I remember how much you loved them.”

“Once. That was a long time ago. Tastes change.”

Moving to stand next to Persy, he put his hand half on her hair, half on her lower back, turning her to face the pile of fruit with gentle pressure; she did not recoil.

“Do you remember?” he asked.

“What?” she whispered.

“That night...” he said.

“What night?”

“The night.”

“Oh--that.”

They were both silent for a moment, until he leaned forward and chose one from among the rest, the largest, heaviest, most ready to be eaten. He rolled the fruit in his free hand, the other hand still on her, light as a first kiss.

“You’ve been away for a long time, Persy,” he commented.

“Six months,” she answered.

“Such a long time...”

“They wouldn’t let me come back. I wouldn’t let me come back.”

24

“Why?” His hand was no longer a peck, it was a demonstration on her body, a bite. She leaned into his grasp slightly, still not meeting his gaze. Persy found her words. “Your eyes, they’re so dark. So... full. They remind me of the before and the during and the after all at once.”

“Mine are nothing compared to yours, even when you have them closed. You have the eyes of a child.”

She stared at the mound of pomegranates. “There’s so many. If I pick one they’ll fall all over the place,” she remarked.

“That’s a chance they make you take. It’s the end of the season,” he said. “The store has to get rid of them while it can. But,” he continued.

“Yes?”

“I’d let you have this one.”

He offered her the fruit, rich and ripe against his pale

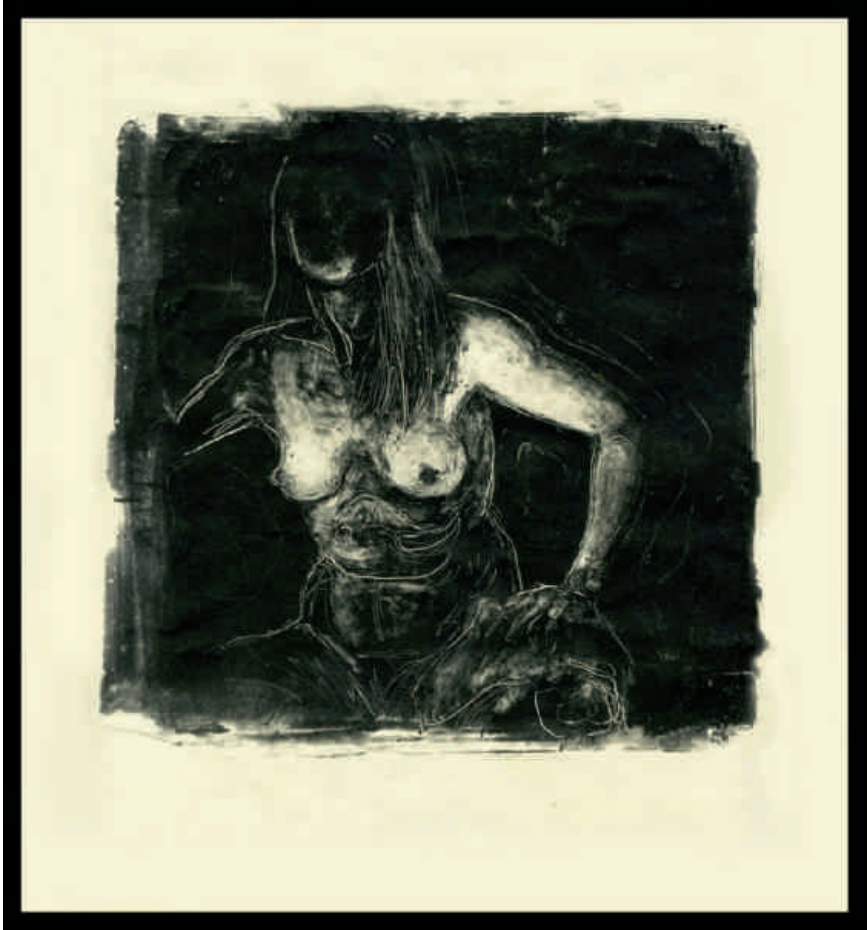


hand, the lively burgundy color almost throbbing in his grasp.

Persy turned her gaze from the fruit to his mouth then slightly northwards to his eyes. They burned with memories and like a snake they held her captive, tighter than the hand still on her body.

And then she began to burn, a flame in her chest growing, shooting across her veins, scorching to her extremities. With one violent motion, Persy slapped the pomegranate out of his offering hand. It sailed through the air and its ripeness burst out upon the dirty aisle floor, tangling with the waste and dust. Blood-red seeds spilled out, the spoiled essence of a ruined promise.

She let out a breath she felt she had been holding onto for an eternity.



**Traces**  
*Katie Law*



**Accumulating**  
*Joanna Henry*

## Good Company

*Ricky Baldwin*

I find the ceiling truly inspiring.  
He can cover a lot, and he'll keep going on and on for hours  
upon hours.

His only competition is the window.  
I like her perspective.

My mind's a chemist.  
He's quite smart but his arthritis makes his work sloppy.  
He's always on the brink of something that he never-  
follows through with.  
He feels nobody understands him.  
I feel he doesn't know he's a mad scientist.

At night my lungs often take me out for a walk.  
They have shared with me some stimulating though clouded ideas.  
They also like to repeat themselves a lot.  
They litter our conversations with but's that put out in broad  
28 reflection.

One might say something like, "what is pride, but  
a blatant ignorance to something better?"  
I tried to ask why we walked alone so late at night  
They both shook with laughter.

My humor has become my best friend.  
We hang out with his friends because I don't have many.  
We laugh and laugh until we're both sad.

The other day he told me a joke.  
He said, "What's funnier than life"  
I said I didn't know.  
He said, "Whatever you've got."  
I guess I could have been offended.  
Then again, he never means much.

## **White-Painted Walls**

*Margaret Adams*

The eyes are protruding.  
Through the dull plaster among the wall.  
Dry, Bleak, Disoriented,  
As if its life is a painful sore.  
Wishing to torment my mind  
To insanity that disillusion my time.  
I escape this room  
In hopes to save my life-  
Only to find six more hallways  
Plastered in horrid white.  
Painted walls that reflect its only light.  
Going on in what seems like forever.  
No where to go  
But in the company of a streaming nightmare.  
I feel like a psychopath  
Seeking a departure.  
That is how the asylum is full  
Because of dreaded white painted walls  
That suffocate the air of every breath,  
When will this torment end?  
And capture the color within my soul.



30

## **Laundry Mat Love**

*Elli McNall*

## The Bible Belt Stretched Too Tight

*Garrett Woolf*

Years ago I was a young private assigned to the 101st Airborne Division. I was in processing, or doing the necessary legalities, required before I was assigned an infantry unit to belong to. The good thing is that I wasn't alone. At the 20th replacement battalion where every member of the 101st goes through to in process, there were plenty of single men to chase women with.

One particular night we all decided to stay local and go out to a country club in Clarksville, TN rather than drive the hour to Nashville. There were around a dozen of us. A dozen genetically blessed good-looking guys who were in fantastic shape. We were a father's worst nightmare.

Once we were all showered, shaved, dressed, and had strategically sprayed our bodies down with cologne, we gathered in the parking lot to decide who drove and who would ride with whom. Soon we were exiting the main gate to the base, and turned right towards downtown Clarksville.

The bar was called "Kickers." A large neon boot kicked back and forth on the front wall of the building. One of our Northern group members looked at the sign with confusion. His brain whirred inside his head that was cocked to the side.

"Kickers?" He said. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"It refers to the boot. Also known as a shit kicker. Hence the name kickers," I told him.

The whirring intensified as the other group members who understood nodded and laughed, while those who were also from Northern heritage debated if us Southern Folk were yanking their Yankee chain.

"Are you sure man?" He asked.

"Yes I'm sure. I'm from Texas."

As we mozied towards the door a debate arose about

who sleeps with whose sister, who won the civil war, whose ancestors were conquered by the Moors, and a whole slew of Full Metal Jacket movie references about Texas, steers, and queers. Once at the door, a bouncer greeted us without a smile. He was a large bald man. A man whose whole life would be about bouncing. He probably went to bouncing conventions. He stood zero chance against us in a fight. Which explained the lack of a smile. There would be no killing us with kindness. We whipped out our military IDs. A dozen green identification cards of bald teenagers who looked like serial killers.

“Only one of you can get in here, gentlemen,” he told us.

My smart-ass attitude jumped at the chance. “Why not?” I asked. “Is this place full? There isn’t a line to get in.”

“Only one of you is nineteen,” he replied.

“So fucking what? We’re all older than eighteen,” I said.

“County law. You must be nineteen or older to get into the bars in Montgomery county.”

“Is this a joke? So where are we supposed to go?”

32 “You can go to Nashville. They’ll let eighteen-year-olds into the bars there.”

“I still don’t understand,” I said, with a confused look on my face.

“Bible belt brother. Christian values and such.”

“Nashville. Shit, dude, it’s an hour drive to Nash-Vegas. Is there anywhere we can go here in Clarksville?”

“There sure is.”

“Where?”

“Strip clubs.”

My brain was whirring now. We couldn’t get into a country bar. We couldn’t drink. However, we could get into a strip club and have tits and asses waved in our faces. Bible belt. Christian values. I had never been to a strip club.

