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VIEW FROM THE HILL

2008-2009

What Lingers

{THE LHSP ARTS & LITERARY JOURNAL}

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Shoes hanging from telephone wires. When choosing the cover art for this year's Arts & Literary Journal, we received mixed, sometimes shocked responses to the piece that was eventually selected, a photo by Jake Lurie, taken on a familiar street in Ann Arbor. For some people, the photo yielded no baggage—it was simply a striking image of shoes suspended on a wire—the clear choice for the cover. For others, the image already “meant things,” although those meanings also varied: from the commemorative (a rite of passage, such as a graduation or the loss of virginity) to the unsavory (the site of a crack or drug deal, a gang location). While some on staff objected to using it because of those controversial connotations, others championed it precisely because of its slipperiness, its refusal to mean one thing.

Shoe throwing (or “shoefiti” as it is sometimes called) exists in some form all over the world. Like all good symbols, it has multiple shifting meanings, which makes it both powerful and unsettling; the meaning refuses to settle on something fixed and knowable. And like all good symbols, it somehow suggests all those contradictory meanings at once—celebration and defeat, conquest and failure. An act of rebellion, an act of surrender. Long after you have put Jake's photo down, those dangling shoes—and the many meanings they evoke—linger in your mind.

Thanks to Jake and an undeterred journal staff, the photo is indeed a brilliant introduction to this year's journal, “What Lingers.” The writing and artwork you will find here, created by students in the Lloyd Hall Scholars Program, respond with similar unflinching tenacity to the confusing, coded, and chaotic world around us. This year's journal board, led by Patty White, was a vibrant and well organized group; not only did they put together this book, they also hosted salons and parties throughout the year, which gave LHSP students opportunities to read from their own and others' work, share comfort food and laughs. The pieces the editors have selected here for publication—an assortment of poetry, essays, short stories, photographs, paintings,

Langston Kerman

{CHANGE}

puppets—do justice to the eclectic interests and talents of the students in our program. In many ways, these pieces themselves are “what lingers” after an inspiring year in Lloyd Hall.

Megan Levad, the advisor to the journal for the past three years, has left a permanent mark on the publication and the program. While we know she leaves the journal in good hands, thanks to her skillful stewardship and mentoring, we also see evidence of her innovation, energy, and aesthetic sensibility on every page.

Finally, thanks to the members of LHSP '08-'09. As I write this, it is early May and you students have already abandoned the hall, on to bigger and better things. It is a warm, breezy day, and outside my office windows are not telephone wires but clusters of low, verdant trees. If I didn't have to walk home later today, I might be tempted to toss my own shoes out onto the branches.

And I don't have the slightest idea what it would mean.

Carol Tell
Director
Lloyd Hall Scholars Program

& then the President turned black
& the earth of the forest soon followed
& then the tree stumps
& next the leaves
& close behind the flowers
& the seeds
& the pollen
& the bees' honey burnt molasses
& then stomachs grew darker
& feet slowly tanned
& noses spread to ocean floors
& hair thickened like drying concrete
& sidewalks mimicked asphalt
& lips swelled dark like sinking ships
& everyone sang jazz
& everyone wore dashikis
& held hands in the dark of day
& the sun burned like a ball of incense in the sky
& space turned light-skinned but just as black
& the moon wrapped itself in leather
& diamonds turned back to coal

Jackie Kauza

{WHEN MOOSE ATTACK}

& the heart really was darkness
& some people cried
& some people smiled
& a few just laughed in the mirror
& they said we all looked just alike

But the air did not change No the air stayed the same

Langston Kerman is an LHSP alum, award-winning slam poet and former Caldwell Winner who received his English degree with a subconcentration in creative writing from the University of Michigan in May. We were fortunate to have Langston return to LHSP in January for a reading at which "Change," among other poems, was presented.

I've heard over the years that vacations for other people are often relaxing affairs, that these people—we'll call them "normal" people—go to one location, like Florida or Mexico, and stay there, that they find a pretty beach and lay on it for upwards of two weeks, just photosynthesizing and listening to the sound of the surf as it rolls along the beach and hoping they're not below the high tide line.

The one time we tried to do this, my mother and I got bored in fifteen minutes and went to frolic in the Gulf, while my father, trying to stick it out, was attacked by sand fleas.

This, I believe, was God telling us that "normal" vacations are for "normal" people, and not the likes of us.

So from the six-hour marlin fishing expedition in Hawaii (what we did not know is that, in Hawaiian, "tour guide" actually means "guy with boat, beer, and no food of any sort") to the trip to historic Wounded Knee (we had known we were in trouble upon seeing the sign "Warning: Low Maintenance Road," but Dad insisted that going back to the interstate would force us to backtrack a crucial three miles and so we carried on over what seemed to be a half-dried riverbed, unable to stop for fear of getting stuck forever and having to abandon the rental car and become nomads, only to find that "historic Wounded Knee" consisted of a commemorative wooden sign and three Native American children with a lemonade stand) to the reversing waterfall in New Brunswick (which we drove two hours out of our way through treacherous fog and mist to see, only to find a murky-looking river swirling around in a decidedly unimpressive way, though the people at the visitor center told us if we stayed another five hours we could enjoy the spectacular and wonderful sight of the tide going out), some of our vacation adventures have been... interesting.

And these are only the failed attempts at fun. Near-death experiences are also a crucial part of any family vacation! Take, for example, the white-water rafting trip on



the Kicking Horse River. According to the rafting guide, the water in the second half of the canyon was at the absolute lowest level it could be for the trip to be considered safe. You know a river is powerful when it can completely submerge a large inflated raft for any length of time. Dad seemed unconcerned, even when a fiberglass paddle was sucked into an abyss and emerged several seconds later bent like a wishbone. Mom remained in the back of the raft, muttering prayers and curses simultaneously, determined, apparently, to ingratiate herself with either heaven or hell, whichever she saw first. And two of the other rafters got to “swim” in this water that was snow yesterday, and they enjoyed it so much that their eyes were roughly the size of party platters by the time our fun-loving compatriots dragged them bodily back into the raft.

Danger follows even into the world’s cities. I speak, of course, of the time in Washington D.C., on the Fourth of July, when my mother and I were almost run over by a malevolent hippie bus, painted in bright colors and emblazoned with the words, “Peace, Love, Jesus” on the side.

I think my favorite instance of vacation danger, however, was during our most recent trip to Alaska, when we were attacked by a moose.

This is the sort of thing they warn you about when you go to Alaska. “Be careful!” travel brochures and helpful trail signs and informational videos veritably scream at you. “There is wildlife in Alaska! So you must be careful. Or you could be attacked by a bear or a moose, and then there will be no help for you! Because we warned you, we did, and if you were still dumb enough to get near a wild animal, it cannot be considered our fault! Did we mention to be careful?!”

The Alaskan attorneys obviously work overtime.

Allow me to say first that we were aware of animal-related dangers. My parents had lived in Alaska early on in their marriage and had encountered a variety of animals, many of which my father and his army buddies had summarily put bullets

into. As far as I know, however, none of them ever menaced a moose, so revenge for past injustices cannot possibly be considered a motive in this particular incident. Nor did we go out in search of this moose. No, we merely wanted to go on a bicycle ride along Anchorage’s coast. It would be a wonderful way to pass the afternoon and see some of the beautiful Alaskan scenery, like scenic mountains, scenic trees, scenic mosquitoes, and scenic other-tourists-on-the-bike-path. So we rented bicycles and helmets and started out along the path.

It was actually on our way back that we encountered the moose. For the record, I had passed her up completely, and my father had called me back. The three of us huddled together beside our bikes, watching the moose alongside the trail. There were three of them as well, a little moose family, a moose mommy and two moose babies, all nosing around in the greens beside the asphalt bike path. Of course, they were attracting a crowd of eager onlookers, all of whom were undoubtedly tourists, as the native Alaskans were moving with purposeful haste in the opposite direction. They had obviously read their own brochures.

Because my father is a wily woodsman, he gave me and my mother sage advice: “Don’t get too close to the moose.” And we were maintaining the appropriate distance, i.e., a distance at which the mommy moose continued to eat happily with her calves and did not jerk her head up and roll her eyes demonically back in her head. However, the other tourists did not have my dad’s instinctive “bushman” knowledge, nor had they read the brochures. One man, perhaps assuming he was at a zoo and Plexiglas would automatically materialize between him and the moose, got, to use the technical zoological term, “too close.”

And, BAM! Up came Mommy Moose’s head and her eyes rolled like pool balls in their sockets and then BAM! she was right at the edge of the bike path. She was staring at the tourists with murder in her eyes, breathing heavily for dramatic effect,

{THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WEST RYE ROAD}

obviously telling everyone present in no uncertain terms that if they did not clear out, pronto, they would be nothing but a remnant of human mush wedged into her hooves.

“We should leave,” Dad suggested, and Mom got onto her bike, and I started to turn mine back in the right direction, and Mommy Moose apparently decided that she had had enough of our nonsense and lunged right at us.

Mom took off like a shot, her jacket flapping behind her, while I sprang onto the bike in a feat of grace and agility I have never since been able to duplicate. Our legs pumped once, twice, and suddenly the moose was RIGHT beside us, her head approximately a foot to the left of my mother’s back tire.

There was, however, divine intervention in the form of asphalt, and when the moose’s first hoof hit the pavement of the bike path, she slipped and stumbled and Mom and I were able to get a head start, cruising out of there at warp speed as Dad, somewhere behind us, yelled, “GO, GO, GO!”

We pedaled probably a quarter mile before we stopped beside one another and tumbled off our bikes and started laughing like goons, the adrenaline playing jump rope with our nerves. Dad appeared about thirty seconds later, stopping beside us, though I can’t recall having been worried about him for that half a minute. I think I knew, deep in my heart, that of the three of us, he was the most likely to be able to out bike a moose. That, or wrestle it to the ground and pin it in a full nelson.

