



REFLECTION

56.2



Reflection

56.1

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*Reflection* submissions are evaluated and selected anonymously.

*Reflection* staff would like to thank everyone who participated in the literary and visual arts community on campus by submitting to the journal. Joanne Shiosaki and Jeffrey Dodd deserve our praise for facilitating an instructive and positive experience.

# Reflection

56.1

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We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled. The  
trick is, knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the  
beautiful stuff out.

Ray Bradbury

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# EDITORIAL STATEMENT

“Nobody could accuse this little zine of lacking diverse  
and original subject matter.”

Monda Sherick Van Hollebeke, *Reflection* Editor, 1962

## Origins.

The act of reflection entails a harkening back, possibly to the origin of a feeling, thought, or experience. Where does art originate? Where are the headwaters for that river of consciousness that streams words onto the page and paint from the brush?

Every creation of art is built on top of previous works. Peel back the layers of inspiration and you will find Greek mythology, biblical allusions, and schools of technique. While on a walking tour of Rome in the spring of 2014 I laughed with the tour guide when she likened the strata of Roman ruins to layers of lasagna. Throughout my remaining time in Italy, cathedrals with basement tombs and upper chapels became ‘lasagna churches.’ Though a cathedral could exist anywhere, without the rich history layered under its pillars it would not evoke the same cultural significance or depth. Artistic accumulation celebrates the modern and innovative while appreciating what came before to inspire its creation.

Since the spring of 1960 *Reflection* has showcased the artistic endeavors of Gonzaga’s literary arts community, each issue swelling in creative potential while deepening its tradition and profundity. In this issue, Lucia Baldwin’s “Persephone” examines the possibility that Persephone did not want to leave the underworld, giving a unique voice to a well-known myth. Tracy Poindexter-Canon’s painting “Parental Throwback” mimics the style of Kandinsky using modern mixed medium technique that includes Post-It notes. This issue celebrates the attempt of poets, writers, artists, and photographers to mine a vein of originality and drench these pages with masterful works of art. Let us bathe in the creativity of Gonzaga’s literary and artistic community while pondering how origins beget originality.

--K.M. Charters

# Flash Fiction Contest

Explaining the origins of Lake Arthur's toxicity in 56 words or less.

## Winner

First digit, proximal phalanx...

... his anatomy text had said; a finger bone. He'd been finding other bones in the same place since freshman year—under the big willow on the shore, where the muskrats burrow. And what was it Father Kuder had said at Dr. Prusch's retirement party? "He knows where the bodies are buried." Hmmm.

David Boose

## Runner Up

From the Desk of Tamara Hert  
Spokane Office of Public Health  
November 9th, 1964

Dr. Wallace-

I have completed the requested secret toxicity tests for Lake Arthur. Radioactivity from our own lab found in samples. Caution strongly advised as we expose the lab to the public, otherwise our superiors could

Hert Eliminated

Cover up complete

-M.H.C.

Sarah Butler

Honorable Mention: Eli Francovich

# Vocation

Luke Janicki

Moving forward like the ticker on a time bomb that you don't know will never blow, but don't forget your purpose before you leave, or did you not know where to look? Whether under the books on your desk or within or without yourself, or by the lamp on the wall where hangs all that matters, but you miss its meaning rushing out the door to the world where they say your purpose is anyway, so why bother with a passion? It won't align with the landscaped path that was scoured all summer only to be trampled under wheels that turn and take students to class and turn back ticking time you were supposed to be spending on that essay on leadership, or was it Shakespeare? Projections compound and rebound one off the other like slops of water from the broken sprinkler, wasteful and unplanned, and utterly ignored, but the grass all around looks nice the people say, and someone's bent down scanning the lawn for something misplaced as I go by. Maybe they'll find what I'm looking for, I think as they look up, stare, and wonder where I'm going. Don't worry about me. I am walking to my brother's house.

# Avoir l'air

Katie Schmarr

12

The stagnant and unfamiliar taste of hotel room air  
Juices your brain late into the night.  
Your brother sleeps near  
Beneath a similar skin-and-armygreen palm-leaf comforter.

You know you are too ugly for a proper holiday:  
Flour-sack thighs, wooly eyebrows,  
But one day you could be the woman whose white bikini  
Serves as a projector screen for the glimmering pool water:  
Long-limbed and golden, like an Oscar.  
Soaked-through with want,  
Like Seventeen left on the terrace for the warm hibiscus rain.

You fabricate men.

20

1:48 a.m. Mountain Time.  
Each room in Boise's Budget Inn includes  
a cinder block accent wall the color of guacamole.  
Damn musty hotel smell.

Beneath the maroon abstract bedding  
You've got legs.  
You don't speak to half the boys who  
know exactly how long they are,

but long enough.  
You've heard everything you ever wanted to hear  
from savior-male lips.  
Some of your friends are still waiting,

and you let them wait.  
You're too dry, like the scrubland,  
and you're damn pleased about it.  
They will not catch me, clutch me, fill me  
anymore.  
I am me I am me I am me.

You're a paper-winged condor high above the plains of Idaho.

...?

Maybe you're seventy.  
Maybe you're checked in to Le Grimaldi in the south of France.  
Maybe they've figured out hotel stink.  
Maybe you've got long, flappy, wrinkly legs,  
Maybe even a lover.  
Maybe.

It doesn't matter.  
This air matters.

You're breathing it.

# Reflection: Editing the Journal at its Inception

Monda Sherick Van Hollebeke

*Reflection* may have been the brainchild of Father Charles Keenan, S.J., a former member of the editorial staff in the mid-1950s of *America* magazine, the national Catholic weekly published by the Jesuits in New York. Fr. Keenan—sharp eye and bloody red pen notwithstanding—was the wittiest leprechaun of an Irishman I have had the pleasure of knowing—a brilliant, but kind-hearted educator.

I wrote features and a humor column for the *Gonzaga Bulletin* during my years at GU—under Editor Art McGinn and moderator, Fr. Lee Teufel, S.J., and I think Fr. Keenan or Art McGinn may have recruited me to join the editorial staff of the new journal, along with several of my friends in the first Honors Course, Jean Lemire and Kay McDonald, and later, other co-conspirators in the department of English: Ed Ryan, Dan Taaffe, Tom Hulscher, Kevin Roddy, and Anne Hilber, among others. Fr. Keenan also gave me a chance to submit an essay to *America*, after President Kennedy’s inauguration, on the subject of the “New Frontier.” I recall that my piece was optimistic and somewhat sappy, but Fr. Keenan sent it in anyway, after marking it up a good bit.

But, holy smokes, I was getting published! My first memorable experience as a writer/editor was on the new student editorial board of *Reflection*. It was for me, then, as it probably is for the members of the editorial staff now, the moment I first saw myself as a member of the writing profession.

In 2012, I celebrated the 50th reunion of my graduating class of 1962. I am still in touch with Jean Lemire, Anne Hilber Nephew (married to Al Nephew), Ed Ryan, and Mollie Comerford from our early editorial staff days. Jean, Al and Anne Nephew, and I became teachers, and transferred what we learned from Fr. Keenan, Fr. William Costello, Fr. Louis St. Marie, Dr. John Sisk, and Dr. Franz Schneider into red ink and tactful editorial suggestions on the thousands of essays our own students have written over the years.

And I did continue to write, professionally. My publication credits include poems and essays in a number of literary journals around the country, a book-length biography of a Jesuit educator, John P. Leary, S.J., and numerous newspaper and magazine articles for children.