“Strip clubs?” I said.



“Yes, sir,” the bouncer replied.

The idea of a strip club never crossed our minds. The group started looking up to the idea of a strip club. They talked amongst themselves, and slapped each other on the arms and back. We all talked things over. Someone suggested the club outside Fort Campbell. The group seconded the idea and moved to close. After a quick jog back to the three or four cars that brought us to Kickers, we drove back to base.

The strip club named Cat’s West awaited us.

I felt nervous. I felt wrong. I felt like I was letting my mother down. I felt like a man. I felt like I was in control of my own life. I felt silly. I felt like a little boy.

Dance music pouring out of the club met us as we exited the vehicles. The men cheered as the gravel from the parking lot crunched under our feet. The front door led to a small entranceway with another door. Inside the entryway sat yet another bouncer. This one was as fat as the last one. He had long black hair unlike the last bouncer. He looked like an internet geek. He looked stoned. I doubted that he was as dedicated to his profession as the last bouncer.

33

I was last to pay the twenty-one dollar entry fee. I was shocked at how much it cost to gain access to a strip club. A private in the Army didn’t make a lot of money.

We all fear the unknown. Even those who are supposed to be fearless. The nervousness I felt was more than the first time I undressed a woman personally. With shaking hands, I handed the man my money.

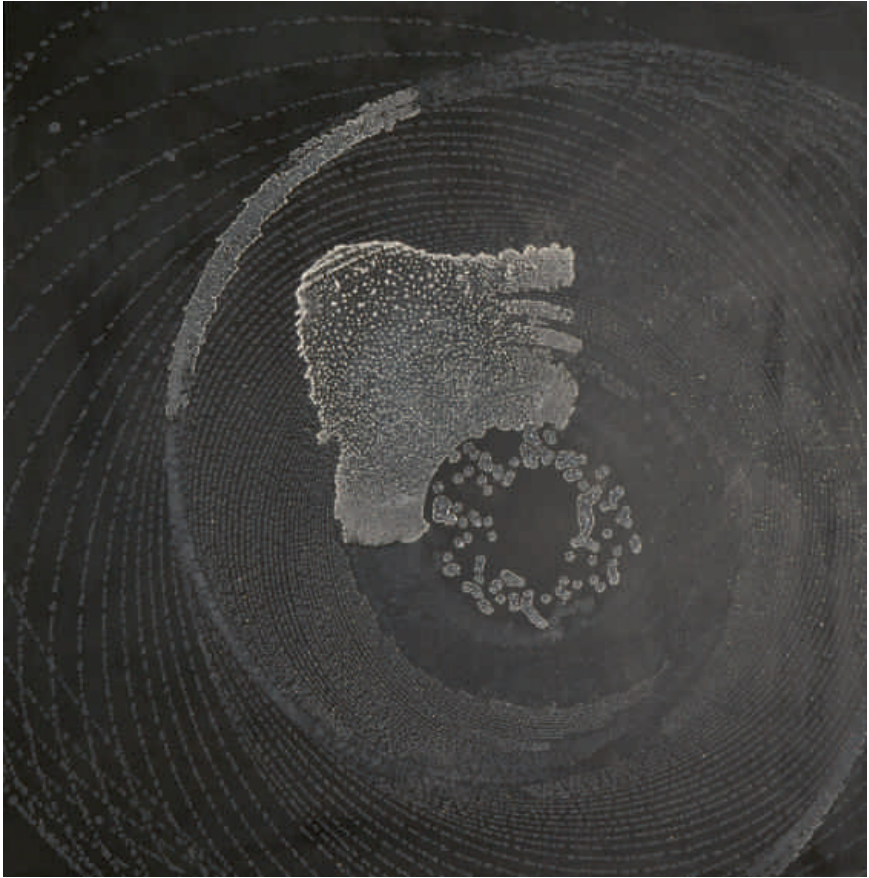
“Enjoy yourselves, men. No touching the girls,” the fat bouncer said to us.

I took his words as a message from God. I felt like I was on foreign soil. I followed the rest of my friends into Cat’s West. My heart pounded as the music blasted out into the entryway when the door opened. “Candy, you’re needed on the main stage.”



**Chicken**

*Heidi Nisbett*



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## **On the Floor: Of the Earth**

*Nicole Davenport*

## Tuesday

*Rachel Trueblood*

Her car heads east, southeast,  
northwest, east, west  
on dimly lit highways  
and ever so often, fingers  
fumble blindly to find the stereo  
today/tonight it glows 12:45.

(like an echo in the void)  
Mother asked when she'd be home  
*around midnight, maybe*  
close enough. –the hands on the clock  
don't move? move too quickly?  
“We're here”

*I don't remember how I got here*

36 I suppose she's another moth to a flame  
ascending the porch stairs to the porch light  
when she realizes she's lost her keys  
fingertips mumble “findthemfindthemfindthem”  
quietly, so they don't upset her  
*Stupid. Fucking. Idiot. (too late)*

She feels the tears coming and  
she wills them to stop,  
They begin to sprint.

One for the father, five for the aunt,  
Two for the sister, the friend, the boy,  
the rude customer with the ugly teeth,  
...ten for the cat

Pathetic. And angry.

for herself? at herself?  
the anger ebbs and flows  
into a greater grief  
where the silent tears break  
into loud gasps for air  
“my child, you are so lost”

sigh the fingers as they wipe away tears  
the palms, they cup her wet face  
and hold her and they whisper  
“you are forgiven”

**Breathe into me and watch me squirm: God,  
Digital Rhetoric, Philosophy, man and Sex**  
*Diego Segura*

How silly it is; how silly it is—  
Someone told me recently, with a smile she said,  
And when you liked my post on Facebook—

37

How saddening is it then; that is why there are  
Some dangers to this digital age; that is why detest  
Ran within me for so long, though I saw the benefits—  
    Though I run my fingers down her naked back,  
    Pull the hair from its pores to the point of 26.0pt”  
Replaced by a click which in sound is so  
Short, by a finger tap which is restricted to a standardized  
Location on a screen.

That is why my heart is frozen up because I see through  
Your eyes humanity; I see through them and yet I am not  
Of you, because my soul yearns for my spirit to be free  
    To invade the confines of your mind, and bypass

That is your spirit; I come with water fresh from  
The mountain springs of God, where the grass  
Shines like diamonds in the illuminated mist of dawn.

And yet you have not moved passed the fog; we have not  
Moved on to the rebirth of spring, and then summer,  
And then the fall: we are stuck in winter, because we have  
Become complacent with the technology of the soul

Let language— let the word breathe into you again  
As it did so long ago—; let the remnant breath of God,  
Let it come back each time, as you decided to seize the day  
Once more and hold its thorns within your chest, within  
Your heart; let it hurt; let passion enmaden your mind,  
And let love take you beyond the gray shores of my  
embrace;

This is why I say, the zenith of importance for  
humanity is

10001000010001000001 1011 010010010 10010101  
01010

38 Though it may take us down dark roads in a future so close,  
Everything will be made anew again once it has fallen,  
The Wheel of fortune never stops, and yet, our human  
Spirit will rise again from the grave

*Wheel of fortune, goddess of chaos, we have overcome you; God  
Of Man, we have overcome you, so as to we search for this thing,  
This divinity... that which is beyond gender, beyond race, beyond  
war,*

*Beyond death, beyond the limited confines of human Eros.*

*Yes we call him God, but that is only because our  
Language has restricted us to the know of the signifier,*

*And yet it is by language that we will be saved, because  
The Word has become incarnate and the ruler of this world  
Is no longer the bent one, but the Lord of Light.*

This is why we must increase the human constant within  
The Digital Humanities; we must stretch and etch out  
The form factors, the determiners, we create  
Through digitalization.

Our rhetoric must expand so that the constant didactic of  
US can live on across time and space...reach the stars and  
Breach IMMORTALITY

Not for the fortune of it, but for the love that is laden  
And born within us all, and persists even to those  
Who have fallen

That is why technologies that humanize the digital element  
Of life—that is why— they must connect to use ever more

*What would it be, that when I press that little button, you can  
Feel the heat of my body and the motion of my beating and torn  
Heart: we would lose ourselves in the nakedness of it*

*And yet it was our greatest dissatisfaction and demise to  
Clothe ourselves, in and without— but it is all for an end,  
So that when the sun rises, and you see the gray and blue  
Calm and peace of morning*

*You may know that when I say you are my end— you may know—  
, you are my third new beginning*

**Transcend the maw**



40

**Sentiment for Evanescence**  
*Ashley Felder*



## Dark and Stormy

*Dave Birley*

What a beautiful morning. First sunlight was slicing across the North face of Mount St. Helens as Brian looked out through his window toward the clusters of pines and fir trees on its lower slopes. He thought back those ten years when he was able to lead tourists through the Ape Caves in the summer time. He loved to entertain them with stories of how this beautiful mountain had been born tens of thousands of years ago. He knew that there was what the experts call “activity” a century ago, but mercifully it was now very quiet, and only occasionally woke up with a small tremor.