And so we had survived yet again. Another adventure to log away in our Big Book O’ Fun Times. Another tale to store in the archives of family lore. Another instance that, had we just bitten the bullet and laid on the beach, never would have happened.

But where’s the fun in that?

The first thing I noticed about the house was that it creaked like a worn old rocking chair in even the gentlest breeze, as though it was not quite sure how to settle itself comfortably. Inside, a quilt of dust covered every surface and cobwebs decorated every corner, though the actual spiders appeared to have left for more fertile grazing long ago. The doors sagged on their hinges and more than one cracked in complaint when I tried to open it. I found, too, that most of the windows had been stuck shut by the weight of the walls bearing down on them. The house was, as the real estate agency had told me, a “fixer-upper.”

The first night I spent there, in a bed that was not my own, but, thankfully, on sheets that were, there was a storm, with rain that spattered against the windows like bullet ricochet and high winds that did not make the house creak, but groan, like a heartsick old man. Part of me thought to go sleep in my car, and another wished with pathetic fervor that I had never broken things off with Roger. All parts agreed that, come tomorrow, I would spend the hours after work looking for another house, though I knew perfectly well I would not find one. The only reason I was living in this desolate building was because there were no other houses for sale in this rural area, so empty that, as I finally fell asleep, I was already longing for buildings that were still lit at night, for fast food, for the knowledge that your closest neighbors were twenty feet away, not four miles up the road.

I had known, of course, that the house was a rundown wreck from the moment I laid eyes on it. That, at least, was something the real estate agency had been honest about.

“It’s not much to look at,” as one determinedly smiling agent had put it. “But there’s a lot of land attached, and it’s very reasonably priced. And of course, it’s the only house for sale within fifty miles of First Federal.”

Which I knew. Which was why I had looked at it in the first place. And in my

opinion, it was reasonably priced because it looked so sorry and dilapidated that no one who was not truly desperate—read, me—would ever consider buying it. Staring at it that day as it slumped tiredly to the left, I felt like the victim of some cosmic joke. The “land” was an old field, all dust and dirt and the petrified remnants of some sort of crop. Behind the field was a wood, and squinting back, I thought I saw deer grazing along the tree line. As I turned my attention back to the house, I saw swallows flitting out from rotting joists, past small curls of dried paint that had once been white. I almost felt like laughing. Finally promoted to manager, and sharing houserom with birds.

They woke me at dawn, twittering so loudly in the eaves that I could hear them clearly through the closed window. I groaned, burying my face in my pillow. I did not start work for two days, and last night I had vaguely decided that I would spend those two days in bed, so as to avoid wading through the ocean of dust. But no matter how hard I tried to fall asleep again, I could only focus on those damned birds and finally, irretrievably awake and bored with staring at my sheets, I staggered out of bed in search of something to do.

Cleaning seemed to be not only a viable option, but the only option. I knew of nothing nearby that would be even remotely entertaining, and most of my things were still packed in boxes in my old apartment, waiting to be trucked out here to West Rye Road on the coming bank holiday. I had only necessities—no magazines or books, no crossword puzzles or Sudoku, no computer. Not that that would have worked out here anyway. I had never seen a more technologically dead zone.

So I unearthed a knobby broom from a kitchen closet and, with movements more suited to snow shoveling than sweeping, I began to clear the dust from the floors. Making my way through the house, I became less irked and more curious, exploring the musty old rooms and feeling rather like an archaeologist excavating some ancient

tomb. On a crooked table in a wide living room, I found a stack of faded farmers’ manuals with pictures of potatoes on the covers, and beside them, a sheaf of notebook paper that had yellowed and wrinkled with age. Nearby was a pen, an old-fashioned ink pen that still had a nodule of dried ink clinging to its tip, all but welded there by the passage of years.

As I turned the pen over and over in my hands, I glanced toward the fireplace and saw a picture frame propped up on the mantel. Inexplicably intrigued by the notion of finding evidence of the former owner of the pen, I shuffled across the room and lifted the frame down from its sunny perch.

The picture was faded beyond any recognition, and I could scarcely make out the sepia-toned forms of two people standing shoulder to shoulder. As a bubble of disappointment welled in my stomach, I set the frame back on the mantelpiece before pacing around the room, looking for any further evidence of the people in the picture. When I finally forced myself to accept that there was nothing further, I tucked the old ink pen into the pocket of my jeans and, leaving the broom propped in the corner, began to prowl around the house.

I cannot explain the sudden compulsion to find evidence of the house’s past owners. But as I lifted tarnished silverware, traced the outline of a rusty horseshoe hanging above the back door, discovered on a windowsill a vase of dried flowers whose petals veritably disintegrated when I brushed a fingertip over them... As I did all of that, the house seemed to be less offensive and more sad, like an old, abandoned dog that had first growled, but then given a tentative wag of its crooked tail.

About to make my way back up the stairs, I paused, one hand on the railing. Along the wall that extended beneath the stairs, there was a thin line, a crack. Walking to it, I ran my hands along it, finally finding a knothole in the wood—a handle, of sorts—and small stained hinges along one side. After a sharp tug, there came a clunk,

and a door opened.

My grandparents had had a closet like this beneath their stairs, and I looked inside it eagerly, hoping to find... I am not sure what, but something of the person or the people who had lived in this old house before.

At first I saw nothing, and heaved a sigh of disappointment. But then I peered deeper into the shadows and saw, where the ceiling was lowest, where the stairs overhead were closest to the floor, a box. When I laid hands on it, I found it to be cardboard, made soft and supple with age and use. I drew it out carefully, almost afraid it would fall apart in my hands, like the flower petals had. I carried it back to the kitchen table, sitting myself in a chair that did not creak.

The box was filled with papers.

The one I lifted from the top was folded into thirds, yellow and rounded at the corners, with soft, fringed rips along the folds, as though it had been opened and closed and reopened many times. I unfolded it gingerly.

The writing on it was neat and elegant, the lines arrow-straight.

April 1918

Dearest Marellie,

The weather here has turned against us. The trenches are filled with mud, and I can scarcely move for shivering, my fingers are so cold. Daniel Johannes took ill two days ago, and his fever is now very bad. I think the major would like him sent home, or at least further from the front line, but it is difficult to move right now...

I read the letter through to the end, eyes sailing easily over the words until I reached the signature.

I think of you each day, and remain your most loving,
Paul

I was picking up the next letter before I even realized what I was doing, and before long, I was tearing through them rapidly, as though reading a novel, an historical fiction.

... Today was the first time I've seen the sun in days...

... There was a great deal of fire last night, and twenty-two men were killed, including Matthew Wolkowski, our medic. Matt was a good man, funny, and I fear more will suffer from his loss...

... Daniel Johannes took a turn for the worse yesterday afternoon, and died this morning shortly after dawn. He had a wife at home, and a baby girl. Oh, Marellie, I wish I could see your smiling face...

... We are pushing the Germans back, and for the first time, the sergeants are talking genuinely of victory...

... Marellie, the fighting is done, officially. My dearest Marellie, I am coming home. I may even beat this letter there. Oh, Marellie, I have so much to tell you, so much to ask you...

When I read that Paul was coming home, that he had survived, something unclenched in my chest. I had half feared that I would unfold a letter announcing to his Marellie that he had died, was gone forever and would never return, that she would never see him again. I had not feared that when I broke things off with Roger... Beneath several more sheets of paper etched with numbers, there was a newspaper clipping, as old as the letters and quite faded, but on which I could make out the words,

On June 19th, 1919, the people of Saint Timothy's Church celebrated the marriage of Paul McGivens to Mary Ellen Westshire, with much joy and much celebration. May their union be blessed.

A smile crossed my face when I read those words—it seemed so like the happy endings found in books.

But looking into the box, I found more papers beneath, written in Paul McGivens's precise handwriting. Lifting the first out, I squinted in the fading light, but found I could not quite make it out. Sighing, I placed the letters back into the box and closed it carefully.

When the swallows woke me the next morning, I took my place at the kitchen table again, opening the box, sifting through the letters I had read and lifting the first bit of paper beneath, one the same size and shape as those on the table in the living room.

August 1919

Marellie and I have finally had the house at the end of West Rye Road built. Strangely enough, I found West Rye Road actually runs north to south, so why its name is 'West,' I can't begin to guess. It's a fine house, though, with a field larger than Father's. There's a wood behind it, and deer often graze along the edge of the trees. Marellie especially loves the deer, though she wishes they would come close to the house. She says they probably drink at the pond, though we've never seen them. I tell her that it's good they kept to the trees, so that when we plant, they won't bother our fields...

For pages, Paul described the house and the field, described how he and Marellie had painted the walls crisp white, how they had planted the potatoes in the field, how they had weathered storms, and how they had taken in their first crop.

That the first year was a success... I can't begin to describe how relieved I am, how relieved Marellie is. She's always smiling again now. I know how worried she'd been before. She's told me that when the sales are more stable, when we're established, that she'd like to start a family. To have children around the house... I can't describe how wonderful that would be. It would make this house into a home. I would be so happy.

The years scudded by as I read through page after page, as Paul rose from the paper and sat across from me, hands folded on the table and a lopsided grin on his face, telling me in easy, rolling tones about the house and the potato field and the pond and the deer that never came close enough for Marellie.

October 1923

... The baby looks so like Marellie, though she says he looks like me. We named him after Father. His eyes look exactly like his grandfather's. When he looks at you, you can see him thinking and memorizing every part of your face. He has a grip strong as oak timbers, and I almost think he'll be walking before the month is out. I know that he's too young. But he seems that strong...

May 1925

... What a task it is keeping up with Wally! Today he tore all through the field and almost reached the wood before Marellie caught him. She keeps a close eye on him. Stevenson said that he saw coyotes around two nights ago, so Wally must be kept clear of the forest.

That's hard enough, as he loves the deer as much as his mother does...