*Reflection* editor Katherine Charters asked me to comment on how my writing has evolved over the years. My poems, I think, have moved away from ideas and impressions to find their subject matter in adult love, loss, memories, and the people who have formed the woman I have become. And, of course, the subject of death. I once read (where?) that all good poems are really about death or dying. I'm becoming convinced this is true. Think about Yeats, T.S. Eliot, W.S. Merwin, Theodore Roethke, Jane Kenyon, Kay Ryan, Emily Dickinson—Homer, Virgil. See what I mean? Another thing I have come to internalize about poetry is its music. Richard Hugo, in a lecture to creative writing students, "Writing off the Subject" from *The Triggering Town*, comments:

*When you start to write, you carry to the page one of two attitudes, though you may not be aware of it. One is that all music must conform to truth. The other, is that all truth must conform to music. If you feel truth must conform to music, those of us who find life bewildering and who don't know what things mean, but love the sounds of words enough to fight through draft after draft of a poem, can go on writing--try to stop us.*

A recent influence on my development as a poet is *Poetry* magazine (founded in 1912 by Harriet Monroe), which I have read and studied for years. I awaken early every morning and most days I write for an hour or more in a journal. Some days I simply deconstruct a poem from a current issue of *Poetry*, analyzing each line, its form, style, imagery, diction, musicality—making notes in my journal—and then do some research on the poet, usually on the Poetry Foundation website. I think of it as "poem-schooling." It is imperative for writers to keep up with the ever-expanding frontiers of human expression and artistry. There is so much to be learned from other poets.

On days I analyze poems, I don't try to write them. But on other days, the poems well up and present themselves (in just a brief line or phrase) as something fresh, new. When this happens, I'm always glad to be sitting in my chair by the window—like a brood hen on her nest—with my writing tablet and a sharpened number-two pencil.

## HISTORY OF *REFLECTION*

The first issue of *Reflection* actually appeared in the Spring of 1960, not 1959 as indicated in your 2014 edition (Vol. 55, #1). Its cover was yellow and blue, and the Winter 1960-61 issue, labeled Vol. I, No. 2

states: “The first issue, Spring 1960, was not numbered.”

But *Reflection* was not Gonzaga’s first literary magazine! Titled *The Gonzaga*, it appeared for the first time in April, 1910. The magazine was edited by graduating senior Eric Schermanson who later became a priest in the diocese of Boise and chaplain at Providence Hospital in Wallace, Idaho. The first issue of *Reflection* (edited by Art McGinn and published 50 years later) was dedicated to Fr. Schermanson.

A smart-alecky essay I wrote appeared in this first issue—making fun of modern poetry. My face felt hotter and hotter as I re-read it for the first time in over 50 years. Herewith are the other contents of the first issue. First-off, a “comma-splice” error and a missing period on the very first page of the first article! Kay Rutter’s essay compared *The Cherry Orchard* with *The Member of the Wedding*; Dan Powers interviewed Canadian students who resented the fact that American students knew so little about their neighbors up north (“Northern Exposure”); the law-school librarian Emily Ehlinger contributed a touching story about the Chinese goddess Kwan Yin and her parallel attributes with the Virgin Mary, in “She who Hears the Cry of the World”; graduating senior Ray Haeg, born in 1934, wrote a poignant memoir about his childhood in Lovell Valley, Idaho during the Depression, attending a one-room schoolhouse (as I did in Montana in 1945-49); Dan Avey spun a hilarious yarn about an old fairy-tale, titled “Rumplestiltskin Rock”; authored by Charles Braunger was an essay on the topic of bums (“No Hallelujahs for Bums”) which caused me to faintly remember him telling the editorial staff about his experience riding boxcars across the mid-West before enrolling in college. Also in this first issue a Spokane sophomore Shannon Stiley contributed a science fiction tale, Rosemary Och wrote an article on prayer, and Clarence Blake penned an essay on the revival of the mandolin! Five poets were published: Kerry Mullen, Kathryn Epton, Kay McDonald, Ina Franklin, and Floyd Loony. Their work is distinctive, fresh, charming and funny. Nobody could accuse this little zine of lacking diverse and original subject matter.

The next issue, Volume I, No. 2, also edited by Art McGinn, with associate editors Kay McDonald and myself, contained an essay by my good friend, Jean Lemire (an associate editor of Volume II and III) on T.S. Eliot’s “Cocktail Party” and its echoes of Euripedes. The issue was dedicated to Shannon Stiley, a contributor to the first issue, who died in a car accident with Dennis Flaherty in September, 1960. Dr. Franz Schneider wrote a touching poem, “St. John’s Fire,” in tribute to Shannon Stiley’s memory.

I edited Volume 2, numbers 1 and 2, with cover designs for both



issues by Mollie Comerford. Charles Braunger appeared for the third time, with a dramatic story, “McDougall’s Daughter,” and Ed Ryan wrote a comical epic poem, “The Poohiad.” Anne Hilber joined the literary staff (and later became Editor of the Winter 1962-63 and Spring, 1963 issues).

In the Winter 1961-62 issue, Father Charles Keenan’s “Stirring Days in Spokane Falls” recalled the founding of Gonzaga University in celebration of its Diamond Jubilee. A favorite of mine in this issue was Norm Gillette’s profile, “I Remember Jean Claude,” the 7 feet, 3 inch basketball sensation, Lefebvre, recruited from Paris, France, by coach Hank Anderson. As a freshman I recall dancing with him at a mixer in the Cog—what a gentle, polite young man he was. (At six feet tall, I was no shrimp, either!) Ed Ryan and Tom Hulscher’s contributions also highlighted this edition. The first man a storyteller, the second a serious poet, these students were among the finest writers of “my day.” I’ll stop here.

A final observation: what a great leap forward *Reflection* has made since it first appeared in the Spring of 1960. Twice as many pages, flash fiction contests, lots of good poetry, wider inclusion of the visual arts, discussions of the new literature of the Digital Age and Goldsmith’s “uncreative writing,” and a startling, beautifully written short story by Meg Besch.

Congratulations to Haley Swanson and her literary staff. And best wishes to Katherine Charters as she charts yet another new path for *Reflection* in the Winter of 2014-15.

# Chokecherries on Shepherd's Butte

Monda Sherick Van Hollebecke

In clefts of coulees  
chokecherries flourished, too sour  
to eat off the bush.

We brought them in our caps to Mother  
who boiled and squeezed them through a cloth  
for pancake syrup. If we dribbled on our shirts  
the stains would stay.

Mother said Indians made deer leap and hawks soar  
on their tunics and tepees with the dark red juice.

One August, at the rodeo in Great Falls the Blackfoot people came  
in full regalia, set up tepees outside the grandstand gates,  
lit fires at night. The young boys, fierce on their painted ponies,  
raced in the tall grass, faces streaked with red.  
Chokecherry juice? Their black eyes took in sunlight  
but didn't give it back. Their noses, old men's noses. They eyed  
their elders smoking outside the tents on beautiful old rugs.

Did they wonder: Is this what we've become?  
Did they feel anger tear inside like prairie fire?

On rising winds did they feel cold days coming?  
Did they see their people in the purple clouds?

# The Shark That Swam Through the Forest

Kellie Malone

“Honey, I had to wash it. It’s filthy.”

“No you didn’t!”

“Jeff, he’s clean now. He smells good and there are no icky germs on it.”

“Maybe I liked the icky germs. And Snappy doesn’t smell good. He smells weird, Mom.”

“Sorry you’re upset, but that’s the way it goes. Sharpie will smell normal soon, I promise.”

“It’s Snappy!”

The baby started crying in the next room, so Mom hustled out of Jeff’s doorway with the laundry basket perched on her left hip and an empty moving box on her right.

Jeff looked over Snappy the shark. He looked lighter gray now, and his big white teeth started to curl from the wash. Jeff didn’t like that they looked like cloth now instead of scary shark teeth. There was a scratch on its right eye that Jeff could see better now, which he decided did make him look more intimidating. But he smelled like ocean breeze detergent. Snappy didn’t even like the ocean.

Snappy was an unusual shark. He liked to swim through the forests, darting through the trees and hunting down elusive squirrel intruders. Snappy liked how the cold air chilled his insides just enough to make him feel everything down to his belly and bones. Snappy really liked his best friend, Jeff.

Jeff’s mom gave him Snappy in a big shiny-silver bag for Christmas just over a year ago. He gasped when he pulled out the shark, with its big mouth filled with rows and rows of teeth. Jeff watched a movie in Ms. Carol’s class that said sharks lose their teeth all the time but can always grow them all back. He only got to lose his baby teeth once, and they weren’t even close to being as cool or as big as Snappy’s.

