



Trillium
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Jacob Cline, Student Editor
Heather Coleman, Art Editor

Dr. Jonathan Minton, Faculty Advisor
Dr. Marjorie Stewart, Co-Advisor

Dustin Crutchfield, Designer

Cover Artwork by Cearra Scott



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Trillium
Department of Language and Literature
Glennville State College
200 High Street | Glennville, WV 26351

Trillium@glennville.edu
<http://www.glennville.edu/life/trillium.php>

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POETRY

Return to Expression

ALICIA MATHENY

I have had nothing to speak about.
No need to write my emotions
or my thoughts on paper
or a computer file,

just silence and its golden
quiet, a vault of treasure
I have collected in my
recent days and months.

Now I feel like talking again.

from LETTERS

JONATHAN MINTON

Dear reader, beneath an ancient lake, replicas of Egyptian amulets and little caravel ships roll down their slopes in bubbles of glass and silt. I will tell this story again, but include a sorrowful captain and his mission to save our city. He is blinded by mirrors and stranded at sea, but his weathered skin is a trick of daylight.

Dear reader, do you remember your summer of water and sun? The summer lasted an hour. The rest is the memory of water, and its riddle in a small room. If a billboard for summer homes makes you feel nostalgia for a beloved childhood lake, then the lake is real.

Dear reader, you are never separate from the world. But to experience it without this pain, you would have to enter the scene first as one character, then another, a secret self that exits somewhere else. Like twin children escaping into the loveliest of woods.

Healing On the Way

(A Song)

WAYNE DE ROSSET

In your hour of darkness, traveling at the speed of life
Can't remember how it all went down, searching for a sign
To point the way from nowhere, from shadow into light
Fixing that which is broken, what can't be just leave behind

Refrain:

And there is so much promise in the new morning sun
And the hope as the hours pass, it's going to stay
Till the diamond stars are laid upon a black velvet sky
Coda to sunset's blaze at close of day
But there are so many people who will hurt you
Faithless friends who never mean what they say
Lovers who will lie to you and lie with you through the night
You just have to find your healing on the way

Crossroads of confusion, dark streets you have traveled down
Choices made so many times, many times been burned
So much beauty around you, try nature's lost and found
A gentle spirit, presence there, take peace from what you learn

Refrain

There is joy within the journey, do not try to outrun time
Brave the dark you meet along the road, it will melt into the day
Know that love is not an illusion, though real love may be hard to find
Give as much or more than what you take, have healing on your way

Refrain

Untitled

BRIANNA RATLIFF

I think of how much I wish my fingertips would glean sunlight and rain,
so that plants would grow into my palms.
Their roots in my veins taking hold and preventing this skin from
crumbling when there isn't enough life in my bones.
Flowers die in my presence as though I am a looming drought that they
cannot withstand.
They leap instead into my lover's arms as though her were made of rich
earth and twinkling starlight that could keep them alive throughout
everlasting darkness
I wonder to myself what kind of woman am I that I cannot yield life.
I flight myself into his arms, inhaling germinating seeds and feeling
flowers growing inside of my darkest parts.
Maybe being a woman has less to do with being fertile and more to do
with knowing that only resilience can make its home inside of me.
I am not a place for the weak to make a temporary home.

Cursed Blood

MATTHEW HERRALD

Yeah, I got a temper
It burns like an ember
Sparking from firewood in late December.

My dad calls it the “Herrald Curse”
He tells me of my grandfather, and his sick use of words
Belittle the little ones, curse grandma or worse
Beat her every day til she took off in a hearse

I never met my grandma but I know she was a blessin’
And I barely knew my grandpa, but I still hold a resentment
It must be hard to know you don’t mean a thing to your descendants
I just hope before he croaked, the man asked for repentance.

My father was a much better man, but he wasn’t perfect
Alcohol and pill addiction ran throughout his circuits
The blood in his veins; the same as the blood before his
And in the midst of all his troubles, he lost touch with two kids.

When my father met my mother, it was his best endeavor
She took him in, knew his faults, and knew he could do better
When his ex left with his son, mom helped him forget her
Then surprise; a son; 1994/December

My veins are filled with cursed blood
And I can feel it bubble and boil every time I get worked up.
A brief relief is to lash out at the ones you love
And then the grief consumes you in the face of what you fucked up.

I spent my days building castles, the envy of all the land
Frustration sets in, I kick the foundation to find it’s made of sand.
It all seems worth it in those moments, but man
How the hell do I put it together again?

