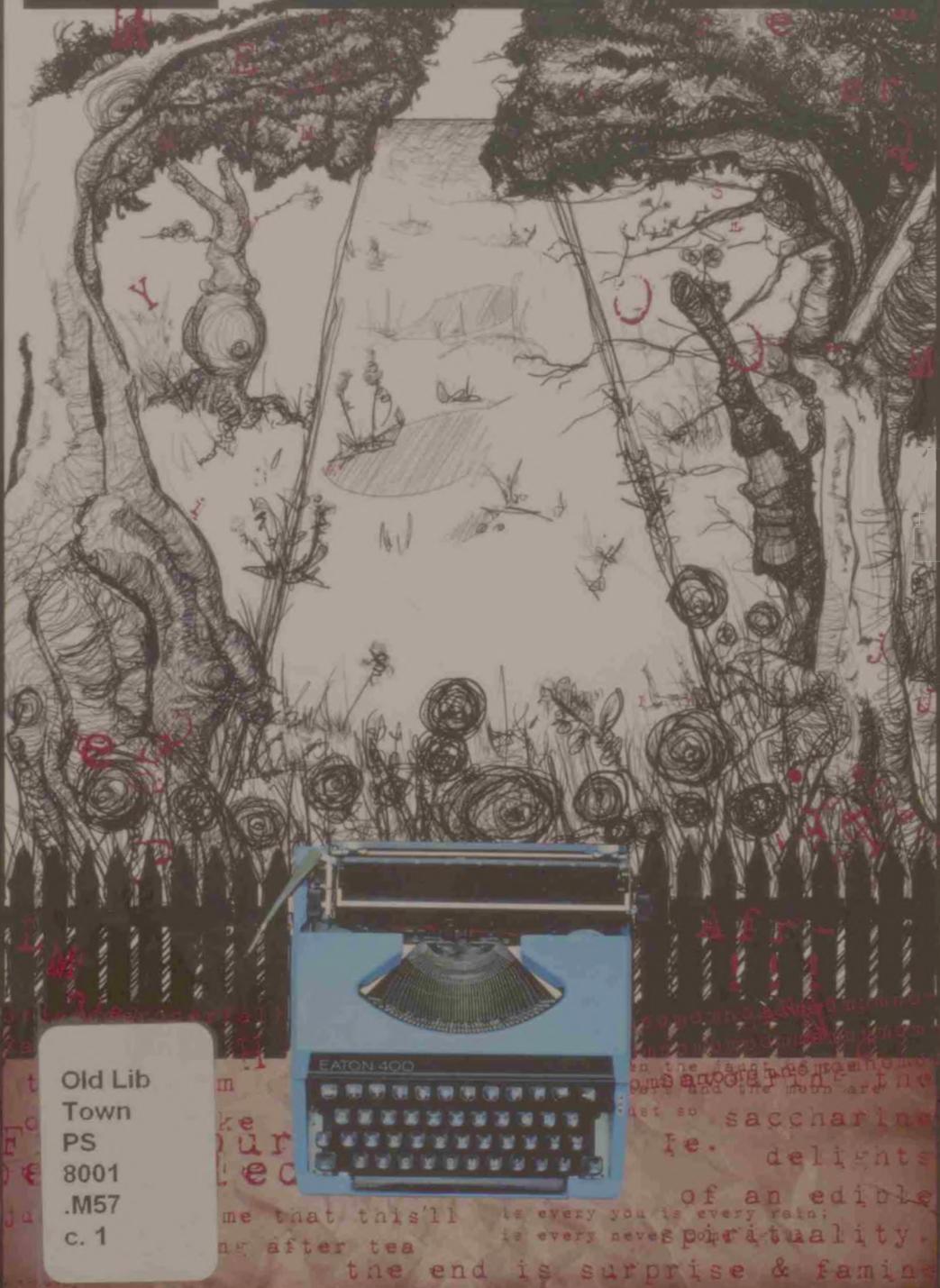


THE MITRE 2010



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... is every you is every rain;
... is every nevespirituality.
... the end is surprise & famins

Bishop's University

The Mitre

117th edition

**The longest running university literary
magazine in Canada**



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Editor's Interruption

The Mitre was my creative escape; a place where your words created a different world, one where we listen to the snow fall, where the world is flat and your eyes are alive. For that I thank you.

I won't keep you. The pages ahead are where the real magic happens. Enjoy it.

Anabel Collin

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*Doodles by Mel Marguerite Hattie (Thank you! Thank you!)

A nice regard
A kind word or two
A warm hug
And yet—
inhuman.

K. King (November 2009)

evidence
by *Olivia Arnaud*

my love you got left behind,
along with a pair of white socks

I found them under the bed,
sitting on a dust doily

I cradled the socks in my palm
smartly folded,
an offer you made of your own accord,
respect for my suffocating neatness

when did you forget these?
how could I have missed them?

I wonder how you walked out of here
without your socks
you never went barefoot in your shoes

I wonder if you meant to sleep over once
against the rules
so when you woke up
you could put on a brand new pair

or maybe you came here after a run,
and after you stripped your clothes
you borrowed a pair of mine

and then when I did laundry
they fell out of the basket

perhaps you still have my socks
hiding in your top drawer
like a photo of my face,
a scribbled number on a napkin

am I hiding under the mattress
just like you?

my palm itches with the evidence
and before I can let you back into

my heart
my space
my dresser drawer
I set your socks back under the bed,
back in the dust



Masked by Erin Wells

Knowing Discontinuity

By Gordon Lambie

We are in the car when she expresses the weight of it for the first time. The rain holds back and the background music drifts between songs.

"I want to go back to having fun without feeling guilty."

Those are words that carry a profound heaviness, and the whole time I'm trying not to compare it to my own experience because some part of me says that would be inappropriate.

I signal to pass a black sedan.

This is not the first time she's known discontinuity and it won't be the last; whatever it was that happened to my own grandfather two years ago, (oh God, is it two already?) has no bearing on what's going on now. That thought is wrong, but debating that with myself right now would also be inappropriate. We haven't met with her uncle yet, because we're still in the car, but that need for propriety is already there, that sense of conceding to the will of the pall.

I've heard people call death a dance before, but looking back and looking ahead I know that mourning's the dance. Death's a breeze, at least that's my impression; where the real footwork comes in is afterward, for all those of us who stuck around.

The Sedan fades out in the rear-view.

The skies are grey and the wind is cold, it is a perfect autumn day, and she just wants to go back to having fun without feeling guilty. We cruise along at one o' five.

Forty-nine hours and twenty two minutes earlier I find out before she knows a thing and try to figure out how to talk to her about it without destroying her contagious good mood. Twenty four hours from now the body's in the ground and the world is still grey, I've gone back to school and she's bent over the toilet with something that might be viral and might be stress but probably finds its roots in both.

We pass a dead skunk and she turns her head towards me, but I think of it as turning away, to think of her as turning to me would be inappropriate, I'm here for support, not to star in the show. I tell myself to shut up; we smell the skunk for two kilometres.

I see the skid marks on the side of the road like I do every time we drive up here and just like every other time I wonder what happened. A great song comes on the radio and we sing, I speed up to one-twenty without noticing. She notices; we stop singing.

Four hours later we stand in a receiving line in what could be a hotel lobby save for one significant difference with the musical equivalent of limp celery playing around us; her fifty-something gay uncle who could be twenty five makes a crack about Johnny Cash and we laugh until we realize we're laughing; His brother, carrying the family on his shoulders, ushers us back to solemnity as the crowd gathers, citing procedure. Propriety holds its course.

The rain comes back again and I hit the wipers. They glide back and forth with a sombre sense of propriety but miss critical patches; our old car coughs and carries on.

Two years ago I'm in the bedroom looking at a flashing light on my answering machine and knowing what my mother is about to say to me, what she said hours ago, but I will only hear now.

Two weeks ago I'm talking to my mother about my great uncle and how his heart stopped in the shower. We speak of his lost mind and how we'll miss his annoying phone calls about pants, even though we won't.

The rain makes me think of Simon and Garfunkel. "Cathy's song" starts on the radio; I wonder about precognition until she changes the song. The road gets wetter and I slow down.

Last winter we've owned the car for two weeks when we spin out in a snowstorm and I'm sure my life is over. She screams with a terror I've never known before. We climb out of the car sideways, unharmed. Half an hour later we're in another ditch and I've forgotten how to be afraid.

I reach out with my right hand and rest it on her left. I think to put it on her thigh, but that wouldn't be appropriate. She squeezes and I can feel that weight. She squeezes and the squeeze runs right back to her heart. I can feel

the tears she's holding back, they cloud my vision. I pull my hand back lightly and wipe my eyes before they can do anything unorthodox; it's not my pain, I have no right. I think about hands.

Four hours later I look at it and see the hands. It's face would have you think it was sleeping, and when I go to sleep that night I will dream exactly that, but the hands, those farmer's hands, mislead no one. Made soft in death they look wrong and though everyone else is commenting on the artistry of the thing, I can see the truth, because of the hands. I don't say anything, it wouldn't be proper. I cannot remember my Grandfather's hands.

Sixteen hours later I am dressing for the funeral and I see my father's hands sticking out of my shirtsleeves. It is like seeing a ghost turned inside out, I've seen him before, but never in my hands. It makes me think of the night before. Men have died younger than my father. This is not the first time I've known discontinuity and it won't be the last. The thought makes me cold.

The fans are on to keep the windows clear, but the air is cold and we are both uncomfortable.

Two years ago I carry my grandfather's coffin out of the church and, although my brother and my uncles bear it with me it feels like I'm carrying the man alone. He is heavy and I don't know what to do with myself afterwards.

A month before that I sit at his bedside, it is Christmastime and I am having the best conversation I've ever had with a man who terrified me as a child. He is small and pale and I wonder if this is the last time I will ever see him. It is and it is not. He asks me to help him into his chair; he is heavy and I don't know what to do with myself afterwards.

After his funeral my aunt tells me how he was afraid to hold my brother and I when we were babies. I am lost for words.

In the car I think of none of this, but I will later, and I know that I will. She looks out the window and comments on the colour of the leaves, which she says have changed quickly this year. I don't really feel that they have, but I agree because anything else would be inappropriate. We pass a sign telling us the exit is in three kilometres and a part of me laughs, knowing the opposite is true. This has only just begun.

I take her hand again and clear my thoughts.

"You okay?" She asks me, and the oddity of the question overwhelms me.

"I will be."

She nods and looks back out the window

I will be, and so will she.

This is not the first time we've known discontinuity, and it won't be the last.



Driving you home by Dayna Lowe

Sunday

is the day that doesn't know
which shoes to wear
patent church party leather
soft-soled foot-formed slippers
or walking shoes

it sleeps late because it can
then regrets the wasted time
stares out the window
(rain-spattered
more often than not)
at the ones who walk
as if they belong to each other

walk as if
that was what Sunday were for
as if the sun were shining
and Sunday was a meanderer
undetermined but also undisturbed

a day of no fixed address
no enforced rules

of serenely empty pockets

a front porch
late brunch
no watch
timeless open field
wildflower day

and not just Monday
in advance.

By Michelle Barker

Un Episode De La Vie De Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811),

Le Petit Soldat Prussien Qui Devint Le Plus Grand Poete Allemand

Par Nathalie Lachance

(...) C'était dans les tranchées qu'il avait perdu le souffle pour la première fois. La poussière semblait avoir pris possession de son corps. Il devait constamment se frotter les yeux, incapable de discerner les formes de ses camarades, de l'ennemi, de son propre fusil. Il avait l'impression de ne suivre que des ombres, braquant sur l'ombre de l'ennemi l'ombre de son arme. Le médecin, un petit homme à la voix douce qui ne semblait pas savoir, lui non plus, ce qu'il venait faire dans cette galère, lui dit qu'il était asthmatique et qu'un séjour trop long sous le drapeau de la Prusse le tuerait, et en plus c'était le printemps, ajouta-t-il. Heinrich voulut cependant continuer à servir l'État, ayant le sentiment diffus qu'il fallait bien servir quelque chose. Son cas empira. Ses crises étaient fréquentes, ses camarades tentaient de faire preuve de compassion mais ils ne se préoccupaient pas trop du sort de leur jeune comparse, occupés qu'ils étaient à panser qui un membre blessé, qui une vilaine cicatrice ou un coup à la tête, quand ils n'étaient pas, plus simplement, morts.

Heinrich fut renvoyé dans sa ville natale de Frankfurt-an-der-Oder sur ordre du médecin. Il se reposa pendant quelques semaines puis reprit du service, devenant fonctionnaire. On lui demanda de s'atteler à la rédaction de lettres destinées aux veuves de guerre. Ces femmes, ne sachant pas encore qu'elles étaient veuves, devaient recevoir une lettre annonçant la chute de leur mari au combat (lettre accompagnée d'un formulaire

quelconque décrivant les détails de la pension accordée à la dite veuve pour la remercier de son noble sacrifice, etc. etc.).

Heinrich attira très rapidement l'attention des autorités, faisant preuve d'un doigté certain dans la rédaction de ces lettres. Au début, il ne savait pas trop quoi écrire. Il suivit un modèle de lettre rédigée par son supérieur et qui avait fait ses preuves. Puis, après quelques dizaines de lettres assez banales, il commença à modifier une phrase ici et là, ajoutant un adverbe, modifiant un nom. Il se mit à jouer avec le carré magique de la syntaxe allemande. Ses phrases s'allongèrent. Son supérieur, qui autrefois ne manipulait les lettres que pour y apposer le timbre royal, commença à les lire, passant du soulèvement d'un sourcil (à la lecture de la quarante-troisième lettre de Kleist), à une larme discrète (la soixante-sixième), à un sanglot tout à fait assumé (la centième).

Quand Heinrich quittait la maison le matin, marchant de son pas hésitant vers le bureau, on le suivait maintenant du regard. Le supérieur n'avait pu s'empêcher de faire lire la cent vingt-deuxième lettre de Kleist à sa femme, qui n'en dort pas de la nuit. Que de beauté, mon Dieu, que de beauté, se répétait-elle, enviant secrètement le sort de Frau Schmidt, à qui la lettre était destinée. Que de beauté. Elle en avait bien sûr parlé à toutes ses amies. Le matin, quand il se rendait au travail, Heinrich ne remarquait pas ces rideaux qui s'ouvraient sur des visages de femmes mariées rêvant de tendres adjectifs, il ne voyait pas ces jeunes filles qui soupiraient au souvenir d'une subordonnée particulièrement émouvante. Et que dire de ces jeunes hommes qui le croisaient en chemin et qui se tenaient un peu

plus droit en l'honneur de ces noms communs lourds de sens qui suivaient Heinrich comme son ombre : Ehre, Dienst, Entsagung.¹

Il devint plus utile à la Prusse en sa qualité de rédacteur que lorsqu'il était au front. Ses lettres consolait les veuves, illettrées pour la plupart, qui, quand on leur lisait les mots de Heinrich, fermaient les yeux, levant leurs âmes vers le ciel, remerciant le Créateur et le Roi pour ce meilleur des mondes, ce monde qui acceptait tout sacrifice, même celui des peuples. Les lettres de Kleist, que la femme du supérieur tenait maintenant à lire, à copier et parfois même à apprendre par cœur, pour ainsi répandre la bonne nouvelle aux quatre coins de la ville, consolidaient les liens entre le Roi et son peuple, hommes et femmes souhaitant de tout cœur voir leur existence transfigurée dans une lettre à venir. On raconta même que le Roi fit l'expérience d'une intense communion avec lui-même lorsqu'un subalterne lui recita de mémoire un paragraphe d'une lettre envoyée à une certaine Frau Bauer.

Heinrich ne se rendait compte de rien. Personne ne lui parlait de ses lettres. Des conversations s'interrompaient soudainement quand il entrait dans une pièce, ce qui le laissait, il faut le dire, plutôt perplexe, se demandant continuellement si on voulait lui cacher quelque chose ou si sa seule présence indisposait à ce point la haute société de Frankfurt-an-der-Oder.

Puis un jour, il ne put plus écrire. On venait de lui demander d'écrire à une Frau Richter, pour lui annoncer que son fils, qui, selon les

¹ Honneur, service, renoncement.

dates inscrites au registre, venait de fêter ses quinze ans sur le front, était mort. Sa dépouille serait rapatriée dès que l'on en aurait retrouvé tous les membres. L'enfant avait, en effet, été déchiqueté par l'ennemi.

Il fixait sa plume, le papier. À chaque fois qu'il se penchait, pensant qu'il allait enfin pouvoir coucher un mot sur le papier, il se retenait, se relevait. Il en était incapable. Il ne trouvait pas les mots. Ehre, Dienst, Entsagung. La petitesse des enjeux. La grandeur, la grandeur traître des mots. Un enfant était mort.

Son supérieur passait et repassait derrière lui, discrètement. Ah, cette lettre, comme il était impatient de la lire. Il connaissait Frau Richter. Dix ans plus tôt, il travaillait à Königsberg, un patelin éloigné de l'est de la Prusse, et cette Frau Richter faisait le ménage chez lui. Elle n'avait qu'un fils, ce fils déchiqueté par l'ennemi. Le supérieur n'avait jamais eu tant besoin de lire. Il avait besoin de ces mots, des mots de Kleist. Mais la main de Kleist demeurait immobile. Il semblait perdu dans ses pensées.