Jeff sat up from his pouting child’s pose on the floor. He looked at his crooked right foot, which was slightly pigeon-toed so it looked like his body couldn’t decide which direction to go when he walked. Even after all the baby leg braces and exercises and surgery, he was left with a little limp and a shorter leg.

He grabbed his marshmallow-man coat and shimmied it on, but he could never quite figure out how to make the two puzzle pieces of a zipper to properly fit. He walked over to Lucy's room, his big toe poking out of his tube sock as he shuffled.

"Mom, I can't get the zip—"

His mom was asleep in the chair next to Lucy's crib. She had placed several toys in the moving box before closing her eyes. Her ponytail was almost completely undone, and short strands around her hairline stuck out like she'd been shocked in an educational demonstration on electricity.

Jeff glanced at his mom and sleeping Lucy. He realized they were both still and staying that way. He turned around, pivoting on his exposed big toe, and pitter-pattered to the door to put on his boots. The mud from yesterday hardened enough for him to smack off the big chunks onto the welcome mat outside. Someone made them special just for his feet, so Mom told him he had to keep them tidy. Jeff didn't see why that mattered, though. The kids at school would tease him about his shoes, whether or not they were tidy.

Bunny ear, bunny ear, loop and pull. It took him three tries, but he laced them up all by himself. After his success, Jeff was so proud that he almost forgot Snappy, who was still lying on the floor next to his crumpled Spider-Man pajamas and his yet-to-be-packed suitcases.

He grabbed Snappy and nestled him underneath his left arm so he could pick up the little specks of dried mud leaving a trail from his room to the door. He gently closed the door and then began rushing to the forest behind his house.

Forest is a generous term for the thick grove of trees that Jeff claimed as his kingdom. Of course he appointed Snappy as bodyguard. No one wants to mess with a shark.

Only an acre stood between the back of Jeff's townhouse and the trail that wound fifty feet above the Sunset freeway, connecting Portland with the Oregon Coast. But the acre was an infinite playground for the crooked-footed boy.

He wanted to get the stink of detergent off his bodyguard. He held him up above his head and began trotting through the forest, his right leg hopping with each step to keep up with the left. His coat was still unzipped and flapped back and forth in the December air. Snappy loved swimming through the damp forest, patrolling for enemies to protect King Jeff.

They stopped. The soggy leaves rustled and squished behind them. Intruder! A small squirrel scrambled up the tree before Snappy could arrest the offender. They continued swimming through the forest

until the whoosh of the freeway numbed their ears.

“Mr. Bodyguard, you’ve done a great job today. The kingdom is safe once more.”

As the King saluted the bodyguard, he noticed a half-empty bottle on the ground and picked it up.

“Snappy, do you know what wa-hisk-ee means? Maybe it’s a wizard’s potion!”

“It ain’t a potion, kiddo.”

Jeff almost fell backwards at the sound of the deep voice behind the tree. He shuffled over and saw a man leaning up against the trunk, his right leg out front and his left bent like they were making the number “4.” His coat was unzipped, too. Underneath was a dark green jacket like the one he saw Dad wearing during their Christmas Skype call. But this man had patches sewn across the chest, and one of them had a shark on it like Snappy.

“It ain’t a very good potion, at least. It just makes life easier to swallow,” said the stranger.

“What’re you doing in the forest, mister?” Jeff paused before asking skeptically, “You aren’t a wizard, are you?”

“Yup, just your everyday wizard, heh-heh. Call me Merlin, why don’t ya?”

Sarcasm flew high over Jeff’s head, so he tried his best to suppress his smile at meeting a real wizard drinking potions in the forest.

“But for real, I’m just taking a break. Been working all day at the overpass,” said Merlin the wizard.

“What do you do there?”

“Advertise.”

Jeff limped over to the man with Snappy in one hand and the bottle in the other.

“Advertise what?”

“Myself.”

Jeff knew he wasn’t supposed to talk to strangers. But this man was a real-life wizard! He had to see what magic he might do for the people on the overpass.

“Can I see?”

“Kiddo, I don’t think you should be out here. What would your momma say?”

Jeff closed his eyes and mimicked the deep, rumbling inhale his mom made when she snored in the room across the hall.

“Well, I’m heading to the pass now. But you best be heading home. It ain’t no place for a little kid, even with a shark to protect him.”

“Please, Mr. Merlin? I’ll be really good and helpful and everything. I just want to see a spell or something.”

Merlin looked at the little limping boy as he stood up and slung on his backpack.

“You’ll be sorely disappointed. But I guess you can tag along.”

Merlin began walking toward the path. Jeff set the bottle down and began his hopping trot to keep up, with Snappy swimming along beside him. The overpass was only five minutes from Merlin’s napping place in the woods. When they arrived at the intersection, Merlin pulled out a cardboard sign he had tucked between his back and his backpack.

“Now watch this, kiddo. I hold this sign, and people magically give me money.”

Jeff shuffled to Merlin’s sign and read slowly enough to sound out the words, “VETERAN fallen on hard times. Anything helps. God bless.”

A Mercedes drove up and rolled down the passenger side window. A middle-aged man with a navy blue tie and a bad comb-over held out a twenty. When Merlin went to take the money, the man held onto it as her said, “Hey man, use that for your kid, okay? He should get that leg checked out.”

“Will do, thanks.”

The light turned green and the Mercedes drove away down the street and around the corner.

“You’re good for business, kiddo. Maybe you should stick around.”

“Wow, that actually worked! How’d you do that?”

“Told you, magic.”

Jeff returned home an hour later to find his mom still asleep next to Lucy’s crib. He took off his special shoes and crept to his room with Snappy. He didn’t smell like detergent anymore.

...

In two weeks, Jeff wouldn’t be living in front of his woods anymore. The boxes piled up in towers around his house to serve as a constant reminder that Jeff’s Kingdom soon wouldn’t belong to him. Their new third-floor apartment only had one tree between the back of the building and the I-5 freeway.

Lucy rocking in a carrier beside her. Jeff would go over to Kirsten’s house down the street most days so Mom could work and build more box towers, but he would leave the neighbor’s place early with Snappy to go through the woods and find his wizard friend again. Kirsten wasn’t very nice anyway. She spent a lot of time poking at his leg and asking over and over why he looked so weird when he walked until her dad told her to

be polite.

The wizard was always drinking potions in the forest about two hours before dinner, which left enough time to see Merlin's magic at the overpass and get home before Mom knew.

Mom saw Merlin one day, although she didn't notice. She was driving Jeff to Grandma's house for the weekend, near their new apartment, and went by the overpass. She made a tsk tsk sound with her tongue as she saw Merlin standing by the highway.

"That's so sad," she said.

"Why is that sad?"

"Well, that man doesn't have a home or a job after serving his country, just like Dad's doing now."

"But he does have a job."

"No, honey, he doesn't."

"He's advertising with magic."

Mom decided not to ask and took the on-ramp toward Grandma's.

...

They were standing at the pass on their third meeting, and Merlin looked at Snappy as Jeff hugged it to keep warmer.

"Hey kiddo, why do you like that shark so much?"

"Well, he can scare away anyone I don't like with his big pointy teeth!"

"Huh. And who don't you like?"

"Mostly the kids at school. Like Gary, who trips me when Ms. Carol isn't looking. Or Shaina. She calls me Gimpy and kicks my chair until I turn around, and they laugh 'cause I answered to Gimpy."

"Does the shark scare people off much?"

"Not at school, no. But he can swim and swim and never have to worry about walking funny. I want to be like that someday."

...

On their sixth meeting, Merlin was a little wobbly when he walked, and Jeff thought maybe he had clubfoot, too.

Merlin looked at Jeff and said, "You look like my boy did years ago."

"Where is he?"

"I made him disappear with a magical spell called anal bitch wife."

Jeff stood there in awe that he actually made someone disappear, just with a few words. He'd love to see that. He told Snappy to remember

the spell.

“Hey kiddo. I know you really like your shark and all, so I thought he could use a buddy for, you know, your move.”

Merlin pulled out the shark patch from his pocket. Its former spot on the left side of his green army jacket was now an empty space. Every stitch was meticulously undone, leaving the patch perfectly intact.

Jeff held the patch in his hand and looked at the scary shark baring its teeth at anyone who dared look in its direction.