I need help,

Weary of therapy but I made the jump
But all this dude wants to talk about is Donald Trump
And how anger and frustration is how he runs the nation
Pushing me further into my shell like a crustacean.
He doesn't want to help ME. He wants compensation.
So I left in even more frustration.

This isn't that "road rage" type of anger
This is that "locked in a cage" type of anger
This is that "we are not on the same page" type of anger.
This is that "no love in your old age" kind of anger.

See, I want to be like the Dali Lama
Mixed with a little bit of my momma
And it when it's my turn to travel to Valhalla
I hope the number of people at my funeral needs a comma.

Yeah, I got a temper, but it doesn't dictate my destiny
My legacy won't ever decay, unlike the rest of me.
Yeah, it's always there but I am the hand that feeds.
Starve it out, let it decay, illuminate the best in me.

The Beast (Rise and Fall)

JARED WILSON

Anger, rage, fury and pain,
Course through my tattered soul and veins.
Devouring my body, creating a hole,
That is never to be filled, never to be whole.
I feed off the rage, fury, and fear,
Destroying and suffering the ones I hold dear.

Degraded, hurt, constantly distressed,
Void, abandoned, deprived of pride, and depressed.
A little boy, lacking nothing, seeking possessed, wanting pride,
What was created and remained, was dark and black inside.
What became of the innocent soul given by God from times date?
A creature born from tattered depths clothed in evil hate.

From the father came a son born,
The son had no choice, nor control, yet was scorned.
Love, admiration, pride should fill the elder heart,
Yet, should another be like him, I would die was told in many parts.
What madness drove the father to scold,
To deny his son amongst every fold?

Protection was crucial for survival and redemption,
What would guard the broken boy in trepidation?
A frightened, bullied little boy in denial and pain,
A beast was born, two became one and the same.
From pain and anguish was conceived strength and power,
A force that would make many shiver and cower.

The Beast was fierce, evil, and cunning,
Always pacing, ripping, clawing, and never running,
Any opposition to the once innocent heart,
Was met with destruction, pain, and left in tattered parts.
Wrapping the boy in its dark claws of possession,
The Beast twisted and poisoned him for a succession.

The two lived as one, day by day,
The Beast savoring his captive, molding the clay.
The innocent became the Beast,
Partaking of the prey and devouring the feast.
Until today, when utterly broken,
The innocent realized he was the Beast's token.

Manipulated by rage, forged in anger,
Innocence betrayed not by a total stranger,
Betrayed by one who should love without condition,
The son finally understood true love needs not giving with tradition.
What the innocent sought, the father cannot provide,
While not the father's fault, yet due to a need for pride.

So on this day, I kneel down and pray,
Please Lord, my Heavenly Father, take my anger away,
Give me the strength, allow me not to care,
About things not in my control and lend them to prayer,
Let me be the man I need to be,
Provide your love for all to see.

The Beast no longer needs the cage,
To harness such uncontrollable rage,
You sent him back to the fiery pits of hell,
Freed my soul from the dark claws of his master's bell,
Wrapped in your loving arms of grace,
I now have found pride in seeking your face.

I know I have not been who I was born to be,
I have not been good to you, although you were holding me.
Holding my hand in the midst of the ferocious Beast,
It wasn't my strength that prevented his release,
You were and are the one who gave,
Everything for my soul to save.

In your Son Jesus Christ I pray,
Birth in me a new creature this day.
A fierce warrior for You and Your Son,
To show the world that I am not the one.
I am not the one who used to be,
But are the one you want everyone to see.

Amen

Book of Knowledge

BRADY TRITAPOE

How do I escape the cage that is my mind?

With words on paper I must reply

Knots, locks, chains, and doors

A closed mind I do not endure

Freedom lies wherever it lays

Whether it's on paper or it's in pain

Ignorance of Knowledge.

You think I would have learned in college, about the Ignorance of Knowledge

Someone so low in self-esteem, they don't even know what I mean

Whenever I call them out, they are challenged without a doubt

A dual to the death for homage, to the Ignorance of Knowledge

I will no long take, this ignorance and hate

These lies and pesky squabbles, are the making of those in the bibles

If we were metaphorically speaking, I must be sneaky and deceiving

So let me state this loud and clear, so maybe the world could only hear

Fear is caused by the unknown, embedded in man written in stone

Still to this day we fear the most, to live a life full of no hope

Narrow minds are equaled to close, so self-actualization never arouse

And now I leap from this ledge, and death to the Ignorance of my Knowledge

Late Night Thoughts....

Restless, tired, sleepy

Late night feeling creepy

As my thoughts try to eat-me

Same thoughts keep repeating

Blankness now receding

Restless, tired, sleepy

The Path of My Mind.