Soudain, Kleist se leva. Il se dirigea d'un pied ferme vers le supérieur, qui, en fait, n'était qu'à trois pas. Il lui dit qu'il démissionnait. Le supérieur ne comprit pas. Kleist dut répéter plusieurs fois. Le supérieur le regardait, interloqué. Démissionner? Mais qu'est-ce que ça voulait dire? Que voulait dire ce mot dans l'univers des mots de Kleist? Le supérieur tentait de comprendre la métaphore. Quand Kleist prit son manteau et sortit, en plein après-midi, quand il ne revint pas, ni une heure plus tard, ni le lendemain, ni le surlendemain, le supérieur comprit que l'utilisation du mot démission était tout à fait littérale. Il s'écroula et dut être remplacé, victime d'une grave dépression.

Sur toute la Prusse planait un nuage de mélancolie. On sentait partout une perte de sens. Heinrich, en proie à de graves crises, ne sortit plus de chez lui, jusqu'à ce qu'il n'en sorte quelques mois plus tard. (...)

Myopia

They lay stretched out on their stomachs,
Unimpeded by swelling breasts,
Bodies concealed by the downy fabric of their sleeping bags,
On the basement floor.
Markers of an abandoned game strewn at their feet
Innocent beverages clutched in their fists
Eyes fixed on the television's proclamations of passion and devotion
But they're engrossed in talk of love.
He's cute. No way. Do you like him? No!
Their chatter is weighted, burdened with their inexperience –
The overbearing virtue that marks them.
So far-removed are they from the plights of adolescence
Corrupting forces that will curdle their pure blood
Making them rampant and wild
And insatiably thirsty.
Swathed in their innocence
Their dislocation is their salvation
They nestle into the cocoons of their youth
Sleeping and dreaming
That these days could last forever
They will awaken, shed the bonds
That now suffocates their desires
They will emerge women, but retain
That wide-eyed gaze
Short sighted in its optimism.
Rose-colored, it beautifies the world
Which, blooming,
Echoes their chrysalis.
That delicate freedom;
Tiptoeing on the peripherals
Of precarious maturity.

By Denise St-Pierre

The Autobiography of Luke Flemming

By Allison McClare

My Birth: By Luke Flemming

Bright!
Clear!
Cold!



It's terrifying.
But I can't sleep
forever.

What am I going to look like?
What are they going to name me?
How long am I going to spend there?
And where will I go after?

My lungs have filled with a thin, clean substance.
It stings
Just a little,
But soon it coats my lungs entirely
And everything is brighter, clearer, colder,
And I drink it down.

I'm a little overwhelmed here.

My Sexual Awakening: By Luke Flemming

The first glimmer of light...
It creeps under my eyelid.
A cacophony went off inside
my head
And in my chest
And in my pants,
But my bedroom
has stayed utterly silent.

Next time,
I'm going to be listening to
Tom Jones.



I open my eyes completely
And my Habs posters are brighter
than they've ever been.
The sun-shine penetrates the blinds
As if to holler
"HALLELUHIA!
I'M GONNA LIVE FOREVER!!!!"
Me too, my friend.
Me too.

And even if I don't,
I'm going to do this
As many times
As possible
And I will die happy.

Today I am a new boy.
No.
Today,
I am a new man.
Tomorrow,
I'm going to ride a wild cheetah.
The day after,
I'm going to barbeque a great white shark
with my bare hands
And smother it with tobbasco sauce.
I don't know how to use the barbeque yet.
But I'll learn,
Because I can do anything.

My Records are Scratched: By Luke Flemming

"And it was cold, and it rained, and
I fel-
It was cold, and it rained, and I
fel-
It was cold, and it rained, and I
fel-
It was cold, and it rained, and I
fel-"

You bastard.

I could take it with *Zeppelin II*.
I could even take it with *Abbey Road*.
But having to live without *Ziggy*
Stardust and the Spiders from Mars
Is going to change everything

Maybe this wouldn't have happened
If I'd jut put it back in the
sleeve every time I listened to
it,
But I didn't.
I figured,
"I listen to this so much,
I'm just going to take it out
again sooner than later."
This is going to change
everything.

Everything seems so permanent
The house I live in,
The poems I've written,
The people I love,
They're all being obliterated
One surface scratch at a time



My Last Week around This Place:
By Luke Flemming

Perhaps it's just the morphine,
But that nurse has impeccable bedside
manner.
When she taps my new IV
She puts her hand on my shoulder
And when she's done, her eyes lock onto
mine.
They're the most beautiful shade of brown.
And I'm happy.
Because whatever happens tomorrow
Happens tomorrow.
But right now,
Her eyes are so spectacularly brown.

The kids will be fine.
And Maggie will learn to move on.
Please, please, let Maggie move on quickly.
But what am I worried about?
She's the toughest Amazonian bitch to have ever
lived.
I have faith in her
As much as I have faith
In the paradox that is faith.

Today is today
And it's better than yesterday
When my whole family saw me get sick in a bedpan.

Last week it was Nancy down the hall.
Then on Monday it was Gerald.
You and I are just soldiers
Marching through the trenches.
Together and alone all at once.
Trying to hold on
To the meaning of the mission



What if the world is flat
By Ergot Heraclitus Wormwood

the greyhound coach left Montreal
with its human cargo at midnight
it is dawn before one man realizes
he did not know where the bus was going
"I was supposed to be in Springfield one hour ago!
I'm going to Springfield!"
the boy next to him crying
the passengers quickly realize they don't know
the trajectory of the humming machine
the oaks along the guardrail maintain
a pathos of distance—scenery unfamiliar
even the sky withholds its hand
Edgar in his flannel denim jacket whispers
I can't read my ticket and then he whispered it
so loud that the bus shook and quaked
a University professor adjusts his spectacles
and exclaims— why should it matter where we're going?
I have a conference to attend at 9 AM!
a rumour circulates that God has a plan for the bus
but it cannot be confirmed
A shout from the back
God! I'm trying to sleep! another
Sleep now or forever hold your peace! another
what piece! what piece! what piece!
he breaks the radiator under his seat
and holds it over his head a trophy
"that's my space helmet!"
"Calm down! There's enough oxygen for everyone!"
are we going to outer space? out of what?
What are we leaving behind?
the high school student reading *Cat's Cradle*
chuckles to himself
and cracks knuckles
meanwhile a small group of women

in back
plot a mutiny
the driver has not been seen
he has made no announcements
since Pont Champlain
or Jacques Cartier?
no one knows where Interstate 97 leads
I'm going to Springfield!
I'm going to Springfield!



Untitled by Marcienne Koenig



Untitled by Marcienne Koenig

Home for the Holidays

By Quinton D Leduc

It is freezing cold outside; the snow is eight feet high and you have been traveling hours by train to get home in time for the holidays. You step out of the train and you know that you are home. The trees are covered in light fluffy white snow head to toe; kids are singing Christmas songs, and children are running to jump on their parents who have been waiting to see them. Their Mom's eyes are tearing up with so much emotion that their children have finally arrived. You decide to jump in the taxi, tell the driver to take you home, where your family is waiting for you.

You arrive and you take a minute standing outside of the house, just peeking in the window to see what's happening. You see your sister sitting down on a bench in front of a baby grand piano practicing Christmas songs waiting for you to walk in, remembering the great times she had singing songs with you. Your brother is sitting down with a cup of steaming hot chocolate with mini marshmallows, watching "How the Grinch stole Christmas", remembering the fun times he had with you, when you were a young kid and the only thing that was running through your brain was that you just wanted to be like him. Then you see your dad walk into the room; he has a hammer in his hand ready to fix something that he has postponed for months, but when he finds out that you are coming home, he decides to get it done. There he goes near the fireplace, ready to put up the stockings, remembering the times he had telling you about Santa Clause coming down on Christmas Eve and making sure that you had been good. Now you see the most important person to you walk into the room, your mom. There she is all dressed up in green and red with a huge smile from ear to ear on her face knowing that any moment now you will be walking through those doors. She has been baking all of your favourite foods trying to fatten you up. She carries a huge plate of your favourite cookies and when your brother and sister try to take one, she slaps them on the hand telling them no, it's for your brother.

Now you realize that you are finally home, and then you grab your bags and run into the house, yelling "I'm HOME!" The family pets come running down the stairs excited to see who has arrived. Your brother, sister and dad turn around and can't believe their eyes. The only person that you want to hug and kiss before everyone else is the person who has sacrificed everything for you so that you can follow your dreams. That person means the world to you; the holidays would not be the same without her. There she comes walking into the room, and with tears of joy running down her face, you yell "Mom, I am home!"

Hungry Ghost
song lyrics by Carol Dignam

Why do I cry, why do I cry?
you wipe my eyes but they don't dry;
dry is the desert inside me,
I'm parched and thirst endlessly...

*I gaze inside afraid to see,
the ghost who hungers shamelessly;
shamelessly he devours my name,
till all that's left is the pain*

So who am I, who am I?
do I see clearly, or do I lie?
lay down with me and hold me close,
together perhaps we'll scare that ghost...

*but the more we shout, the more he grows,
his belly falling to his toes;
his toes they cling, nails slashing through,
my tender heart breaks in two*

closing my eyes I feel the pain,
streaming down my face like rain;
rain down on me and wash away,
all my fears and my armoury...

*I gaze inside surprised to see,
the ghost approaching tenderly;
tenderly he calls out my name,
then holds me as I release my shame*

why do I cry, why do I cry?
it's just me trying to say goodbye;
goodbye dear fears, beloved lies,
welcome moon, sun...and seamless skies...

The Exes
By Elle Anhorn

A boy and a girl walk on stage from opposite sides. They catch sight of each other and slow down, deciding whether the other is going to stop or keep walking. They both stop in the middle of the stage.

Lisa: Hey.
Ben: Hey there.
Lisa: How's it going?
Ben: Great, how are you?
Lisa: I'm good.
Ben: That's good. That's great.

Pause.

Ben: Happy Valentine's Day.
Lisa: Oh of course yeah, to you too.
Ben: Thanks.
Lisa: You're on your way to---
Ben: To Michelle's, yeah.
Lisa: Yeah of course. Obviously... Sorry. *(Pointing to his shopping bag)* SAQ?
Ben: What? Oh yeah.
Lisa: *(Leaning forward slightly to peer inside)* That's a good wine.
Ben: Is it?
Lisa: Mmmhmm.
Ben: Well good. You'd be the expert.
Lisa: No kidding.
Ben: ...I'm just teasing.
Lisa: No, I know!
Ben: You just really like wine.
Lisa: No I understood, don't worry.
Ben: Yeah.
Lisa: But seriously, that's a good one.
Ben: I chose well then.
Lisa: Yum.

Ben: *(Beat.)* Are you guys going out tonight?
Lisa: Um, I'm not sure yet. You guys?
Ben: Yeah I think so... see how we feel...dinner first.
Lisa: Of course, the wine. Does she like to cook?
Ben: I'm cooking actually.
Lisa: You are?
Ben: Yeah.
Lisa: Wow...That's great! That's great.
Ben: Thanks!...Yeah. *(Ben looks backwards, then turns back.)* Where are you heading?
Lisa: The bakery, for lunch.
Ben: That's cool.
Lisa: Yeah, me and... we go there a lot.
Ben: It's a nice place. Great coffee.
Lisa: Mmmhmm yeah.
Ben: It was before, anyways. That's what I mean. I haven't been there in awhile.
Lisa: I'm trying to drink less of it actually. Caffeine makes me all...
Ben: Yeah I know what you mean. Me too...I should cut back.
Lisa: Healthier.
Ben: Yeah.

Beat. Then, simultaneously:

Lisa: So what did you guys--- Ben: Well I'd better be---
Lisa: Oh, right sorry--- Ben: Oh, wait what? Go ahead.

Lisa: No. I was just asking what you two got up to today.
Ben: Oh, well, we went to breakfast and then we took a walk.
Lisa: Oh that's nice.
Ben: Yeah. How about you and...
Lisa: Just hanging out. Slept in.
Ben: Sounds great.
Lisa: Yeah it was. I mean. It is.

Pause. They share a look.

Lisa: Well I'd better---

Ben: Of course, get going, wouldn't want you to be late.

Lisa: Nope.

Ben: Can't be late today.

Lisa: Ha, yeah that would suck.

Ben: Definitely.

Lisa: No---

Ben: *(finishing her sentence)* kidding!

They share a little laugh.

Ben: Anyways.

Lisa: Anyways.

Ben: Happy Valentine's day Lise.

Lisa: You too. Ben.

*They both continue on their separate ways, offstage.
End.*



Mix tapes/cell mates by Dayna Lowe

Letter to Guy
By Noni Howard

my dear one in the north ward
of a northern country
battling the neige, the never ending
snow, now rain
a taste of bitterness
a wound.

what joy could you possibly have
in defrosting doorknobs, failed batteries:
who forgot the jumping cables?
the depressing ride to work
every dark morning
this isn't school we were forced
to go.

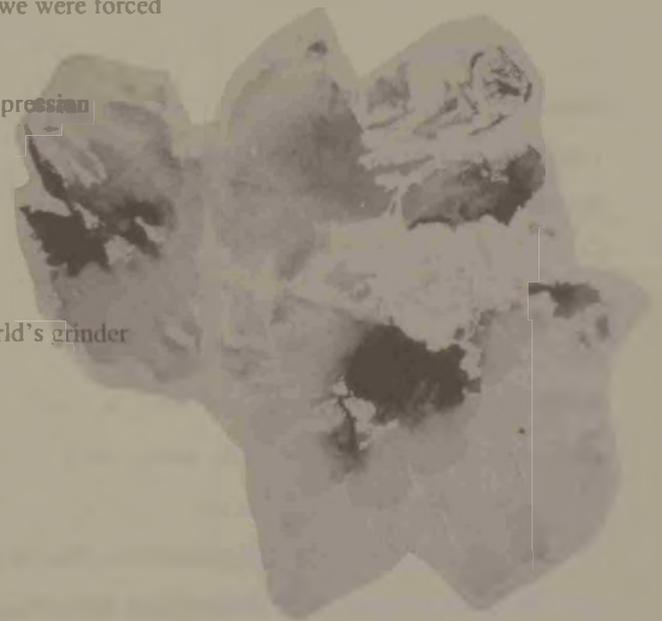
how does your warm impression
let all aside so that you
can see me
decadent beyond years
jaded because
I know too much.

two lost souls in the world's grinder
meet and hold
the living touch

for a scarce moment
while the children in us
eaten by time
grow up and up

who would have thought
who could have thought

that we would have said
that we LOVE each other?



BREAD
By Nancy Branch

Lizzie was running late. It was already ten o'clock and she'd not yet begun Mac's dinner. The problem wasn't the bread she'd started, but rather the yeast she was using to make it. She thought the yeast cake must have been old because it was taking a long time to rise.

In spite of the hour, she finished measuring out the bread ingredients with unhurried precision. She spooned flour into the measuring cup and leveled it off with a knife back and then dumped the contents into a heavy earthenware bowl on the counter. Into a second bowl, she plopped lard from the Tenderflake tin, followed by salt from the Mason jar, and sugar from the wide-mouthed counter canister. She returned the jar to the cupboard and the canister to its spot between the flour and the tea. *A place for everything and everything in its place*, she

Bread 2

thought, smiling with satisfaction. Next, she brought the kettle to a boil and immediately removed it from the heat before the bubbling water had a chance to go spitting and dancing across the polished black surface of the cook stove.

While the hot water melted the lard in the bowl, Lizzie reached again into the cupboard for the everyday dishes and set out two places at the table, brushing a wayward crumb from the oilcloth into the palm of her hand. Mac liked his dinner on time, he did, and got riled if it wasn't on the table when he came in wet and shivering from the fishing weir. If the meal

wasn't there waiting for him, he'd heave an exasperated sigh and toss his salt-stained cap onto the seat of the rocker near the front door.

Lizzie peeked out the window to see if he was still on the water. He was, but it wouldn't be long before he was in. She hefted her girth to the stove and began to fry up some onions in the cast iron pan. It was an old trick she used. The smell of the buttery onions always made her husband think dinner was well under way.