“Wow, Mr. Merlin Wizard. Thanks.”

That’s all Jeff could think to say, but he saw a subtle grin creep up on Merlin’s lips. It was the first time he’d seen him smile.

...

That night, Lucy would not stop crying.

“Mom, why won’t she be quiet?”

“I don’t know! I can’t help it, so we’re just going to have to deal with it for a bit, okay?”

“I think I can help.”

“Honey, just go to your room for a little bit or something. I need to calm her down.”

“No, no I got it!” Jeff held Snappy in his left hand as he waved his right and commanded, “Analbitchwife!”

“Jeffrey! What did you just say?”

“It’s a spell to make people disappear.”

“Go to your room, mister. I don’t know where you learned that language but it is unacceptable.”

Jeff shuffled to his room, wondering why Mom yelled at him. Merlin said it worked before, but he was a real wizard so he must have more power. Jeff wished he had some of Merlin’s potion right now.

He could hear Lucy crying in the room next door as he sat on his bed hugging Snappy. The boxes and bags were scattered all around his room, ready to be loaded onto the truck tomorrow. He felt a sharp tickle dance gently across his neck. He turned around and saw that his window was slightly ajar. When he looked out, he could just barely see the trees in the dark kingdom of his backyard.

He usually needed Mom to open the window, but he stood on his bed and pushed and pushed to get his window to budge upward. With a jolt, he loosened the old window high enough to fit through. He grabbed his flashlight that lay on the nightstand and his marshmallow-man coat draped over his desk chair. He didn’t want to risk getting his special shoes by the front door, so he slipped on his comfy slippers that weren’t sup-



posed to go outside. He stood on his bed and wiggled through his window, Snappy in tow. He needed a bodyguard in the dark.

He stumbled out the window and fell on all fours like a kitten. He picked up his flashlight and the now mud-stained Snappy and hop-trotted into the tree line. He had never asked his wizard friend where he slept at night, but he headed to the only place he ever found him among the trees near the freeway path.

He couldn't see the enemies in the forest now, but he could hear them. He heard a loud crack of a stick somewhere behind him and froze. He turned around, scanning the flashlight around the trunks and across the pine-needle carpet. He saw his breath almost keeping time with his quickened heart in the frantic beam of light.

Nothing.

He didn't want to go back. He wasn't sure what was there anymore. Jeff wished the monsters in his kingdom would just show themselves so he could see what he was up against, but nothing appeared. He turned around, shuffling mud and needles every other step as he continued toward the dim sound of the nighttime freeway.

Jeff and Snappy kept moving, dragging, nearly running toward the hum. As he moved his flashlight back and forth, something caught his eye. The reflection from a bottle shined back at him, and next to it Jeff saw a hand slumped on the ground from behind a tree.

"Mr. Merlin? Is that you?"

He walked over and saw the nearly empty potion bottle on the ground. Merlin was sprawled with his winter coat under his head, leaving only his thin green jacket to cover himself. There were two more potion bottles near his feet, all sucked dry.

Jeff bent down next to his wizard friend and shook him gently.

"Wake up, Mr. Merlin, I came out to see you!" He shook him harder.

Jeff stood up and put his hands in his pockets, with Snappy under his left arm. He felt Merlin's shark patch still there from earlier that day.

"Look, look! I brought your patch. I was going to get Mom to sew it on my jacket just like you. I'll come show you if you want, but we're moving tomorrow. Maybe I could just come out here and live with you! Can I, Mr. Merlin?"

Merlin the wizard lay still and silent. Jeff bent down and pushed his friend's jaw to the side to see if he would jolt awake and yell, "Gotcha!" or flutter his eyelids or twitch his hand. His jaw wouldn't move, though. It stubbornly stayed put. Jeff jerked back and fell to the ground, alarmed at the wax sculpture stiffness of the whole face and neck.

As Jeff sat on the pine needles, he knew that Merlin wasn't going to get up. He hugged Snappy tight to his chest and rocked a little back and forth like an unsteady tide. To his right sat the almost-empty potion bottle, and he rocked over to pick it up.

It just makes life easier to swallow.

Merlin told him that the day they met, and Jeff hoped it was true for his friend now. Everything felt blurry, and it was hard to breathe like he was bobbing in water.

"Jeff! Jeffrey! Jeff, honey, where are you?" Mom called from the edge of the forest with Lucy whimpering in her arms.

Jeff stood up and took a deep breath. The blurriness subsided as if he dove into the water he had been bobbing in and adjusted his eyes. He placed Snappy in the crux of Merlin's sprawled arm and made Snappy's scary teeth face outward toward the trees to scare off any intruders. Jeff thought his friend needed a bodyguard now more than ever. He put his hands in his pockets and felt the patch again.

"Jeffrey! Come home, baby!" Mom was closer now.

He turned around and headed toward the sound of her voice. He didn't need a potion to swim through the forest that night.

# Lazarus

Natalie Safford

I wouldn't recommend a resurrection:  
tight limbs, chafed lips,  
a song that won't stop singing.  
I rose like a child from a fantasy  
with new eyes fresh for seeing  
men hung on crosses;  
widows falling on stones;  
skin flaying from broken faces;  
a cat, wide-mouthed, gasping  
reaching claws out, pleading  
mercy at the door.

I woke as a mummy  
choking on linens,  
flapping through cloth.  
It wasn't till rising that I learned  
that wings fly for only seconds,  
including those fresh off the tree.  
A moth reborn,  
I wait for mine to shrivel.  
Forever alive,

forever dying in cold  
chrysalis tombs.

# Dear Janie,

Katherine Charters

It's the dance of the lemons over here.  
Shells rain down on us like salt  
from one of those rooster shakers  
on Momma's checkered tablecloth.  
But don't worry about me.

Those socks you sent keep my feet  
good on dry days, but these holey  
boots don't do a lot against the  
mud like the grass after Momma's  
garden hose lays too long.  
But don't worry about me.

You remember Mickey from  
the blue house on the corner, the one  
with the red petunias? He got juiced yesterday.  
A piece of shrapnel punctured his throat.

We're all just lemons, before ripening time.  
Everyday a new one thrown into the mix,  
whipped stiff like Momma's meringue.  
But don't worry about me.

'Cause Janie, these fireworks are  
like those sparklers we had  
on the Fourth, waving our names  
in the air, asking for a light.

But don't worry, and  
please don't tell Momma.

# 13 (August in Klahanie)

John Winslow

I am 13 and my father's voice is still vox dei,  
still baritone and thick enough to wrap my adolescence in.

It has been 6 months since his return from  
brown dust and BDUs and strange Arabic names that still explode off my  
tongue with  
fricative wind and I am still glad that my father's voice,  
his thick-enough baritone,  
is no longer interrupted during the once-  
weekly phone calls by the soft whistle and pop of mortar shells  
(The first time a mortar attack interrupted our conversation he  
told me it was fireworks).

I am 13 and it is Saturday and I am comfortably wrapping myself in the lull  
of my  
father's baritone when he says, "You know, it would be my worst nightmare  
if you were  
gay."

I am 13 and it is Saturday and it is August in Klahanie and  
suddenly wrapping myself in my  
father's voice feels like a blanket of spider webs,  
feels like ice-black lines crawling out of my stomach on ink-thin legs.

I am thankful I have let my brother ride in the front seat on this drive home  
from QFC.

I am 13 and it is Saturday and it is August in Klahanie and I am hopelessly in  
love with my  
best friend.  
He is all-American beauty, all  
smooth Mojave-brown skin and Pacific-deep irises and pure, vital laughter.

I am 13 and it is August in Klahanie and I am hopelessly in love with my  
best friend and for the first time in my life love  
is a bad thing.

I am 13 and I am my  
father's worst nightmare.

# rubber boa

Maria Mills

you almost step on a rubber boa snake, in the dark, in your socks  
and sandals. you call me over to look at it: “check out this  
worm!” your voice echoing against the canyon above us, the moon  
above that, lending a weak-edged visual to our notion of time kept  
against the dark sky. you will be gone soon.  
for now, i keep my hand small and tan against you  
in the dark. the moon says “not yet, but almost.” until then, marking  
time.  
the weeks fluid, rubber almost, docile and in our path, so small and  
tan  
they might be mistaken for a worm, fangless, doing little to bar our  
passage.