Trapped in thoughts cycling in refrain

I fear I may be going insane

Gluttony for pain is ecstasy for my brain

I fear I may be going insane

Repeating, circling down the drain

I fear I may be going insane

I try to derail, get of this train

I fear I may be going insane

Once more time I'll stand in the rain

Because I feel I've gone insane
My Picture.
If a picture's worth a thousand words
I wonder where I'd draw the sword
To stick stencils straight with pencil
I try to write words suspenseful
Ink on paper like ink on skin
One is published, the others a sin
Both illustrate art metaphorical and literal
And both widen my peripheral
Art speaks in more ways than one
Visually, lyrically, musically, are some
Good stuff should make you introspect
That's why art deserves your respect
It took me twenty years to find
What's been searching in my mind
The real truth of mankind
A history we left behind
Look at the art and perfect lines
Symmetry is beauty as old as time
Also a construct of mans design
Fantasy is fiction and reality is perception
My Religion

I am not a religious man, but I am a spiritual man
I do not despise religion, but everyone has their opinion
I can't see a future for people, as long as there's stipples
I do not believe in genocide, no matter where you side
I do believe in faith, but not to a higher power
I have faith in myself, but also for everyone else
I can see a future for people, as balance brings back evil
I have faith for both, mankind and their hope

Aliens
Why do we refuse to see
What lays in-front of me
When all the facts seem
Written plain and clean
All around the world
Flying disks are whirled
Through space and time like worms
Yet no one says a word
While we wonder weary in fear

Where what we want in here
With Big Brother trying to hear
Words we weight start to wear
The whole world stood and watched
In different places they walked
Aliens on stone they washed
Now all their history was wasted
I Walk the Line
Inside my mind many memories remind
How hard heavy thoughts are left behind
When wondering wishes were thought kind
Terrible thoughts trick me and promises bind
The line I walk in my mind
Leaves me hopeless, sometime blind
But when I search I sometimes find
Words escaping while thoughts rewind
Gears loosen lubed lost but still they grind
My strong snake skin steel seems still as rind

I Am

HANNAH SECKMAN

I am
 salt
Lot's wife looking back
burnt
 tongues
layers of hair
 enough to
hang
 myself
with
a purple bruise
 shaped like a star
on my left
 hip
the silent tick
of my grandmother's
 broken watch
ten funerals
crushed flowers
smothered beneath
 soil
water sliding
 down
walls
 warm
and weeping

Stop Making Sense

MATTHEW THIELE

*Burned all my notebooks. What good are notebooks?
They won't help me survive.
My chest is aching, burns like a furnace.
The burning keeps me alive.*

Stop talking. Don't move.
Just sit, consume, and be consumed
While the house burns down.
I forgot to mention that the house is burning down.

Okay, move. You need to move to do your work,
You need to do your work to make your money,
You need to make money to consume and be consumed.
Don't think of consumption
As an emptying out,
A gutting by fire,
But as fulfillment, satiety.
Alight with an eternal blaze
Like the God the Sun prays to.

Eat a chocolate freezer treat.
What a luxury.
You feel naughty: spent but full.
How decadent. How rich. What a thrill.
As your house burns down,
Chuck in the wrapper and the stick.
Try to save your clothes.
The clothes make the man.
Try to save your money.
Try to save your family.
Don't make a sound
While the house is burning down.
Calmly feed your debts and regrets, one by one,
Into the conflagration.

I'll tell you later.
Don't enrich yourself through work.
Enrich somebody else who smiles,
makes a sound, possesses, does not work.
Enrich your soul with food you buy.
Growing food is cheating
unless you plan to sell it.
Who has time to grow their own food
While the house is burning down?

Consequences

LOGAN SAHO

When all the trees have been removed from this Earth
When all the streams have been polluted or sucked dry
When all game has been depleted, and eaten
Humans will find that they cannot eat money

One Day

MEGAN STOFFEL

I remember everything,
from day one.
Your smile as bright as the sun.
Your eyes,
calm as the sea.
Always watching over me.
Your heart,
big and full of love.
Cherishing all those,
near and dear.
No need to worry,
no need to fear.
It's time to rest,
and spread your wings.
Please don't worry over me.
I miss you and love you,
forever so.
One day too,
I will come home.
Together again we shall be,
underneath the weeping willow tree.