November 1925

...Wally like to talk. All the time, he's stugging at me, wanting to try new words. He likes to sit near me as I write. I read the words aloud to him, and he smiles...

February 1926

...Wally has told us he wishes to become a doctor. His grandfather made him a stethoscope for Christmas. It's only a toy, but he insists she can hear heartbeats with it. He takes Marellie's all the time and tells her she's "healthy as a horse." He picked up that line from my father. He checks his grandfather's heartbeats whenever he visits, and he checks mine. It seems every minute when I'm not working the fields. At this rate, he will be the most dedicated doctor this state's ever seen...

Wally was a figure on every page, and Paul was beaming, running a hand through his hair with sheepish but obvious pride as he described him.

March 1927

It was a long winter, but the pond was only half-frozen over. The ice was thin. Marellie spends much time sitting alone, looking after the hands. We worry about the potato crop. I fear that the year will not be good.

I reread the passage once, then again. Puzzled, I read on, but page after page was mention of nothing but weather and potatoes, failures and successes with the crop. I bit my lip as I read the final passage on one sheet.

June 1928

The doctor told Marellie that she won't be able to get pregnant again. I think her heart is breaking, but I have no idea how to help her.

Putting the paper down, I rested my forehead in my hands. It was several minutes before I repacked the box and went upstairs.

After that, I felt less like the reader of a novel and more like an intruder. Paul no longer seemed to be speaking to me. Instead, I was eavesdropping on a private conversation. I slept fitfully that night, and it was something of a relief when in the morning, I dressed in blouse and tweed skirt and drove to First Federal. I did not open the box on the kitchen table. I tried not to even look at it.

When I returned to the house, however, tired from standing in heels all day, I sat immediately at the table and opened the box. I did not even think what I was doing until I was halfway through the next sheet of paper. I thought of putting it down, but found that I could not. It remained in my hand, and as I glanced outside to the slanting sun, I realized that I only had an hour or so to read. What was the harm in that? Tonight, when it grew too dark, or tomorrow morning, perhaps, I would close the box for good and return it to its final resting place in the closet beneath the stairs.

December 1929

...It's been so cold. I've been woodworking more and more by the firelight. Marellie warns quietly that it's bad for my eyes. But I want to finish the new headboard for the bed...

March 1930

... The postman tells us things grow worse and worse in the cities. Things are worse for me, as well, but only because I cannot finish to perfection this headboard. Marellie just shakes her head when I promise it will be finished before the growing season...

September 1931

... The potato crop is good this year, better than I had thought. The land does not seem to know what sorrow grips the country. The potatoes grow regardless of what men think or do, regardless of how much money they make or of whether they have a job or not. I promise Marellie that this winter, I will finish the headboard...

January 1933

... Now that that idiot Hoover is out of the White House, perhaps the country will turn around. I have read of our new president in Stevenson's paper. He said, 'We have nothing to fear, but fear itself.' I believe that I like this man...

My eyes were narrowed to slits as I read the final words for 1933, it had grown so dark outside. I repacked the papers neatly in the box, starting to lift it, to return it to the place beneath the stairs. But in the end, I left it where it was. If I put it away now, I would never learn if Paul had finished the headboard for Marellie.

The next morning, I almost read a page or two during breakfast, but was so afraid to get jam on the old papers that I let them rest. It was only when I was driving to work that I realized that I'd failed to return the box to its place under the stairs. But

I felt that that was somehow all right. As I had continued to read last night, Paul had become comfortable with me again, or I had become comfortable with him.

Paul's experiences during the Depression had been a mixed bag, a roller coaster ride of successes and failures. One year, the potato crop was poor—the weather had been too hot. But while Paul had been concerned, saying that he had paced the living room each night wondering how to make ends meet, he had also said,

... Marellie loves the headboard. She was smiling when she saw it. She seems more and more like herself. At least harvesting less meant that I had the time to finish that for her.

December 1941

... The Japs have finally struck U.S. soil, a navy base in Hawaii. We're in the war now. Father always said we would be. It was only a matter of time. Marellie went to meet with her sister in town. They plan to organize the neighbors there to raise some money for the war effort. She apologized for being out for so long, but I couldn't be happier. This is the most determined I've seen her in years...

June 1943

... The Great War. I fought in the Great War. That name had a strength to it. It was the most terrible of conflicts, so terrible that it needed a name more sinister than any other. Now I have heard it called World War I. This is World War II. The Greater War. An even more terrible conflict. I never thought there would be anything more terrible than the Great War. Now I see that mankind has proved me wrong, and I have not been so saddened in many years...

September 1945

...The war has officially ended. Marellie and I danced around the kitchen when we heard news of the final surrender. She told me that my father would have loved to see this day. She said he would have tossed his cane aside and danced with us. Maybe somewhere, he was...

I traced my fingers slowly over those words. When was the last time I had spoken to my parents? Either of my parents? I loaded the papers back into the box again and walked upstairs, so deep in thought that I forgot to examine the headboard.

On Wednesday, the pages were filled with short, happy entries from the 1950s. The potato crop was good. Marellie made jam and won prizes five times at the county fairs. Paul made a rocking chair for her and set it out on the back porch, so that she could sit comfortably and watch the deer that grazed along the border of the trees. When a nearby barn burned down, everyone from within sixty miles arrived the next day to rebuild it.

Sitting across from me, Paul was laughing, waving his hands with delighted flourishes. There were patches of gray at his temples now, and there were lines showing around his eyes and alongside his mouth. But he looked little the worse for it. In fact, he seemed more alive than ever as he described his exploits with Marellie. They had gone to Las Vegas and returned home laughing, vowing never to go back again. They had gone to California in Paul's new Ford. They had gone to the Grand Canyon and Marellie had insisted upon riding pack mules down into it. Paul discussed with loving detail the plans they were making for the next year, after the potatoes were

harvested. They were going to go to the East Coast, he explained with a wide grin. They were going to see Boston and New York City and Washington D.C. Marellie had always wanted to see those cities, he said, and I expected to hear all about them.

April 1959

The weather's been nothing but rain, like crying. The fields are all mud. Planting might be impossible...

...I can't imagine anything growing this year...

...Who knows whether any potato plants at all will come up. Maybe they'll just hide in the ground...

All potatoes. I skimmed through the next pages, looking for finalized travel plans, tales of adventure on the East Coast, but there was nothing. Only entry after entry describing the potatoes, which seemed to be in a sad and sorry state all year, until...

September 1959

...The crop wasn't as terrible as I thought. I made enough to last the winter, and I've food to keep me through. I wish I'd the recipes for those stews...

I went back despite the failing light and read the passages more closely. Perhaps I'd overlooked something. But as I read page upon page upon page about potatoes, I began to feel something icing over in the pit of my stomach. For all those pages, there was not one mention of Marellie.

Going up the stairs that night, my feet felt heavy, and my hands felt cold. I sat on the edge of the bed for a long time, staring at my palms. When I went to lie down, I glanced at the headboard and paused. Reaching out, I traced my fingers slowly over

the carvings. Deer ran through a field toward a small house, their limbs rendered so fluidly that it appeared as though they were actually in motion.

Thursday, I settled in to read, determined to find out what had become of Marellie and equally determined to go slowly, to miss no detail that would give me a piece to the puzzle. For a long while, my efforts were fruitless and there were only descriptions of daily life in short, sporadic bursts, going on as usual. I could scarcely envision Paul now, but I imagined that he would be sitting with his shoulders hunched slightly, staring off to the left or right of me, trying to hide, trying to be evasive.

Finally, I found a page that was written in a hand more shaky, less distinct.

August 1962

I finally decided that I would pull up that potato plant that was growing too close to Marellie. She'd had to deal with those damned potato plants all her life, she shouldn't have had to now. I tried for hours to dig up that damn plant. I tried to pull it out and dig it out. I used my hoe and my shovel and every other tool I could think of. I went to sit for a time, to rest my back, then I tried again. And again. But I couldn't do it. I've farmed those damned potatoes for years, and I couldn't move one. I couldn't move one plant away from Marellie. Finally, I gave up and I sat down by the gravestones and cried.

I picked that spot for them because I thought it was far enough away from the potato field where they wouldn't be bothered by the crop. That's what I thought for Wally, at least. It was away from the crop and from that damn pond, so there wouldn't be any water seeping into the grave. For Marellie...

Marellie loved the woods. She loved the fields, too, but the woods, especially that old wood—she'd loved those more. She's by the trees now, by Wally. They're in the sun. Marellie always loved to sit outside when it was sunny, to watch the deer graze. She always wished those deer would come close to the house. She's close to them now. Now she's close

to her deer.

I left the potato plant there.

The next entry on the paper was dated in December. There had never been a gap that long before. I noticed that my hands were shaking. I couldn't even put the papers away. Outside, there was still some light in the sky, but I couldn't read. I left the papers on the table and I went out the back door and I sat at the edge of the field with my elbows on my knees and my head in my arms.

I sat there for a long time.

It was dark when I got up, pitch dark and much colder. But I only went inside for a minute, to get my car keys. I drove back along West Rye Road—West Rye Road actually runs north to south—past an old steeple with a faded sign—the people of St. Timothy's Church celebrated the marriage of Paul McGiven to—past the country doctor's clinic at the very outskirts of the tiny town—will be the most dedicated doctor this state's ever—

I skidded into the parking lot of First Federal. It was the only place I knew that got decent reception. My hands were shaking from the force of their grip on the steering wheel. It was ten minutes before I could fish out my phone. With trembling fingers, I dialed the Boise area code, and I called Roger.

On Friday, it was almost too dark to read by the time I returned to the papers. It had taken time to gather my courage, time to realize that I really did want to keep reading, that I was nearing the bottom of the stack. Somewhere inside, I felt it would be basest treachery to abandon Paul now. He had told me so much, I had enjoyed so much, and now because he was telling me a tale I did not like—a reality, not a happily-ever-after fantasy—I did not want to read any farther. Perhaps it was simply human

curiosity to know the end of the story that drew me back to the old, yellowed papers. But I would have felt awful if I had not finished. It would have been as though I had betrayed Paul and the trust he'd put in me.