# A Buick No Longer

Evan Olson

The junkyard employee flipped a waist-high lever from his platform over the car crusher. Two huge drums began spinning inside the giant cube and a slide on the top opened to reveal the inside where the two drums met. Metal teeth whirred faster, hummed louder. The employee grabbed hold of the railing and leaned back to watch the sight that was about to unfold.

To the right of the crushing machine another worker manned a crane that was now lifting an old green Buick by the undercarriage. He raised the car up high over the crushing machine, halting when it was centered over the opening. The Buick swung in the wind. Its hard lines and faded green hid no antiquity in the sunlight, glinting in the windows and rear-view mirrors.

“It’s a shame,” muttered the employee leaning on the platform, “It’s always a shame. Someone loved that car.” He gave the crane worker a thumbs up. The crane’s claw released the Buick into the opening of the crusher.

“Oh nooo, savee mee. My facehaghagh—” mocked the employee in a falsetto, cartoony voice. Then, once the car’s rear end disappeared under the rolling drums, he stood up straight and raised his hand in salute. “Let us commend this Buick to the mercy of the graveyard. To drive is to live. This Buick drove, therefore it lived a good, long life. 40 years on the road and now, we, the junkyard crew, bring it to rest. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to metal, in the sure and certain hope of recycling among future generations.” From the platform, the employee saw the crane worker saluting enthusiastically in the control box.

He waited for the light below the control level to turn green, indicating the crusher was ready for another. Moments passed, then a mechanic click sounded and the green light flashed.

“Next!” the employee shouted.

# Persephone

Lucia Baldwin

I don't want to be ashamed to be in love with grey things  
Because I think we are made of grey things  
And I think that winter reminds us of this and makes us afraid

(What an ashy mix of blood am I)

I want to be the bird on the wire  
Drenched in the glory of grey lines  
Dripping spots falling like bullets  
A solitude of shots, my heart being pierced  
Burst it and burst it and burst it

If only I could unfasten these buttons  
Reach for me, my hands are trembling

Step outside and hold your breath  
The trees are unclothed and have nothing to hide

For a brief and pulsing moment  
There is no division in the sky

Can't you see that winter was meant for great words?  
To say that I love you, and that our souls are made of stars  
To break the layers of warm clay between us  
And I can run and cry and shout  
And tumble into myself and soar up  
There is nothing blocking us because everything else is asleep

You and I both know how close we are to being kings.  
Whisper it. It is true.  
Spin naked in the snow and clasp winter around the neck  
Take off your shoes and curve your spine  
This is the bed you were meant to sleep in

(I am a grey thing among greyer things)







Ean Van Bramer, "Not all who wander are lost"  
Digital, Canon T5i



Andrew Fioretto, "Punk Phonics"  
Acrylic, 2' x 2'



Matthew Boyle, Untitled  
Film, Burke and James Monorail Camera, 4 x 5"



Emily Luse, "A Crumbling History"  
Digital, iPhone 4





Tracy Poindexter-Canton, "Parental Throwback"  
Acrylic on canvas and Post-It Notes, 2' x 3'



Kamilla Rzayeva, "Up in the Air"  
Digital, Nikon D90



Isobel Smith, "Fall Forest"  
Watercolor



# Claustrophobia

Natalie Ochoa

Bells in a box that the dead can pull  
appeal to me while watching *Kill Bill II*.

Claustrophobia:

asthewoodshapesherboddy, a fitted dress,  
blackened lungs from the earth's crust  
she suffocates slowly and I imagine  
she being me and me doesn't like she or this

But then, an impact. A drop of light!  
Blood on my hand blood on the box,  
I am Superman (with Clark Kent glasses) and I  
form a crack. Splinters fall like icicles  
I'm still freezing but warmed now by the light

Peeling away my man-made cocoon  
I newborn through the cemented dirt,  
mouthing *Wait for me, baby, I'm only 6 feet  
away* breathing easily on my stomach  
scraping, desperately grabbing to the bones  
napping in your box—

Displacing the bolts, breaking in now  
I'm breaking and entering, I'm a rebel  
with a chamber throbbing for the life of a lover,  
my lungs are filled again and breathing familiar

Hands grope and sweat again, your eyes open.  
A gasp and air!  
*Hello, my love, you waited,* I say.  
And we float, up

Up to our everlastingness, together:  
Two corpses with wood-chipped flakes in our living hairs  
and I feel a drop of water and hear you say  
*Maybe love is feeling so much inside that you have to cry*

# Things of Little Consequence

Megan Dempsey

I am remembering  
not the breath-catching blue of your irises  
    but that thick rick of lashes stacked about them,  
    with roots of oak-brown and ends licked by light;  
not the Davidic arc of your sun-bared shoulders  
    but the tawny birthmark on the small of your back,  
    hard hand of your father, or tea splashed on blank paper;  
not the rustle of your clothing or your belt whipping through belt-loops  
    but the way you stood on one lean leg, stock-still,  
    taking off your sock with your toes.

# How I lost you over three oceans

McCarrick Clark

## I.

My Vodka called you on New Year's Eve  
in hopes that my lips would reach  
you through the Los Angeles smog,  
touch the left point of the northern star,  
where it would be directed to a cabin tucked  
between two mountains in the North West,  
search through a room full of ambitious resolutions  
and find its way to plant itself on your lips.

## II.

Did you know that I took you with me  
into the Indian Ocean? You spent two  
nights of stolen kisses & ten time zones  
to leave a long distance voicemail. I took  
your drunken words & held them  
in the corners of my smile & we floated  
there together, in an ocean hugged by  
jagged mountains—staring into the African  
sun didn't hurt so bad with you.

## III.

I tried to be another girl. An exotic girl  
who sneaks into pools & loves in an  
ocean under night's blanket with a boy  
who never called. But you never knew  
about him. You simply fell silent

when we were finally close enough  
to shock our fingertips in the dry pine air.

# An Interview with Brenda Hillman

Katherine Charters and Zack Rosse

A professor of poetry at St. Mary's College in Moraga, California, Brenda Hillman has written over ten books of poetry and received numerous awards for her work. Four of her books focus on the classical elements of earth, air, water, and fire: *Cascadia* (2001), *Pieces of Air in the Epic* (2005), *Practical Water* (2009), and most recently, *Seasonal Works with Letters on Fire* (2013). Her poetry addresses political, environmental and social issues while astonishing the reader with innovations in form and sound. Poet Brenda Hillman came to Gonzaga University on October 21, 2014 as part of the Visiting Writer Series and was kind enough to speak with members of the *Reflection* staff.

KC: What is the biggest piece of advice you give to creative writing students?

BH: With my own undergrads it is pretty much the same advice I give to my grad students, but at a different level obviously. I definitely think that you should be reading as much as you write at this point, which is hard, because you are drawn to writing. You want to express yourself and you want to make things and it is so thrilling to make your poems. But there is so much to read, and so much of writing comes out of reading, and there is an amazing, magical universe of literature that you cannot possibly finish in your whole life. Right now is just a very exciting time for literature and for writing and people are just doing amazing things, both in America and so many other places. It is a very fertile time. I think that may be my top advice.

Also, just be willing to revise your work. There is a lot of different feelings about revising: that you shouldn't revise [poetry], that it comes out from the mind of God so you should just accept it the way it is and it's great and you're great and all that stuff. But the ability to revise is the main thing you can get from a community. When you are starting to learn to write, you want to learn techniques for revising and make your work better. What do you think?

# As the Roots Prepare for Literature

Brenda Hillman

Sound, what is your muse? Just now,  
we found a meaning but too soon –  
*cckkcckk*...Dawn sprinklers start &  
crickets wheel, they go down-down, dippy  
down-down. Smell of toast in the suburbs.  
The West is burning. Our little mother  
prays in her sleep, our father rests  
under his new big scar like America.  
Ancestors step through flame to get to them.  
Beyond air, the galaxies whirl ceaselessly  
as picnic salt –  
Our childhood sight  
hath gathered multitudes...On streets  
named for forts or saints, news is brought  
to foreclosed houses. The medicated grasses wait.  
In other deserts, soldiers kill other people's  
parents. Here the unemployed wear boots  
in cafés near terrifying pies  
piled high with cream. Wrens make nests  
in cholla. *Cylindropuntia fulgida*. Spirits  
stand round in the bodies of doves.