The Monsters Inside of Us

KERRI SWIGER

We all carry monsters inside of us
We all have to fight them at least once in our life
But the monsters in us differ from person to person
Some monsters are bigger and some monsters are stronger
And with these monsters live angels and fairies
They are what gives us hope and courage to go on no matter how strong the
monsters become
But then there are times when the fairies can't beat them and the monsters win
When the monster's growls and claws are too sharp to handle any longer
And we let them crawl out into this world through our veins, our minds, and
even through our lips
Sometimes they make us do and think things that ourselves would never
They whisper lies and hate into our ears and hearts and makes us believe
things our souls knows are lies
And with those lies comes feelings that are too strong to bare or no feelings at
all
And they know that
That is when we are at our weakest
When we're alone and feel that nothing will lift us out of this pit of despair
That is when they whisper the final lie into our hearts
That is when they tell us that it is the only way to win the battle and end this war
They say it will take all the pain, sorrow, and all the loneliness from our world
So we do what they say and we believe that lie
Because we think that it is true and we think it is the only way to be free
So we prepare our mind, but we can never truly prepare our souls for the lie
And we never truly know what happens after the lie is complete
And we have done what we thought we must
And after that lie is done and we finally silence the monsters
And the fairies stop flying
All the remains is the shattered wings of the fairies that once were.

This Love is Alive

JOHNNY O'HARA

This love is alive
It brings tears to my eyes
This love is alive.

This love is alive
Whenever we compromise
This love is alive.

This love is alive
It surrounds on all sides
This love is alive.

My Mistress

PAUL TREADWAY

Here I go again to suffer for you
At this time my life had just begun
There's no need for me to cry too
It is time for me to pick up my gun
Time to sever the hand that is trying to kill me
If I die I won't be the only son
What does it take for you to finally see
I am not ok, not so perfect anymore
Time for me to pay respects on a broken knee
When the trigger starts I know what is in store
I am no longer the governments whore
I can't believe that you are no longer with me
That you are cold in the ground never to be free
Why did I have to be close to you
Why couldn't I just not make any friends
That way I wouldn't have to suffer in the end
There is no need to be selfish
No need to hate my eternally tormented brain
I guess it is nobody's business
If I stay here there is nothing more to gain
Time to pack my bags and go back
To this mistress I call Iraq

Patriotism

JUSTIN RAINES

White house picket fence
shining car in the drive.
Bright image the American Dream
Reachable to anyone alive.

Clean sweat white brow
Hard work paves the way.
Rewards sky-high to those
busting it for that pay.

Leaking roof, overdue rent
passed to uncalloused hands.
Tired body slumped in the pew
praying for misery's end.

Rustling stacks of fat fat cash
climbing up to towers high.
Filling the vaults of bankers
drowning the working sigh.

The Day in the Life of a College Student

KITRIC MOORE

Deep, rhythmic breaths
Warm, comforting skin
The face that I love dearly
A tender kiss is how he awakens.

Soft padding across my body
A gentle meow, now two
Our two fur babies nuzzle between us
One kiss to their velvet noses.

The deep sigh of realization
As reality hits again
Pulling myself from bed
To get ready for the rollercoaster that is life.

I make my way through the day
Going from class to class
Waiting for the moment to be home again
Back with my cats

The bright screen floods the room
As I am concentrating my task
Of flipping the knife to get more points
One more flip before I settle into bed.

7 Lives of a House Cat

CARISSA WOOD

Eyes of emerald
Ancient secrets held within
Revealed to no one

Padded paws of grace
Soft and silent to all ears
Envy of dancers

Pink and velvet snoot
Olfactory of hunters
Ready for booping

Elegant whiskers
Wispy snout side extensions
Life kept in balance

Smooth fur- grey and white
Softly beneath my fingers
My hand glides over

Warm purrs touch the heart
Overfilling it with love
Creation of joy

Slender tail curls 'round
Encircling ageless being
Through both life and death

Earth's Pure Power

HANNAH CURFMAN

Born before the written word, in the times of light and plenty
I was found in everything, from smallest insect, to largest ocean
I Mothered your Gods and gave birth to the celebrations you follow
I was here first, and with me all life has flourished in peace

My children danced naked beneath my full Moon's glow
At One with Fire, Water, Earth, and Sky, I am never shy
I gave power to each flower, each stone, each beating heart
Death, how he lingers closer, is halted by my herbs of healing

But You strayed from the pure and light that is I, to a God borne from me
You cowered behind this God, taking life of all who denied Him, in His name
Fear ran like blood through your hearts, as you cursed my name and mine
A book given more meaning than the lives you've destroyed for Him

Abandoned by my children, I continued to love and guide those who stayed
Held fast to my bosom, I've fed them my strength with every heartbeat
I was forced to watch as you had them burned, drowned, tortured, and broke
Their lives as stepping stones for your power, their only crime, loving my Earth

And though I am the solid green Earth beneath your feet
And the crisp clean Air in which you breathe
Still you deny me in my own power, for still here I be
As I will it, so Mote it be

Empty Chairs

JAYLIN JOHNSON

The chair sits there empty,

abandoned, lonely, dark, desolate, and cold.