In the winter, he liked to show off his athletic prowess as a ski guide and take people up the snow-covered upper levels. The nice thing about St. Helens was that it wasn't quite as big as Rainier and so neither as overloaded with tourists nor as intimidating to ski. Frankly, back then when he was in peak condition, he liked to take off his jacket so he could impress the young ladies with his washboard abs while he did his trick skiing routines. He always thought it was funny when a little tremor would loosen a bunch of snow into a mini-avalanche. He knew that it would never amount to anything, but it might give the girls a bit of a scare.

41

But that was ten years ago, 1970. Now he was coping with ROAMO, a little acronym which he found ironically similar to ROTFLMAO – but nothing like it in meaning. Rapid Onset Adult Male Obesity was quite rare and treatment for it was not only hard to find, it was prohibitively expensive. When it started for him, he rapidly found that he could no longer navigate the Ape Caves in the summer or even stand up on his skis in the winter. Over those ten years he packed on almost three hundred additional pounds and could barely walk from his bedroom-office to the kitchen. Now all he could do

for the tourists was function as unofficial mayor of the little community of Cougar and offer touristy suggestions for things to do.

Fortunately, he had inherited a modest estate that enabled him to keep the roof over his head and food in his pantry, but, living alone, all he had was his memories of those days when he was the object of attention and affection by the pretty tourist girls. He had heard the warnings by the experts that the mountain was getting frisky again, but he had heard those so many times that he no longer paid them any attention. His good friend, Harry Truman, no, that's wrong, Harry R. Truman, told him that this type of palaver had been going on for decades before Brian had even first arrived in Cougar, and there was no way Harry was going to leave his little home by Spirit Lake. "We are the true spirit of the mountain," he used to say. "Ain't nobody going to get me to run away from it."

42      Around eight o'clock, Brian decided it was time to brew up and he loaded up his Mr. Coffee with his favorite blend. He thought it was odd that there were a couple of slightly stronger tremors than he had felt lately, but nothing to get excited about. He looked out the kitchen window again, and as he reached for his mug of coffee the explosion occurred. Brian never really knew what hit him. His home was right in the middle of the blast zone, and as he staggered back he thought, "Poor Harry, he'll never know what..."

## ***POETRY EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD***

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### **Eurydice: to Orpheus**

*Connor Renfroe*

You sought me in the Underworld—  
My prison in penance for playing with snakes.  
Resigned was I to my demise,  
Yet you promised sunshine and music.  
So I followed your lyre  
And stepped into your footprints.  
Upon the Mouth I saw the light;  
Thought I might inhale again, but  
On the verge of vitality you stopped  
To gaze back into the abyss.  
I smiled, because how could I  
Have expected you to defy the stars for me?

43

## ***PROSE EDITORS CHOICE AWARD***

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### **The Video Tape**

*Mitch Postich*

Nicholas found something extraordinary and impossible in his attic the other day. It was a video tape.

44 It was early November, and November meant cold weather, and cold weather meant the heavy clothes needed to be dragged out of the attic. So Nicholas was bent over in this chilly, dark space, shoving around boxes full of forgotten treasures so he could reach some other boxes full of funny-smelling sweaters. In the furor of moving all these boxes he happened to knock one over, an ordinary-looking container full of old video tapes.

Nicholas groaned, and leaned over to gather up all the VHSes, but the title of one, neatly printed on a fresh white label, made him stop. It was called *Tomorrow*. It struck Nicholas as a very unusual name for a video tape. The other ones had innocuous names: *Disney World trip 98*, *Alicia's B-Day*, *As the World Turns*, all of them with cracked, yellowing labels. They threw up dust when Nicholas touched them. The one called *Tomorrow* was pristine.

Gripped by curiosity, Nicholas descended the stairs, went into his living room, and found his old VCR under the entertainment center. He barely remembered how to connect the old A/V cables to his new TV, but he was possessed by

some unknown force to complete this task. He finally turned the VCR on and popped the tape in.

The tape played immediately – no rewinding was required. The image that appeared on screen was impossibly clear for a VHS: it filled the screen in 1080p and flawless HD quality, with no motion blur, no washed-out colors. Nicholas might as well have been watching that day's ESPN broadcasts.

It was a video of an empty hallway. Whoever filmed this had done it with a handheld video camera. It didn't take Nicholas long to realize this was his house. There was the upstairs hallway; the way it curved and opened up was unmistakable. Light speckled the hallway in exactly the same way it always did in the afternoon, odd and crystalline yet beautiful. But the hallway on the video was a different color. It was an ugly yellow. Someone had painted it. The new color clashed with the reflected light horribly, making it look like an ugly stain. A drab, gray expressionist painting hung on the wall that didn't fit at all with the color of the hall. A sense of revulsion curdled to life in Nicholas's stomach.

Unconsciously, without even deciding to, Nicholas rose and walked into his garage. He opened his toolbox and got out a hammer. When he came back to the living room, the video still showed the ugly hallway and the ugly painting. He studied it carefully.

Slowly, Nicholas made his way upstairs, located the precise spot where the horrible artwork had disgraced his living quarters, and smashed it with a hammer.

It felt good. He swung again, and now the hole was wider, again, now it was a gaping maw, again, downward, until a large crevasse stared at him where his wall used to be. He stared into the crevasse. Nicholas then decided that he was satisfied.

Nicholas walked back downstairs and sat down to watch the mysterious video tape again. To his pleasant

surprise, he saw that the giant hole he had made in the wall was now on the video, and the drab gray painting was gone. Nicholas allowed himself a small sigh of relief.

This turned into a horrified gasp when he saw the video turn around, head downstairs, and go outside to view the shoddy yard work that had been done to the front of his house.

“Nick, is that you making that awful smell?”

Nicholas turned around. It was his neighbor Tommy.

“Yeah, I’m sorry about that. I need to do this quickly.”

“What is that?” Tommy pointed to the bottle whose contents Nicholas was spreading around his yard.

“Vinegar,” said Nicholas.

“Vin – why?”

“I need to kill the grass.”

Tommy crossed his arms. “Are you going to re-sod the yard?”

“I don’t know.”

46 “Well... what about the people who are coming to look at your house?”

Nicholas looked down and started fumbling in his pockets. “It might be bad someday. It’s worse on the video tape, trust me.”

“What?”

Nicholas continued to fumble in his pockets. “It’s worse on the video tape.”

“What are you talking about, what video tape?”

Nicholas pulled out a box of matches and pulled one out. “Should I burn it, too? Just to be safe?”

Tommy began to back away.

Some time later, the house was properly in shambles; the lawn was brown and dying, and would probably soon be

set aflame. The rafters were torn down, the shutters had had holes blown in them from a blowtorch, and the vinyl siding had been shot at. Nicholas observed all this and decided to go back inside, careful not to trip over the front door that was lying in the driveway.

As he entered the house he was assaulted with mosquitoes and flies that had come in through the open and broken doorway and windows. More concerning to him, however, was the living room, where he had torn the carpet up. He had to tiptoe very carefully in order to avoid stepping on an exposed nail. The only thing that was pristine in the room was the entertainment center, where rested the television and the VCR which continued to show the video that he had watched and observed so obsessively over the last three days.

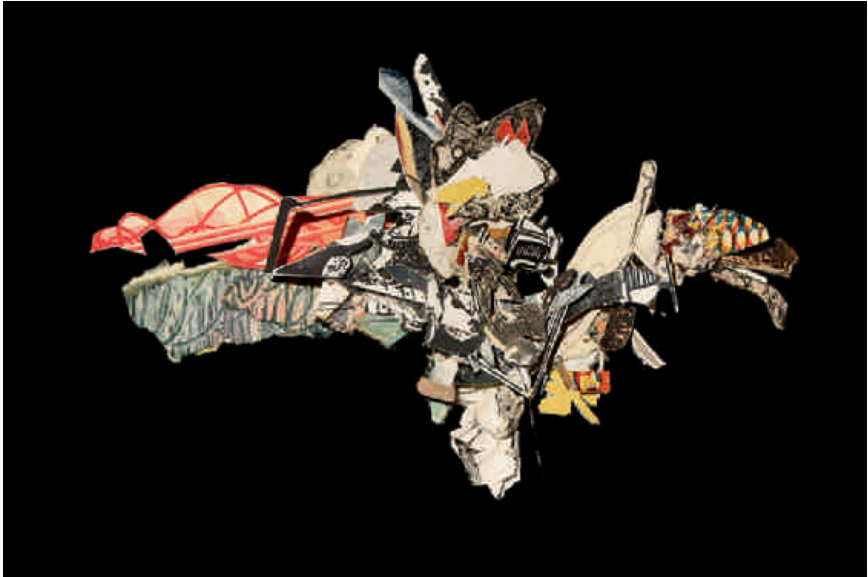
Nicholas found a nail-less patch of wooden floor to sit on and lowered himself down. If the video finally showed what he wanted, then he could finally feel free to take a baseball bat to the television. Nicholas sat and watched the video, and a huge wave of relief washed over him. It was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen: yesterday.

47

He whistled as he picked up the baseball bat and finished his work.

***ART EDITORS CHOICE AWARD***

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48

**Quarterly Quitters**

*Sarah Kinard*



## ASSISTANT EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD

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### Of Treachery

*Felicia Chisholm*

Distant soul-sistah chides her in the chosen hour,  
a distracting sugarhoneygirl— stale-sour.  
Distant soul-sistah incites me nay haughty,  
a dignified sweetbuttercaramel— spiff-salty.