Do you remember learning to spell?  
It's best to bring words slowly into English;  
*wrad* (the root of *root*) shines  
for centuries underground. It's not  
for nothing the shadows are lit when children  
are called to literature. Now word  
has gone out that you are here  
as sleepers curve their heat-shapes  
to the ground. Hard  
for you to keep steady, i know. The roots  
of your words can see fire, though.

# Red Dirt Girls

Meg Besch

The call came in sometime after three, the phone ringing shrilly in the hot afternoon quiet. Hannah answered with wet nails, fingers curled gingerly around the receiver. It was probably Grace, wanting to trade shifts at the diner again.

“Gracie, honey, I already told you—”

The voice on the other end wasn’t Grace. The soft Alabama drawl, hushed and hard to hear over the old landline, was a voice she hadn’t heard in, god, seven years. Not since high school. Not since Lillian. It was Toby Harris, saying her name like she was going to shatter if he spoke too loudly, words heavy with the weight of an old, familiar grief.

“Miss Miles,” he said. “Hannah?”

The room was warm. Sunlight streamed in through the gaps in the blinds, slow and gold like spilled honey. She forced her voice to work.

“Yes?”

“Hannah,” he said. “They found a body in the woods out on Route 431.” He paused, the silence swelled between them. Her bones felt like they were humming. Her fingers tightened on the phone, wet nails forgotten. Rusty red polish, No. 628 Wrapped in Rubies, smeared across the cheap plastic. She knew what he was going to say next, before the words crackled through the receiver.

“It’s her. They found Lillian.”

*“Hey, Hannah?”*

*“Yeah?”*

*Lillian grinned, lips curling like she had a secret. The old porch creaked beneath her as she rolled over to stare at the sky, hair trailing over the edge of the platform. The sun was setting, painting everything a deep red, the same color as the Alabama dirt. “Don’t you ever wanna leave?”*

*“And go where?”*

*“Anywhere that isn’t here.”*

*There was a drop of condensation sliding down the side of her glass. Sweet tea and vodka, even though Mrs. Harris was home, because Lillian liked living on the edge. It was sharp and sticky-sour on her tongue.*

*Hannah turned so she was on her back as well. The whole world*

looked red, and the vodka was hot in her stomach. Lillian's question seemed entirely reasonable, like they stood a chance at getting out of Meridian.

"Sure," she said. "Where are we headed?"

"The city," Lillian said decisively, executive even with the booze rolling out the syllables of her words, softening all the edges.

"Which city?"

"A city. Any city. Doesn't matter."

"That's a horrible plan," Hannah said, "You have to at least know the city."

"Details," Lillian said airily, flapping her hand like she was shooing away gnats.

Hannah laughed, and then Lillian was laughing too, the sound rolling out of her bright and rich, giggling about big cities and places where they wouldn't ever have to see the dirt again.

"What about the stars," Hannah asked when she had the breath to speak again, because she was tipsy on vodka and the sound of Lillian's laughter. "If we can't see the dirt, we probably won't be able to see the stars."

"Why would you need stars when you've got me," Lillian gasped, still snickering, and that was how Mrs. Harris found them, drunk and laughing on the porch. They were both grounded for two weeks, but it didn't matter. They'd both been sneaking out for ages, and they were seventeen, and the world was wide open and waiting for them, somewhere outside of Meridian. They'd see it someday, Lillian promised, tangling her fingers with Hannah's. Someday soon.

The lights in the police station flickered above her as she sat waiting for the detective. A cold case detective, not the one who'd asked all those awful questions seven years ago.

"When did you last see her? Has Lillian ever disappeared before? Is it possible that she might have tried to hitchhike? Can you account for your whereabouts on the morning she disappeared?"

The lights kept flickering.

Behind the front desk, Toby looked like a washed out copy of the boy she'd know in high school, worn thin and faded with grief. He'd met her eyes when she walked in from the sticky heat. Neither of them smiled. Toby looked like he didn't even remember how.

That was what came of waiting, she realized. It pulled you apart, stretched you so thin that knowing wasn't a relief. You didn't know how to go back to the shape you had before. You just sat there, spooled out

and useless, watching the lights flicker, buzzing with a faulty current. She'd been waiting seven years, and now she didn't know what to do with herself.

The detective finally came. He led her into a different room, away from Toby's thin face, and asked her the same questions. "I'm sorry, ma'am" he said, "I know this is difficult. We just need to review your answers."

It was the first time she'd ever been called ma'am. She could almost hear Lillian laughing.

"Miss Miles," the detective said, tone no longer so apologetic. "I need you to answer these questions."

She gave the same answers she'd given seven years ago, words stumbling past her lips without her conscious input. Her mind kept circling back to Lillian, dead. Lillian, a pile of bones somewhere along the highway, bleached white by the sun, stained red with dust. The detective thanked her, and she blinked. The lights had steadied. She felt like she was the one skipping a beat, brain stuck stuttering over *they found a body*.

Toby gave her another look as she walked out of the room, past the front desk, and pulled the door of the station open. Muggy air flooded into her lungs. The sun was setting, and she could feel Toby's eyes on her back. She felt hollow, like the fragile curve of a broken eggshell. Her own grief was too much. She didn't want to deal with Toby's.

She walked out without a word. The beater she'd inherited from her momma was waiting in the parking lot, sitting crooked in between faded white lines. The engine coughed and sputtered before it finally caught, and she was speeding as she pulled out. She didn't care. The tires kicked up dust when she turned off the highway and onto the dirt road that led toward home. Hannah didn't let herself think about it.

*"Hey, Hannah?"*

*"Yeah?"*

*Lillian was slicking her mouth up with red lipstick, the cheap stuff she'd shoplifted from JacyC's the week before. She popped her lips together a few times, testing to make sure nothing smeared.*

*"Remember the city?"*

*"The city where we won't see any dirt?" Hannah was watching her from the door. They were late, but that never mattered to Lillian.*

*"That's the one." She capped the lipstick and turned from the mirror to face Hannah. "I don't want to wait anymore. A high school from a shitty little town like this doesn't mean anything. I just wanna go."*

*"What are you gonna do, Lillian? Catch a Greyhound? You don't*



have any money." Nobody in town did, but that wasn't the point. "It's a pipe dream."

Lillian was quiet for a long moment. "I'll figure something out," she said at last, voice oddly serious. "I mean it, Hannah."

Her eyes were dark, and her lips were so red. Hannah swallowed, and looked away.

"Sure you will," she said, trying for light and missing by a mile. "Now come on, Lillian, we're gonna be late. Benny'll be pissed."

Lillian gave her another long look. "Wouldn't want that."

"Let's just go."

The party was terrible, just like the parties always were. Lillian made a beeline for Benny as soon as they walked through the door, and he slid his arm around her like it belonged there. Hannah could hear her laughing from across the room, bright and rich. When they left, the red of her lipstick was smudged and faded, messy, like she'd been kissing. Gravel crunched beneath their shoes as they walked back toward Lillian's house.

"I'm gonna figure it out, Hannah. I promise."

"Yeah."

They were quiet for a long time after that, walking slowly. The moon was out, and everything was silver. It didn't seem like Meridian at all. It made her feel brave.

"Send me a postcard or two when you're gone."

Lillian laughed, and this time it didn't hurt to hear, quiet and soft. Her voice was just as gentle. "Hannah, please. Like I'd ever leave you behind."

She didn't think about it that night. Lillian was too clear to be a memory. Too alive. Hannah couldn't wrap her thoughts around the terrible shape of a dead Lillian. A pile of bones, instead of the girl she'd known. She remembered the shape of Lillian's hand and the way freckles danced wildly across the delicate wings of her collarbones, bloomed like a universe on the pale skin of her cheeks. She couldn't think about those things, and the way they made her ache.