The lard had by now melted and the hot water had cooled to the right temperature. But the yeast still hadn't risen even half-way up the pressed glass beer mug she used when making bread. She stared for a moment at the tankard. Whatever had possessed Aunt Alma to buy that thing for Mac was beyond her. The old woman knew Lizzie frowned on drink in the house. Well, she'd made

Bread 3

short work of *that* gift and had found a good use for it before her husband had gotten a chance to christen it. But Lizzie was no fool. She suspected that Mac's little sojourns in the fish house with Arlice and Billy Loggie from down the bay had more to do with liquor than the mending of any lobster nets. Not to mention the trips to the barn with the uncles when they visited, which these days was often. *Well, I can't stop ya from drinkin*, she thought, *but I'll be darned if I'll let the wretched stuff into the house.*

Lizzie had lost her father to the drink, and her only son as well. Five years earlier, when a nor'wester had torn away the trap lines off Chance Point. And the fools – both of them – had gone out on the water when they should have known better, bolstered by the false courage of the rum and the desperate need to salvage what remained of their livelihood. Like

Mac and many of the fishermen round the cove, the two hadn't known how to swim. Not a stroke. Not a single, solitary stroke. Oh, they'd understood the subtle movements of the tides and the currents that ran under the bay; they could tell from the smell of the air if a storm was coming or if the sea would bring in a heavy fog; they'd sensed when the mackerel or cod were running and where best along the shore to drive in the spruce pickets for the salmon leaders. Yes, they'd known the bay as intimately as a woman's body, but they hadn't known how to swim. The irony of it still rankled. *Blasted*

Bread 4

prideful idiots, she thought. *How many times did I tell 'em? How many times've I told Mac?* In spite of the intense heat of the woodstove, Lizzie shuddered. Pushing her torment aside, she returned her attention to the bread.

The yeast had risen up the sides of the glass by halung degrees. So as not to waste time, Lizzie reached for the bread pans stored under the counter. She never washed them – not anymore. Over the years, they'd taken on a soft patina that prevented the loaves from sticking. All she had to do now was grease them ever so lightly with a wadded piece of waxed paper and a small dab of lard. As she withdrew the neatly stacked pans, she glanced out the sink window towards the beach. She could no longer see Mac and the other fishermen at work beside the weir – only Angus Jennings making his way up past the bluff and along the dirt road beside the north pasture. Coming slowly, with that hitching gait he had because of the farm accident when he was a boy. And his hair, with the cowlick in front, sticking straight up from his forehead like he'd got caught in a gully squall.

Lizzie watched his slow progress up the road. *Dear old Jenny*, she thought. *There isn't a soul alive kinder than him.* And then she saw it. The black cap in his hand. The one with the green brim stained with bay salt and the sweat of long days of dropping nets and hauling traps. The green brim *he* always wore turned

Bread 5

up.

The old man knocked twice and entered, as was his custom. He stood in the doorway of the kitchen, shifting the weight off his game leg and twisting the cap in his hands.

And Lizzie suddenly knew – she knew without him even having to say a word.

“Thank ya fer comin up, Jenny,” she said, taking the cap and hooking it over one of the wooden coat pegs behind the door. “I’ll be down to see ta things in a bit.”

Closing the door behind him, she walked stiffly up the back stairs to the bedroom, without a glance at the yeast spilling over the rim of the mug or the onions blackening in the fry pan.

Does my walk frighten you?
Do my words daunt you?
Are you timid of my gaze
that sees the recesses of your soul?
Or is it the radiant colour of my skin?
Yours, it outshines.

Then be frightened
Daunted
Timid
Dull
For me, I will never apologize.

K. King (November 2009)



Tea time by Dayna Lowe

The Second Coming

By Isabelle Schumacher-Chipps

I met Him at university, right around when He preformed His first miracle. We were at a party, and I was talking about how I wanted to backpack through Europe when the beer ran out. He told a couple of guys to fill the kegs with water, "Why man?" they asked "Just trust in me" He replied. So they filled them, and it was a miracle, because when we poured the frothy liquid into our cups, it was beer again. No one paid for alcohol for the rest of the semester, and Emanuel quickly became everybody's favourite person on campus. At first we thought that maybe He was eccentric and rich and just jerking around with us or something. But that wasn't really it. We would make Him do it over and over again, all of us watching and waiting. But we never caught Him switching the kegs, or filling them up with anything but water, so after a while we just had to believe Him. A couple of guys got Emanuel to put videos up on youtube, and even though most of the comments called Him a jerk and a phony, the word spread anyways. After a while reporters started showing up on campus looking for interviews, trying to get in on some of the parties. They asked Him all kinds of questions, like "Are you trying to promote underage drinking?" and "How do you feel about alcoholism?"

Emanuel started performing different kinds of miracles after that, and He stopped giving us free beer. "I want people to take my work seriously" He said, so when our quarterback Dan sprained his ankle. Emanuel put His hand over it until the sprain healed. He also got the girl in the wheelchair to walk again. And when I was on the verge of tears cause I was the only one that brought cookies for our bake sale, Emanuel manned the table for me and tons of people bought cookies, but we never ran out. People started showing up from all parts of the world to see Him: blind people, mothers with dying children, balding men. There used to be long line-ups outside of

His dorm room, and He had to post visiting hours so that His roommate could get some sleep.

Reporters started showing up again, and Emanuel even managed to score an interview with Barbra Walters. She'd hired a team of researchers and discovered that the night He'd been born, there'd been an unusual star pattern in the sky. In the tiny public hospital just outside of Rimouski, there'd been a huge bright star shining over Him, something that none of the nurses had thought of until now. She paused for a long time before she asked Emanuel "Do you think you're the next Jesus?". He just smiled at her and that was that: it made headlines all around the world. The interview played for months and months and was released on DVD to become a best-seller. Emanuel's mom, June, was also interviewed by Oprah. June told her that she'd been visited by an angel when she'd been pregnant with Emanuel. This angel had told her to not be afraid, that she was carrying a really special child that would one day change the world (June had spent some time in a mental institution after that, and her husband Steve had divorced her a few months later). Oprah smiled at June compassionately, as her eyes watered up. June gripped her son's hand, "It's been though," she told the cameras, "But seeing Him now... I'm just so proud. So proud of Him".

After those interviews, there was a boom in pilgrimages to our campus. People wanted to know why their prayers didn't get answered, how their dead relatives were doing, if it was going to be the end of the world now that Jesus was back again. And even more people started showing up to have Him cure their broken spines and botched nose jobs. Emanuel tried His best to deal with everyone. He hired me as His secretary and paid me with some of the donation money people gave Him. But it got to be that you could see Him by appointment only, and I had to organize them by priority, in half-hour intervals with one hour for lunch. For the questions, He held a press conference: "I just want you all to know that this isn't the end of the world." He said, "I'm here to bring you all to an age of prosperity. I'm here to lend a hand and

help spread the word of God". "So the book of Revelations got it wrong?" asked a reporter "Well, a lot of it was meant metaphorically and stuff" Emanuel replied "So I guess it's how you see it". "What about your personal life?" asked a young reporter wearing lipstick "You've been seen spending a lot of time with your secretary lately, and I was just wondering if we have a new Mary Magdalene on our hands..." He looked deep into my eyes, from half-way across the room. Emanuel said that He didn't want to comment on the matter any further, but everyone noticed that He said it with a warm and bashful smile. For every question, He tried his best to answer: Gays were good, the Vatican was bad. The Pope was a good guy, but so was Martin Luther. He hadn't been as much of a looker the first time round, but He was happy with the artistic licence that people had taken over the years (that one He said with a smile and a wink). The press just couldn't get enough of Him. There were reporters and news anchors swarming all over campus. I also found paparazzi hiding in the bushes, trying to get that one scandalous photo or bit of gossip that they could sell to *Enquirer* or *Hello!* magazine.

Then one day, Emanuel walked right across the pool water to where I was sitting in my lifeguard chair. He wanted me to leave with Him. The dean had just told Him that He'd been missing too much class, and that the hundreds of thousands of visitors were getting in the way of the rest of our education. It wasn't anything personal, far from it. The dean made sure to mention that he and his wife were regular church goers. But the gist of it was that Emanuel still had to go. "Will you come with me?" He asked, and even though He was Jesus and I'd always wanted to travel, I couldn't help wondering if Thomas or Peter or John ever looked back and wondered what things would have been like otherwise. Emanuel had also found a guy that wanted to be His agent, a guy that could help us book tours to spread the word (first North America, then a European leg, and after that, the Middle East. Maybe finish up in Jerusalem, since it seemed appropriate). This guy, Chris, came from a rich Boston

family and had the kinds of contacts that we needed to make it happen. Already this afternoon, he was working on getting a book deal for Emanuel, an autobiography titled "What would Jesus do?".

So after my shift was done, I went back to my room for the last time and packed up my stuff. I waited outside until I could hear the sound of Chris' minivan crunching gravel as it drove up. It was cold outside, and I could see my breath steaming out. The warmth of the car felt good and Chris handed me a cup of coffee when I got in. I was surprised at how young he looked. "Twenty-three" he said, and explained that he'd learnt most of his stuff from watching his dad, who was in the business too. We spent the next few hours blasting Christian rock out of the car stereo and talking about what we wanted to do when we got to Europe. By the time we got to the Mermaid Motel, it was already four in the morning and Emanuel was snoring in the back seat. We carried Him to His room (we all got separate ones, just in case reporters were lurking around for a scandalous story) I felt wide awake as I headed back outside and looked up at the stars, and for the first time since that party, I felt like I was in control of something. "They're nice, aren't they?" asked Chris, as he joined me on the motel patio. It was true. They made me feel small, but the stars were nice and the air was crisp. We looked up at them for hours, and for the first time, I knew that something in the heavens was staring back.

An Ode To A Certain Miss Fuck It Woman
By Alicia Cumming

The young man,
overcome with idyllisms about the human purpose,
said that she was too self-centered because
she talked too much about her allergies.

But I say,
They are why
her nerves are so fragile
that she feels perpetually faint,
and overwrought
with anxiety
that she is
vulnerable,
weak,
and useless.

They are why
her body is so fragile
and vulnerable.
Her thin little back is bent,
her spindly arms, legs and hips are painfully unlike
the soft, strong curves so befitting a woman,
and her long, haggardly thin face
is framed by a thick blond matronly coif,
which to my chagrin,
makes men think her bereft of any strength or wisdom
that women have and always had.

The fragility is there,
no matter how hard she strives
to care for herself,
to make herself into
a woman of strength,
grace,
Intellect,
kindness,
beauty,
wisdom:

a teacher,
a mother,
women of influence and power

She climbs naked into her bed
and wraps the covers around her.
She feels the warm woollen blanket
on her large, swollen breasts and cold, perspiring skin.
It lulls her nerves,
her shattered, shattered nerves,
to sleep.
She feels a pleasure,
a warm, soothing pleasure.
She puts her fingers into
the warm, soft folds of her vagina.
She is loved.
She is no longer
a fragile victim
of her mind,
and our minds.

Beneath her fragility,
lies strength,
wisdom,
kindness,
beauty,
grace,
intellect.
They complement her fragility,
completing
what is a human being.

Artists draw her naked body,
capturing
fragility
and strength,
beauty, grace,
pain, vulnerabilities,
and wisdom,
creating the work of art
that is the human condition.



New light on the old by Christopher Brandon

All the Waiting to be Born
By Etienne Domingue

Every silver lining, every ashen face -
every simple silence in the between place -
every reminder, every iconic fluke,
every callous, malignant case of good looks

is every you is every rain;
is every never come again.

Every patchwork, every livid love-like lorn,
all the dying, all the waiting to be born
is you yet again, is your bloody heirloom,
& the incessant sound of sickly doom is

also yours - & G-D you leave such
a wake of terrible poems.

Conversation Without Meaning
By Etienne Domingue

Into old age, into madness -
yea, even into death -
we will remember cigar nights
when half-drunk, half asleep
& entirely beyond caring
time unravelled into
conversation without meaning
& nothing mattered.

Happiness is the past
that remains with us -
buried, unknown deep within us.
It is Eternity in the language of Earth.

Seized
By Erin Wells

The crisp autumn sun smiles golden
Scattered leaves upon the ground
Footsteps whisper through the seasons
And leave their mark without a sound

Careless breeze, winter's words
Summer's kiss still lingers on
There's moonlight dancing in the darkness
Seizing at the break of dawn

Frost is creeping, swiftly spreading
December paints my window pane
Chasing daylight leaves a shadow
Etching beauty far from vain



Untitled by Mel Marguerite Hattie

Moving Again (again)
By Christopher Brandon

I wish two drinks were always in me
she said
looking at the floor.
a smile unpacking old boxes at the corners of her mouth,
handling each item with care.
her eyes slowly focused.

she looked back at me
saline ribbons gift wrapping her cold grey eyes
(gun-metal, or smoke I would call them sometimes)

I could feel the dust on her hardwood floors
on my bare feet - knots.
I held her for a moment
and put my face on her head.
Her hair smelled like her
so I squeezed a little tighter
and stayed a little longer.

1228060420(happy new year)
By Christopher Brandon

Down the side of the cliff.
The fear is here but not so sharp that it can't be
bought,
"loose morals you see."
One after the other, stricken by the wayside &
forever gone.
A sense of loss is pervasive and sickly sweet
tasting, tongued delicately with spite in the back
of
the
throat
(waiting).
The end is not longing - the beginning is longing
- the end is surprise & famine

(droughtwarpainhappinessfirebulletartsurprisetheend).

Moose Droppings
By Eleanor Gang

"Life is a pile of moose droppings, is how I see it," said Arthur McGruder to no one in particular. There were already a number of empty beer glasses on the table in front of him, drops of condensation and a little spilled beer that he'd been using to draw shapes in with his index finger.

They'd buried Sam O'Neil that afternoon. There had been quite a crowd at the cemetery, kin and next-of-kin Arthur had never heard of. Sam had had his secrets, as did everyone, and he'd never told his best friend about the ex-wife and the children she'd raised with another husband. Arthur found himself shaking hands and giving condolences to relatives Sam hadn't seen in years, but who had somehow heard of his untimely demise and gathered at the funeral like crows on roadkill.

The minister had asked Arthur to eulogize his friend, and he had reluctantly agreed, not knowing if he could put into words what Sam's friendship had meant to him. They'd shared a similar passion for collecting bottle openers and corkscrews and Arthur had assumed they were both overgrown bachelors until Sam stood up for him at his and Livia's wedding. He hadn't known then about this previous family. If a man could keep from telling his best friend about something that enormous in his past, what other secrets must he have carried to his grave? In the end, Arthur stood at the pulpit and said very little. He was a man of few words anyway, and that was one of the things that characterized their longstanding friendship, their easy silences, whether they were fishing or hunting, or just enjoying a beautiful sunset from Sam's back porch.

"Sam O'Neil was a good man," Arthur had said, uncomfortable in his wedding suit, hands in his pockets. "He was a good friend and helped me through some fallow times. He was best man at my wedding. The world's a poorer place now that he's gone, and I'm going to miss him."

Later, when he bore pall with Sam's two grown sons, a son-in-law and two of their fishing buddies, he inwardly remarked on the lightness of the coffin. Sam had always been a big, strong man, beefy even. Over the months of illness, he'd lost a hundred pounds at least. Arthur smiled

bitterly when he thought of how the cancer had cheated the worms out of a good meal.

At the graveside he had shovelled dirt on top of the oak casket, hearing the thud as each clod fell on its top. The hollow sound it made reminded Arthur of the hollowness left behind by Sam's passing. Life just wasn't going to be the same without him.

They drove home in his pickup truck, where he changed out of his fancy duds and back into his comfortable plaid flannel and denim. Dinner was quiet, neither he nor Livia seemed to have anything to say, and afterward Arthur rose abruptly and said, "I'm going out." Livia saw the haunted look in her husband's eyes, kissed him on the forehead and on the mouth and said nothing.

Now Arthur lifted his glass to his lips, surprised that only a few drops fell onto his tongue. "Moose droppings," he repeated to it. Arthur had hunted moose. They left enormous, steaming turds, full of undigested bits of twigs and seeds and stems. They must be eating constantly to get enough nourishment for their enormous bodies from moss and leaves and bark. Not too many calories there, and then always moving from one clump of vegetation to the next, burning the fuel they'd just taken in.

He thought again of Sam, once robust, overweight even, become a hollow man, the proverbial skin and bones in his coffin. The remembered sight of his wasted face, lying peacefully against the blue satin, brought a tear to Arthur's usually dry eye. Hell, he'd just had umpteen beers, his best friend was dead; he could cry if he wanted to.

A fly buzzed around him and he absently swatted at it. There were always flies around moose droppings—any kind of droppings. Flies and shit; they went together. Flies and death. For a moment Arthur saw Sam's face in his mind's eye covered with flies, like the bodies of roadkill he'd seen on the highway, and shuddered. He didn't want to think of his friend like that, like the time they'd found the dead moose calf on the side of the road.

They'd stopped, thinking it was a deer, but soon realized it was a young 'un, not fully grown, legs broken, the crows already pecking at the easily pecked-at parts. There had been flies then, too, and droppings. The calf had shit himself. "Well, hell," Arthur thought, "I'd have shit myself

too, if I got hit by a truck, caught in its headlights, blinded by fear and high beams.”

He toyed with the idea of getting another beer. Better not. Livia would be worried and he didn't want that. My god he was lucky to have found her. She was a treasure. Arthur put down the empty glass with a sigh. Sam was gone, life was a pile of moose droppings, and he had a wife who gave new meaning to his otherwise humdrum bachelor existence. There it was in a nutshell. Sam had Arthur to mourn him, and Arthur knew that when he went, Livia would do the same for him. He was overwhelmed with emotion suddenly, love spilling out of his pores he felt it so strongly.