It was an easy day for reading. The entries remained short, but they grew more and more light-hearted. There were brief anecdotes about neighbors and animals and fairs and, as always, the potato fields.

The swallows were chirping on Saturday morning when I woke, though they hadn't woken me. I was lazy; I took my time getting out of bed and shuffling my way downstairs. I made fried eggs and ham on the stove that I had finally taken the time to learn to use, and I ate while listening to the birds sing.

Once I had finished, I turned my attention back to Paul.

July 1971

...I think I'm getting too old to tend the fields anymore. My heart hammers fast when I try to dig too much, and my side just stings with pain. I can only tend in the morning and early afternoon, because once the sun sinks behind those trees, I can scarcely tell potato from dirt. My eyes have gotten so bad. Sometimes I can still make out the deer, though. With Marellie's old glasses, I can see enough to write at night, but only if I turn the lamp as high as it'll go...

Suddenly, Paul was older. His shoulders were stooped, his knuckles painful arthritic knots beneath his skin. He kept his palms together, but did not fold his fingers. His hair was entirely gray now, laced with white, and the lines on his weathered face

were clearly defined. He looked straight at me now; his voice rang with frank honesty. He was old, and he knew it.

I stared at the remaining stack of pages, so small compared to that of those I had already read. My heart did a strange double jump in my chest. I was coming to the end of Paul's life. Never, since I had finished the war letters, had I imagined Paul dead. His words had still chimed so clearly through the kitchen that they had made a veritable echo of him, one that sat across from me and told me tales in a voice that had been so friendly and sonorous. Now that voice cracked with the weight of years on the voice box, of countless colds and other illnesses, of time spent outside day after day, with hands plunged into the cool earth, searching for potatoes.

The only way I could imagine Paul ever leaving this house, this house that was his and Marellie's and Wally's, was in a casket.

I left the papers on the table again that day, and for the second time in three days, I drove back to First Federal after hours, sat in my dust-covered car, and made a phone call.

This time, I called my parents.

By Sunday morning, I had decided to stay with Paul until the end. He had had no one here. For all I knew, he could have died in this house alone, could have lain cold on the bed or the couch or the floor, collecting dust like the furniture until someone realized that old Paul McGivens had not been seen for a while, and had gone in search of him. It was a gesture in futility. I knew that. But leaving Paul's last writings unread, leaving the last things the man had ever thought unseen, it was, it was... I couldn't.

The entries I read that Sunday became more sorrowful. Paul lamented his aches and pains, wishing for nothing more than to be on hands and knees in the potato field, digging weeds from around the plants. His mind was as sharp and driven as ever

before. Yet his body had finally succumbed to the march of time.

...I'd never felt trapped in my own skin before. I hate that feeling...

The entries I read that Sunday also became more difficult to read. Dates no longer appeared, replaced by crooked line breaks between small paragraphs. The script itself was larger, sloppier, no longer following an unseen line so straight it could have been made by a ruler. In places, the ink had bled too quickly, leaving large splotches to mar Paul's thoughts.

The entries I read that Sunday made me cry.

I did not do much reading on Monday morning. It was a bank holiday, and the movers drove down from Boise, unloading boxes and boxes into the house. Roger came to help, and he worked alongside the two men and me, building cardboard mountains on the creaking, complaining floorboards. All three of them left in late afternoon, Roger and I making plans to meet the next weekend.

When I walked back into my kitchen, I was struck by the boxes. Not the number of them, but how different they looked, straight-sided and stiff and even, compared to the slumping shape on the table. I lifted a small box slowly off the chair that did not creak, and I sat down. There were, at most, five or six sheets of paper left, and I decided that, as I moved my things in to replace his, I could at least do Paul the kindness of reading whatever wisdom he had left for me.

The writing was at its worst, the letters crooked and broken, as though they had been etched onto the paper by a four-year-old clutching a pen in one chubby fist.

Parts of it were not even legible, no matter how hard I tried to decipher them.

...Thepotatofield...emptynow...Everythingisdead.Looking...seemslike...onlyold, parchedskeletons...plantsIcan'ttendanymore...missthe dirt...myfingers...miss the...and...walkbythegraves...afternoonssun...thiswindow...wanttosit...theold rockingchair...eyesgetshadowysoeasilynow...sometimestryto...can't...butsome- times I can look out at the... and see the deer...

With painstaking difficulty, I worked through five pages like that, the corners of my eyes stinging. Finally, I lifted the last page. On it, there was only one line, written in handwriting as neat and precise as it had ever been, as neat and precise as that first letter I had read, written to Marellie from her soldier overseas. This entry said only,

I think it is about time to go.

That was all. There was nothing more.

I did not want to accept that. I searched the house for some other record of Paul. I scoured the closet beneath the stairs, and every other closet besides. I pried open the door to the attic to find it empty and unused. I opened every cupboard to find most of them bare. I even ran my hands along the sooty insides of the fireplace, trying to see if there was a loose brick or a scrap of paper that had not completely burned, something to show me what had happened to Paul after he had decided that it was about time to go.

I found nothing. But when I returned to work on Tuesday, I looked for more. Every client that entered First Federal received a polite question: "Did you ever know

anyone named Paul McGivens?"

To which I received the same polite answer every time: "No. Sorry."

After two weeks, I had met just about every client in this empty, rural place. Every time I recognized a face, my hopes would fall a little farther. It seemed Paul McGivens was no longer even a ghost. The echoes of his life reached only me.

It was a month later when a young woman entered First Federal. I had never seen her, and as we discussed her aging grandmother's financial matters, the question rose unbidden to my mind. As she packed up to leave, I asked,

"Sorry if this seems like an odd question... but did you ever hear of anyone from this area named Paul McGivens?"

The woman tapped her index finger against her lip. "Paul McGivens... Paul McGivens... hmm... y'know, that sounds a bit familiar. My grandma might've mentioned him to me before. Why d'you ask?"

"Your grandmother mentioned him? Did she know him?"

"Might have." The woman studied me curiously. "Why?"

The old woman was pushing ninety-four and was half-blind with cataracts, but she could still converse with the best of them. I sat in her cozy little living room, drinking a cup of chamomile tea. We had made small talk for the better part of half an hour, and now she was regarding me with a look of owlish curiosity.

"Well, dear, why not just hop to the reason you came now? I've loved speaking

with you, but an old lady like me needs to sleep quite a bit. I don't want to nod off on you."

"Of course not," I said hurriedly. "Please, Mrs. Ashford, I was curious as to whether you'd ever known anyone named Paul McGivens."

"Paul McGivens?" One of her frosty eyebrows quirked upward. "Well, of course I knew Paul. What of him?"

"Do you know what happened to him?"

"He's gone," she replied without hesitation.

There was a sinking feeling in the very bottom of my stomach as I asked, "Dead?"

"I would guess so," she replied, and I must have looked puzzled, for she continued, "One day, Paul just left. He put on his old plaid coat and his worn old hat and he walked straight across his old field and into the woods. A neighbor was plowing his far fields and saw him. Didn't think anything of it. It was common knowledge that Paul liked to go walking back by the woods. That's where his wife and son are buried, after all."

"What happened to his son?" I interrupted.

"Walter?" Mrs. Ashford rubbed the bridge of her nose with liver-spotted fingers. "Walter drowned when he was little. He fell through the ice in the pond behind Paul's old house one winter."

"And Marellie?" I continued without thinking.

The old woman gave me a look that was not quite suspicious, but somewhere close. "Mary Ellen? Paul's wife? How did you know that he called her Marellie?"

Blushingly, I admitted all—finding the papers, reading them, becoming obsessed with them and obsessed now with knowing how the story ended, with knowing what had finally happened to Paul.

Slowly, Mrs. Ashford nodded. "All right, dear. Mary Ellen fell sick one winter. She coughed her way through three months. He thought she was getting better when he found her dead one afternoon in her old rocking chair."

"And Paul...?" I prompted.

"Paul, as I said, walked back into the woods one day. And he never came back to the house. After a few days, people began to get worried. He hadn't been at church, or at the county social. He hadn't called on a neighbor when he said he would. No man was as punctual as Paul. And finally, his one neighbor realized and told the sheriff when he'd last seen Paul. Well, the sheriff called the police in from the neighboring counties, and they all went through the woods searching for Paul."

"Did they find him?" I asked hesitantly. There was a part of me that did not want to know the answer.

"They never did," said Mrs. Ashford quietly. "As far as anyone could tell, Paul McGivens just vanished into the woods."

As I was leaving the old woman, I asked her timidly how she knew so much about Paul and his family.

She smiled at me kindly, showing the gaps between her teeth. "My maiden name is Westshire. Mary Ellen was my older sister."

Once I got home, I went behind the house, walking back into the barren field for the first time since I had arrived. Paul's words were like a map in my head—in the sun, away from the pond, near the tree line. So I kept abreast of the trees until I saw the graves. The stone was worn, but the words were still clear:

MARY ELLEN MCGIVENS and WALTER JAMES MCGIVENS
AUGUST 8, 1902-APRIL 22, 1959 OCTOBER 4, 1923-MARCH 11, 1927

And over both graves, there grew a potato plant, in bloom, its flowers small and pale purple, soft and folded in waves like spilling silken cloth.

I sat on the hard earth beside the flowering plant, touching its fresh, supple leaves almost reverently. I am not sure how long I remained there, just staring at the graves and the potato plant, at the physical proof that Paul had been real, that he had existed, that he had been in this very spot once, trying to uproot this same plant with tears of frustration and grief rolling down his wrinkled face.

When I finally looked around, I stared for a long moment.

Standing in the field, between me and the house, were a pair of deer, a graceful, willowy doe and a lanky-legged fawn, its back covered in snowflake-speckles. They were nosing through the old remains of the potato plants, but then the doe's head shot up and her ears swiveled toward me. With a flash of white tails, they bounded past me and past the gravestones and into the trees.