She couldn't think of Lillian, so she thought of Toby, instead. Toby, pounding frantically on her door, bright high school face wild with terror, looking for his sister.

"Please," she could remember him saying. "Please tell me she's with you, Hannah."

Lillian wasn't with her. Together they tore through town, calling for Lillian behind the diner, at the creek where they used to smoke cigarettes after school. She wasn't there. Benny's garage was empty except for

an old tube of her lipstick. Cheap drugstore red, the kind that left smudges everywhere, kisses in the shape of Lillian's mouth on the lip of Coke bottles and the tan stretch of Benny's neck. They'd broken up a month before, after the party, but Benny helped them look, bored at first and then frantic as time stretched out with no sign of her.

Minutes blurred together, until the sun was setting and there was a horrible pressure settling in her chest, something dark and heavy. The sky was deep and bloody, and Toby was crying as he and Mrs. Harris talked to the police, and Hannah stayed up the whole night, waiting for Lillian to reappear.

Eighteen hours later, she was declared a missing person. No one in town thought she was coming back.

*"Hey, Hannah?"*

*"Yeah?"*

*Lillian's voice was quiet. The rest of the house was asleep, Hannah's parents snoring two rooms down from them.*

*"Come with me."*

There'd been a prayer vigil, of course. The town wanted to come together and send up prayers for her safe return, never mind that Pastor David had hated Lillian's guts. She was loose, he always said, and she'd better watch herself. Bad things happened to girls like that.

Hannah hadn't gone. Instead, she stole a bottle of vodka from the stash her momma kept hidden in the back of the medicine, and gone walking by the creek, smoking cigarettes. Toby had found her there, after. He stormed up to her, eyes still so wild, furious as he pulled the bottle out of her loose grip.

"Why the hell weren't you there, Hannah? The whole town was there, even Pastor David, and you were, what? Too busy getting drunk to make it?"

She made a grab for the bottle, tripping and swaying a little when he yanked it out of her reach, and screamed right back.

"Screw you, Toby! I wasn't too busy, I just—"

"You just what?" he spat.

"I can't watch everyone act like she's dead! Like she's not coming back!"

She reached for the vodka again, crying, and Toby flung it away. It landed downstream, shattering against the rocks. The shards glittered in the muddy water, like stars smudged with dirt, tarnished red.

"You can't watch that? How the hell do you think I feel? She's my

sister, Hannah, and she's gone! And I have to listen to everyone say 'oh, poor girl,' like they're not all thinking that she had it coming."

"I know that," she said, voice hoarse. "She's my best friend, Toby. I don't want her to be gone."

"You don't know a damn thing," he said, but he didn't sound angry anymore. He just sounded sad. He grabbed her hand, towing her out of the creek. "Come on. There's more vodka back at the house."

They shared a bottle between them, sitting on Lillian's bed. The covers were still messy and twisted from the last time she slept there, and her stolen lipstick was on the vanity. The whole house smelled like sympathy casseroles and candle smoke. The vodka sloshed inside Hannah, ugly and sour, and she felt sick.

"She promised, Toby," she said after the bottle was empty. Her voice was small and slurred. "She promised she wouldn't leave me."

"I know, Hannah," he said. "I don't think she meant to."

"Promise? Or leave?"

"Either. Both. I don't know. She hated it here. She wanted things she wasn't allowed to have."

"I didn't want her to leave," she said, and Toby pulled her into a shaky hug, like he didn't know what else to do.

Her head hurt, and the room felt too big, cavernous without Lillian to fill it up. They fell asleep staring at the door, like they were waiting her to sail through it and laugh at the whole fuss.

Toby walked her home the next morning, and told her mother in a grief-graveled voice that she'd stayed to help them clean up last night.

Lillian's case was declared cold six months later, and now they passed each other in the grocery store like strangers. Hannah didn't know if Toby had kept waiting, all these years, the same way she had. She wasn't sure if she wanted to know.

Lillian was dead. She fell asleep choking on seven years of sobs.

*"Hey, Hannah?"*

*"Yeah?"*

*"Don't you ever wanna leave?"*

She woke up with tear tracks on her face. She didn't remember dreaming, but she could almost hear the sound of Lillian's laugh, hovering somewhere just out of earshot.

There was another gathering. Not a prayer vigil this time, because they all knew for sure now. Lillian, poor little dead girl. Hannah wore black, but her lipstick was red. Her nails were still smudged with polish,

Wrapped in Rubies, the same color as the dirt packed around Lillian's new headstone. It seemed fitting. It made her want to throw up, like she'd been drinking sweet tea and vodka, like she'd been crying. She'd been sober all day. It was sadness burning in her throat, making it hard to swallow.

Toby hugged her afterward, shaky, like they'd exchanged more than three words since the night of the prayer vigil. Like his voice on the phone hadn't shattered seven years of waiting. She hugged him back. He looked like she felt, worn and faded. He'd been waiting too, she thought now. They'd both been waiting, and now they knew.

Grace called after the service, saying she could pick up Hannah's shift at the diner.

"I know you two were close," Grace said, voice dripping fake sympathy and something like disgust. "You can take all the time you need, I'll cover for you."

"You know what, Gracie," Hannah said. "You do that. Take those shifts. I don't want them anymore."

*"Hey, Hannah?"*

*"Yeah?"*

She walked Toby to his house the next morning, a backpack slung over her shoulder. He stared at her for a long time when they got to his porch.

"Be careful," he said finally. His voice was heavy and rough with grief.

"Yeah," she said, just like she'd always answered his sister. "I will."

*"Hey, Hannah?"*

The Greyhound pulled out of the station, rumbling onto Route 431. Hannah's nails were still rusty and red. She picked at the smudged polish, watching the trees blur by as the bus hurtled towards a city, any city.

By the time it hit the state line, she'd chipped off all the polish. The beds of her nails were stained a deep red, the same color as the Alabama dirt. Lillian's laughter was echoing in her head. She pressed her fingers to her lips, holding the sound close as she left Meridian.

Her throat was burning. It was vodka now, because it felt like tradition. A mixture of vodka and grief, but that was how it had been before.

Toby was listing into her side, head pressed against her neck. He was crying, soft and silent. They were sitting in her house this time. The covers were neat, and the house smelled stale, un-lived in. Neither of them had said a word; Hannah felt like screaming.

# Barbershop Behind Dutch's Inn

Jim Hanlen

had a pot belly stove that was fed  
with yesterday's *Spokesman*  
*Review*. A line of students circled  
the inside, uninsulated wall  
of a one car garage. \$2 cash.  
It takes five minutes and fifteen  
students who skipped the convocation  
step around and fill the air  
with smart exhaust. One guy says  
"We have a 7'2" player." The college  
newspaper will print that the president  
spoke on the value of liberal education.  
He will quote the Beatle's lines  
from the *Nowhere Man*. When I reach  
the barber chair, the only furniture,  
I enjoy the heat for five minutes.





Ean Van Bramer, "About a girl"  
Digital, Canon T5i





Andrew Fioretto, "Color my Idiosyncrasy"  
Acrylics on Canvas, 2' x 2.5'



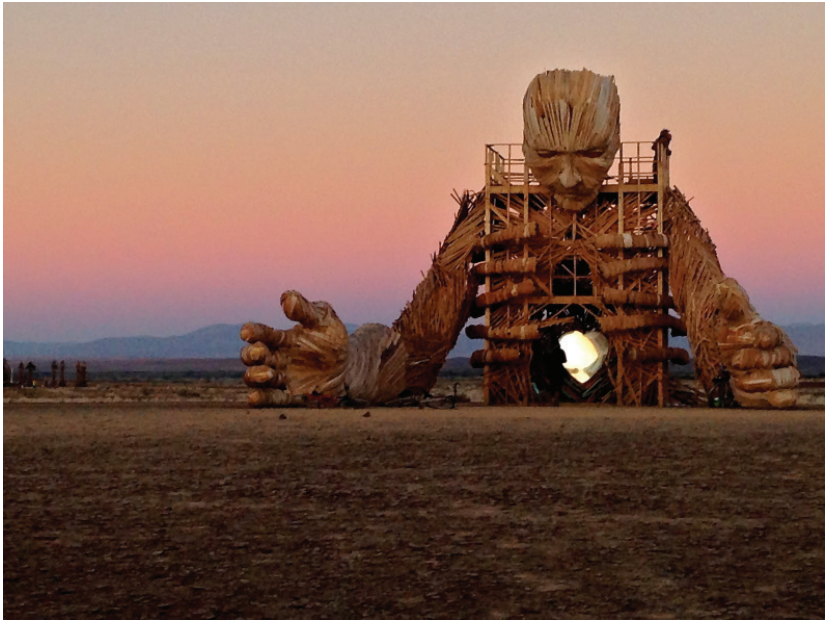
Katherine Sumantri, "Fullerton"  
Digital, Canon EOS 550D