“Goodbye, Sam,” he whispered. “It was a good run.”

Silences

By Barbara Hunting

Written for the vigil at Bishop's University on December 3rd, 2008

I teach introduction to Women's Studies

I recently argued to keep the title of this course intact—Intro – to Women's Studies

To be politically correct the department wanted to call this course gender equity studies...

The buzz is that women have achieved equality

Don't misunderstand I teach in an inclusive manner

I believe there are more women than men on this planet; yet

It is women who fought to get the vote

It is women who have walked this path so I may teach at University

I teach about the silences

Silencing is a, neo-conservative weapon—a tool of rhetoric—

a tool of myth and reality

Women have not achieved equality; on the job market we earn .68 to the man's dollar

I teach about the 'silences'; the women who don't have a voice

I teach that women have been and continue to be subordinated

I teach that women also subordinate other women

I teach about the silences

I teach about racism, classism, and every 'ism' you can think of

I am here to raise awareness

I want you to think—to develop a consciousness

Don't simply amuse yourself to death as the media would have you do

I want to teach men about women's studies

It seems that men don't value the women in their lives

Yet we all have a mother, a sister, an aunt, a grandmother

I teach about 'violence against women'—the husband who takes advantage of his wife on Friday night—because he has had a few too many beers—and she

will keep quiet—because after all he loves and supports her----I teach about the silences

I teach communication

Yet assignments are handed in half-done with the expectation of a 'good mark'
Students are busy socializing and not knowing how to learn.....but they won't
ask? I teach about the 'silences'

These women who studied at Polytechnique were silenced before they could
flourish

So yes, I teach about the silences

I want to celebrate their short time on earth, today!

I teach about the silences

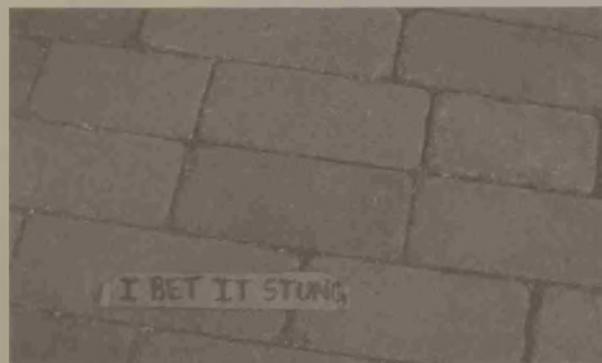
I won't be silenced or silent today...this is my voice, and yes,

I teach and I am not silent—especially not today! Let's begin a DIALOGUE.

Ode to an Eyebrow

By Denise St. Pierre

She picks up the apparatus, turns it in her hand
Surveying its sharp edges, the body's smooth curves
And the tiny pads upon which she would place her fingers.
My face is an unruly mess, my emotions marred—
My eyes can't express what's circumnavigating
The tracks within my brain.
I've been called ugly, chided and mocked
For my face, stitched together at the brow.
It won't hurt, trust me you'll look so much better
She reassures me...*soon, you'll be beautiful.*
As if this is a state I have evaded until now.
She pulls at the hairs, plucking away my infancy
Replacing it with these pencil-thin markers
Of my submission. Womanhood has been thrust upon me.
Errant hairs, evacuated in an instant—
Their existence stifled.
Adolescence uprooted—
Gone are the carefree expressions of my youth.
The face of the child disfigured—
Forever frozen
In this mask of beauty.



Everything seems better against brick by Lynsey Hachey

snowfall

have you ever listened to snow fall?

you cannot hear it
within the realm of resonance
but of silence.

like puffs of cotton
on Carolina's breeze

like traces of static
from radio speakers after
a blackout.
no one speaks, but
the depth of space
surrounds you.

close your eyes
to taste it
with your skin

a storm of crisp petals
rains down from a heart
beating too deep
to be safe from arrest.

questions lose their will
to surface in a sea of white noise
and answers do their best
to pretend as if they answer.

the fall of snow
is not a song,
but the pauses between notes—
a glance across a room,

the brush of hands,
a kiss to the edge of a mouth—
like a parting,
both incomplete
and final.

eventually sound will seep back in
so you can stop the search for sense,
so time can resume—

and you can go back to
deafness.

By Olivia Arnaud



Bejewelled by Erin Wells

Daddy

By Connie Jensen

Daddy likes when I rub his feet. He says it makes them smaller. Sometimes they're really big. He says it's because he's lying in bed all day, and all the blood falls down to them. I don't like blood. When I'm watching TV and there's scary people with blood on their faces I run and put my head into the pillow on the couch. I count 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 and then peek out. Since Daddy doesn't like blood in his feet I rub them for him and it goes away. They turn small again.

"Ethan, five minutes until bed time. Daddy needs his rest too."

"Can I sleep beside Daddy tonight, Mommy? On the floor—I promise I will be quiet. We won't even talk this time."

"No honey, you have school tomorrow and Daddy needs a good sleep too."

I kiss Daddy on the cheek and he squeezes my hand. Daddy can't play the washing machine game anymore. Mommy says it's because he's too tired. I guess Daddy's just getting old. He doesn't have any hair anymore and last time he blew out the candles there were so many I couldn't even count them all.

"Goodnight Daddy."

"Goodnight buddy."

At school, Darcy and me and Paul play trucks. Darcy gets the fire truck, I get the tractor and Paul gets the police car. Darcy's Dad is a fire man, that's why he gets the fire truck. Paul always gets the police car because he says he wants to be a police man, just like his Uncle Tom. I always get the tractor. That's because my Daddy doesn't drive a fire truck. He doesn't drive a tractor either but he lies in bed a lot. He doesn't even drive his big black truck anymore. Daddy and me used to take it to get groceries. I would stand in the back and he would pass me the bags to pile nicely. Sometimes when Mommy wasn't looking Daddy would let me drive it. I would sit in between his legs and he would push the pedals because my legs weren't long enough. They still aren't long enough but

I'm growing. Daddy says when I'm bigger I can get the groceries by myself in the big black truck. He says it will help Mommy a lot.

"Ethan, wash your hands for dinner please."

"What are we having?"

"Macaroni and cheese."

Macaroni is my favourite. Daddy likes it too. I put ketchup on mine but Daddy says his is good with just salt and pepper. Daddy doesn't sit at the table anymore. That's not fair because I always have to sit at the table on my bottom and I'm not allowed to watch *Arthur* while I eat.

"Daddy's just too tired to eat downstairs, Ethan. He needs his rest. And he doesn't want any macaroni tonight."

"Can I go see him?"

"No, honey. He's gone to bed for the night. We can't bother him."

That's what Mommy always says. Daddy and Mommy's friend, Rhonda, comes over a lot. She helps make Daddy's feet get small again when I can't and brings him special food that makes him not tired. On days when Daddy is not tired he lets me sit in his bed beside him and we watch hockey together. Daddy likes the blue team. I like the red one. Daddy says when he was little his Daddy liked the blue team so he likes it now. I like the red team because that's my team's colour. I play forward. Daddy says that's a good place to play and that if I keep my stick on the ice I will score lots. Now that there is snow on the ground hockey is back on.

"Ethan, time for hockey! Go get your jacket and boots on."

"Yay! Daddy, come on, time to go!"

"No honey, Daddy can't come to hockey. Driving makes him too tired and he can't sit in the cold arena."

"Sorry my man. Remember to keep your stick on the ice. I can't wait to hear all about your game."

Mommy drives me to hockey and I score seven goals in the game. Daddy says that's really good and sometimes I should pass the puck so Darcy can score too.

The snow is really high now. I ask Daddy if he wants to play outside with me but Mommy says he can't. Daddy never wants to play anymore. I'm not even allowed in his room unless Mommy says I can. Rhonda comes over a lot now. Mommy says it's because Daddy needs someone to talk to while I'm at school and she's at work. I like playing in the snow. Daddy and me made a big fort last winter and Mommy would make us hot chocolate and we got to drink it inside it. Mommy tried to help me make one this year but it didn't work very well. Not the same as Daddy could do.

"Daddy, look outside! I made some snowmen."

"Oh, very nice, buddy. What are their names?"

"One for you, and me and Mommy."

Daddy could only see them through the window. He's not even allowed to go outside anymore. Rhonda moved her stuff into the guest bedroom and Mommy and Daddy have machines in their room because Daddy is hooked up to them. I really want to push the buttons but Mommy says no because then they would turn off and Daddy needs them or else he will fall asleep. Daddy falls asleep all the time now. Darcy and Paul and Mommy and Rhonda were there for cake on my birthday but Daddy couldn't come downstairs. I blew out six candles and made my wish. I brought Daddy a piece of cake and put it beside his bed. Daddy said he would eat it later because his tummy wasn't feeling well. I opened my presents. Daddy and Mommy got me a new hockey stick. It was just like the one I saw my favourite player on the red team using.

I was playing really good in hockey. Darcy and me always scored all the goals and we got to sit front row in our team picture. I brought it home to show Daddy. Darcy's dad dropped me off. The big black truck was sitting in the driveway and my snowmen were just sticks and toques and carrots now. I ran upstairs to see Daddy.

"Mommy! Mommy! Where's Daddy?"

"Shhh, honey, we have to be quiet. Daddy's head really hurts."

"Can I just go see him? I won't be loud."

"No honey. Daddy needs to be alone. He got really tired today so Rhonda brought over some special people who will try and make him feel good."

I peeked into Daddy's room. There were special people in white coats all around him and the machines were making lots of loud sounds. My birthday cake was still on the side table. I guess Daddy doesn't like chocolate anymore.

"Ethan, get away from there! I told you, you can't be around Daddy's room."

"But Mommy, I want to see Daddy! Why does he have tubes attached to him?"

Daddy brought me to the hospital when I was a little boy and my ears hurt. They put tubes in them. Sometimes I look for them in the mirror with a flashlight, but Daddy says since I'm bigger now they have probably fallen out. I wonder if my tubes looked like Daddy's.

"Oh Ethan, don't worry. They're just trying to fix Daddy. His head hurts and he's tired. The medicine will go through the tubes and make him better."

"Good. Then I can show Daddy my team picture."

Rhonda came downstairs and talked to Mommy. They were whispering and hugging and Mommy looked sad. Mommy has been looking sad a lot lately.

"Ethan, baby, time to show Daddy your picture."

I walked in Daddy's room and everyone was quiet. Daddy looked sleepy. I went over to his bed and gave him a big kiss on his cheek. He didn't move at all.

"Ethan, tell Daddy about your picture. He can hear you."

"Hi, Daddy. Look at my team! That's me, that's coach Mike and that's Mark, and Vince, and Taylor...."

Daddy wasn't looking at all. I don't think he could hear me. He was fast asleep.

"Mommy, he's not even listening!! What's going on??"

"Honey, he's just resting. He can hear you."

The machines were really loud. They made a long beeping sound. I covered my ears because I always hated that sound. Like sometimes it happened when Daddy forgot he was cooking something on the stove and the fire alarm went off. Daddy would take a pillow and dance around the kitchen with it until it went away. I bet Daddy didn't like this sound either. The people in the white coats left Daddy's room. Rhonda whispered something in Mommy's ear and then she left too. It was just me, Mommy and Daddy now.

"Mommy, maybe if I jump up on Daddy he will wake up and hear me."

"No, honey, Daddy won't wake up."

I turned around and Mommy was crying. Mommy never did that unless a movie on TV was sad or when she laughed so hard at Daddy's jokes.

"Mommy, what do you mean? Why are you crying? What's going on?"

"Daddy is just too tired. Rhonda and the special people tried to make him feel better, but he just doesn't want to wake up. He needs to rest for a long, long time."

"But Mommy, he gets to rest every day. He shouldn't be tired anymore."

"I know, baby. But Daddy is too sick. He's going to go to Heaven and watch over us every day."

Mommy hugged me and cried. I just wanted to go to Heaven too. Mommy should have told me earlier that Daddy was going. I would have packed my suitcase.



Caliban *a*) the office.

An archipelago of desks,
each populated by one bowed and silent head,
each separated by a sea of darkness,
and bathed in a blue digital glow.

Wordless though we are
we are taught the language of submission
sullenly aware
that deadlines really do mean
the end of the line.

By Frank Willdig

November Walk.

The world is blanketed in morning mist,
and the faint outline of trees
offer only surmises
of what lies beyond.

A delicate obscurity,
and a comforting serenity
come with each gentle step.

This beautiful ambiguity,
reminding me so much of life,
making our way
on wonderful paths,
not knowing exactly
where we're going,
and from where we have come.

By Frank Willdig

Dear Rabbit
By Annie Rilkoff

Down the path covered with little black feathers you will find a key shaped like a piece of holly. When you open the door, you'll hear a little "snick", and then there you are.

This is where the Lady Greensleaves lives, in the hollowed out trunk of a great beech tree. She lived here with her very good friend, an elf named Corny. Corny's real name, which was very long and difficult to remember, was Curly Corny Conkyque but we'll just call him Corny.

Corny and Lady Greensleaves had lived together in the tree for as long as anyone could remember, which was a very long time. Corny's bedroom was in the uppermost branches of the tree, and he slept in a large walnut shell lined with thick bumblebee fur and pillows stuffed with goose feathers. Lady Greensleaves slept in a room beside the kitchen, where she and Corny had breakfast together every morning. It was a small kitchen, with one window to let in the sun and a stove to make fried eggs and toast.

There were many animals in the forest that came to visit Lady Greensleaves, animals who loved the Lady dearly.

The first two I will tell you about are Brown bear and Black bear, who often came to afternoon tea. Brown bear was rather large and often very grumpy, and he would sit at the kitchen table and mumble and grumble, which is a very rude thing to do when you have been invited for tea. Black bear, however, was a very agreeable bear, much smaller than his brother, and he often had good stories to tell Corny about the family of weasels who lived just outside the cave where he lived.

It was Black bear who first told the Lady all about the meadow in the woods. "I was looking for a little something for my supper" he said,

"and I happened upon a great clearing right in the middle of the woods. I had never seen it before, but oh lady! It was so beautiful. The grass is tall and cool, there are bushes of sweet huckleberries and when the sun is hot, the butterflies come out to dance in the wind." "How wonderful!" said Corny, who had become so excited he had knocked over his teacup "I do love to chase butterflies!" The Lady decided it would be a good place to explore "don't you think, my dear Brown Bear?" "Mumble grumble mumble" Brown bear said by way of an answer, staring grumpily down at his cup and saucer.

The Lady and Corny decided that they would visit the meadow as soon as possible, and so the next day they packed up a picnic lunch and went on their way. It is often very easy to get lost in the woods, especially woods as big as these, but Black bear had given them good directions and they found the meadow in no time. It was just as their friend had described it: the grass was cool and green, the huckleberries were round and ripe, and several small blue butterflies were waltzing slowly in the wind.

Corny had prepared a lunch of spicy carrot soup and bumblebutter on toast with a slice of marzipan for dessert. After they had eaten, the Lady lay in the grass and counted the clouds while Corny chased the butterflies.

Suddenly, Corny stopped running. "Do you hear that, Lady? I think I hear someone crying..." he said, pricking his ears to listen. Lady Greensleaves stopped to listen to, and both Lady and elf stood very still, and very quiet to hear the noise. "There! Do you hear it, do you Lady?" said Corny, "it's coming from over that way, in the forest." It was a small crying sound, the kind an animal makes when it is in trouble.

The Lady and Corny both ventured slowly over to where the noise was coming from and it became louder and louder as they went. "Lady, I'm frightened," Corny whispered, "what if it's something awful?" "If someone needs help we must help them, my dear elf, it is only right." The Lady replied, and Corny knew that she was right.

They walked for quite a ways, and the sound continued to get louder and louder still. Suddenly Corny let out small yelp. "Oh Lady, it's awful! Look there, Lady, oh how awful!" For there on the ground, lying on her side and shaking quite terribly, was small brown rabbit. She was letting out small squeaks and it was clear to the Lady that she was in a great deal of pain.

Corny could hardly bear to look, for there was a great deal of dried blood that was staining the rabbit's fur. The Lady wasted not a second, and she swooped up the rabbit in her arms and wrapped her firmly in the folds of her skirt.

When they had made their way home, carefully as to not hurt the rabbit, they lay the poor creature by the hearth and lit a fire. The Lady took a wet cloth and washed the rabbit clean of any blood and wrapped her soundly in some of Corny's warmest bumblebee blankets. The little brown rabbit kept shaking, but she had stopped squeaking, and lay very silent by the fire place.

They ate their dinner in sad silence, and Corny tried to feed the rabbit a bit of lettuce from his salad. "The dear little rabbit won't eat it, Lady, why won't she eat?" Corny asked when the Lady was tucking him into bed, "Oh lady, what if she's too sick to get better, what if she dies?" Thick tears began to spring in Corny's eyes and roll down his long nose. Lady Greensleaves sat at the end of Corny's bed, and looked at him right in the eyes. "She may die Corny, but if she does you must understand something. When someone dies, no matter how much you love them, there is nothing you can do to change what happens. Everyone has to die, and so even though you may cry and feel sad, you must realize that death is as much a part of life as chasing butterflies or eating your breakfast. It happens and we must be brave and accept it. Do you understand?" Corny nodded his head very slowly. "Then, my dear elf, you must go to sleep and dream good dreams. And in the morning we will check on our friend and see what can be done." And she kissed him softly on the forehead and turned out the lamp.