There is no one remaining to fill the vacancy.

Its seat is eternally bare.

The teacher rattles on.

How could he ever be so bold?

It's like he hasn't even noticed!

He doesn't even care.

The students watch the board,

stealing sly glances when they can.

They don't talk about the free seat,

but it hangs in the air.

At last the name is said.

They have lifted the ban.

Their tears begin flowing

as they stare

at the empty chair.

Graffiti on the Poet Lauriat's Grave

WILLIAM T. K. HARPER

Twilight and evening confess,
And after that the spark!
And after that there be no sadness,
When I debark;

For tho' to tho' from out our born of place and Space
The flood may bear me far to far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have barred the cross to cross.

Sunset and Evening Star™,
And one clear call for alcohol!
May there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out,

But such a ride as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and for dome,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Mama Always Said

KRISTEN MURPHY

“Keep your friends close but your enemies closer,”

That’s what mom always said and it’s going to stay in the back of your head.

“Don’t date that boy, he’s nothing but trouble and only wants one thing.”

Don’t brush that off, you’re eighteen and he’s twenty-two.

“What do you expect?”

You’re going to strive to make your parents happy,

especially mom because like she always says,

“Mama knows best.”

“Don’t wish youth away, you’re going to miss every bit of it looking back,”

Looking back, reflecting on this letter to you, all I can say is she knew best.

You’ll think college is going to be the best years of your life but Kristen, you’re going to fall.

“That boy on the football team is no good for you Kristen”

Rumors will fly, and you’ll be dubbed ‘Short Murphy Girl’

But don’t think about taking those pills, don’t think about taking your own life

Think of the mother that you’ll be leaving behind.

“Remember who you are, what you stand for, and don’t let others opinion play any role in making yourself happy.”

Mama is wise, and she will help you in every aspect of your life.

Flesh of Ash
(After Psychology 310)
TEDDY RICHARDSON

Eyes open to a technicolor landscape,
Excitement and entertainment all present,
Heart beating with hummingbird speeds,
Time is but an anchor holding the world,
 There will be no work, no school,
 Nothing but the fun than runs fairy deep,
 On the outer ridges of the skin,
 Stamina that lasts for the ages, here and there,
 Tasting the flavors that have been ignored,
 The sun has come and gone, and rising again,
 Beauty and lavish enjoyment, a swirl of radial sounds,

Tick,

The seems to be an issue, the lights aren't as bright,

 Tock,

The laughter, infectious no more, a pallor on the fun,

Tick,

Tears fall over the cheeks, smiles fade, the sound slows,

 Tock,

Better rest, the bed, the darkness, a retreat from the world,

 Away from all of the colors, sounds, sleep, sleep for days,

 There isn't a reason to get out of the bed,

 There isn't a person who wants to see, the issue,

 The pain inside burns like molten glass,

 Slipping through synapse, after synapse.

Fussell Said;

RANDY STIERS

Rhythm must have meaning,
Ezra Pound insisted in 1951.

And he was rigid?

The empirical study of poetry
will convolute us

Meter is a prime physical and peak emotional palpable constituent of poetic
meaning.

The great Monty Pythons of perceived
pleasing english poetry

“Parade Lost”

“The Rapacious of Locke”

“Song of Innkeepers and Expenses”

“The Rim of the Ancient Marinade”

“Mauledberyl”

“The Wassup Land”

have constricted moments of metrical discovery.
they all reveal an excitement
with meaning almost as meaningful as the fundamental meaning of meaning.

RICHWOOD

CAROLINE PERKINS

Main Street, Main artery of my youth,
Buildings, decay

Damp dark,

Giant Tombstones of a culture slipping into history.

Cracks irreparable by mortar

Rather solidified still.

The smell of ancient pulp lingers,

Thick and rich as wood laid down a century ago.

Echo of the mill whistle moves the town into tomorrow

For now.

“That Day”

SAM EDSALL

They walked through the woods
Young and in love
Only having met that day
That day
That beautiful day
They knew each other well
Eternity in moments
But only on that day
That day
That beautiful day
Hand in hand they still are
Near or far, they remain
Contently locked inside that day
That day
That beautiful day
Till the last breaths
Of their long and hard lives
They remembered that day
That day
That beautiful day



PROSE

The Fall of McBride

TEDDY RICHARDSON

“I killed three of the demons” Eric said, his voice deep and commanding, “I want my compensation!”