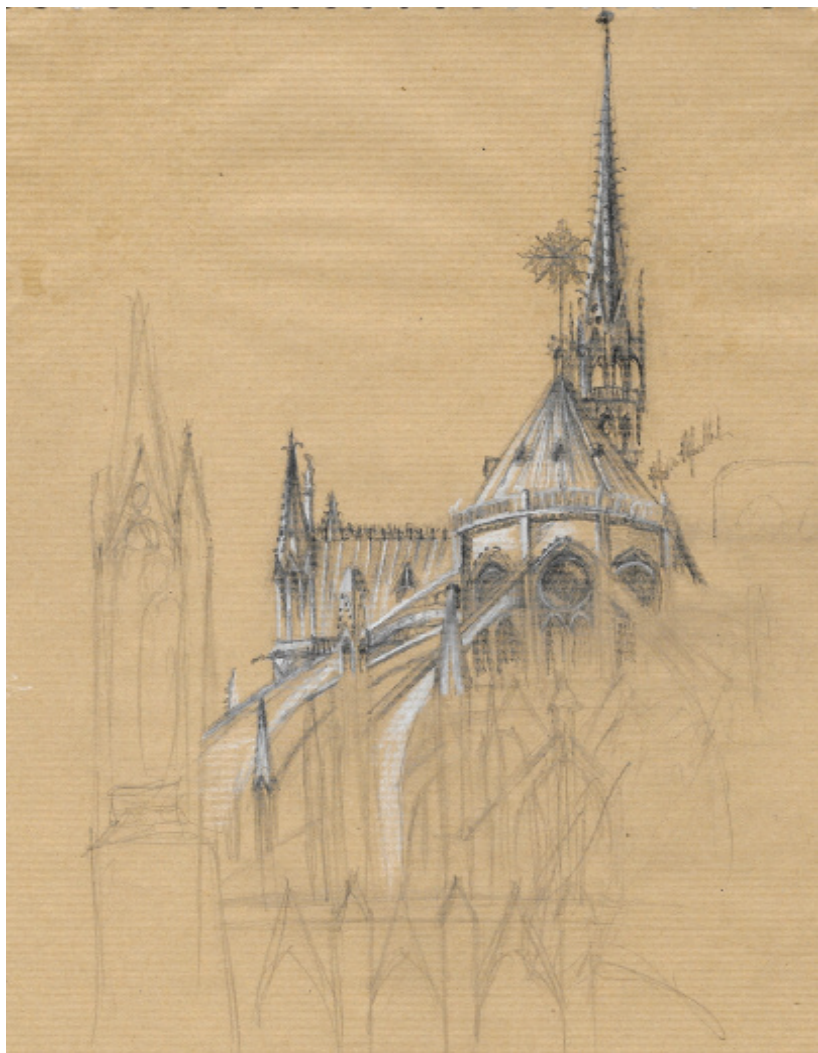
Andrew Fioretto, "A Homeless Story"  
Digital, Nikon D300



Katherine Sumantri, "Good girl, bad habits"  
Digital, Canon EOS 550D



McCarrick Clark, "The San Man Afrikaburn 2014"  
Digital, Nikon D3100



Maria Mondloch, "Afternoon at Notre Dame de Paris"  
Graphite, 8.5 x 11"



# CONTRIBUTORS

Lucia Baldwin is a senior who has more books on her shelf than friends on Facebook. No matter what, she never fails to have an opinion on the matter, an appropriate biblical analogy, and a snack in her purse.

Meg Besch is a historian, equestrian, and caffeine addict. When she's not trying to replace her blood with coffee, she enjoys cruising around in her fifty year old Chevy and whining about the price of gas.

David Boose is a biologist with hidden talents. But then aren't we all?

Matthew Boyle owns a camera and a cat. Among other things.

Sarah Butler is an avid fan of dogs, pizza, and all things peanut butter. Since she is unable to major in the master art of napping, she instead studies English literature and secondary education.

McCarrick Clark spent the spring semester surfing with great white sharks and Rastafarians in South Africa. She is currently working on befriending every feral cat in Spokane before she graduates in May.

Katherine Charters is a senior English major who enjoys a good latte and climbing trees. She hopes to one day beat her mother in Scrabble.

Megan Dempsey committed her time at Gonzaga to soaking up as much of Woolf and Kierkegaard as she could. In St. Louis, she now spends her days trying to get her sophomore boys to stop laughing at the word 'phallus.'

Andrew Fioretto is a commercial real estate tycoon and spends his free time making things up about himself. He also finds enjoyment in well-made sandwiches, interesting photography concepts, and sitting in the ocean.

Jim Hanlen GU ('70), worked as campus mailman one year and majored in English.

Luke Janicki is a senior, an English and Spanish double major, and an identical twin brother. He has an affinity for water skiing and all things *Lord of the Rings*.

Emily Luse is a senior studying History and Secondary Education. She is choosing (of her own free will) to teach middle school....God help her.

Kellie Malone is a senior who collects street art and laughs like a dying Pac-Man. Her pet peeves include 80s jazz saxophone and squeaky mechanical pencils, and her interests include Tom Hanks movies and learning useless skills like miming and ventriloquism.

Maria Mills splits her time between evolutionary biology, doodling in class, and indiscriminate animal-loving. When possible, she tries to fit all this in before a 10pm bedtime.

Maria Mondloch is a senior Fine Arts and French double major who spent her junior year abroad in Paris, during which she ate over 100 crepes, visited 9 countries, and went to Disneyland Paris 31 times. In her defense, she went to the Louvre almost as many times as she went to Disneyland, but Mickey Mouse beat Mona Lisa by just a few visits.

Natalie Ochoa is a junior who wrote this piece because she has a weird obsession with Quentin Tarantino. She is also constantly working towards her dream of becoming a contestant on *The Price Is Right* in the near future.

Evan Olson is a Portlander who spent the summer on the streets of London—studying with Gonzaga classmates the writings of this confusing French guy named Jean Baudrillard and wandering Brick Lane with a salt beef and bagel sandwich in his face. Post-study abroad, he now has increased interests in writing, photography, and drinking coffee.

Tracy Poindexter-Canton is a staff member who enjoys painting and writing in her spare time.



Kamilla Rzyeva is an adventure seeker, a believer, permanently - a dreamer. She loves traveling, taking photographs (obviously), singing, drawing, designing, writing stories and coffee in particular cups (regardless of coffee btw). She's still trying to figure out how does it all fit in with her International Relations/Political Science major....

Natalie Safford is a senior who daydreams often and appreciates her food. She hopes to discover stories wherever she goes.

Katie Schmarr is a lover of history, the bucolic, and less-than-androcentric spiritual paths. You can typically find her baking indulgent breads and pastries, engaging in passionate discussions about social issues, or trying just to be.

Isobel Smith is currently working on her goal of reading the Harry Potter series for the 6th time through and in her spare time she likes to brave the Alaskan wilderness and drink lots of water because her mother told her it's good for her.

Katherine Sumantri is a sophomore and an international student from Singapore. She has recently found her passion for photography among many of her other passions such as working with kids and baking.

Ean Van Bramer is a freshman from Seattle, Washington. Addicted to both coffee and his camera, he tries to fit school in every now and then.

John Winslow is a senior Religious Studies and English Writing double major. He's a little obsessed with all things churchy, his niece, and sandwiches from I Due Fratellini.

Poetry. Fiction. Nonfiction. Photography. Art.

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