The next morning Corny woke up and felt a terrible feeling in the pit of his stomach. "I must go check on our dear little rabbit, and make sure she is well." he thought, but he was very scared of what he might find. He tiptoed down the stairs and saw the Lady, sitting very still in a chair by the fireplace. In her lap was the little brown rabbit. Corny walked over to them, but Lady Greensleaves smiled and said "She'll be all right Corny, she's alive and well." Corny let out a whoop of joy. After breakfast Corny fed the rabbit some cabbage leaves from the garden and she ate them very slowly. After a week's time, with lots of rest and care, the dear little rabbit was well enough to walk. After two weeks time she was hopping and running through the garden, scaring away moles and playing hide-and-seek with Corny.

"Thank you Lady, thank you Corny" the rabbit said to her friends when it came time for her to leave, "you have been very very good to me. I promise promise promise I will visit you whenever I can." Corny was thrilled, and began to do a little jig. The Lady had a present for the rabbit: a red velvet ribbon that she tied in a neat bow round the little rabbit's neck. "Thank you thank you thank you! You are dear friends!" the rabbit cried as she hopped away into the woods. "And you are my dear rabbit!" Corny called after her. And that night, under the covers of his bed, Corny thought of his new friend and drifted off to sleep, smiling.

Turn Her Into Fiction
By Jesse Feith

Part 1: Spanish wedding

They were simply walking by, him and her, hand in hand when they heard the music, the laughing and the love coming from behind an old catholic church. They decided to go take a look out of curiosity. It was dark out by now, somewhere amongst the night they had lost track of time. The back of the church was lit up beautifully. White lights dangled from the trees, red roses spread out on the washed-out table sheets upon the tables that were set up amongst the church's backyard. The bride and groom were there, dancing, smiling, and embracing in the middle of the makeshift dance floor. Everyone seemed so happy, not a thought on their mind other than how pleased they were for the newly wedded couple.

They stopped in the middle of the dusty street behind that old church and observed from a distance the wedding that was taking place. She squeezed his hand a little tighter as they turned towards each other. He told her he loved her as they looked into each other's eyes, and there they were, slow dancing in the middle of an empty street, feeding off the Spanish music from the wedding in the background. Their faces barely lit up by the romantic lighting coming from behind the church. He thought to himself in that moment that if he could just hold her for the rest of his life, he would die a happy man. The first of many times he would think that very thought in the year to come.

That night, that night of the Spanish wedding, was the first time he told her what he felt. That night, in the middle of that quiet street, with her in his arms as they danced side by side to the wedding beside them, was the first time he finally told her he loved her. And the first time she said it right back to him. To this day, he remembers the look in her eye as he told her, her eyes lit up so bright they could've lit up the entire street they were dancing in, the entire city they were living in. They continued to dance after those words were exchanged, their feet feeling lighter and lighter, their hearts

It started like any other day.

I woke up at 6 to the pleas of my little man.

At 6:30, while eating breakfast,

You leisurely stroll into the kitchen,

Half-naked, while scratching your

Once Adonified stomach.

"Need milk," you grumble,

As you stumble towards the
bedroom

To find cover for what time
destroyed.

7:30, before leaving, you slap
me on the butt

Like I'm one of the guys on the
team.

Sweeping, wiping, feeding,
cleaning becomes the day.

My man returns at 7:30, only to
say,

"No milk."

As if I should go get it.

"Yes Massa. No milk."

K. King (November 2009)



Away by Alexandra East

feeling heavier and heavier.

He went to sleep that night feeling like the luckiest man in the world, never could he have imagined what was to come in the future for them. That one day those Spanish rhythms wouldn't mean anything anymore, that the faces of the people at the wedding as they watched them dancing in the street would become blurred out in their imaginations. That those three words shared that night would become worthless.

From a letter from him to her:

"It hurts me to my very last bone when I admit to myself that it's actually over. All those words we told each other, all those promises we made don't mean anything anymore. I once crossed my heart and told you I'd keep yours safe forever. I never thought we'd both be left broken hearted instead."

Part 2. Angel in the Snow

They spent this day together at her place, about a ten minute drive away from where he was staying at the time. There had been a big snow storm the night before and the winter's air was cold and rigid by the time he got to her place. They spent the entire morning out in the park near her house, out amongst the freshly fallen snow and the covered maple trees surrounding the park. Wrestling with each other, launching each other snowballs from behind the covered benches situated around the park. Just playing together, like two young kids with nothing else to worry about. Not that there wasn't anything to keep their minds full of worries and thoughts, but on this day, when they were together, their minds were clutter free. She paused for a moment, somewhere between the play fighting and snowball chucking, when he had her in his arms lying on a snow bank. "Let's make snow angels" she said quietly into his ear. He

hadn't made a single snow angel since he was a little kid, playing in his backyard with his brothers. He refused at first, but after watching her flap her arms and legs up and down in the snow, her blonde hair leaking out from underneath her tuque, shaping the perfect snow angel, he felt as though he had to give it a try. He lied there beside her in the snow, his angel looking nowhere near as good as hers, looking over at her just to find her looking right back at him. They stayed there for quite some time, just lying in the snow, the traces of their angels' arms now undone because they had reached over to be able to hold each other's hands. They lied there watching the snow come down from the sky, feeling as though there would never be a moment more perfect than this one right now.

They finally headed back to her place. They held each other on her old couch in front of her television, her old childhood blanket on them, helping the warm-up process. They had put an old movie on, but they sat there for the next hour or so watching each other instead of the movie playing in the background. He couldn't get over how pretty her green eyes looked when her cheeks got rosy after being out in the cold.

Her hair was still wet from the snow as she rested her head on his shoulder and eventually fell asleep. He kissed her on her forehead as she closed her eyes; she squeezed his hand tighter one last time before falling asleep.

From a letter from her to him:

"You are the only thing that I want in my life so I can't figure out why you have to be the only thing leaving. I really don't think I can come see you the day you leave, I can't do it, it's going to hurt everywhere and I won't be able to get up. Right now I feel like I could just run away with you, just forget everything and leave"

Part 3: Goodbye

There they were. The big goodbye they had been dreading for so long now had finally arrived. She had said she wouldn't be able to come with him when he left, but there she was, sitting in the train station with him, her heart as heavy as the train on the tracks. He couldn't believe how fast these past days had gone by, but he knew there was nothing he could do about it now. They sat there hand in hand, waiting for the train to come and take him away. As others around them got grumpier and grumpier as the train's delays were announced one after the other, they counted every single minute of the delay as a blessing, a few more minutes they could spend together. The tears were rolling down her cheeks uncontrollably now, his thumbs couldn't keep up with their pace, trying his best to wipe every tear off her face and tell her that everything would be alright, that they could make it work.

Hopelessly trying to keep her happy and hide his sadness at the same time, he stood up and gently pulled her towards him. He grabbed her cheeks, wiping the tears one final time before taking her by her sides and starting to slow dance. "Just like at that wedding" he said, as he tried to hide the sorrow in his voice. She smiled, that same smile he couldn't possibly get enough of, and she started to dance with him. He hummed the tune, she led the dance. People around them stared in disgust as they grew angrier about their delayed train. It wasn't long however before those same people, a couple of elderly ladies, a young couple with their kids, started to smile as they watched. They danced there for the next couple of minutes, time seemingly suspended for one last time, her hand in his to their left and their right arms wrapped around each other.

When the train arrived he had no choice but to get on, and watch her turn around and walk away. She put her hood on as she walked through the sea of people rushing to get on the train, trying to hide the tears on her face. He watched as her silhouette got further and further, until he couldn't look anymore.

He instantly buried his head in his sweater up against the train's window. He put his headphones on and tried to block out the world, he tried to understand why this had to be the way it was. Why he had to leave her. Why she had to leave him.



Rose by Alexandra Eastland

In Praise of the Man from Ohio²

who shot a teenager
for walking across his lawn

because who needs teenagers
anyway?

Too many piercings
and that music,
if you can call it music –

boys walking as if they've got a load
in their pants
and girls bearing every inch of skin
that the good Lord gave 'em.

They spend too much time
at the mall,
and don't respect their elders
anymore.

Spare the rod, spoil the child.

² On Sunday, March 19, 2006, Charles Martin shot fifteen-year-old Larry Murgage in Union Township, Ohio with a .410 shotgun for walking across his lawn.

You have the right to bear arms,
sir. I commend you
for your quick thinking
and decisive action.

God bless America,
the only place in the world
where you can cross-stitch
Love Thy Neighbour
in pretty colours
and hang it
right next to the rifle cabinet.

By Michelle Barker

TAILS

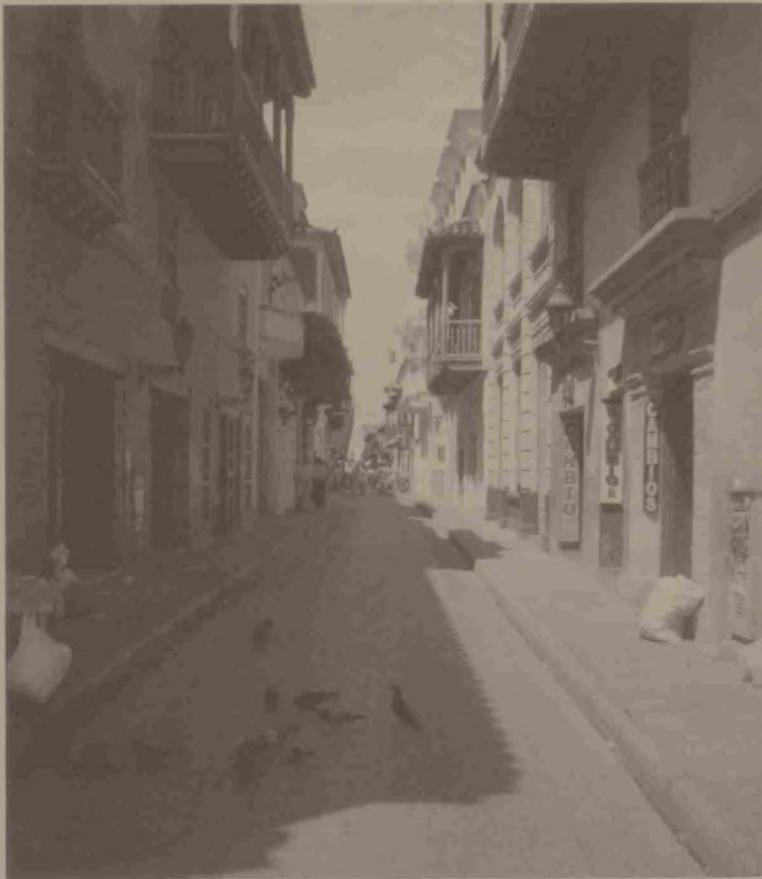
By Taylor Evans

Location: A bar. Time: Weekday Afternoon. Description: Jim, a man in his forties, is sitting at his local bar working on his fourth or fifth.

Note: Words in the monologue that appear in italics should be spoken in a young boy's voice.

Jim: *Don't die dog. Please don't die. You're my only friend in the whole world.* I laughed so hard. The boy was crying. What a loser. *Goldie please stand up. Come on, get up.* Meanwhile I'm trying to get the blood off the front of my truck with my shirt. I didn't think dogs had so much blood. What was that? What you say? He shouldn't have been running in the streets. The streets are made for trucks not dogs. I don't drive my truck in the park. Dogs shouldn't be running in the streets. The problem is it's really not the dog's fault if you think about it. What? No it ain't mine, are you stupid? I know it's an old truck and the brakes are a little shot but that doesn't excuse the fact that the dog was in the middle of the road just sitting there. It was like he was asking to be hit. His head was down. His head was down. What is the first rule you learn in hockey? Keep your head up when you're skating through the middle. His head was down. Yah, I know he's a dog. That don't make no difference, the boy should have said something to him. Just like coach taught me. Hey shut up. I only had seven concussions and you know it. Forget about it. Back to my point it's not really the dog's fault and it clearly ain't my fault. The fault is on the boy. If you have a dog you have a responsibility. I mean you gotta look after it. It ain't like a baby you can't just leave it lying around for a couple of days. See a baby won't go anywhere. They got really short arms and they're really stupid - like Mexican stupid. Now a dog, they're curious things, they pick up a scent and boom they're gone. I know this one guy had a dog. He was watching TV. His dog was in the room with em'. He went to get a beer, when he came back the dog was gone. One year later he's watching that same

TV and guess what he see. Guess. He sees his old dog in one of those doggie trick shows taking home first prize. Five hundred dollars! As you can guess the man was real pissed off. No not the guy who won the money the guy whose dog it was originally, the guy watching the TV. But back to my story, the impact of my truck didn't kill it. It only really hurt it. The dog's tail it was still flopping and he breathing sort of, awkwardly, at least for a bit, kind of like the way you breathe Sammy because you've been smoking all these years (Jim imitates Sammy's / the dog's breathing pattern). So I go up and ask the boy for a towel but he ain't listening to me. The boy won't leave the dog's side. Finally I say "that dog ain't getting up son but this truck has got to get going." This is my boss' truck. If he sees blood on his truck I could lose my job. Still the boy won't get up from the dog's side. At this point as you can imagine I'm real pissed off. I'm already late for my delivery and I haven't had lunch. Finally, I realize this boy must be one of those retard kids or something and he sure ain't going to help me. So I do the professional thing, I give the boy a two for one coupon to Swiss Chalet to settle things. Make it even. Now I don't care what anybody says that is a top notch restaurant. I took my first girlfriend there once. Bought her a quarter chicken and some fries, later that night she gave me a blow job. Anyways, I've got to explain the whole situation to my boss in an hour or so. I figured I'd stop in here beforehand you know have a drink or two. Sometimes you just have rough days. It's like they say every dog has his day. I've got take a piss, see you boys around.



Cartagena by Olivia Arnaud

When Your Eyes Are Alive

there is light radiating from them
a splash of fire
a primordial god
an energy unopaque
to my bruised fingers

a sun spot
on the soul of time

likewise
it's so easy to see
when the light has gone out of them
when the light
has gone out

leaving a milky transparency
simply congealing tissue
to harden into space

the crude reality of light
is when it's gone
you have to make it up

imagine what seeing must be like
imagine
then imagine not

By Noni Howard

The Night, she passed
brought clarity.
The Deed was Done.
I could only weep
for joy and relief
that I saved the innocent.
No guilt was felt, though
She laid at the bottom of the lake.

K. King (October 2009)

Disengage
By Denise St. Pierre

A sense of dread pervaded my brain as I clicked the cursor; a blitzkrieg of images. My heart was thumping in my chest—I wanted nothing more than to leap into the photograph and tear apart the scene, piece by piece. Insert myself in her place. Anything to remedy this loneliness. An exilic state I had once embraced—I falsely claimed it to be my own personal freedom. I turn away from the screen, yet the pictures linger like a parasite on my brain, sucking away all my pretences of strength.

It was all a facade. One of many charades I could whip out on command to as prescription to cure my doubts. To hide the tears that betrayed my ebullient demeanour. This time, I don't think I'll heal. Until now, my feelings have been quarantined in a desolate corner of my brain—once or twice they appeared on the peripherals of consciousness, right before I shut my eyes and attempted slumber, but more often than not, I was safe from their ambush.

Now, they linger directly in my line of vision. Dancing behind my eyeballs, obscured only on occasion by the inundation of tears, those wicked informants. He is everywhere I look. He is every physically demonstrative couple, every broken heart. I see him when I lock eyes with another lonely soul—their solitude is visible in their every movement. Our wretchedness mingles in the air between us before we pass one another and continue forward.

The relentless pounding of my heart threatens to bruise my skin. I can't have that—corporeal evidence of my feelings is forbidden. Where do I go from here? Do I let these feelings linger, let their perfume taint the air until the particles disintegrate? Do I shut my eyes and feign ignorance, as if they never existed? I slump against the wall, attempting to quash the torrent of images saturating my mind. His face, stretched in a sly smile; the shape of him as he walks away from me; the glint in his eyes that makes me feel transparent—the cad. With the conscious realization of each memory, I

feel as though I am methodically deconstructing a hastily crafted barrier,
removing sandbags in the wake of a flood.

I have fallen victim to the precariousness of our bond—clutched the fine
web-work in my fist and let it disintegrate. However, the mournfulness
mingles with fanaticism. I clutch my mouth to stifle the cackle that would
betray me.

The inevitability of detachment within this massive social network
Logging out of reason. Shutting down sanity.

And yet, I am insatiable. A masochist. I ache for the feed.

To Gabrielle
Maximilien Roy

Well Montreal's winters are cruel and cold
I know you know it so very well
But nothing's as frozen as my soul,
As lonely as a penny at the bottom of the deepest well.