They bounded, too, past a buck, who watched me for a moment with deep liquid eyes, his antlered head tilted slightly to one side. Then, soundlessly, he turned after the doe and fawn and vanished into the woods.

{ME AND MY THERIZINOSAURUS}

In the course of pursuing an English major, I fully expected to read a lot and write a lot. Comes with the territory, I figured. But a challenge I did not foresee was trying to think up things for other people to write about. These “prompts,” as they are innocuously dubbed, are harder to produce than a ten-page paper, because they have to be clever and witty, at the very least, and maybe poignant as well (and you try combining clever and witty with poignant—doesn’t happen often outside of a Terry Brooks novel); they have to be universal enough for everyone to write on (“Write a parody of the life of President Zachary Taylor.” Never heard of President Zachary Taylor? I am not surprised), and above all, they must be creative. Creative is the pseudo-threatening byword of the prompt dynasty, and if your prompt is creative, then all will be well and you will receive fifteen bonus points.

If it is not, you will be put to death.

So I spend a lot more time thinking about prompts than about, for example, the topic of my thesis paper. After all, who’s going to read my thesis? A bunch of erudite professors who I do not know personally. And who is going to hear my prompt? My friends and fellow students, people who, in the short term, have much more power over my life than old Professor Wexler skulking in his office with the Oxford Collegiate Dictionary and a copy of Thesis Reading for Dummies.

Another criteria in coming up with prompts, for me, at least, is choosing a topic that I would actually enjoy writing about, because in more cases than not, I am writing the prompt right along with my fellow students. And that is how “What is the weirdest animal you have ever heard of?” came into existence, with the addendum, “It cannot be a mythical creature, but it can be an extinct creature, so long as it once really existed.” Granted, here I sacrificed poignance for the cleverness and wit I hoped would emerge, but the topic was fairly universal (most everyone has heard of animals) and while not especially creative in and of itself, the responses would be. So, I would not receive

fifteen points, but I would get to live.

Plus, I thought it would be a lot of fun to write about.

And so, as I went about my business, my brain mulled on autopilot over this topic, trying to decide what the weirdest animal I had ever heard of might be. And it finally concluded: The Therizinosaurus.

If you have never heard of a Therizinosaurus, this is no cause for shame. It does not often come up in conversation. Nonetheless, it was one of the most bizarre creatures to ever walk the earth. But you don’t have to take my word for it. Allow me to describe the Therizinosaurus, and you can decide for yourself.

First of all, the name Therizinosaurus, like most dinosaur names, is long and complex and means something in Latin, though for the case of this argument, it is not important. Also, Therizinosaurus is a very long word to type. And so to spare my fingers and to keep my word processor from overtaxing itself producing those little squiggly red lines that it so thoughtfully puts beneath each word offensive to it, I will from here on refer to the Therizinosaurus as “Bob.”

Bob lived during the Cretaceous Period, the last period in which dinosaurs still hung around Earth, and he was a lonely, awkward sort, the type of dinosaur that other, cooler dinosaurs like T-rex and Triceratops did not want to invite to their parties. Bob stood over seventeen feet tall. Whenever I hear such a statement, my usual response is, “Ha ha. Seventeen feet. That’s not so big.” For comparison, try this. Find your friend Chad and your other friend Mitchell. Stand Mitchell on Chad’s shoulders. Mitchell cannot sit on Chad’s shoulders, but must stand, cheerleader style. Then find Yao Ming, and stand Yao Ming on Mitchell’s shoulders. And in the split second before Chad’s legs splinter, you will observe roughly how tall Bob was.

If you were in bed on the second story of your house and had a window, Bob could watch you sleep.

{WATER'S FALL}

Height, of course, is no indication of weirdness, so I will now attempt to describe Bob in layman's terms. Start with the main body. Picture something round and chunky, à la Butterball turkey or hippopotamus. Cover it in rough, dinosaur skin. Now add a reptilian tail. Nope, you're thinking too long. Make this tail stubby, only about two-thirds of the length of the butterball body and relatively narrow.

Bob is bipedal. His legs are shaped roughly like chicken legs, but are much thicker and taller. But not tall enough to appear proportional to Bob's body. Remember, Bob is seventeen feet tall. At human proportions, roughly half of that would be Bob's legs—about eight-and-a-half feet. Bob's legs are around four feet long.

Bob is a chunk of a torso on stumpy chicken legs.

From the shoulders up, however, Bob resembles one of the longnecks from The Land Before Time. Elongated and sinuous, his neck matches the rest of his body about as well as a giraffe's would a rhino's.

And that's not even the most bizarre thing about Bob. While Bob's legs are stumpy, each of his arms is eight feet long, meaning he could give an entire baseball team a hug, probably with room to spare. And at the end of those arms are claws that are each three feet long, giving Bob forelimbs like giant three-spiked rakes. Paleontologists nevertheless believe that Bob was an herbivore and used his claws to strip foliage and bark.

So, to rehash: Bob had a little head on a long-neck's long neck, a bulky hippo body and a stumpy tail, thick and stubby chicken legs, and two massively disproportionate long arms with massively disproportionate claws. In fact, Bob looked like the sort of combo-creature the ancient Greeks would have cooked up. He would probably have come off the better in a battle of bizarre between himself and a hydra. And so by his very existence, Bob is creative enough for both himself and the prompt.

Fifteen points, please?

Silver sang swiftly,
A sun-streaked storm
Sailing in slow motion down.
Tiny hang-gliders to hover one sharp second,
Then leap!
Like leopard spots snow-speckled
Across an afternoon
Like misty morn at midday.
A rush, a rage,
A cool cascade to carry
All the hopes and dreams of winter
Roared down startled streams.
The mighty mountain's bridal veil
For Mother Earth's marriage to the Sky,
The glossy toss of the bouquet,
The birthing of their child, Day,
Savored in this awed array
Of starburst burst
And liquid play.
And all those silly people, they
Had told me water was blue.

Kendra Furry

{THE WAY THINGS ARE NOW}

she walks faster than everyone else
glancing to the side dramatically
with one eyebrow raised
pretending she's filming her Oscar-winning role

he can't walk down a hallway without
ten or seventeen or more or fewer people
saying hey, hi, hello, goodbye
because he's the best of both worlds
well-known and well-liked

they're walking in opposite directions
on different sides of one coin in an astronomer's pocket
a quarter
or maybe a penny
because Lincoln's all the rage these days

and she can't stop singing Aretha Franklin
and he can't stop reciting speeches

{TERMINAL}

Every five minutes a plane leaves the ground
taking someone away from somewhere
and someone else back to where they belong
and I'd take a flight so I could hear you say good morning
or cross a time zone just to hear you say good night.
Airports are never empty.
They just can't hold you there
and I'm starting to get scared
that you're just waiting by the gate for me to open it up
because my breath isn't coming fast enough
and my tears have drowned the last three I love yous
I'm afraid my kiss won't stop the plane from taking off
and you're just trying to make me smile
but the signals got crossed
so like clockwork here's the rain you asked for
and you can't hear it but I'm listening.
I'll keep my ears open tonight
and if I hear a drop I'll let you know
and if you ask me to I'll let you go
but there are times when even your speech is a poem
and I swear our words could whisper planes out of the clouds
before the downpour of another lonely night
where every five minutes I remember what I came here for.
I reminisce on recent indulgences into desire
and hear the sound of an anonymous statement,
clicking past my thoughts to see if there's a gray space

{PENS}

within the confines of my insecurities.
and on those nights
10:37 is when my guard drops
11:29 is when my heart stops
and 12:13 is when I write poems about you.
And I won't be sleeping much tonight
because I fell for you before the boarding call.
And in spite of it all I still think there's hope,
still think there's you in these walls
because through my five minutes of catharsis
I can feel something shift
and I've got to get it all out of my head
or else my heart will think I'm lying in the morning
but I still feel like these lines can't say what I want
and what I want is for you to stay
and to see you standing in that terminal
holding a sign that reads my name
so I will finally know for sure
that I don't have any reason to leave.

My mother never puts the caps back on pens after she uses them. This always bothered me growing up. It seemed so simple to me: remove cap, write, replace cap. But she could never follow the final step. When anyone tried to use the pen again, the tip would have dried out, so profuse scribbling or licking the tip to wet it was necessary to make it write again. But don't suck on the end; I've seen people who have had pens explode in their mouths from sucking on the end to get the ink out, like some violent and angry betrayal of the used against the user. Whenever I would see pens she had left uncapped, I would sigh with frustration and rectify the problem. I didn't understand why she couldn't just put the cap on when she was done.

I never liked to use pens all that much, so it usually didn't affect me tremendously. It was just one of those little things we let get to us in life, a somewhat obsessive compulsive urge for me to replace pen caps. I have always preferred writing in pencil; my propensity to make mistakes makes a much better case for using pencil, which is easily erasable. I hate the look of scribbled-out pen, and I tend to find the way I write in pencil to be neater and more appealing than how I write in pen. But during my second semester of college, having to take copious notes and write several outlines for papers—such is the life of an English/Spanish double major—resulted in my possession of a large quantity of pencils that were no longer usable, with worn down erasers and no more lead. My only option was to use that which is mightier than the sword: a simple Bic black ballpoint pen, the kind we kept around the house.

Much in the way I tend to make mistakes when writing, I often misplace pens or pencils when I'm using them. One time in particular, I was tearing my desk apart in search of a writing utensil, and I saw one of my ballpoint pens. When I picked it up, I stopped in my tracks. The pen cap was not on the tip, but rather on the other end, like it was the last time I was writing with it. I had not replaced the cap like I so often did when my mother failed to do so. And suddenly this ordinary and otherwise

insignificant object threw me into self-reflection. I became quite homesick, having been reminded of my mother in such an unexpected way. I also began to ponder my similarities to her, where I could see her influences in certain aspects of my life, who I was ultimately turning out to be. Maybe I'll never replace another pen cap in my life, and someday my daughter will find pens around the house with the cap on the wrong end, breathe a sigh of frustration, and rectify the problem, never understanding why I couldn't just put the cap on when I was done.