We,  
by Judas, swept away  
different directions but fatally close.  
Me,  
emancipated,  
by divine unconventional he, “You’re my Ruby.”  
But like disrupted fish in diaspora to compost,  
I shake,  
in bed,  
suffocating silent screams suppressing me,

49

alone,

nauseated by the freshness of morning and the former’s decep-  
tion.

Lacerated.

Slumber uninterrupted—the day’s priority—but longing  
to meet death,

*sí, fin de la vida, pero sin dolor,*

peacefully,

involuntarily.

A newly radiant “ruby”

blind to it by choice,

and *disobedience*— my catalyst to spiritual cancer,

fighting sanity  
like octopi in my larynx.

And I keep shaking, choking, pining for control.



50

**Still Life Disrupted**

*Lindsey Bargar*

## **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S CHOICE AWARD**

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### **Mourning**

*Willard Ramsey*

Act I

*Silence for three minutes.*

*Five gunshots in rapid succession from Stage left.*

*Silence for one minute.*

*WOMAN cries in sadness Stage right.*

*Silence for two minutes.*

*Three priests, ten flower girls, four men in coats, three women in ball gowns, seven men in all red, six doctors, five teenage boys, two women on the phone, nine boys holding candles, and one hair stylist run from stage right to stage left.*

*Curtain.*



**Delicato I**  
*Kwan Fuller*

## A Secret I Kept

*Jami Hodgins*

I used to believe the voices—  
The whispered words, the hushed tones,  
The ones I'd never seen—  
People traded them all the time

But I'd never kept one of my own,  
Until dawn overtook dusk and  
I was still alone  
Glancing over my shoulder in two-second intervals,  
Tripping over my feet in broad daylight  
It was my predator, and I would  
Soon be consumed as its prey

It thrived in the shadows,  
So I tried to remain in the light  
Until the time came when, once again,  
Day was overcome by night  
Who told the sun to set?  
When was the moon to rise?  
Full of darkness, looming as my fate  
Its daunting would be my demise

Seconds transitioning into minutes  
Half past dusk and a mile to dawn  
Wringing my hands and pacing around  
So unsettled, I mustn't have been aware  
When did my feet sink below the ground?

Immobilized by the earth below  
Bound to it, sinking fast beneath the surface  
And though I strained to cry out,

For what it's worth—  
No one will ever know

The voices are silenced  
Now I am with them, and I realize  
They don't whisper amongst themselves—  
They whisper words unseen to their own eyes  
I made the mistake of trusting  
What was not before mine—  
A curse, I know now

If only I'd known the whispers  
Were echoes from below the ground

54



**Serenity**  
*Will Lattman*

## Summer House

*Caroline Riley*

Wind chimes danced with the breeze outside an open set of glass double doors, begging to be invited in with the tickling smell of cucumber. A candle burned on a walnut table, wind taunted the flame, and a trail of smoke weaved its way past paintings of skulls and oceans hanging on mint walls. Like incense for the living, the home breathed summer, warm sun, and crisp wind. The dog-eared pages of magazines ruffled in its grip and paper argued with ink, forgiving each other when the storm had passed only to hurtle threats of fluttering off the counter at the next breath. A ray of sun slashed through the double doors, searing the milky hard wood like a laser meant to chop the snoozing cat straight in two, a torture with which it appeared content. A clock ticked, potted plants whispered, and the fuzzy beast thunked his tail to celebrate the season. The skull of a deer pouted over the mantle, upset with the mirror across the wall that showed not thirteen points but twelve, what a lie, and the music irritated his younger brother whose bones lay labeled and unperturbed in the dining room. The kettle stirred, promising tea to the young fawn waiting patiently at the table, but tea would never come. No one drank tea in the summer.

55



## From Anonymous to Identifiable

*Alicia Tosca*

Knees scraped along bark as the lion tree  
sucked me into its embrace.

My mother hated that I climbed trees.

My mother hated that I climbed trees  
with the neighborhood boys.

The sun stirred in the sky,  
clouds melted apart,  
and there was fishing  
there was biking  
there was climbing—and lots of it  
there was fighting  
and, of course, too much pretending.

The sun followed me,  
spinning webs of time  
that clung to my bones and to my skin.

56

Puberty crept in  
and with it came my curls—my genetically re-enforced  
femininity.  
A new wardrobe, a new set of friends, refined behaviors.  
Goodbye, hats.

Hello, headbands!  
No longer looking but looked at,  
baptized in my own hormones,  
I stand now on the roots of the trees  
that no longer suck me in.



## Tents

*Colby Dockery*

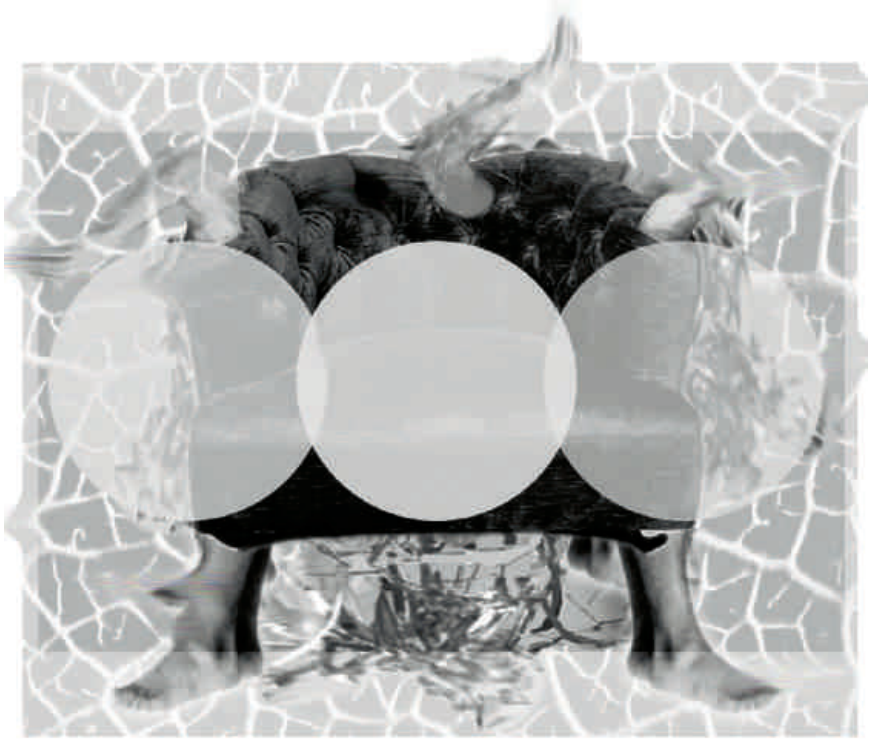
We don our masks to hide our impish plot  
and now are here, when before we were not.  
Enter our striped tents of black and white—  
and turn thy day to Dionysian night.

We will swing through the air with endless grace  
and put a smile on dear Apollo's face.  
Be not afraid of whom thou cannot see—  
they only want to laugh and play with thee.

We break the feeble limits of the mind  
in these tents where Muses hath intertwined.  
They will tell thy fortune and make thee smile—  
and only occasionally beguile.

57

We have no doubt thou wish for us to stay  
lest thou dost leave and drive thyself astray.  
So make a plea to Hecate's mindful ear—  
and catch us all before we disappear.



58

**No Feet**  
*Kwan Fuller*



59

**Dragon Bottle**  
*Sarah Stokes*

## No Nerves

*Ana Barkley*

I can't think of anything except that I don't feel nervous. At least not yet. I'm not sure what I'm supposed to be thinking about in this moment. Maybe I'm officially unafraid of flying. I wouldn't know, considering this is my first time on a plane. I should just appreciate the beauty of this night while I can. Staring out this window makes me feel like an astronaut. I have always dreamed of being an astronaut, so it makes me feel a little hopeful.

Hopeful for what? I ponder this until Nate leans over to me.

"Hey, I gotta take a leak. Stay cool."

He leaves his ugly navy blue fedora on the seat for some reason. I keep telling him that it's a chick repellent but I think his grandfather gave that to him, so I could understand why he latches onto it. Nate's grandfather is the only person that  
60 has ever really been there for him and treated him like he's an actual individual. I know Nate will miss him. Or at least his grandfather will miss Nate.

I look around at these people in the cabin and reflect on the monotony of people in general. The concept of people is so dull. People are so twisted. Manipulative. Only interested in themselves. My ex-girlfriend especially. People are mistakes. People are my biggest mistakes.

"I paid Eva an extra hundred because I know Charles will be a nightmare. But at least I left him the iPad." A woman in front of me snickers to her meat head of a husband.

She is especially disgusting. Her hair is dyed red with blonde splotches. Her leather skin is painted with cosmetics that probably cost an obscene amount of money. And here she is, chortling with the father of her child about leaving their kid

behind while they escape to an exotic getaway. He says nothing. He's reading about baseball and steroids in a Sports Illustrated. What a douche. I wish I was making this up.

Nate slips back into his seat.

"I'm starting to sweat." He tosses his red curly hair with both hands.

"Where?"

"Uh... everywhere?"

"Well stop."

"I'm trying god damn it!" He's starting to lose his cool. He's always been hot-headed. But I've always been patient, which is why we make a great duo. Nate makes up for it with the enthusiasm and ambition that I lack. He leans back and wipes his hands on his basketball shorts.