Please won't you throw a coin down my misery
something to fill this loneliness
the bucket's been kicked, the rope is weary
the last will has been addressed

While the water level rises
my willingness to live shrinks
but winter slows what life is
and ignores what the well thinks
The captain may still work on the crisis
but still my love boat quickly sinks

Down every bottle there is a kaleidoscope
I see you everywhere
And in every breath
there is hope
a willingness to dare
so I will hold my head up
high
and make my way
through hell
For there must be a piece
of pie in the sky
I hope it's you, a break
from this jail

The captain can't control
the wind
But he can raise the sails
I can speak or keep it in
But I'll never forget you, Gabrielle



Untitled by Mel Marguerite Hattie

Snow Angels
By Olivia Lees

Marie Jean Hawkins returned from church that brisk Thursday morning, removed her Sunday best, and went to bed.

Saturday afternoon the wind gusted through the trees outside, and rustled the shutters on the main floor. Marie had placed a wooden rocking chair next to the Christmas tree at the bay window in the front tower, the one that overlooked the lake. She swayed calmly, squinting at her needlepoint until it was finished. She secured it with a knot and cut the thread.

"Dotty!" She sang, hopping off the chair. Her black party shoes clapped on the floor. "Dotty!"

"Yes Miss Marie?" Dotty said, entering the parlour. Dotty was the cook, and had been working for the Hawkins family since Marie was born. They had developed an affection for each other, which grew when Marie's parents died.

"I've finished my roses for Grandmother's pillow," she said, tightening the red ribbon that tied back her long blonde curls. Dotty frowned.

"Did you?"

"Yes I did, why are you looking at me like that Dotty? I told you I needed to finish her present this weekend." The cook stared at the girl a moment, then smiled.

"Alright child, you give me that and we'll find some stuffing for the pillow."

Marie walked to the window, placing her tiny hands on the high sill.

"Why don't you put on a pair of bloomers and play with the Shepherd girls next door?" Dotty suggested. The girl didn't move.

"Grandmother says young ladies don't play in the mud, Dotty. Besides, it is getting colder these days."

"All right, Miss Marie." Dotty backed slowly out of the room, shaking her head.

Nellie, one of the maids, walked past the parlour and followed Dotty into the kitchen.

"What's that girl up to now, Dot?"

"Lord, Nellie, I don't know what to do with her," she replied.

"She's staring out that window again."

"I know. I wonder what she's waiting on."

The following morning, Nellie met Marie in her bedroom. She picked a dress from the closet and brought it to the girl who sat methodically brushing her hair.

"How about this one Miss?" she asked.

"Nellie, that is not my Sunday best," she replied. "Grandmother said I should wear the blue one to church." Nellie hesitated, then asked:

"Are you sure you want to be going to church this morning, Miss?"

"Nellie! You know we must," Marie snapped. "And Nellie, you know Grandmother says the secret to a happy household is for everyone to know their place, so, give me my blue dress before we are late."

At church, Marie and her Grandmother sat in the third pew from the front, on the left hand side, next to Marie's classmate Sally Johnson and her mother, as always. Nellie and Dotty decided to come along that day. They sat in the back row.

"I'm praying for you Marie," Sally Johnson said before the sermon began. Marie looked away.

On Monday morning it snowed. Dotty made snowman shaped pancakes to celebrate the season, which Marie and her Grandmother ate in the kitchen, at the same table as the help. Grandmother wore an elegant black gown, her favourite, and her hair pulled back into a firm bun.

"Wasn't that fun, Grandmother? I love eating in the kitchen."

"It was, Marie. Why didn't we do that more often?"

"I don't know!" the child said.

"Why don't we see if the mail came today, I'm expecting something from the city."

Marie hesitated, but when her grandmother did not protest, she

led the way out the front door and down the steps of the house. The snow had blanketed the ground overnight, and it felt like icing sugar beneath her feet. Clouds darkened the sky, bringing it closer and closer to the ground. Light flakes began to fall, collecting in their hair. Marie darted glances at her grandmother as they trudged through the snow. Grandmother's dress dragged along the powder as they walked carefully down the sloping drive. She did not complain, she laughed.

"What is so funny Grandmother?" Marie asked.

"I forgot how much I loved the snow," she said. Over her shoulder, Marie could hear people calling her name. They ran back and forth on the wraparound porch, but she stayed with Grandmother.

"Do you want to make a snow angel with me Grandmother?" Marie asked quietly.

"How do you do that?"

They lay down, right there on the unshoveled driveway, before the mail had been retrieved, and made snow angels in their dresses.

Marie heard the sound of a vehicle in the distance. The tires caused the familiar crunching sound of snow compacting beneath them.

"Marie Jean Hawkins!" she heard Nellie calling, still standing on the porch. Her voice was shrill. Marie had never heard Nellie speak to her like that.

Marie continued to laugh as she and Grandmother swung their legs and flapped their arms, becoming angels in the deep snow. Marie looked over, but she could barely see her grandmother.

"I love you, Marie," Grandmother said, laughing. The car came closer, and the horn began to honk, signaling someone's arrival.

"Get up, child! What's wrong with you?" Nellie screamed, dragging Marie up from the ground. Nellie had snow up to her hips from racing down the drive. The car stopped ten feet from where they stood. Grandmother sat up, her long silver hair cascading down her chest, having come undone in the midst of becoming an angel.

"Aunt Alice!" Marie screamed as a woman hurried out of the vehicle before the engine shut off.

The young woman embraced her niece. The snow had begun to fall heavily, getting in their eyes and covering their tracks.

"What are you doing out here, Marie?" She looked upset.

"We're making snow angels," Marie replied. Aunt Alice's eyes widened. She dropped the girl's hands and began to sob. Marie looked at Nellie and Dotty.

"Alice, you're not helping," her husband William said, walking around the car. "Marie, let's go inside."

"Okay. But Grandmother and I stopped to make snow angels; we still have to get the mail. Grandmother is expecting something from the city."

"Surprise! We're from the city," William said. Marie looked at her grandmother for confirmation.

"Stop it, Marie. Stop it," Alice shrieked.

"Let's go inside, Marie, we'll have some cocoa," William said, ignoring his wife's behaviour. He took her by the shoulders and pushed her firmly forward.

"What's going on, Dotty?" Marie asked, looking back at Aunt Alice.

"Why are you doing this?" Alice screamed, tears streaming down her face. Marie began to cry.

"What have I done, Uncle William? What have I done to Aunt Alice?"

"Nothing, Marie, it's all going to be okay now. We're here to take care of you," he said.

William continued to push Marie forward. Nellie and Dotty supported Alice as the group made their way to the house, destroying the pair of snow angels disguised by the fresh snow.

"Where is Grandmother? She's waiting for her package from the city," Marie sobbed, trying to look back. Alice spun around.

"She's dead, Marie. She's dead."

UNICORN

By Alexandra Eastland

Some days your eyes were hollow and reproachful,
And I could have been Queen before daring to defend my love for you.

Now, I am left to fall into a liquid state
Of flowing down and away
To take flight whimsically,
As if it were a granted gift.

It is so easy to polish and admire
Something from antiquity, though...

I was driven by the image of my own dead forest
To hunt the remains of the unicorn in you.

Yes, that is how impossible and fantastic we were.
Though not so eternal,
Not nearly so eternal.

The roots were lost and then
No more buds
Of easily broken soil and tender petals

Now, I must forge the visions
Which are as obscure as the beast itself
Fleeting flanks and blazing eyes
We collapsed into each other's imaginations

(The creation of a myth
For children to sink their teeth into
And for the future to distort all the more)

We were the only witnesses
But even our testimonials are skewed.
I cannot stall the wilting passage of time
And the flaws of our mortal recollections.

All I can clearly envision is that
We discovered a mythical creature
And abandoned it.

the tainted room
by Olivia Arnaud

the secrets of my bedroom
have changed since my walls went
from pink to papered unicorns

the first room to be butchered—
until I got the one
that couldn't keep me safe.

letting people in
still requires a covert knock
a number encoded when I went from
two, down to one

when my sister got her own room and
left me alone.

I never wished for her,
what I got
instead. I hope she remembers

and I hope even more
that she doesn't.

mom and dad told me I could go anywhere
told me to forget.

dancing clowns on swings
ponies and porcelain dolls,
and a blanket
the only barrier—
the only survivor in the
Ascension of the Twenties

passion on the walls will get replaced
with art that lasts and
maybe photographs
if I'm lucky.

dreams will stay rooted in the paint
like the punch in the wall from
the door handle,
a permanent fit of rage

broken hearts and crumbs of plaster
I still can't mend on my own

Untitled

By Ergot Heraclitus Wormwood

There are days after dusk
in the midsummer musk
or the glimmer of frost and snow
when I dance with the devil
he spins me around
when the jaunt of the stars and the moon are just so
when the stars in their jaunt are peculiarly slow

it is on such a night when the clock it does strike
one hour to midnight and nary a light
the odd dance of photons doth enter my sight
and these shimmering fairies do lead me
from the bounds of usual sanity
and I with no mind to fight

these are nights when I finish the evening roast
and my backgammon partner is oddly disposed
the candles they burn a strange humming to see
and there's nobody left but the devil and me

there are eves when I bathe in the pitchest of black
when my hand appears empty as a void
the nothing around me dances with a fever
I wonder if I am merely a ploy

but if I am a prop in the evening's play
then why would the devil ask me to stay
if I am no more than a flicker to see
what creature would fancy to dance with me

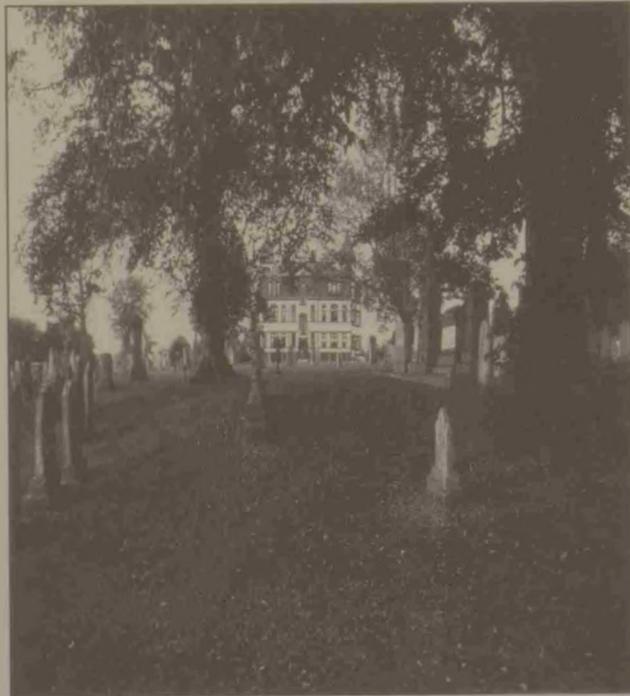
and so I breathe and touch my chest
and lay my idle fears to rest
and skip to the worlds I dare to see
on the night that the devil doth dance with me

she swings me up into the air
I quiver my buttocks with a flare

and flip her over to the right
into the brisk of the starry flight

many a journey many a dream
many a starry burning life
began on such a humming night
where the wind did dance like a wizard's knife

and so we pass on the breeze of days
where the dance of fairies escape our gaze
but never forget how it is to glow
when the stars in their jaunt are peculiarly slow
when the jaunt of the stars and the moon are just so



Graveyard at dusk by Erin Wells

Behind the Strawberry Field

By Anabel Collin

28 days. Life happens in a series of 28 days. In 28 days, the milk will go bad. In 28 days, I will owe the library \$2.45. In 28 days, the strawberries will be red. In 28 days, local news will go on strike. In 28 days, I will bleed again.

My name's Tyra and seven days ago, I gave up on life. That day, a big storm hit our town and Tammy wouldn't leave the tree. I begged her to, I even climbed up there myself, she told me to go away. Her hair was all up in static, I tried to pat it back down on her head. I told her Rose Petal was scared. She told me to count in Spanish with her. It calms her down. And so I did and when we got bored, we just looked at her up in the tree, the only tree on the property, the only tree with leaves. The only god damn thing that was more alive than her.

She came back in through the back door and we were sleeping our backs against the front door. We were waiting for her, waiting for lightning to strike. She shook us until we woke up and motioned for us to sit at the kitchen table. We were going to make Miso soup. Tammy was inspired; she wanted to teach us a lesson. Most of all, she wanted us to be together. She made us swear we would never do anything as stupid as what she had just done. Did you see the light, asked Rose Petal. She just smiled and fed us our soup. Then, I noticed it. The jar sitting in the middle of the table. It looked like all of the other ones except near the lid it had a crack. I knew Tammy hadn't seen it or she would have been back up on the tree so I didn't say anything and burnt my tongue instead. It was getting late and Rose Petal's hair was hanging in her soup but Tammy wanted us to stay up. I could be really coolio, she said. I didn't tell her Mr. Hubert would be testing me on my French grammar the next day. So she lit up all the candles she could find until eerie shapes started dancing on the walls. Tammy laughed and made spooky sounds to go with the mood. She asked us if we were happy. We told her we were. This made her happy and so, we were sent to bed.

I woke up in the middle of the night and realized it had come again. Right on time, every time. Please leave, I said. But it never did, so I got up, stuck a maxi pad in the bottom of my underwear and listened to Rose Petal breathe until I fell asleep again.

Now, seven days later, it starts again. Seven days later, I feel hopeful and every night in Jordan's car, I press my naked body against his and pretend it's worth it. And when he puts his pants back on and tells me I felt great, I stick my feet up in the air and wish for fertilization. I once heard that in tragic circumstances, a newborn could revitalize a person's spirit and completely change their outlook on life. This reminds me of a time when we were kids and for a whole month, Rose Petal pretended she was a fairy. Tammy braided her hair and made her wings that she swore she had dipped in fairy dust. And for a whole month, Rose Petal refused to bathe because she thought the magic would wear off. This happened right around the time Roy left us and never came back. We didn't care much for Roy and it seems he didn't care much for us either but we still wanted to believe in the good things in life so when Rose Petal said she was a fairy, we smiled and thanked God for her.

I'm seventeen and from the town I'm from, we don't believe in contraception, we only believe in luck. Dead-beat dads are a common occurrence and high school dropouts aren't a big deal. Except for Tammy they are. They're a huge freaking deal. That's why we have a bunch of college brochures everywhere around the house. Right by the bathroom sink, in the cereal box, you name it. She wants me to leave the strawberry field and see if there's anything else out there.

Tammy has a lazy ovary. She wasn't supposed to have kids. Not one, never mind two. She wasn't supposed to miscarry three times either but she did. I'm nothing like her though. I'm okay down there. I've been to the gynaecologist once, on my sixteenth birthday. She used big words like Gonadotrophin-releasing hormone and told me pregnancy ruins lives. On my seventeenth birthday, I started taking prenatal vitamins, screw what the doctor said. I wasn't going to have

an inhospitable environment. Tammy had her smells, Rose Petal had her glasses as thick as my fists: I had to fit in somehow. If I didn't, I feared she'd make me leave.

On the tenth day, my uterus was waiting for a fertilized egg to implant there. On the fourteenth day, my egg travelled down my fallopian tube towards my uterus. I didn't feel it but I traced its journey on my stomach with a black marker so I could see it. Jordan didn't ask about it, that's how much he cared. We did it sitting down then from behind. I wanted to thank him for his deposits but kept my mouth shut. He told me he liked tugging at my hair and asked me if next time, he could do it harder. His car smelled like beer and I wished I had a jar so I could fill it up and give it to Tammy. It would make her happy.

I remember the first time I got my period: I cried. I walked into the kitchen and cried. Tammy was so excited she asked Rose Petal to stop reading about the glaciers and to come over here, pronto. She then washed my underwear in the kitchen sink and sang a song about a bird that found the sun. She baked a cake but before that, she reached for one of her empty jars and filled it with the smell of my lost childhood. Rose Petal clapped and I cried some more. I was thirteen and didn't know shit.

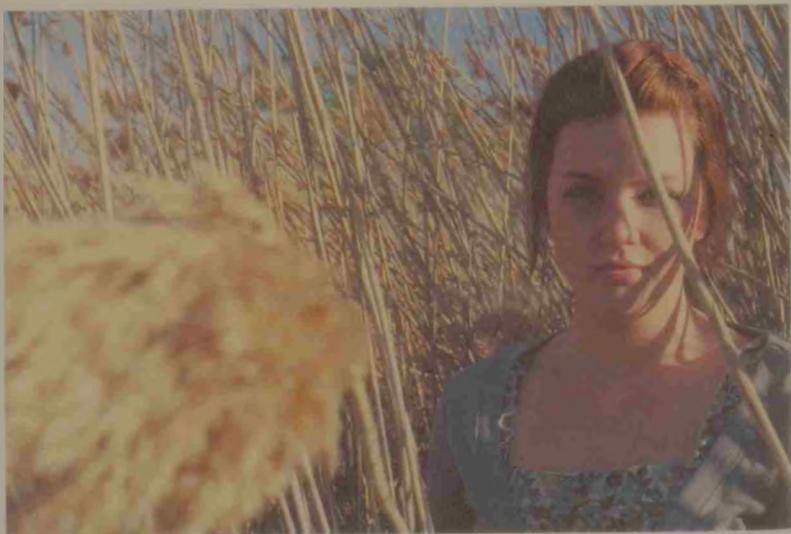
The kids at school don't get it. Growing up, they never had a mom that asked them to use their inside voices or a dad that was allergic to food coloring. I was nine when I had my first popsicle. Rose Petal was still dressed like a fairy and Tammy figured it was about time.