{WORTH 1000 WORDS}

I walked into every room
of the condo she never would've bought
if you were still around,
feeling the walls inhale with my presence
as I studied each picture in its frame,
hoping to meet your kind, wise eyes
within a square of black wood
or an oval of polished metal.
But I only saw one picture with your face
smiling through the glossy finish,
but not through glass or even plastic.
It was held to the refrigerator by a magnet
like a five-year-old's latest Crayola masterpiece.

And suddenly I was overcome by sadness and wonder
at why this is the only photographic
reminder of you that she has
and I feel like, even though I know it's not true,
I am the only one who cares
to remember you anymore.
I've devoted eight pages of my photo album
to snapshots of us together,
pictures she sent to me,
as if she only wanted the smallest sliver of you
to remain visible to her.
I can trace the outline of your six feet
in the emptiness of a family picture
taken just four months after you died.
And in our 2006 family Christmas photo,
fewer people stand behind the couch than should,
drumming the lack of you into my heart.
I know that it's been two years,
eleven months, and nine days since your death.
I remember not having enough warning
to even realize what was happening,
so that when she went to the hospital,
I cried every day knowing that routine
can be fatal and you
can never expect anything.
I bit my lip to fight back tears that at times

Amy Parlapiano
{LOSING KEYS}

refused to be silenced because
I was afraid she'd be gone from me too
and it makes me wonder what I did
to make her like me the least
because I'm the only one
who broke down for her
and she doesn't even know it so
she still treats me like the black sheep
and it hurts me and I miss you.
I miss you every day
because you never made me feel like
the odd one out
and you and I were more alike
than she and I will ever be
and I only realized that after it was too late
so I just hold onto all my pictures
and to the last time I ever got to see you
and have you wrap your arms around me and sometimes,
I pretend my dad is you
because like father like son
your embraces feel about the same
but still different enough for me to know
you're never coming back.

"Losing Keys": It's the last track on Jack Johnson's *Sleep through the Static*, as my mom and I learned by playing the album on a loop in our rented car as we drove up to the North Shore of Oahu. It took us a while to find it—we made some stops in local stores but were greeted with the same old "Greatest Hits: Ukulele!" We kept our spirits up as we dropped into another store, with a cashier who opened a drawer underneath the cash register to reveal the CD. "We love our Jack," she said with a smile, and handed us the CD.

I've been losing lots of keys lately, I don't know what that means;

His soothing voice matched the soothing breeze and the soothing sound of the waves. We turned the volume all the way up and let ourselves soak up the beautiful setting. It had been a tough year. Stress and anxiety had gotten the best of us. But not anymore. Jack wouldn't allow it. Not here. Not now. That's in the past, his voice told us. And our grins proved he was right.

but maybe I'd be better off with things that can't be locked at all.

We had him on a loop as the minutes turned to hours and we made some wrong turns and took some wrong exits. The songs repeated. And repeated. And repeated. "Losing Keys" was on. And then it was on again. And again. And as the CD, for the umpteenth time, reached its middle section, tensions rose.

"Why don't you know where you're going?"

"I do. Drop the tone."

"I don't have a tone."

“Yes, you do.”

I’ve been feeling kind of sea-sick lately,
see you reaching to me, gonna save me.
You or me, I would much rather take the fall.

By the time Jack was singing “Losing Keys” for whatever number time, we were sitting in the parking lot of the Dole Pineapple Factory. She fumbled for a map. I looked up incredulously.

“This is stupid.”
“It’s cultural.”
“It’s Dole Pineapples.”

The world has its ways to quiet us down.

She found where we needed to go on the map and gave me her token look.
“Why can’t you ever just stop to appreciate things?”
“It’s Dole Pineapples,” I repeated.
She unbuckled her seatbelt in a huff and glanced towards me. “Coming?”
“You can go in on your own. I’m staying here.”

Down comes the rain, down come our spirits again.

Then Jack stopped singing. She got out of the car and slammed the door on the way out. I sat alone in silence. I stared at the floor and occasionally looked up to watch the

tourists flock in and out of the factory, smiles on their faces, families laughing and hugging.

Ten minutes later, I heard her steps approaching the car. I continued to stubbornly stare at the ground. We’d been through this before. This was the part that was like a game. I didn’t want to speak first, so I didn’t make eye contact. She got back in the car and let the silence continue for about 10 seconds. Then Jack came back on.

down comes the strength to lift us up, and then...

“I brought us caramel popcorn.”
I looked up at her. “No pineapples?”
“The caramel popcorn looked better.”
We reached into the bag at the same time. I smiled.

“Losing Keys” came to an end, the first track started again, and we drove on. Windows down, hair blowing in the wind, caramel popcorn in our hands, Jack crooned on:

it’s all for the sake of arriving with you.

Marie Brichta
{ROYAL PERFECTION}

Countess slurping strawberry ice cream
A pink drip slides down the cone
Dignified, but scared she looks down
Nothing can be done

Duke recycles today's newspaper
Never looking back
As he throws it toward the bin
He misses

Queen relates her latest tale
To the servants
She slurs the last words of the story
They still laugh at the punch line

King begins to draw in ink
The official border of the land
His hand twitches
I now live in France

Katie Lee
{SPRING}

The base of my spine
pulses with
mild discomfort
in the spot where
flesh hits concrete.

I don't think I was meant for this.

My skin is warm where
the sun's rays
seep
into my pores and
summon out small
beads of sweat.

I don't think I was meant for this.

The insides of
my lips are raw
where I've anxiously removed the
tissue with my teeth.

I don't think I was meant for this.

The glare of white paper in
the light shuts my eyelids,

{TRUMBULL}

scolding
them from leaving their post.

I don't think I was meant for this.

A garnet gem protrudes from
my right forearm, glistening,
round, perfect in the sunlight,
and if I put a fist to the sky,
I can keep it from growing.

I don't think I was meant for this.

Our shoes were filled with lead,
before. Now
mine, just feet—
yours, water and ash.

Your poor soles must
be drowning in
mistakes.
She looks so
out of place
in this place,
all alone in
a room full
of people.

Did you notice,
when I looked at you?
A face in the crowd
to remain constant.

She doesn't
dance.

Cigarette-lipped, you sweat.
Pools of liquid drop—
even the neck,

where your hand performs
its intricate choreography,
is soaked.

She just stares,
liquid courage in
hand. The only
thing she can
cling to while
you're not there
to guide her, hand
at the small of her back.

I don't think you noticed,
when I looked at you.
I don't hold my glass that way.

And she doesn't
dance to this
sort of tune.

I don't think you noticed,
when she gave herself away,
little by little,
while you played.

Because I know
it's that neck you love
most,
that body,
that sound.

She doesn't dance,
but I watch her
bring you another drink.

{TRUMBULL #2}

You don't use chapstick? she asked.
No, he said.
Well you must lead either a
very moisturized or a
very painful life, she said.

And he told her she
was still beautiful,
even though
things were different.

Rachel Sutton

{YOUR KINGDOM'S COME}

I know who you are, she thought.
It will never happen, she thought.
It could happen, she thought.
And she thought herself to

sleep, possibilities
boundless, open,
intrigued.

She knew who he was,
but she was wrong.

It looks good, he said.
Thanks, she said.

He yelled her name as
she went to leave.
It didn't matter.
She was already gone.

What? she asked,
indignant.
He leaned forward.

Your car's silver paint met golden sun and were one.
From that harsh burst of light,
You were gone on the road to a life not here.

Our children—my children—seem for you
As faceless as that growing sphere under her dress.
Such a tragedy in that my oldest bears your name.

At Hall, I present our family as evidence
For Heaven above to see the unity where broken,
In spite of the brand you've burned us with.

The masses kneel and petrify, identical to
Stone gargoyles in the backyard cemetery
Where your plot waits, years ahead of you.

Though why the Lord doesn't smite you
With boils and lightning and plague
Right this moment seems a monumental injustice.

As my children pray for the life of thy neighbor,
The youngest mumbling the familiar vowels,
I sit in my righteous anger and beseech Jehovah:

Never vindicate his godless name.

Eric Hernandez
{AN ELEGY FOR LOVE}

"See the Sun?" asked Arces.

"Of course," replied Edicus.

"It's dangerous."

"How? It nourishes our bodies and provides energy for so much."

"They say that if you look directly into it, you go blind."

"How could something so beneficial, so beautiful, cause such harm? How could one go their entire life without looking at it at least once?"

"Well, Edicus, imagine this: you're walking and you feel someone behind you. Either it's something you know or don't know, like or don't like, are afraid of or aren't afraid of, should be afraid of or shouldn't be afraid of, or it's nothing. Do you turn or not?"

"I turn."

"You turn and see nothing."

"So there is nothing."

"Precisely. As you turn back around, there is an arrow at your eye."

"I fight."

"You die."

"Why?"

"You turned."

Sarah Friedman

{THE RHYTHM OF THE SOUTH}

The rhythm of the South is so different from the North.
The South is steeped in rich complexity
While the North is computerized and motorized.
The Southern people go with the flow
Of nature and slow simmered red beans with rice,
While the Northerners wait in lines
For slabs of meat on bread and a cold extended hand.
No pleasantries exchanged.
I don't want to exchange my soul for that detached life.
Only now do I realize how much I miss
That warm inviting bosom of the southern countryside
Cradled between the Mississippi River
And the warm waves of the Atlantic Ocean,
With sloping ridges and lakes freckling the smooth façade
Make this part of the planet unlike any other.
It's no industrialized, mechanized, cold, hard world that I live in today.
No siree, it ain't.
Because now I have blisters on my feet from the concrete
And everywhere looks the same with ten-story monsters
Gobbling up people by the minute.
You can't be alone there for a second or else you're likely to be exposed.
"You're not from here, are you?"
The drawling "y'alls" and the intoned "yes ma'ams"
Are hardly heard around the smooth ice,
And all the politeness was left behind that Mason-Dixon line.
Because we live in a world run by cash,

So if you don't have a stash
You're a broken barrel,
A worthless wheel,
The jam in society's cog.
If one slows down for even a second the frenzied rush angers and avoids,
But not down South
Where the air is sweetly peppered with those
"What's wrong, sweet?"
And "Are you okay honey?"
No I'm not
I'm trapped in a place where nobody cares about anybody.
They are all the best
They are all right
And I'm just a plain Southerner.