"How much longer?"

"I don't know, an hour?"

"Shit." I can see the panic across his face.

"Just go to sleep. It'll be fine," I assure him. "I'll wake you up."

"I can't fucking sleep," he retorts bitterly. At this point I decide it's best to end this conversation before he starts a scene.

For the next ten minutes he shakes his leg, taps his fingers, and wipes the sweat from his face until he attempts to make small talk.

"Did your mom give you any money?"

"Hell no. You know my mom."

"No one gave you money?"

"Nope. You?"

"My dad gave me 100 dollars. I'll be glad to waste that bastard's money any day. He's just going to buy coke with it."

Both of Nate's parents have their destructive vices. His

mom is an actual hooker who will probably die tomorrow from meth. Last time he talked to her a few weeks ago, she was hooked on this insane Russian drug called Krokodil that eats your flesh and makes you a walking zombie. He said she had a giant hole in her forearm that looked like ground beef.

It's ridiculous how messed up both his parents are compared to him. It's as if Nate's the adult. Once he told me that all he ever wanted in life was a real mom and a real dad that "did normal parent things." I told him I would give him my childhood if I could. It was a really special moment.

"So this guy right here? He's got about a kerbillion dollars in the bank from a butter company he inherited." We make up bullshit stories about people and their lives to pass the time.

"What's it called?" I ask. Nate looks better, but still a little on edge.

"I don't know, fucking, Dad's Butter or some shit." We snicker like we did when we were in primary school.

62 "Right, so he's a billionaire. His wife's name's Sheila but she's actually from China."

"No, Paraguay."

"Where the fuck is Paraguay?"

"By Brazil."

"Fine, Paraguay. She-" The flight attendant passes us and asks us if we would like somerefreshments.

"No thanks," We say in unison.

"What time is it?" He asks me after she's well down the aisle. I check my watch.

"It's quarter 'til midnight."

"Ready?"

"Yeah man, ready as ever." He looks around as if he's

"You sure?"

"Absolutely." No nerves even now.

"We're fucking nuts. I swear I love you."

He tackles me into a hug for what felt like half of my life before he kicks the back of the seat in front of us, igniting the bomb on the inside of his shoe. The meat head turns around, ready to kill Nate. Nate smiles wildly at me and lets out the most genuine laugh I've heard from him in years.

"See you in Hell, man!" Nate yells as flames envelop his freckled face and the cabin erupts into a cacophonous chorus of blood-curdling screams.

## **The Purpose of Gods**

*Rachel Burns*

When the sun first hit the Nile  
the whole world must have sung a song,  
its deified notes tasting of gold-  
of lapis, alabaster, myrrh-  
sweetness and luxury and deep, soul-rich sensuality.  
That song is dying on a heated breeze,  
weaving and whistling through split pillars,  
caressing rough half-faces melted by the elements.  
The air hums in lost places with the ghosts of voices,  
raised and praising, mimicries of the First Song.  
These ghosts are not enough, the gods have agreed;  
humans have forgotten grandeur.  
Ra bows low, sinking into the Earth,  
carrying humanity's borrowed glory,  
pulling with him the last refrains of that First Song  
as he retires to where the other gods have gone to die,  
and a silent ripple disturbs sunless delta waters.



**Primal Scream**  
*Philip Perry*



## Consumerism

*Rachel Trueblood*

“In the station of the metro”  
there are solemn faces turned towards the  
exit that empties into the  
road that leads to the market

Where the masses herd like  
self-governed sheep and  
where the workers gather  
like a school of fish to a baited hook

With caution, with certain indignation  
they find themselves where they were  
Yesterday. The week before. A year ago.  
But not more than two.

One young man finds himself blankly  
gazing at his parents, at what they are,  
at what they used to be, at what they sell,  
at what they used to sell.

He sigh for the spicy paella  
he would trade on Saturday afternoons  
for a necklace or a pair of earrings  
from the Czech antique stand on the corner

Now, the antique stand only sells  
machine-made jewelry from China  
and the young man has nothing to trade  
but a pre-packaged lunch from America

The customers are taking photos

and smiling and buying such things  
while they laugh to each other and say  
“What wonderful souvenirs!”

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66

## **Piles**

*Heidi Nisbett*

## Peeling

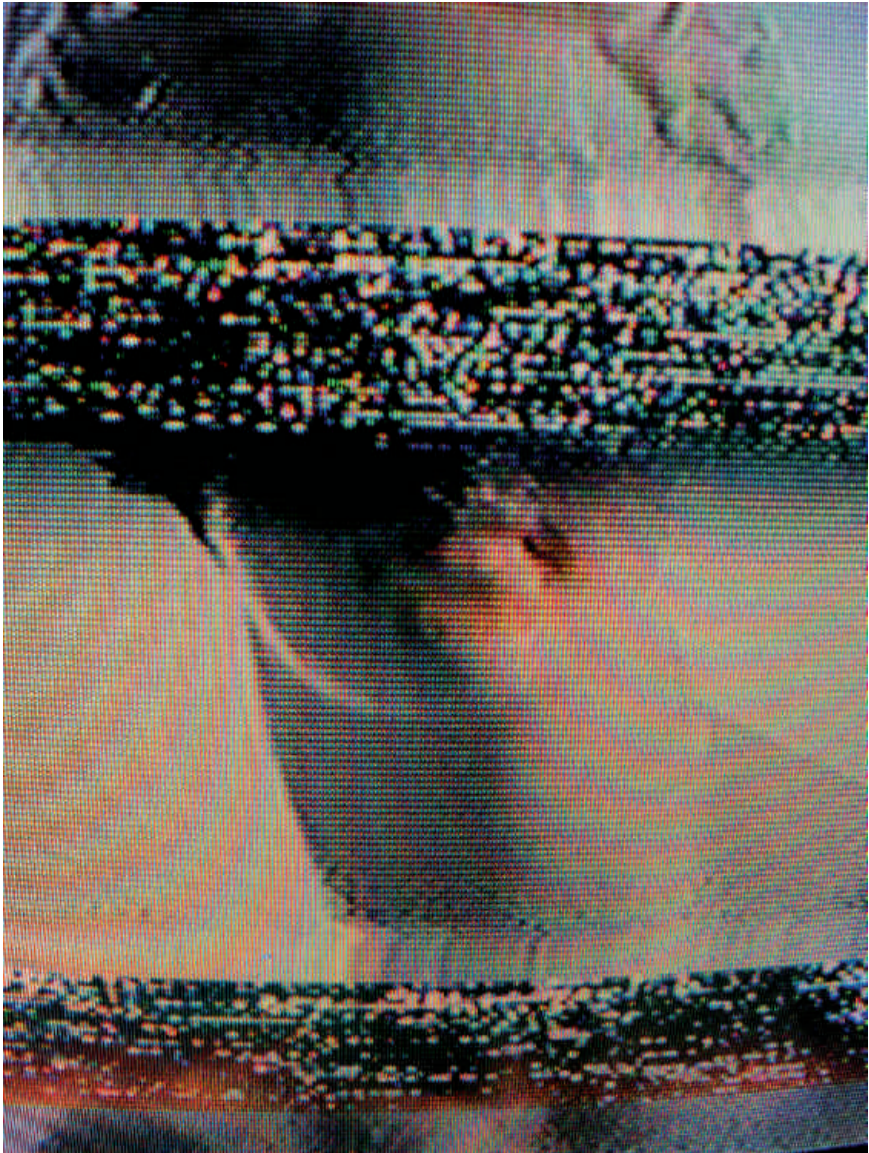
*Connor Renfroe*

Thought I might be peeling  
Back the layers of your shell  
To caress your gelatinous core,  
But merely sticking my hand  
Up your shirt to stroke your tummy.

And when I meant to  
Grasp your heart, perhaps  
I was just groping your breast.

Pillows that I scoured,  
Scavenged for your scent—  
That was just me trying  
To insist to myself  
You were real.

Fingering the waistline,  
Dancing the delicate line  
To unveil your sensitivity:  
Probably just a ploy  
To uncover your choicest bits.



**Identity Withheld 4**  
*Dylan Bannister*

## Binomial Nomenclature

*Emily Thomas*

The morning you died, I stood  
outside of the hospital thinking  
about some verse in the Bible:

If you believe that Jesus is your savior,  
then the Kingdom of Heaven shall be yours.  
I couldn't quite remember it right,

but the whispered prayer filled my lungs.  
Like fresh spring leaves, a green butterfly  
floated down and circled around my head,

gently sprawling in the early sun.  
Delicate lepidopteran.  
I remembered from biology class

that their wings were covered in scales.  
Touch them and they leave a fine dust  
between your fingertips.

Abdomen, thorax, proboscis slurping nectar  
from pistils, stamen, anthers of a flower.  
*Danaus plexippus*. Monarch.

You in the Kingdom of Heaven  
and I, here in Kingdom Animalia.

# The Tie-Dyed Bandana

*Lauren Miller*

My roommate and I were at Urban Outfitters on the day I found the bandana. This was before I had boycotted the store for selling shirts that say “Eat Less” and “Depression” and other horrible things. It was lying on top of a stack of men’s t-shirts, out of place. The bandana had pink, blue, lime green, and yellow swirled around behind a skinny black design. I checked the price: \$7.95. I threw it over my arm with the skirt and flannel shirt I had already decided on. I found Bridgette at the jewelry and started looking at the rings.