“Sir, you will be compensated, first we need you to be calm,” The servant in the white tunic said.

“Calm? I will be calm, once I am paid!” Eric’s shoulder length hair framed his face and danced around casting sharp shadows as he paced the small room that the King had provided him. The walls white that matched the tunics of the servants and guards, was almost maddening.

“We just want you to eat, and relax, sit back and get some rest,” the servant said.

“Will I see the King today?” Eric asked, sitting on the edge of the regal bed.

The man in the white tunic opened the door and another servant dressed in a similar fashion brought in a silver tray with the richest of foods, “We ask that you eat all you can, and rest.”

Eric, eyed the food and thought, it had been some time since he had eaten, “Very well, I shall partake of your supper. Will I see the King next sunrise?”

The servants exchanged a glance and the first spoke again, “Yes.”

Nodding in satisfaction Eric took the tray and sat it on the bed with him and he removed the silver cover over the main dish, a large roasted bird. His mouth watering, he looked to the two servants and said, “Be gone, I am in need of no further service.”

After the servants had left him, and the meal had fattened him, Eric lay back and looked out the tiny window at the cloudy sky darkening with the dusk. His wife and child back in the mainland would be so proud to know how he had fought with honor and at the hefty sack of gold the King was sure to give him. He had done his hunting in the name of the King and risked his very soul for the country. As he drifted off to sleep he could still hear the hideous screams that the demons had made as his blade pierced their black hearts.

Morning brought with it the sounds of the castle coming to life. People shouting and bustling down the long cold corridors. Eric rose and washed himself in his small basin, he straightened his tunic and prepared to meet with the king. The first round of servants came beckoning and he declined breakfast, only hungry for the gold that was rightfully his and his audience with the King. Two of the Kings guard appeared, they led him down the long corridors, and then passed the dungeon, where in small cells the criminals screamed and hurled incoherent verbal barrages at the servants.

Coming to the head of the main corridor, in the heart of the castle, was the two large doors that lead to the Kings chamber. The servants opened the doors and Erik walked in head held high. The King was seated behind a large oak desk, in a high back leather chair. He had gray hair crowning his bald top, and magnificent white tunic, as were the colors of his Kingdom. To the right of the desk sat another portly servant, watching with pale blue eyes. The room was large made larger by the tall ceiling and long windows with stained glass depictions of saints.

Eric stood between two large oak chairs in front of the desk and waited till he heard the doors close behind him, he knelt to show respect and the King spoke first, "Please Eric, that isn't necessary." His voice held a tone like that of a wise grandfather.

Eric stood. "My liege, I have waited impatiently for our meeting. I must thank you for your hospitality, but my family is waiting, I must be on my way soon." He hoped he didn't come across to insolent.

"Please sit Eric." The King said directing him with a wave of his hand.

Eric sat in the right-hand chair, "Lord please forgive me, I am not accustomed to so many servants and the richness of the food has been hard for my poor palate."

Pulling a scroll closer to read it, the King said, "You killed three?"

Eric nodded, trying to not show too much pride on his face.

"Tell me about them." The King said.

"They were demons. Hell's soldiers. There is nothing much to tell, I have killed them and sent them back to hell in your name sir." Eric was growing uneasy, he had trouble swallowing.

The King nodded and made a note with the small quill. "Erick, I would like to hear how you killed the first one. In detail please."

Eric was feeling nervous, as if this was a trap. "I found the first demon, a succubus in a small hamlet east of here. I trailed her to a tavern where she was luring men to a small hut and then stealing their souls." Eric stopped and dried his hands on his knees. He was having difficulty swallowing and sweat was beading up on his upper lip. "May I have a drink, my Lord?"

The King waved his hand and the portly servant brought a glass of water and produced a syringe. "This will help you to relax, and clear your mind." The King's soft old voice coxed.

Eric glanced at the King and back at the silver syringe. He nodded and accepted the needle in the shoulder and drank the cool water, "Thank you sir. I followed her for three nights. As she brought men back to her hut, I watched through a window, she used Lust on them, and was taking their souls without their knowledge. The third night once she was alone, I slipped into her hut and ran my blade through her black heart. Her scream still haunts me at night."

"So, it was not a quick death?" The king asked.

"It was as quick as it could be, these demons are not like us mortals. I plunged my blade into the thing's chest several times to try to stop the screaming." Erick was no longer nervous but he felt sleepy and off.