Kelsey VanOverloop

{SNOW}

"Damn, it's cold." He reached for the fleece blanket, but it had fallen off the couch onto the floor. "The heat must have clicked off. Lady, stop licking me. I'll let you out in a second, just let me get up." He pushed off the thin sheet that was left on him and grabbed the dog by its collar. "It was a dumb idea not to wear more to sleep. I forget how cold this house gets at night. Surprising, since it's been frigid in here for weeks. Quiet, Lady, we don't want to wake her up. I don't have any coffee in me, so I'm definitely not ready to deal with her yet."

"What did you say to the dog?" She stood in the doorway at the far side of the room, wrapped in a large, terrycloth robe. From where he stood, she looked almost delicate, fragile in the soft white cloth. Then he looked into her cool green eyes, and he remembered why he had slept on the couch.

"I didn't say anything. I was just letting her out."

"You're going outside like that?! Are you insane? At least put some—" He sent her a look that said, you really want to tell me what to do. "Fine, do what you want. I know you will anyway. But you might want to take a quick peek outside before you head out there in just your plaid boxers."

"Oh, Jesus Christ! When did all that snow fall?"

"Oh, I don't know, probably about the same time you passed out on the couch last night."

"My car is buried! How the hell am I supposed to get it out, or go anywhere?"

"Everything is closed, and there were four big accidents on the freeway already this morning."

"Great, just great. I am supposed to be at... I need to leave in like an hour."

"Well, then you better start shoveling because there is no way your cute little sports car can get through all that snow."

"My car is not cute. It is anything but cute. It's hardcore."

"Well, your hardcore car is never going to make it out of the driveway, let alone the neighborhood. Ouch, damn it! Can you move some of these boxes? That is the second time I've stubbed my toe on them. Do you have to put them in the middle of the hallway?" She gazed around the entryway. "How many are you taking?"

"Does it matter?"

She bent down and began to lift the lid of the box closest to her.

"Don't! You have no right to go through my stuff."

"I wasn't going through them. It just seems like a lot of stuff to take with you."

"Well, you don't need to look at all of it. Don't you trust me?"

"I assume that was a rhetorical question. And I wasn't checking up on you. I just wanted to see what you considered yours, not ours. I guess quite a bit."

The two stared at each other for a moment. By now he had his boots and overcoat on, and without another word, walked out the front door with the dog. Slam! He stayed outside longer than he should have. She was right; there was no way his awesome little car could get through this, even with the snow tires he had put on last month. I hate when she's right. And she's always right. Her car, on the other hand, would be able to roll right over the snow with no trouble. It could also hold a lot more stuff; he might be able to get all his stuff in one trip with her car. If he could just borrow it for a few hours. But there was no way he could ask her to use it, not today. He couldn't even play the "man of the house" card and just take it. Because really, it wasn't his to take. None of the stuff was. He didn't own anything in that house; he didn't even own the house. The only thing he owned was that little black car; that's why she hated it so much. "Come on, Lady. Let's go warm up. My nose is about to fall off."

"You didn't wipe the dog's feet. How many times have I asked you to just towel her off before you bring her in?! She tracked snow everywhere! All over the floor, perfect!"

"Sorry, I'll grab a towel." He walked into the kitchen and took a towel off the stove.

"No, not that one. You'll just make a make a bigger mess. That is my nice dish towel. It's not for the floor. The floor towels are by the door, right where I put them for you. Never mind. Don't worry about it; I'll just do it."

"I can..."

"No, it's fine, just take your dog."

"Fine. I'm getting in the shower."

"I just finished cleaning the one in the bedroom, so you'll have to use the guest bath."

"What, why? That one is too small for me, my head barely fits under the faucet, and it has zero water pressure. Besides, it's going to be a really quick one. I have to leave soon."

"Sorry, the master bath needed cleaning. I guess if you had fixed the shower head in the other bathroom... anyway, the master bath is off limits for at least an hour or two. I'm trying this new cleaner that you have to let sit so the grout will look like new. So unless you want to inhale some bleach, or whatever chemical they use... on second thought, go ahead and use the master bath."

"Very funny. I'll just use the guest bath, no problem."

"Have a good shower."

As he walked away she got down on her hands and knees and toweled off his soaking dog, mumbling under her breath. The dog licked her face. "Now, don't you try to get on my good side. I know whose side you're really on. It's okay, I understand; he feeds you, you love him more, simple and easy, perfect for him. Besides, now I won't be constantly picking up dog hair. That is someone else's job after today." She let the dog amble off in the direction of the bathroom, and went on to clean the floor. It

seemed like cleaning was all she had done for the past month. The kitchen, the bathroom, the basement, the office, everything; everything in their whole house was spotless. And yet, it still felt dirty to her, still felt like she just needed to scrub a little harder, dust a little longer, clean a little more, like no matter what she did, their home would never be clean again.

Her mind had drifted, and by now she had wiped the same spot on the floor about sixty times. She quickly got up, threw the towel back behind the couch, and began to wander. Her routine was off because of the snow. Usually on Saturdays, she got up at nine, got dressed, went to the gym, picked up groceries for the week, and by the time she got back to the house, he was up and working in the office. But today, today was all wrong. She hadn't been able to sleep, so she had been up and out of bed before seven. She had showered, and noticed the grout looked a little dirty, so she had cleaned the entire bathroom. She didn't dare venture out to the family room until she absolutely had to. He was so grumpy in the morning. And she didn't want to drive today because of all the snow on the roads, and in their driveway, and all around them. She couldn't leave this morning because of the snow; at least, that was what she had told herself. But she knew her car would be fine, and the roads were probably plowed by now. She could leave whenever she wanted, but what if she came back and he wasn't here?

She flipped on the TV to the news and let it play in the background and fill her consciousness. She never used to watch the news, it was too depressing, but he had always told her it was important to stay informed, to know what was going on in their world, so she had gotten used to having it on when he was home. But right now she wasn't listening to be informed; she just needed something else to think about. Someone else to think about. Someone other than the man who was in the small bathroom right down the hall from her.

She looked at all the boxes again. Why does he need so many? What is he taking? She couldn't resist. She walked over to the closest box and gently pulled open the top. Just clothes. She was about to close the box when she saw something bright blue all scrunched up in the corner. He doesn't wear that color, he hates blue. What could this... oh. This isn't his. And it isn't mine. And it most certainly isn't ours. This belongs to her. She felt sick in her stomach, the same sick feeling she had had for months, like acid was eating her from the inside out. What is this doing in our house? Why did he bring this in our house?! Her stomach flipped. I am going to be sick; I know I am going to be... ok, it's fine, it's fine. She looked down at her hand around the blue satin. Her knuckles were white, making them stand out against the dark fabric. Just put it down and walk away, just walk away.

"What the hell are you doing?!" he bellowed as he walked toward her.

"Nothing. I wasn't doing anything. I just... I just wanted to see why you needed so many boxes."

"You just couldn't stand it, could you? You have to know everything. What are you... oh."

"It's fine. I'm fine. I'm sorry I messed with your stuff. Are you done in the bathroom? Whoa, you weren't kidding; that was a fast shower. Why are you looking at me like that? I'm fine."

"You weren't supposed to see that."

"I know, I know. That's why it's in the box you are taking away with you, right? Don't worry about it. It isn't like I didn't know. I was just surprised to see, to see it here, to see it in our house."

"You mean in your house."

"Stop that. You know this is still our house. We bought this house together. You and me. Back when we were still you and..."

"Let's not do this. I was supposed to be there fifteen minutes ago, and I still need to get ready. Could you just put it back and shut the box?"

"Sure."

"Thanks." He turned and walked back toward the bedroom. Their bedroom, her bedroom, whatever. She watched his back as he moved toward the room's door, then she had an awful thought. Almost in a whisper, she said, "You had her here, didn't you? In our house. This isn't something you just brought home as a memento, is it? She... she left this here."

"Let's not."

"I can't not anymore. I haven't said anything since I found out, since you said you were leaving. But this, in our house. I knew it felt different." Her voice was no longer a whisper, it grew louder with every word she said, although the expression on her face hardly changed. "I thought it was just us, I thought we had tainted it with our, with whatever the fuck is between us. But you tainted it. You brought your slut in here. IN OUR HOUSE!"

"Don't call her that. How dare you..."

"How dare!! Do you really want to go there?" She had regained some of her control; she was no longer yelling, but her face seemed to be cracking, like the words she was saying were forcing something out of her. "I know we are not who we were when we bought this house. I know you think I am cold and heartless and obsessive and a neat freak and basically a frigid bitch, and that I am the worst person in the world to live with and all these terrible things. But I am a lamb compared to you. I may be cold, but you betrayed me. I thought I could just let you off the hook, that we had just grown apart, that I just couldn't give you what you needed anymore, that all this was my fault. But you did this to hurt me. You brought her in our house, you left her earrings in my car, you went to our restaurant, you kissed her in front of the club

where you knew my friends would see. You wanted me to catch you.”