“What does my thumb ring make you think of?” I asked her. I held up my hand to show her the silver ring with rose cutouts that I had worn for years.

“Honestly?” I nodded in response, and she continued. “It makes me think of Brent. I’m not sure why- maybe because of the pictures of you two holding hands- but I always think of him when I see it.”

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She was right. That ring was the only thing I had held on to since my relationship with Brent. After I broke up with him, I packed away all of the letters and notes and told my mom to throw them away. My hair was a different color, I had lost weight, and I dressed and acted differently. I changed everything when I got rid of him. That was the only way I knew how to get better. He was my first real relationship, but he had verbally and physically abused me for two years.

I picked out a new thumb ring, size eight, and marched up to the checkout. I turned on Paramore in the car and we screamed along to it. On the interstate, I waited until there weren’t any cars behind us and rolled down the window. We were going 80mph and the wind rushed loudly by. I threw the old silver ring behind the car and watched it bounce like a rubber ball until I could no longer see its glint in the sun.

I felt positively triumphant, and I even let out a yell. The little ring, the last remaining evidence of him, had been like a shackle; I was finally free.

.....

A year later, the bandana was a regular part of my wardrobe. I loved wearing it with bright pink lipstick that matched the pink in the design. I usually wore it when I was working out or when I wanted to hide my greasy hair. I loved how the bright colors popped against black clothes. One day in March, I put it on in an attempt to look cute but laid back. It matched the baseball tee that I wanted to wear. I didn't want to seem like I was trying too hard. It was my crush's birthday, and I was going to his dorm to hang out with him and his friends.

We ended up going to get weed and parking to smoke. My heart pounded with the thrill of possibly getting caught. The car was full, so I ended up on my crush's lap. Bob was attractive because he was unattainable. I was a young, naïve freshman, and he was an older musician with dreadlocks. He always seemed dirty, but in a sexy way. He slipped his arms around my waist as the bowl was passed around. It came back to us, and he asked if I wanted to shotgun. The car laughed at me when I said I didn't know what that was. For some reason, I had no problem being in the car but drew the line at actually smoking. Instead, I let the sweet smoke drift around me, satisfied with a strong second-hand high. Later, Bob invited me to stay in his dorm. I started out on the futon, but gradually, by whispered invitations and body language, ended up intertwined with him in his awkwardly small twin bed. We both pretended I was just there to sleep, and the anticipation of who would move first was thrilling. I could hear every noise the two of us made. Slowly, achingly slow, he moved his hand from behind his head and lifted my chin up to face him. His moustache and scruffy beard were a surprising difference

from the baby-faced teens I had kissed before. As I searched for my clothes the next morning with a smug grin on my face, I found the tie-dyed bandana lying by my shoes. I decided that it was lucky.

Two years later, I was packing for a trip to New York City with my boyfriend Lewis. The lucky bandana was not as vibrant as it once was. The edges were frayed and the fabric was thinning in a way that made it soft and pliable. I tossed it into my suitcase by habit; I needed something to hold my hair when I washed my face, and I would probably wear it out at least once. Everything in the fancy minimalist hotel was stark white, and when the bandana was tossed on the floor it was easy to find. One night after washing my face, I put it on the robe hook on the back of the bathroom door. We had two days left in the city.

72 Traveling with a significant other tells you a lot about that person, and a pregnancy scare tells you even more. Unfortunately for us, those things happened at the same time. We tried to enjoy this great trip too soon after we thought we were almost parents. It's funny how a negative test ends the worry but doesn't end the stress. Questions like "Well, what if it had been positive? What would we have done? What would you have done?" were constantly thrown around. They hung around like a fly that gets stuck in your room at night, that you hear but can't see. We laughed, rode bikes around the park, ran for trains, danced around theatre lobbies—but in every moment of silence, there it was, buzzing around.

In the airport we sat at our gate waiting to board. I was going over everything I had packed in my head when I realized what I had forgotten. I felt the last of my ability to fake being happy escape like a deflating day-old party balloon.

"What's wrong?" Lewis asked.

I told him it was nothing, just that I had left my bandana in the hotel room. He patted my knee, reminding me



that I had lots of bandanas. I could have called the hotel and asked them to ship the bandana to me, but I decided not to. I needed more practice leaving things behind.



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## **Pierre avec du Chocolat**

*Abdul Shabazz*



STAFF

# PATRICK KAY

## *EDITOR-IN-CHIEF*



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**Patrick Kay** created a Xanga blog account in the eighth grade to connect with classmates and provide them with bad lyrics from crappy early-2000s post-grunge bands. In his ill-advised and all-too-public ramblings on school society he found out he could write a decent sentence or two even while remaining cloyingly saccharine. This developed into a love for language itself and a mindset fueled by magical thinking which assures him he will be so damn good at making wordstuffs that he will never have to worry about keeping the lights on. He has served as the Editor-in-Chief of The Anthology for the 2014-15 year and worked as the magazine's Prose Editor for the 2013-14 year. Though open to new existential crises which may completely unbalance his sense of self, he is old enough to realize that he will most likely always be this way.

## Cornpone Gives Directions

“Yes ma’am. I’ve known Ol’ Bill for many a year now. Been to his place often a time. His wife cooks meaaaaaan apple mess, I tell you what. Oh. Oh, yes ma’am. Here’s what you do: Go down Bright Street ‘bout half-a-mile, take a left. You’ll know to take a left when ya see Chilly’s Biscuits – that’s the best eatin’ ‘round these parts. Then you’ll see one a those fancy-dancy neigh-bor-hoods called Sicklemore Grove comin’ up on your right. Take that right. Go down aways, past the pink house Miss Margareet built for her cats and then past the rainbow house us boys built when we rounded up all them gays, and eventually you’ll see Ol’ Bill’s place ‘bout a mile away on top of that there hill. At this time a day you might find yourself stuck behind a honkin’ yellow schoolbus, and they stop pretty frequently, be ferwarned. Anyway, the schoolbus’s last stop is the house right next to the wormhole we discovered with tha ancient and immortal god Nyarlathotep inside. Yes ma’am, Nyarlathotep. Bill’s buster Duck was diggin’ around in a haystack for a lost catcher’s mitt when he acc’dentally discovered a tear in space-time. Funny how the good Lord plans these things for us, ain’t it? Anyway, that rift which shatters sanity grew and grew ‘till it blocked the whole road up to Ol’ Bill’s place. You’ll hafta go through it if you want to get there, but it ain’t a problem. You’ll wantta do some breathin’ exercises in order to prepare yerself for the hideous monstros’ty that infests your mind and has caused many a young lady, such as yerself, to jam her windshield wipers through her own eyeballs. Heh. Funny what that Nyarlathotep can do, when e’rytime I’ve seen ‘im he just floats along in the endless void singin’ the song of unlife. There’s that chance you’ll make it through, though, and when you get to the top of that a hill, I’m sure Ol’ Bill will be waiting for ya with a nice pitcher of water to refresh your irrepr’bly-damaged psyche. An’ if yer really lucky, his wife will have some apple mess layin’ out on the window for ya. Yes ma’am, you’ll be fine. I’d go m’self but I can’t operate no motor vehicle no more after that wild child o’ mine ran my back over with that aflaming chariot. It’s gonna be a great party, though, Ol’ Bill’s been talkin’ ‘bout it before church for weeks.”

# CONNIE SHEN

## ASSISTANT EDITOR

**Connie Shen** is a writer from South Carolina who has grown to embrace and love her Japanese and Chinese heritage despite all of the people who told her to do otherwise. She aspires to one day be a famous essayist or novelist, but needs to graduate and learn more life skills first, like how to change a tire or make her own doctor's appointment.



### Peppered Moth

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In the dream world, everything is perfect. Of course, there are still white people, but they do our nails and take care of people's kids and mow lawns for a living. God apparently made a pact with one of them and told them that they'd done so many bad things that he was going to get rid of them all immediately—ASAP, pronto, stat, in a jiffy. Apparently the guy started crying like a baby and got snot everywhere, begging him to give them another chance and that they had really messed up big time couldn't he understand how very sorry they all were? So God said, alright, alright, I'll let you all have one more pass, but things are going to be real different this time around. And it is!

Anyways, the dream world doesn't exist anywhere except for my own head (brain, noggin, thinking machine), and I know that people would get real upset if I talked about it during class, so I just keep it to myself. I do dream about it at night sometimes, but only after we've had fried pork curry and rice for dinner, and even then everyone in the dream world

looks kinda scary. My dad, who had a really fancy restaurant back in Japan but now works in a Chinese place at the mall as a chef, says it's because of the sodium and cholesterol levels. I don't really know what that means, but I like my mom's food, so whatever.

I.