I get so bored sometimes. I wish I could die... or have a baby. I have a great pair of overalls that would cover up the bump just fine. Over the next few days, my egg wanders in my body wanting more than anything for sperm to unite with it. I start to get moody and tell Rose Petal I want nothing to do with her experiments; I'm already leading my own. In our house, we have six different calendars. Mine is the kind that you rip the page as each day passes. I like it better that way, I can throw away my past and let the future surprise me.

Tammy likes it better when it's all laid out for her. Rose Petal makes her own and chants every full moon.

On the twenty-fifth day, my hormone levels dropped. I did the count-down in my head and wrote on my hand that I really should bring my book back to the library. Tammy used up all the milk before it would go bad. She made scones and waited for us to come home from school with her apron still on. She filled another jar and asked us if we were happy.

On the twenty-eighth day. I skipped school. I went out behind in the strawberry field and stripped. My breasts felt sore and the smell of the red berries made me puke. And then, in the middle of it all, I started to bleed.



Sea of gold by Dayna Lowe

Dearest Monster
By Etienne Domingue

Dearest Monster I can't follow
down the path where you wind
through the forest of suicides:
I'd take root, I'd grow boughs.
I thought you'd whisk me off somehow -
see how I shivered in the wind,
heard how I creaked. I crease & spin
my tall tales; this one for woe,
for when you walked out of the snow
into turbid water, away.

Away: we go our ways.
We do not speak, we do not think
we pray we never, ever meet
by evil chance out on the street.
I dropped your trinket in the sink
& did not try to fetch it.

Dearest Monster on your swim home
I hope you find yourself alone
& so doggedly confident.
You've given me something to write,
something to writhe about all night
& I don't do it out of spite -
I do it out of need.

A man of words & not of deeds;
this one has no one to deceive.
What neither bends nor breaks - will chip:
the end is what you make of it.
Dearest Monster - L-RD keep your soul!
I would not deign so much as look
lest your pale eyes swallow me whole.

Dirt

The dark loam pours out of the box
onto clumps of dirt packed close
by winter's chill and weight of snow
and ash from the wood stove:
rich, life-giving soil from
vegetable parings and apple cores,
eggshells and grapefruit rinds,
coffee grounds and tea bags;
nothing is wasted.
Scrapings from dinner plates,
tips of beans and celery leaves,
corn cobs and avocado shells
all thrown in together
to rot, metamorphosing
in that polyvinyl cocoon
into the black earth
that cradles the new year's crop.
Parsley stems and tomato cores return
to the soil that grew them;
tough stalks of basil nourish
next summer's pesto;
and all this flows onto my spade
and I spread it and bury it
and crumble the clods of clay-packed dirt
which, after years of mingling
with spring's spoils from winter's waste,
is still hard and rebellious
under my shovel and rake.

A clang of metal on limestone and
shale brought up by winter heaving;
these will not decompose.
They will not become soil
in my lifetime.

By Eleanor Gang



Such is Life
By Philip Sutor

We have reached the close of day once again and I sit here in silent reflection of those experiences that are so real and yet so hard to completely keep your finger on that it becomes almost unreal because it has that feeling of subjective undeniable reality, and, unfortunately, this is not how life is at all times. So we sit in a room and waste our time until things come to a head and we can feel those beautiful moments in life that we know only come around every so often, that high intense and inescapable feeling that right now you are living your destiny and things are actually going your way. Whirlwind is one of the best, yet most cliched, words to put on it. Thompson called it the "High White Sound" you feel from the perfect combination of words or people or circumstances, that makes you feel higher than you have ever been and are not on any drugs and it is only your second Heineken, and then it comes on, an overwhelming rush of clarity in the middle of all that ambiguity that you have become so use to and does not even give you the Fear anymore, as it has become a part of everyday life. That overwhelming feeling that comes when she says the right thing in response to you and then your hands touch, for only a brief yet intense moment, and you know that you never want to come down from whatever it is that you are feeling right then and there, which is a thousand things at once, a wave of so many emotions at one time it is indescribable and you shudder even trying to speak it, and you never want it to end. But you would be content to let it fade if you knew you could for certain get it back but you know that it may be a long time before it is your turn again, so you want to hang on as long as possible, never

letting her eyes leave yours in case they try to hide away behind the self-conscious awareness of the rest of her and your life that at that moment does not exist but threatens to materialize any second.

And then you find yourself up on a roof with her and your drink and your anxiety and your hand trembling almost uncontrollably, and it is your sixth drink and you still have anxiety which you know means something, and you are staring at the stars with her head lying on your shoulder and arm inside yours clasping your hand, calming your tremble, taking in anything you say, and you have known her for less than twenty four - less than twelve - hours, but you trust each other wholly and completely - except for her whole distrust of Love - almost more than you trust yourself, and you both work together to keep riding that wave as long and high as it can possibly go and you make promises to each other without caring at that moment whether they ever come true - though you know if the chance arises they will be fulfilled - because you believe them and she believes them - you both believe in that moment - and that is all that matters. And it is cold as hell in the Canadian fall but that is not why you are trembling. And suddenly you have gained the confidence to write everything you have ever wanted to write and you actually believe that it may be worth something after all.

Then you are telling her that you will never leave her side as long as she never hers, and you mean it - and, in a sense, you both never have - and she agrees with tears in her eyes because she is a beautiful woman and she is feeling too many emotions at once that she cannot completely understand but she knows that it is right and that is all that matters.

Then you kiss, the kiss, like nothing one has ever felt before. Her lips touch yours and your eyes close and you feel it, but you do not really feel it because you are too euphoric and numb all at once, it is ecstasy but cannot be described, you know you love her but it would take too long to tell someone why. Oh that dreadful English language, even Shakespeare is out of his league on this one, but then you think, no, if anyone, Shakespeare would be the only who could come close to justifying it, the only one, and even he would only come so close and then buckle under the pressure of its intensity. It is all just too much.

Then it is time to sleep but how? You know you will not be able to as your mind is racing and there is no way to stop it even if you wanted to, but you must part each other but not before making more promises and holding each other for not long enough, because it seems it would never be long enough, and then you come out of it and realize you are not in eternity, and you go lay down in her bed and she somewhere else, alone, but not really, and you are awake all night and she is too, because one of the promises you made was that you would not sleep. So you stare at the ceiling all night, where, just on top of that ceiling, three hours earlier, you had spent the night with Her.

Morning finally arrives after a thousand years and she just comes quietly into your room, her room, and gets under the sheets with you and you just stare and hold each other. A Saint and a Writer truly together for the first time in a long time and you wonder what God and Lucifer would think upon seeing this, who would be happy and who would be sad and angered, not that you believe in them but the idea is still there, And you just lay there, for what else do you need?

But now your time is over and all the rest of your life awaits tending to, and other people's dishes need to be cleaned, and other people's pint glasses need to be washed, and rent needs to somehow be paid, though you do not know from where or how. You both feel how unfair it is, though both know how life works, and your paths are just not meant to merge completely yet – simply a crossways – this was just the introduction to this story, this symphony, and you know never to cross Destiny, especially when it is eyeing you. This is not the end but it still feels like it because the rest of life feels and looks like a wasteland compared to whatever this was or is or will be. And you have not had enough but you know you would never get enough, you are hooked, then you think about your favorite word – Jaded – and you love the word but you do not want this to ever reach that point, so you hold each other again, in the silence that is full of that 'High White Sound' and you can hear nothing else, then you let go but your hands will not part. Finally you let your hand drop because you tell yourself someone has to do it. You step on the bus for the most tortured four hours in a vehicle or anywhere else that you have ever had to endure. And you know it will not get any better at the end of the four hours. And you know that you will not be able to explain to even your closest friends what has just happened as there are no real words in the English language left to use except for Shakespeare's words or Fitzgerald's words or Hemingway's words and even those will not suffice. But you know that you will try to explain it to them, unsuccessfully, but the effort you put into trying will show them how much it meant and was and they will see it in your movements and your eyes and your intensity and the funk that eventually you will fall into, and they will see. Some will

just listen and nod, then walk away and shake their head, some will say they understand, some might in their own way, and some of the most cynical will not believe experiences like that exists, but it does not matter to you – you were there, so who the fuck cares what they think, they will come to you one day with a similar story, about to burst, babbling incoherently and you will understand in silence that that was you in some earlier time and now the memory of your experience, the thoughts of that event, comes to you in those moments of silent contemplation, and you know these are the universal, eternal, 'High White Sounds' that keep you going until the next time you hear that sound again, and you know you will but you can never say when and...Such is Life.



Passlantic by Olivia Arnaud

Heroin(e)

By Mel Marguerite Hattie

heroine addicts on the movie screen,
and something that would make you feel clean
these are the things of which you dream.

Too bad -- false idols
have come to life to make you worship
late at night, rambling, rambling...
shooting upwards to feel the stars, and the stares.

With the pretence of friendship,
you can't wait to take my clothes off,
and our talking consists mostly, of
tongue wars;
shoving against any surface that won't break
and some that do.

we broke the window and started bleeding
for the cameras, in your mind to see.
And these chance encounters make me think
Throughout my hazy thoughts to link

every time we met--
to a meet against the floor.

Aggressor, aggressee,
just promise me
that this'll mean nothing after tea,
and this whole routine we run
more habit than kisses and hugs;
more damaging than drugs
makes me imagine shooting your poison
up through my veins
just to cure boredom in the rain.

and when you think about it--

I barely even
know you.

Imperial Block

By Alexandra Eastland

Imperial Block has nothing on what I thought
Could be those
Too-cool-for-this-dingy-room eyes
Cool of course, but not lifeless like the walls.

What reminded me of my first kiss
Was the moment you knew you'd have your
First escapade into manhood
(Or the kind of manhood they expect of you out there)

Sulking sultry at a table
Waiting for a ride, a kiss, a fairytale
That was a story I wanted to live and tell
And that was a bed that I want to recall.

When we were done
(I had no idea of your innocence)
You asked me:
"What kind of guy are you looking for?"
So I tried to describe what I knew of you
To already be in my heart.

Par Nathalie Lachance

Toute la ville s'éveilla ce maun-la en souriant d'un air victorieux : aujourd'hui, Jena allait passer à l'histoire. Le poete Friedrich Schiller allait donner le premier cours magistral de sa carrière de professeur d'histoire en apres-midi. On s'étira un peu plus longuement ce matin-là; on enfila ses vêtements avec assurance et conviction; on se regarda dans la glace, pleinement conscient de la signification que prenait, soudainement, tout geste banal se déroulant au cœur de ce petit patelin qui allait être appelé à jouer, de cela on n'en doutait point, un rôle capital non seulement dans l'évolution du mouvement des Lumières allemandes (*die deutsche Aufklärung*, dont le meilleur était encore à venir, disait-on d'un air satisfait) mais aussi dans la grande trame narrative du progres humain, dans le grand projet humaniste, dans le récit de l'Homme avec un H majuscule.

Quant à Friedrich Schiller, il s'éveilla ce matin-là avec une gueule de bois. La veille, il n'avait pu s'empêcher d'aller boire et jouer aux cartes avec les copains et avait encore une fois perdu une petite fortune, ce qu'il devait absolument cacher à sa femme. Il tenta de s'étirer un peu mais y renonça bien vite : il savait bien que tout mouvement, quand on avait un tel mal de bloc, n'allait mener qu'à des étourdissements. Il avait du mal à garder les yeux ouverts, la lumière penetrant dans sa chambre lui arrachant une grimace. Comme un automate, il enfila les vêtements de la veille, qui n'étaient tout de même pas si défraîchis, se dit-il. Il se regarda dans la glace quelques instants en ne pensant à rien. Puis, il tenta de se rappeler ce qu'il avait à faire ce jour-là.

Ses yeux tombèrent sur une pile de feuilles en désordre sur son pupitre. Ciel, pensa-t-il, se rappelant tout à coup qu'il devait donner aujourd'hui le premier cours magistral de sa carrière de professeur d'histoire. Voyons, de quoi voulait-il parler? Il se dit qu'il lui faudrait relire ses notes. Il eut une pensée pour Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Ministre pour le Duc Karl August de Weimar. Goethe! Goethe n'aurait certainement



The Cabin by Kristen Cleghorn

pas passé la soiree a boire et a jouer la veille d'un tel événement, se dit Schiller. Non, Monsieur le Ministre était au-dessus de tout ça, il se tenait le dos bien droit, levait le menton, souriait calmement et posément en vaquant a ses occupations (inspection de mines, lecture de rapports financiers, rencontres de dignitaires, etc.etc.). Son écriture lui ressemblait, oui, Schiller se dit que les écrits de Goethe avaient eux aussi le dos bien droit, le menton en l'air, l'air calme et posé. Évidemment que Monsieur le Ministre n'avait pas apprécié *Die Rauber*.³ Il était jaloux, de cela Schiller en était certain, de l'attention que les femmes, autrefois éprises du poète de Werther,⁴ lui vouaient maintenant a lui, Schiller, depuis le soir de la première a Mannheim quand elles s'étaient toutes évanouies l'une après l'autre – dans les loges, dans les allées, dans le foyer!

Schiller perdit ainsi un temps considérable a penser a Goethe ce matin-la alors qu'il aurait pu relire ses notes, car le premier cours magistral de sa carrière de professeur d'histoire allait avoir lieu... dans une heure a peine!

Il avala une bouchée a la course, salua sa femme, lui lançant qu'il était pressé, trop heureux d'éviter une conversation qui n'aurait pas été des plus agréables. A l'université, il se précipita vers la salle qu'il avait réservée pour l'occasion. Il s'étonna de voir une foule compacte et surexcitée et s'étonna encore plus quand cette foule commença a l'applaudir en le voyant. C'était donc lui qu'on attendait?

Il commença a paniquer en entrant dans la piece, après s'être frayé un chemin, lentement et difficilement, a travers la foule. La salle était remplie a craquer et dehors, on entendait déjà les grondements des centaines de spectateurs qui réalisaient qu'ils n'allaient pas pouvoir y entrer. Le sang de Schiller se glaça dans ses veines quand il vit un représentant des forces de l'ordre pénétrer dans la salle. Il comprit bien vite que celui-ci ne venait pas, cette fois, l'arrêter pour une quelconque offense aux autorités ou

³ *Les Brigands*, piece de theatre du jeune Schiller.

⁴ *Les Souffrances du jeune Werther*, roman du jeune Goethe.

une dette de jeu, non : le constable en question venait dire a Schiller que pour des raisons de sécurité, il faudrait que le premier cours magistral de sa carrière de professeur d'histoire ait lieu ailleurs, dans une salle plus vaste. Et ou était cette salle, demanda Schiller poliment? A l'autre bout de la ville, déclara le constable. On se précipita a l'extérieur de la salle trop exigüe, la foule suivant le poète dans sa course effrénée. Les cheveux de Schiller, qu'il avait très roux, se dressèrent sur sa tête en entendant les pompiers. Quoi? Il y avait, en plus, un feu quelque part en ville, ce qui allait considérablement ralentir la course? Le constable qui courait dignement a côté du poète le rassura: on avait fait appel aux pompiers justement pour vider les rues et laisser passer Monsieur le Professeur et ses spectateurs. Schiller tenta un sourire de gratitude qui échoua lamentablement.

On arriva enfin a l'auditorium, qui était déjà plein. On avait ouvert les fenêtres pour que les derniers arrivés puissent entendre la présentation de Schiller. Le poète se tenait devant la foule, écrasant ses feuillets de notes entre ses doigts, ne sachant pas trop comment commencer, n'ayant pas eu le temps de relire ses notes. La foule, le voyant ou plutôt le croyant prêt a commencer, se taisait et son silence recueilli ne plut pas du tout a Schiller. On était accroché a ses lèvres. Mais qu'attendait-on de lui? Il n'était qu'un poète qui voulait parler d'histoire. Il n'était quand même pas Goethe!

Il commença alors a parler et un fin observateur aurait remarqué que tous les spectateurs plissèrent immédiatement les yeux, signe indubitable d'une grande concentration. Ils ne comprenaient rien! L'accent de Schiller, originaire de la Souabe, était tel que personne ne comprenait un traître mot de ce qu'il racontait! On se mit alors a l'observer puisqu'on ne pouvait le comprendre. Ses vêtements étaient vraiment défraîchis. Ses cheveux étaient vraiment trop roux, et des mèches mouillées de sueur lui collaient aux tempes. Autour de lui flottait un vague relent de bière, dirent plus tard les spectateurs des premières rangées. Et en sortant son mouchoir, dit une femme, il laissa échapper un valet de carreau!