He was silent. He stared at her, but not into her eyes. He was afraid to look into her eyes, it hurt too much. Because for the first time in a year, her eyes were not cold, or angry, or empty. For the first time her dark green eyes looked hurt, and tears were starting to form at the edges of them. She still had not put down the blue satin, and was squeezing it like she was trying to put all the anger and sadness she had been trying to keep inside herself into the fabric, like that little blue thing could absorb all these things it hurt so much to feel, all these things he had believed she was incapable of feeling.

She walked directly toward him. It looked like she was going to run him over. Maybe she is going to hit me, or kick me. I won't stop her if she wants to. He flinched as she got closer, but she stopped a foot in front of him and held out her hand with the little negligee in it. He extended his hand as well, and she dropped it, but it missed his hand, and lightly fell to the floor. It landed soundlessly, though he felt the earth shake as it hit the tile floor. She breezed passed him, walked into the bedroom, and gently closed the door.

He just stared at the cobalt blue object on the floor. He really didn't like that color. He didn't even want to pick it up. That little thing was everything he hadn't wanted to become. It belonged to a woman who was easy, not just in the obvious form of the word, but in everything she did. She agreed with anything he said. She was always smiling or pouting when she didn't get her way. He didn't have to work hard with her. Just like this negligee, she was light and airy and simple. It was shiny and bright, two things he and his wife had never been. She didn't understand him at all, but maybe, that was the reason he liked being with her. He was tired of being with someone who knew everything about him and could use it against him. It was nice to be with someone simple, someone who would think he would think this negligee was

sexy. It wasn't the negligee or the girl he found sexy, but the novelty of it all.

As he stared at it, he could hear her moving around the bedroom. She wasn't slamming anything, wasn't mumbling, she was hardly making any noise at all, except a quiet whimper. This was not her. This was not the woman who had roamed their home for the past few months. The woman who had just walked passed him was a woman he had not seen before. His wife was a woman who never showed weakness. Anger was the main emotion he saw from her, not sadness. She had only cried in his presence once in their entire marriage, at her mother's funeral.

He stuffed the thing into the box and shut it tightly. He still wasn't dressed, and he needed to get out of here. But his clothes for today were in that room, and though there was no lock on the door, there may have well have been a barricade in front of it. He crept over to the door and knocked.

“What are you knocking for? This is your room too. You don't need to ask my permission to come in. I am not your prison guard. You can do whatever the hell you want.”

“I just need the last of my clothes, and then I'll be out of your hair.”

“Fine.”

He silently came into the room. She sat at the edge of the bed facing the wall, but her eyes followed him as he moved around the room. That anger he knew so well was back in her face, but those eyes that watched all his movements were filled with despair. Nothing was said between them, and the awkward silence left a ringing in his ears. He dressed as quickly as he could. As he was about to leave, he heard her say, “I think we were happy when we first came here. Do you remember? I want to remember when we were happy, when we talked to each other without fighting, when, when you loved me. I wish I could remember that, but all I remember—”

“We were. When we first came here, we were.”

Alexis Delaney
{GIACOMO CAROLLO}

“Good.” The tears were back in her eyes. She stared at him for a moment, and she saw sadness in him she had not seen before. She quickly looked away so he wouldn’t see her cry.

“I need to go,” he said quietly from the doorway. She didn’t answer, just kept staring at the wall.

He walked out of the bedroom, shutting the door behind him. As he walked to the front hall to grab a box, he remembered all the snow on the ground. He turned and looked at the closed bedroom door, then back out the front door. There was even more snow now than there had been when he woke up. He took a step toward the door, and stopped. “Shit.” At the sound of his voice, Lady walked over from where she had been lying and nudged his hand. He looked at their dog, then the two doors. “Damn, it’s cold in here.”

His skin is fleshy and white like mine
But with spots
His belly drapes over his pants
Suspenders keep them up
He breathes steadily but quick and often
He can get mad
Mom tells stories that make me hate him
So I hate him
Sometimes he doesn’t turn anything but his neck.
His head a rotating platform
Tilted down, eyes focused and sharp
Patriarch surveying his progeny,
Often it’s not a joke, he jabs
at Caryn for gaining weight,
at Kim for not controlling her temper—grown daughters
He has to keep in check.
My mom for the Christmas gift he didn’t like,
the garlic on the bread he claims he’s allergic to
He funnels anger into that look
But I see where it goes

From across the room,
Across the counter of ham, no-garlic pasta, blackberries
Liters of pop
He stands with his half-glass,
Look of disgust writ large across his forehead,
Eyeing my Daddy
for treating Mom the way he does.

But Mom doesn't see
So she goes on hating both of them.



Jessica Pester
{SELF-PORTRAIT}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



Jessica Pester
{UNTITLED}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



Kristine Colosimo
{A PAINTED CHILDHOOD}
NATURAL FLOOD-LIGHT
PHOTOGRAPHY

This photo is an on-location portrait taken with a digital camera and edited on Photoshop CS 3. The painted effect is from a flooding of light into the picture.



Mia Mazer
{VACAS}
{UNTITLED}
{YANA}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY





Eric Hernandez
{SELF-PORTRAIT}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



Caitlin Budzinski
{FAIRY TREE}
{BUILDING A SANDCASTLE}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
EDITED IN IRFAN VIEW,
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY





Down the road from my home, an empty lot provides a lovely setting for a small neighborhood park. Smith Park is a place for passers-by to throw balls for their dogs and watch small children play on the makeshift see-saw. Although it is overlooked much of the year, every mid-May a hidden corner flares with color. From among the brown underbrush, wild poppies grow toward the sun. In the early morning, I venture to sit among the blushing petals, thankful that I am one of the few who knows about this secret of spring. Center Me and Sunpaper are portraits of the joyful flowers that have become my annual friends.

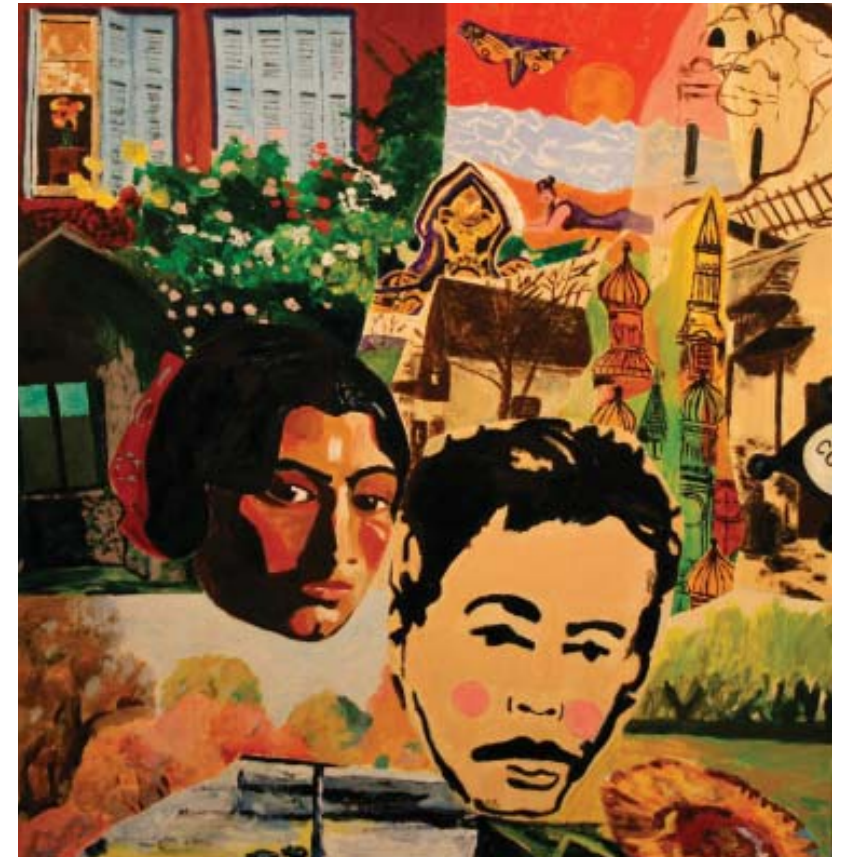


Hannah Hunt Moeller
{CENTER ME}
{SUNPAPER}
DIGITAL
PHOTOGRAPHY



Jacob Lurie
{SNOWBOARDER}
BLACK & WHITE
PHOTOGRAPHY

Situated on the terrain park and
balancing on skis, I managed to
capture the boarder taking flight.



Sara Eidelman
{UNTITLED}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



Amber Ostaszewski
{SELF-PORTRAIT}
ACRYLIC ON
BOARD



Nicole Mancino
{UNTITLED}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



The poetry that my peers chose for the journal reflects what I challenged myself to do this year: everything. I don't like pinning down my style and I love experimenting with form and voice. As for the photography, I tend to do this in bursts and those chosen are from the fall in Ann Arbor. I am very much an amateur, so it was really surprising and wonderful that these were chosen.

Patricia White
{SPLASHY FLASHY}
{BOWLER HAT IN
SHADOW}
DIGITAL
PHOTOGRAPHY





Kristen Bialik
{SEEMINGLY ANCIENT}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Kristen Bialik
{DISOBEDIENCE}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Jackie Kauza
{MOUNTAIN MIRROR}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Trevor Maat
{ELK}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



{FESTIFOOLS}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MYRA KLARMAN



{FESTIFOOLS}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MYRA KLARMAN



{FESTIFOOLS}
DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MYRA KLARMAN



Raquel Sherman
{UNTITLED}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD



Raquel Sherman
{SELF-PORTRAIT}
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS



Miranda Steffler
{SELF-PORTRAIT}
ACRYLIC ON BOARD

Kristen Bialik
{KEY STASHING SECURITY}

I hid the keys to the house in
a fake rock under
a fir tree just
in case someday
I couldn't get in
I taped a spare
car key underneath
the engine beneath
a valve just
in case someday
I got locked out
I made an extra key to
your apartment
in case you asked for
yours back
someday, I
could still reach you
but the key to me,
I locked safely
within the chambers
and the veins
never to come out again
keeping you locked out
so someday,
I would spare you
from getting in.