The first time I had a crush on anybody was last year in the 5th grade, which was weird because by that time, all of my friends had dated at least three people if not more. They read their e-mail conversations to me, but all they ever talked about was what they ate for dinner, or how bored they both were, and all of the messages ended in "I love u"s, which was extremely disgusting and weird to me. But the boy's name was Aaron Miller, and as soon as I saw him, I knew I wouldn't mind talking to him for three hours over AIM, even if he ended up asking to see a picture of my butt or something. He had blue eyes and curly brown hair and wore old khaki pants that were way too short and wrinkly, like his family didn't own a washing machine. My mom always made me watch her do laundry on Sundays while my dad was working at the restaurant, folding grandma's extra-small floral sweaters into a neat pile before loading my grass-stained blue jeans and toothpaste-dribble t-shirts into the washing machine. While she was doing laundry, I was forced to work on my Japanese exercise books, writing *kanji* like "bird" and "flower" and reading stories for her out loud as she pulled bobby pins out of her lint-covered pink apron to pull her bangs back from her round, tired face.

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"I'm not doing it today, *Okachan*."

Every weekend, I refused to look at the books, believing that maybe, just this once, she would be cool like my white friends' parents and let me play like a normal kid on Sunday.

My mother didn't even bother to look at me before responding, her hands moving mechanically as she ironed the

creases into my father's black pants, hot steam pouring out of the iron like a tugboat.

"Okay, then. Don't."

"I'm not going to."

"That's fine, *Michiko-chan*."

I waited for her to protest, to pick me up by my arms and tie me to the kitchen table, gluing a pencil in between the webs of my fingers and pressing my hands down to the page as I screamed, a true hero to all Japanese-American kids everywhere. But that never happened. After five minutes of freedom, I would look at my mom and start feeling guilty about it all, so I would start reading the story just to make her feel better. That's the only reason, though. I knew how sad she would be if I didn't do it.

80 None of my white friends had to do anything on Sunday. My best friend, Maddie, got to sleep as late as she wanted, while I had to wake up at 7 A.M. to help my mom make breakfast for my brother and me. Maddie got to go to pop concerts, while I could only listen to classical music on the radio. Maddie's little brother was named Zach and was really skinny, while Keiji was fat and had a name that none of his teachers could pronounce. Maddie was good at math and science, while I liked to read books and couldn't figure out if a platypus was a bird or a mammal or both. Even though I felt jealous sometimes, she was still my best friend.

On Monday, after my mom dropped me off at school early, I rushed to my locker and sat there after I got all of my books out. Not that I wanted to sit on that nasty floor with gum and fingernails and dried nachos on it, but I had memorized Aaron's schedule by now to know that he had a class right beside my locker first thing in the morning. I was so excited that I felt like I was gonna pee my pants, so I made sure to clench my legs extra tight and cup the place in between while I watched the clock on the wall until it was 8 A.M.



Suddenly, I heard people coming down the hallway and knew that it was time. I jumped up so fast that my head hit the locker above me, the metal making a weird popping sound as it hit my glasses and I fell backwards, hard, onto the dirty floor again. I heard people gasping and giggling around me, one girl almost moving to help before I suddenly saw a shadow above me. *Please please please don't let it be Aaron*, I thought to myself before opening my eyes, but, of course, it was.

“Hey, Michiko.”

He was smiling, but not in a mean way, and his hand felt rough as he reached down to help me up. I tried to say something like *thanks* or *I like how short your pants are*, but all I ended up saying was,

“Haaaannnnnnn.”

Aaron looked at me for a second, confused, before nodding and walking away. I wanted to die, but before I could run into the classroom to grab a pair of safety scissors and stab my heart with it, I heard Maddie's voice behind me.

“Ohmygod, are you okay?” She grabbed my arm and started scrubbing at the dirt on it with her lint roller that she carried around in her backpack.

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“Yeah, I'm fine. I'm just really embarrassed because I fell in front of Aaron and made a really weird noise afterwards.”

“Oh, man. Well, that sucks, but I honestly don't know if you two could be together anyway.”

I stared at her, with her straight blond hair and clinking charm bracelets that hit together as she now moved to wipe dirt off of my back. Maddie had never been mean to me before, not really, unless I had eaten her chips at lunch or taken one of her gel pens without asking. So why was she saying this so calmly, as if Aaron weren't the biggest greatest love of my entire life?

“W-what makes you say that?”

“Oh, well you know.”

“I don’t know. That’s why I asked.”

“Well, I don’t want you to be hurt, it’s just...”

She stopped talking for a second, looking like she suddenly didn’t want to be there with me any more. The silence made me feel guilty, as if it were my fault for making Maddie tell me the truth. Right when I was about to say that, though, she said,

“He probably won’t like you because you’re not...um...”

And that’s when it hit me. Why Aaron, the boy with curly brown hair and blue eyes and a mom who worked as a yoga instructor at the local YMCA wouldn’t be interested in someone like me, who brought weird smelling lunches to school and had brought in one of my kanji exercise books to school for show-and-tell, only to have had everyone complain that they couldn’t understand anything I had written.

“Is it because I’m Asian?”

“Well...yeah.”

# ZACH NESMITH

## *GRAPHIC DESIGNER*



**Zach Nesmith**, also widely known as Neesmith Onzeur, did not study graphic design but said he used photoshop before and made a video game once so they said, “Ok”. When not looking up how to do simple things in inDesign, he was often out taking pictures like these-

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And these...



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He also shot the Anthology staff (with a camera!) for this bio section as well as the cover of this year's issue. He especially enjoys when someone visits his website ([flashcrackphoto.tumblr.com](http://flashcrackphoto.tumblr.com)) or flickr and wants everyone to know that any of his photos can become posters, t-shirts or soon include you and your friends if you just reach out to him and send an email.

# MIKE MORALES

## *POETRY EDITOR*

**Mike Morales** finds it hard to submit a biography, as one cannot write a biography of someone without a life. Mike spends most of his time sitting alone in a dark room, lit by only the glow of a computer screen, playing video games. He also sings, but big deal, no one cares about that so don't even ask him about it. He also likes poetry.

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## Decanted

The sickly sweet aroma  
Of a potent potion  
Knows no mater  
It wafts in waves  
It finds an unsuspecting nose  
Under which to dance.

Like sirens to the sailors,  
It sings its song  
Bright with hope  
Dripping with anguish  
Under the guise of absolution  
It lays man to rest.

# GABRIELLE WOLFE

## *ART EDITOR*



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**Gabrielle Wolfe** has been making things ever since early childhood. She was born in Northeast Pennsylvania and grew up in Charleston, South Carolina. Gabrielle began her studies at Winthrop University, in Rock Hill, South Carolina as a painting major. After taking a course that incorporated basic printmaking techniques during her freshman year, she fell in love with the process and effects achieved through various printmaking techniques. Now Gabrielle's work incorporates influences from her prints and paintings, meshing the two media into work that is richly layered and textural. She is currently a senior and plans on graduating in May 2015 with a BFA in Fine Arts.





## Answers Will Come

# LAURIE HILBURN

## *PROSE EDITOR*



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**Laurie Hilburn** is the prose editor at The Anthology. She's an English Literature and Language major with a double minor in Creative Writing and Women's & Gender Studies, making passionate debates on feminism and literary adventures her areas of expertise. She enjoys thinking she's super smart, but when not trying to strengthen her noggin (arguably the only exercise she partakes in), Laurie plays video games late into the night, nourishes her affection for cats and dogs and all the bunnies, and tries to write creatively. Her goals are to become an editor at a publishing company or write for video games. She would much rather become Wonder Woman, but she accepts collecting a silly amount of Wonder Woman merchandise instead.

## Undone

*"How can we be whole together if you are not empty in the place that I am to fill?"*

- Robert Olen Butler, "Jealous Husband Returns In Form of Parrot"

She kissed me the night of the Halloween party, her skin-tight cat suit meeting my plastic princess tiara in the middle of the dance floor, and she hasn't kissed me since.

It had been unusually hot for an October night, but the basement, so packed with students that the old dorm building ached beneath their weight, was even headier, heavier, sweat licking down the inside of my white tights. The refreshments had long since been served, leaving guests grumpy and loud, rebelling against their calloused throats and the pulsing music, swaying to the beat until it broke them. The party had several casualties—the heel of a shoe, the entrails of a dress, a bloodied fight over the ownership of top hat—but the night still insisted that it was young. Halloween—college—magic—I felt crushed beneath it all.

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She beckoned me with her finger, manicured claws luring in the scratchy fabric of my gloves, and drew from the V of her leotard a flask, a silvery potion brewed just for my split lips and never to be tasted again.

I was all angles then; I was sharp edges, a rough patch, fumbling for ease, to fit as a square into the circular escape. My dress pinched at my back, skin pink from the heat and restraint, and my knees threatened to break, unscrew at their hinges, at each clunk I took in my costume heels. My shoulder jarred against one couple—toes tripped against my hem—

when I met the center, the force of the blasting drums and shrieking guitars locked in my box-shaped self, steadying but trapped, held together and in need of repair. The dancing partners shifted and bounced around me, like I was a party decoration to perform to, and the colors and shimmers and sounds bled together until I thought I would drown in them.

As her elixir burned down my throat, she laced our hands together. I was rusted to the floor, but with ease she pulled me closer. "I can't," I tried to say—can't dance, can't talk, can't move, can't breathe, can't fit into the curves of her body, the smooth circles, the soft lines, graceful serpentine curled into her form until a purr seemed to melt and drip and shudder right off of her skin. My limbs shook in her grasp. "I can't—"

She kissed me, liquid against solid, molten, flowing, until the tarnished edges corroded, dissolved, and were purified. She smiled into the kiss, nose wrinkling against mine, as the rest of me was smoothed and fluttered, untied, undone.