"How did you feel stabbing so many times?" The King asked.

"Just that I wanted the screaming to stop, I knew I had to bring death or I would surely be killed myself." Eric said, the screaming continued to sound in the back of his mind.

"Please continue." The King probed.

"After the screaming stopped, I cut off her head and took it deep into the woods and buried it under a maple tree." Eric said, his eyes roaming from the books on shelves lining the walls to the stained-glass Saints.

"Why did you burry the head in the woods?" The King asked.

"Demons can come back, unless you separate their heads from their bodies, and so that is what I did." Erick said, he was feeling out of place. Things didn't look the same to him, his thoughts were not as clear as they had been.

“Was the other two the same as the first?” The King asked.

“No. I got better at stopping the screaming, ending it quicker.” Erick shook his head, he should have eaten, his stomach was upset.

“What work did you do before you became a *demon hunter*?” The king asked, putting a strange infliction on demon and hunter.

“I was...I was... I was a Professor.” Eric was trying to sort things out in his head.

“A professor of what?” The King asked.

“Of religion.” Eric answered as if he was hearing it for the first time.

“Where?” the King asked.

“A University.” Eric was having more trouble remembering the kingdom and the layout of the different hamlets. Visions of a blond-haired child and a woman with green eyes flashed in his mind.

“Eric, you have been here at Saint Martins for three weeks. We have tried letting you adjust, however you have not been responding. That is why today we are trying the medical treatment. Can you remember your wife and son? The lady at the bar?” The man behind the desk asked.

Tears running down his face, “I remember.” He said in a weak voice.

“You killed them.” The man said.

“The demons, yes...” Eric said.

“No. Your wife was having an affair. You Killed her lover, then went home and killed your wife and son.”

“I...I...” Eric was sobbing now and not able to hold himself up. Two orderlies appeared and helped him to stand. Desperation wafting off of Eric in shivers.

The orderlies mostly dragged Erick back to his white room and on his bed in the leather restraints. Images of blood and his sons face froze in Eric’s mind. Unstoppable tears ran down his cheeks, and an overwhelming pain coursed through his soul, “The demons... they got me.” He said to himself as the door to his room closed, and locked, the sound echoing through the delusions.

Untitled

LOGAN SAHO

So what is this world then when you are plagued by the demons of our past and by the deepest creatures that crawl from the back of our mind that we call doubt, pain, and question. Why, why must one be in the way that they are, but one then would wonder why must you allow your mind to wander, for you, you are happy, and indeed we may be happy in our set path. But that one questions that wanes on and on in the night as we lay awake to stay away from the demons chase through that black portal we humans call the nightmares. Or for that may be their world and we are to be their prey to a hunter and we the hunted. Then so we lay awake into that night to escape their wrath yet we succumb to your own mind which is worse than those demons of our own mind, for then past the stroke of twelve our minds become its own worst devil. For the words and doubts wain on an on. But then again the lover that lay next to you is that one that you cling to for the hope and the dreams that you see ahead to block out the darkness of the evil parts of one's mind. Then your love will cling unto you and the kiss will come from a sleeping mind, but yet you your mind is still plagued by the voices of your mind. They speak of the past, for the way they treated you, to the questions of our own futures. Then to the questions of what could have been, then to those of evil that caused ruin in your life. But not to them do you think for you shudder in pain and disgust. Then your thoughts pass to the other humans as to which you have found anew or one could say new friends, then the complexity of what is has become more than what you can bear. As you rise to your feet leave the room a slight question comes from the breath of your lover and in turn you say you will return, but you don't for a while. You find yourself in your den fighting, wrestling, and bleeding with your demons that keep you awake in the long night. You stare awake within the den and see the shadows move and taunt you for your sins and they laugh they laugh and laugh, as you collapse to the floor in pain of what was is and will never be. Pain is the only thing that remains, the only emotions the demons do not rip from your being. Your existence in those waning hours of the morning is nothing but the pain, agony, and defeat. You lay upon your den floor in a pool of tears and vomit. You have lost everything except for the being waiting for you in your bedroom. Soon then you rise and clean that mess that the demons left for you. You then walk to your love with nothing but a shell of pain. As you slide in next to the one your love the heat of love flows over you as their arm grasps you close and they whisper I'm here for you. And then you remember the one thing that the demons cannot take from you is the love

that your lover gives you. The one thing they cannot rip, steal or destroy is the love from the one person that has completed you. That one person that is your platform when you need one, the person that weeps for you when you have left for that den when they hear your screams and wailing of pain from the other room. When they pray to whatever being that will listen to save you from yourself. That one person that is there, the one that will keep you sane, the one that will stand if you need someone to stand for you. The one that will help if only you would ask for it. Yet as any real person they will still keep helping you even if you don't realize that you are being helped. And yes that is the power of love. To melt away the voices of the demons to love and hold you when you are a void and stripped of all from those demons. They are there to pick up the pieces that have scattered those dark long nights. They will fill your void with themselves and then your will be whole only knowing that one those night when they crawl to the den and they are plagued by their demons you will do the same you will love and care for them more than even they could. You have then found the one that you will spend your eternity with and not with the demons that have plagued you.