Un seul homme, un compatriote de Schiller, semblait suspendu aux lèvres du poète. Lorsque tous se levèrent, a la fin de la présentation, il se moucha bruyamment pour se donner une contenance, ravalant ses larmes et expliquant a ses voisins qu'il souffrait d'allergies saisonnières. Il rentra

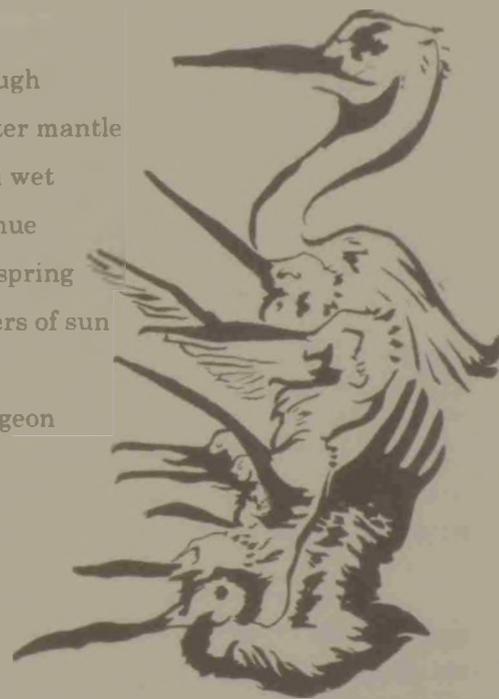
chez lui bouleversé, se mit à écrire des lettres à des collègues des grandes universités germanophones, lettres qui allaient, nous le savons maintenant, immortaliser ce cours magistral de Schiller que les grands esprits allemands allaient bientôt citer aux côtés des textes de Kant et, plus tard, de Hegel.

Quant aux bonnes gens de Jena, ils rentrèrent à la maison ce soir-là quelque peu abattues. Jena allait devoir attendre pour faire sa marque dans l'histoire, se dirent-ils. Nul ne doutait que ce moment allait arriver et qu'il serait porteur d'un lumineux espoir pour toute l'humanité. On continua à lire Goethe, on s'amusa en lisant son *Wilhelm Meister*, on admira son *Faust*. Quant à Schiller, on l'aimait bien, malgré tout, mais le grand poète allemand, c'était quand même Goethe - du moins, c'est ce qu'on enseignait dans les livres.

To Moth

To moth a hole as deep as through
The diamond husk of your winter mantle
To lift autumn's fall of cold and wet
Glistening leaves in shades of hue
To bury a sigh exhuming your spring
From your bed soiled of summers of sun

By Ernest Pidgeon



Tuck

Paper bag angel pours out her soul,
consisting of jelly beans and candy root beers.
She offers up
and I partake in her cleansing,
savouring the saccharine delights
of an edible spirituality.

By Christopher Brandon

Dropping the bomb

By Elyse Gagne

She tucked the precious instrument onto its protective cradle of foam packing pieces and sealed it inside the box, wrapping it twice with heavy brown paper. The address was a typed sticker which she smoothed on, dead center. It would add to the suspense if her handwriting wasn't recognized. She was on the other side of the world this week; far, far away from home, and from him.

It was wonderfully light; it hardly cost a thing to send. She parted with 12 dollars to have it mailed express, a small price to pay so that it would arrive and be opened long before she even boarded her return flight. The miracles of modern science. The weight of the world was wrapped up tight in that little parcel and yet it would cross the globe in 24 hours, weighing less than a newborn.

They played catch with it, unknowing of the precise chemical tool nestled inside. It was tossed down the chute, onto a trolley, into the van, out of the van, onto the flatbed, crushed between other, heavier boxes in the back of the plane.

It arrived battered and torn at 301 North Preswick Avenue, a looming office building that normally received only bills, resumes, statements, press releases, computer catalogues and the occasional bouquet. There, it was sorted with a hefty bundle of thin white envelopes to go to the fourth floor, the Blake Ltd suites.

One secretary traded off the pile of the usual business mail, and this one exception, to the other, who left it on Simon Curie's desk, the morning after it had been sent. A few curious co-workers eyed the strange arrival from their cubicles. Simon himself had never so much as received a post card at work before. Normally all the mail was for his superiors- and no matter, their mail was always the monotonous trifle that could be expected from those slender white envelopes that were made to fit only crisp white 8.5 x 11s.

Simon guessed who it was from; she was the only person he knew who was in Europe. But why send him anything? He shook it roughly next to his ear, but could only hear the impatient rustle of the Styrofoam. He slit open the tape, tore his way through the two layers of paper and his hands delved into the cardboard womb to retrieve the small mass inside. It puzzled him. There was only a plastic baggy with a post-it stuck on.

That was when Simon started yelling, running around the office shouting, waving the plastic bag like it was on fire. He dropped it onto the secretary's desk, the whole staff staring at him in alarm. The post-it said 'Love you forever'. Inside was a smudgy blue-and-white stick.

"My wife's pregnant!" Simon hollered. "My wife's pregnant!" Reverently, he passed his precious delivery around, as though it were very heavy and almost dangerous.

You give, He takes

She gives, He takes

You receive

nothing.

K. King (November 2009)



After the fire by Christopher Brandon

Charades
By Denise St-Pierre

He's one to pipe superfluous greetings—
Glossy grin, eyes expectant—
But vanishes before I open my lips.
My response rests on the tip of my tongue
Anxiously awaiting his alleged return.
Heart leaps in fear and in passion—
He has leveled my world,
And watches with judging eyes as I work
To reassemble the scattered pieces.
The windows are kept shuttered,
But I can peek through the slats
To glimpse at his soul.
Empty, only a framed photograph
Of himself. *Typical.*
How does one like this come to be?
Do they shoot out from the womb
Wailing hymns of self-praise?
Does it simmer beneath the surface
Waiting for language to take its shape?
Truth, his forgotten mistress—
How effortless it would be for him to take her in his arms
And fall into an easy waltz.
But he chooses to dodge her skirts,
Weaving between her buckling legs.
He is fluid, splashing and slipping through my grasp.
I drink his lies, liquid poetry
Though it's bitter on my tongue,
Yet he laughs wholeheartedly.
A paragon of jests—
And I know his favourite game.

Tiller Towards Trouble

By Etienne Domingue

The tide, I fear, is rushing us towards the rocks;
the shore would have nothing to do with us
& underneath the clang of wave & wind & rain
we drown – again. again.

And yet other currents
might save us: rive down the masts, cast the sails away.
Let mer-folk & kraken drag the dull freight
by surface or sea-bed to spill its dim contents.

Hark, crazed helmsman! Turn now the wheel this way & that.
mad rudder to repay the Tempest tit for tat,
creaking of wood against crashing of wave.

The battle is long & the blue does not tire
but all of dread Ocean still is only water
(& the monsters therefrom on beaches lie
not for gainful sleep, but only to die)

forever there remains the certainty of Land
steadfast always, though it seem tenuous.
Indeed there shall be land enough at journey's end
for wives & children gaily to greet us

or for ancient bones to wash up on the sand.

Ode to Rain
By Alexandra Eastland

Your touch patters on my bare shoulder
And I am slick with desire for your refreshment
Drenched in yearning for
All of your stormy might to break loose
Crushing the blades of grass between my toes
Dripping from my nose and chin
I reach up, feet down pat
And call for you to shake me
As the prophet said love should.
Oh, rain, I would become you in an instant
To course through all life and
Feel the effortless savagery and beauty
Of nature pound through rock.
Would I become you, I might prefer to
Patter on one's shoulder
For him to desire my refreshment.



Untitled by Pierre Quinn

You:

I remember you telling me about your bones melting, and being the queen of nowhere. I told you, this is the violent and unforgiving electric city of our youth.

Who are those pigeon-kicking rebels drawing underneath the playground?
Sharing hallucinations and throwing up --all over the teachers.
They're weird; they eat paper; they're queer.
Catholic school purged us of religious tolerance.
That's the last time.
It bruised the brow with battering -- crosses and confinements.
I never got tired of chasing you; did you think I meant to leave?

I'm shoving words in my mouth like uncooked alphabet soup.
Fumbling for words I never wrote so I can't say
Because my noises get all jumbled that way.

I told you-- this is the violent and unforgiving electric city of our youth.

By Mel Marguerite Hattie



Untitled by Mel Marguerite Hattie

Cinderella vs. Prince Charming

By Lauren D.M. Smith

Darren resisted the urge to smirk. *This I could get used to*, he thought, surrounded by a small cluster of pretty girls. Catching the eye of Lyel over the shoulders of the current girl who had herself pressed against him in a mockery of a dance, he made a gesture to indicate her body and how much of it could be seen due to her clothing. Lyel glared making Darren grin. He had known that Lyel wouldn't find it amusing. Lyel was happily engaged and it was only the fact that Darren was his best friend that had enabled Darren to pry Lyel out of the arms of his fiancée.

Again Darren scanned the dimly lit room. Flashing lights and random bursts of smoke made it hard to see much but the mass of writhing bodies that was the dance floor. The ceiling, walls and floor were all covered in an unidentifiable sparkly material that caught the light and threw it back, causing the place to give off a sort of tacky glitter. Sweeping the room one last time, Darren felt it. *Finally! Time to get to work*, he thought before giving Erramun the nod.

With a pained look, Erramun disappeared into the crush, ceeling through the sardine-like crowd with surprising ease. It only took him a few moments to return, with a microphone in one hand.

Excusing himself from his 'dance' partner, Darren took the mic and stepped back, waiting for the current song to end before he began.

Val was sitting in one of the booths with her friends, nursing her third drink and idly watching the crowd when she froze. There he was. His black hair was all she could see over his wide smile, but she knew, though

she didn't know how, that his eyes were bright blue, he topped her by half a head and that if she let herself, she'd end up falling for him. *No! Oh hell no! I...I refuse. I don't even believe in fate or love at first sight or any of that bullshit. This...I'm not letting this happen. And certainly not with him!* She thought, angry and more than a little freaked out. Val unfroze her self and turned away, sickened by the sight of him smirking at his companion over the harem that had sprung up around him. *And he's a prick to boot. Lovely. Well if I can just avoid him everything ought to work out fine.*

Just then, the music in the club stopped, causing an angry murmur to arise from the assemblage. Val took a quick peek and saw to her horror that the blue eyed man was getting up onto a table, a microphone in hand.

"If I could have your attention for a few moments, I have an announcement to make. My name is Darren. I've travelled quite a way to end up here. Anyway I'm looking for the girl who will be my queen. She's here somewhere, I can tell. So princess, if you'd please come find me I'd be grateful. That's all."

Amidst the stunned silence, the man, Darren, hopped down off the table, handing the mic to the taller of his two companions as he did so. The silence was quickly broken as everyone began talking at once while a small stampede of girls rushed towards Darren. Val took several deep breaths to calm herself down before digging around her purse for a pen.

After sending the initial swarm of girls that had appeared, Darren threw himself down onto the couch beside Lyel while Erramun loomed over the pair of them. "Well I think that went fairly well." Darren remarked.

"How do you figure that?" Lyel demanded. "You don't know what she looks like, her name or even what type we're looking for!"

Darren shrugged. "We know she's here. So that's a start."

"I don't like it. The...women here are not proper ladies," Erramun said.

Rolling his eyes, Darren retorted "That's because you're a prude, Err."

"Hey, I think this is for you" A brash male voice called.

The three of them turned to look at the young man who stood in front of them, something small and white in his hand, which he was offering to Darren. Before he could even reach out to take it, Erramun put himself in front, taking the item in question.

Only after he had thoroughly checked it over did Erramun hand the napkin to Darren, much to the amusement of the would-be messenger. Moving closer to the window, where the light from a nearby street lamp made it easier to see, Darren could see that on the front of the folded napkin in bold blue letters were the words *To the Prince Charming Wannabe*. Flipping the napkin open, he was able to read the whole message.

Leave! Now! I like my life the way it is now. I refuse to be tied down and I absolutely refuse to be your Cinderella. So get the fuck out!

Darren was surprised. He hadn't been expecting this. *A Cinderella should be grateful!* He grumbled mentally. *And of course it's a Cinderella. I was hoping for a Snow White-Rose Red or a Sleeping Beauty or even a Pea Princess. Well I'm not to be gotten rid of so easily.* A sudden idea made a wide grin break across Darren's face. When Darren caught Erramun's attention and nodding once again, his bodyguard, who was clearly ill at ease with the expression Darren was wearing, sighed heavily but complied.

Taking the microphone from Erramun as soon as he returned, Darren leapt back up onto the table to address the club once more. "Well then princess, since you don't wish to come out and I have no intention of leaving, I propose a game. A wager really. If I win, you come away with me. If you win, I leave and never bother you again. The game itself is simple. I have to find you. Figure out which of all the girls here in this town you are. And since tonight is a full moon, it makes sense for the limit to be one moon. When next the moon is full, if I haven't found you out then you win. How does that sound?"

As a second silence swept the nightclub, the crowd began looking at one another, waiting for some kind of answer. After a few minutes people began whispering, then talking and soon the place returned to its normal level of din though no one resumed dancing.

Darren, a grin plastered onto his face, hopped down and returned to the couch to wait. He knew she'd answer. She wouldn't be able to resist.

Val waited a good ten minutes before writing her reply. She spent the time discussing the weirdness of it all with her friends. They were excited. When did something as exciting as this ever happen?

"I want to know who this princess he keeps talking about it is," Jodie said, face alight with interest.

"If what he said is any indication I don't think he knows either," Francoise offered.

"Maybe she doesn't know herself?" Naomi murmured.

"No way! You heard him. She wants him gone," Jodie insisted.

"I'm more concerned with the fact that he is under some kind of delusion that he's Prince Charming," Val told the others, giving them pause.

"You know... Val's right. He could just be crazy," Francoise said slowly.

"Don't say that! He's hot! It would be just our luck for the hottest guy to ever show up in this damn town to turn out to be a nutter," Jodie complained.

Val chuckled. "I'll leave you three to bemoan losing your latest eye candy. I'm going to get another drink."

Laughing and making comments about Val not being any fun, the three girls continued their discussion on whether or not Darren was insane. Shaking her head, Val headed towards the bar; surreptitiously leaving the new napkin note on one of the empty tables she passed by.

Sliding back into the booth claimed by her and her friends, Val covered her smile with a sip of her drink. She'd show the Charming wannabe. No way was he going to win this game.

It was a good half-hour before Darren received a response, during which he began to pace. When the note finally did arrive, Darren snatched it out of the hands of the girl who'd brought it, ignoring Erramun's protest and the shocked look on the face of the girl. Folded like the previous napkin, the front this time said *To the Idiot Prince*. Darren all but ran over to the window where he could read the rest of the note.

Since it seems I won't be able to get rid of you any other way, fine. But the game starts tomorrow. It's hardly fair since you know I'm here. Any cheating on your

part and the deal is off. And I expect you to leave immediately after I win. No going back on the agreement.

Darren smirked, handing the napkin to his two companions to read. "She's quite confident she's going to win. I'll show her. I'm going to win this Cinderella Game."

Lyel and Erramun froze. "Did you just say Cinderella?" Lyel asked, eyes wide.

Darren nodded. "She named herself as one."

"But if she's a Cinderella she should jump at a chance to get away," Lyel said. "This whole place is different. I don't think the normal rules apply," Darren replied absently, already planning how he was going to find her out.

Erramun and Lyel exchanged a look before shrugging in unison. It was out of their hands. They were Darren's sworn companions and bound to help him see this through. Even if things didn't make sense.

La Toilette
Lines for Arthur Rimbaud

In greasy lavatories
a waxy crone of an old woman
with one gold tooth will sell you
hard as a bench wood box
a single square of corrugated
cardboard and expect you to
do your business.

many centimes later
i emerge lighter
and without funds to even purchase
the day's paper.

with a thickly soiled rag
she wipes the toilet rim
and then the sink before
I wash my hands.

if a place does this
it could do anything
in justice, mirth, and idiocy
and kill men with a laugh.

i run darkly away
and fall upon the old battlements
of the rotting city
disgraced and hounded by dogs
I cannot escape
and am torn into ruins
that only i can see

By Noni Howard



Apples by Tom Nepomuceno

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY
CONSULTATION SUR PLACE

Elle Annorn
Olivia Arnaud
Michelle Barker
Christopher Brandon
Nancy Branch
Kristen Cleghorn
Anabel Collin
Alicia Cumming
Carol Dignam
Etienne Domingue
Alexandra Eastland
Taylor Evans
Jesse Faith
Elyse Gagne
Eleanor Sang
Lynsey Hachey
Mel Marguerite Hattie
Noni Howard
Connie Jensen
K. King

Margienne Koenig
Nathalie Lachance
Gordon Lambie
Quinton D. Leduc
Olivia Lees
Dayna Lowe
Allison McClure
Tom Nepomuceno
Ernest Pidgeon
Pierre Quinn
Annie Rikoff
Maximilien Roy

Isabelle Schumppher-Cripps
Lauren D.M. Smith
Denise St-Pierre
Philip Saitor
Erin Wells
Ergot Heracitus Wormwood
Frank Willdig