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When she pulled back, I was scarcely tangible; the ethereal echoes of her taste tethered me to her. "Can too," she hummed, and then she tipped back her head to drink from her flask, releasing me from her touch. I could barely hold on—I can barely hold on—I am barely holding on—

*Can too*, she whispered, from when she kissed me the night of the Halloween party, her magnetism meeting my iron, drawing me forward to where she hasn't kissed me since.

Not yet.

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Margaret Adams** is a junior at Winthrop University. She utilizes poetry to understand the world and its issues. Romanticism and Modernism are her favorite eras of poetry, which she incorporates into her writing.

**Ricky Baldwin** is an English major at Winthrop. He wrote a poem. Now here we are.

**Dylan Bannister** originated in the miniscule Sandy Springs, South Carolina, nestled between Anderson and Clemson. Deriving from his deep-seated infatuation for nostalgia and technology, his recent imagery involves capturing stills from dated, obscure VHS tapes. If free time makes itself available, he can be found surfing the information superhighway and collecting Pocket Monsters.

**Lindsey Bargar** is a junior Photography major. She enjoys exploring the wide spectrum photography offers. In her spare time, she enjoys watching Breaking Bad, playing board games, and eating Uncrustables. Lindsey hopes to continue taking pictures of various assortments for the rest of forever.

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**Ana Barkley** is a sophomore Choral Music Education major. She enjoys her major, intimate conversations over tea, and serif fonts. In her spare time, she explores art and loves people.

**Heather Bechtler** is an English/Creative Writing major with a minor in both music and psychology. She works as an adventure guide at Camp Canaan and a rock climbing instructor at the Winthrop rock wall. Additionally, she enjoys yoga, art, and adventuring outdoors.

**Dave Birley** was born in Canada before the Internet, computers, or even TV were invented. With adventures and opportunities in many parts of the world under his belt, he settled on a career as a portrait photographer. When, at age 78, he discovered that the BFA path at Winthrop included drawing as a pre-requirement, he switched to English, and has been enjoying the writing assignments

a whole lot more than he ever did with the drawing ones.

**Rachel Burns** can't believe this is her third time being published in The Anthology! No, really, she can't believe it. Is this a joke? Guys?

**Chelsea Chao** is a junior illustration major and aspiring concept artist. She enjoys and appreciates a good story to be told in thoughts, writing, and images alike.

**Felicia Chisholm** earned the nickname "Truth." She is an English Major in the Literature/Language & Secondary Education track, with Religion as a minor. If she could have any superpower, it would be invisibility; if she had one wish, it would be unlimited wishes. When she is inspired, she writes. When she is not inspired, she writes.

**Nicole Davenport** was born and raised in Anderson, South Carolina. She is currently a BFA candidate at Winthrop University, majoring in General Studio with concentrations in Sculpture and Printmaking. After graduation she plans to pursue a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in order to teach middle level art education and eventually teach classes from her own studio.

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**Colby Dockery** is a senior English major with a love for languages, stories, and performances. He enjoys late night adventures, procrastination, and pretending to know what he's doing. One day, he hopes to be a published author of fiction and travel the world.

**Ashley Felder** is currently seeking a BFA in Jewelry Metals and Sculpture (graduation, May 2015). In addition to being a maker, Ashley is a yoga teacher and will soon be travelling to India to attend a yoga school. Lately, she draws most of her inspiration from nature, ephemerality, and the fleeting moment.

**Kwan Fuller** is a recent Winthrop graduate who is pursuing a career as a fashion photographer.

**Cassie Graham** is a senior double-majoring in dance and English (creative writing track). She plans to obtain her MFA in creative writing after graduation to pursue a career in Southern regionalist writing. Cassie looks forward to growing old and set in her ways in a plantation home in the beautiful Carolina country.

**Joanna Henry** was born in Florida, and relocated to South Carolina in 2007. She is currently a Senior in the Fine Arts program at Winthrop University. She works in acrylic and oil paint to create abstract landscapes and images.

**Jami Hodgins** is a freshman English major who doesn't quite have life figured out yet. She tends to ask a lot of questions out of some inexplicable, insatiable curiosity she constantly harbors. Some of her favorite things are words, trees, bacon, long walks, people-watching, list-making, and Taco Bell.

**Sarah Kinard** is a recent graduate from Winthrop University where she received a BFA. She is attending USC in the fall of 2015 as a candidate for a masters in printmaking.

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**Will Lattman** is a Sophomore BFA Commercial Photography Major, and is from Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. The photograph used in this year's Anthology is in memoriam of his father. Aside from photography, Will likes to theatre, socializing, and his hair.

**Katie Law** created this monotype as an experiment with linearity and values of black and white. Most of her work features women and comments on how the focus is always on their bodies and sexuality instead of who they are.

**Elli McNall** was raised in Chapin, South Carolina, where she cultivated a love of art, color, and paper hoarding early on. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor in Fine Arts in General Studio with an emphasis in Painting and Printmaking from Winthrop University. While earning her BFA, she also works for the Winthrop



University Galleries as the head Undergraduate Assistant. She has had works displayed in a variety of solo, group, and juried exhibitions. Additionally, she won the 2014-2015 Fine Arts Endowed Scholarship as well as the Dedicated Painting Student Award the past two years.

**Lauren Miller** is very excited to be published in *The Anthology* for the second time. She is a junior English major who plans to go into publishing. Her inspirations include Walt Whitman, Lena Dunham, and Taylor Swift.

**Logan Moody** was born and raised in South Carolina. He is seeking an undergraduate degree in English, though his dream is to move to the mountains and work for a small brewery. Or something like that.

**Heidi Nisbett** is in the process of earning her BFA from Winthrop with a concentration in painting and printmaking. Her work subtly touches on female social issues by portraying disturbing subject matter in a pretty and delicate way.

**Philip Perry** was born during a January blizzard where he was stubbornly born in a shade of blue due to a lack of oxygen and an unwillingness to exit the comfort of his mother's womb. Raised in the heat of the southern sun, surrounded by damnation, wooden porches, and farm animals, Perry formed a close bond with himself early on and thus formed a deep love of solitude and indulging in creative pursuits. Perry's current work deals with identity and the way in which we as individuals interact with our own personas, our own histories, our own relationships with one another, and our surroundings.

**Mitch Postich** is a secondary English education major. He writes weird stories where bad things happen because he is a weird and angry person. In addition to poorly writing, he poorly plays guitar and poorly acts.

**Willard Ramsey** is a double major in Art History and Music, and is very excited to be a part of The Anthology. He studied Creative Writing at the Fine Arts Center for four years under Sarah Blackman and Claire Bateman, and would like to thank them for all their inspiration!

**Connor Renfroe** is a junior English major minoring in Creative Writing and German. He likes to write angsty poems and essays in a decrepit composition book.

**Caroline Riley** is a 22 year old Illustration major at Winthrop University looking to graduate in May 2015. She has a deep love for writing, drawing, cats, and unusually dark stories.

**Jessie Rogers** is in the process of completing her final undergraduate semester at Winthrop University. She is pursuing a BFA in General Studio with concentrations in Painting and Drawing. Jessie recently participated in UNC Asheville's 6th Annual Contemporary Drawing Discourse, and her work has been accepted into the upcoming 2015 ArtFields festival in Lake City, South Carolina.

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**Tom Seay** is a second year MFA student at Winthrop University set to graduate in May of 2016. His current work starts with photographing people with crowns he has created. His interest lies in perception of power and portraying this through photography and painting with the use of props he creates himself for each person he photographs and paints.

**Diego Segura** is a senior English Major with a concentration in Literature and Language and a minor in Creative Writing. He enjoys the ironic practicality of philosophical foolishness, and he is interested in spiritual and religious topics and genres. He plans to pursue a career in technical communications.

**Abdul Shabazz** was born in Washington (the state, not D.C.), and

was raised in Charleston. He is a junior Illustration major who loves to work traditionally, especially in pen and ink. His work is influenced by the animations done by Chuck Jones, Tex Avery, and the illustrations created by Al Hirschfeld and Jules Cheret.

**Sarah Stokes** comes from the small town of Seneca, South Carolina. She is receiving her Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in Photography and Ceramics. Upon graduation, she hopes to travel and continue making art.

**Emily Thomas** is a sophomore English major from Charleston, South Carolina. Her writing is often inspired by the larger-than-life characters in her family. After graduation, she hopes to pursue an MFA in creative writing.

**Alicia Tosca** is a senior English major with a severe interest in philosophy and religion. She takes a nonchalant approach to life and has mastered the art of procrastination. After graduation, she will meet the real world with a pen, paper, and sarcasm.

**Rachel Trueblood** is a junior English major at Winthrop with a minor in Women's and Gender Studies. She enjoys the finer things in life, like potato chips and exceptional water pressure in the shower. After graduation, Rachel will most likely remain in Rock Hill at a dead-end job where she'll daydream about fantastical life options she couldn't afford such as living in Germany for a year or joining a Utopian commune.

**Garrett Woolf** served in the United States Army for four and a half years. He is now working towards a degree in psychology with a minor in creative writing. This is the author's first time being published. He now lives with his son in Fort Mill, South Carolina.