Prayer Weeds

SKYLAR FULTON

The prayer weeds. That is what she was after. She bolted through the glass doors of the massive, three story prison-like school building, sprinting straight for the only field around. Warm tears stung her face as she rounded the fence. *Thump-Thump. Thump-Thump.* Her heart pounded loud enough to be heard back home. Not back to the stuffy concrete apartment her parents moved her to just around block. No, not there. Home was in West Virginia.

This city was not home. She could not fathom why anybody would want to live in a place where there were hardly any patches of grass. Pavement was not as joyous to walk on as grass. As she leaped over the last bit of pavement, she flung her flip flops off and continued to race towards the field. The grass was cool against her bare feet, and her heart rejoiced! She could feel the familiar freedom flow through her whole body.

From the time she was knee high to a grasshopper, she would walk through the fields with her Grandmother. Using her free hand, she would brush the tall weeds, grass, and flowers. Grandmother would find a sturdy log or rock to rest while the girl skipped and twirled. She could dance like the weeds as they moved with the wind. Sometimes, Grandmother would bring her paints to capture the majestic scene.

As she drew closer to the field, she began to feel closer to West Virginia. Visions of her life in West Virginia flashed through her mind. She saw the one-room church back in the holler by the river. She smelled the pepperoni rolls from the local baker and imagined the taste of a cool lemon Zul's melting in her mouth. Most of all, she saw Grandmother painting a prayer weed. Grandmother understood her love for nature and the prayer weeds.

The city folk in her school did not understand her. She had no common ground with them. For entertainment, her peers played video games and stayed indoors. The girl, on the other hand, dreamed of being outdoors with nature. She longed to chase fireflies, catch crawdads, roast s'mores over a bonfire near the edge of the woods, feed the neighbor's horses sugar cubes, and fall asleep to the sound of crickets and a whip-poor-will. How people slept in the city with sirens blaring every five minutes puzzled her.

She would not dare tell the other students her desires or confusion. When she speaks of West Virginia, her peers mock her not only for her culture but her dialect.

“Pepperoni Rolls and Zul’s!” a boy with brown, spiked hair once responded to her. “You’re just making up stories to fit in. Stop making up fake food! And by the way, if you say ‘ya’ll’ one more time, I’ll tell our English teacher, Mrs. Mercer”.

As she reached the field, her mood quickly shifted to panic. There was not a single prayer weed to be found. After searching frantically, she collapsed onto the ground in despair. She curled up into a ball and heaved crocodile tears for what seemed like years. Eventually, she was too exhausted to cry any longer. As she rolled over, a round, fluffy object caught her eye. A prayer weed! Now her faith in returning to the Mountain State had been restored.

West Virginia was where Grandmother taught her about the prayer weeds. The city folk call them dandelions or wishing weeds. But Grandmother always said, “Ya’ll, there ain’t no such thang as a blind wish...only faithful prayers”. She needed Grandmother. She needed West Virginia.

Yes. West Virginia was home. She closed her eyes and prayed to God, “Heavenly Father, please take me back to West Virginia where the land is wild and wonderful. When I open my eyes, please let me be starting back into Grandmother’s gentle laughing eyes”.

With one more deep breath and a heart full of hope, she blew the prayer weed and the prayer seeds ascended towards heaven. Too frightened to open her eyes just yet, she sung the soothing lyrics of “Country Roads” silently in her mind. Then, she willed herself to open her eyes on the count of three. One. Two. Three.

Hot Dogs Grow On Trees

A Pap-Paw Story

DAVID MOSS

I have for some time wanted to put on paper what I call, "Pap-Paw stories." The one I am going to tell is one of my very favorite from many little pranks and stories involving my grandsons. Hopefully I will have a story involving my only granddaughter who has competition from my 6 grandsons.

My story begins with our family having hot dogs for lunch. While L & L initials for the grandsons were visiting for the day. All my grandkids love hot dogs. My conversation with the younger L came about by me telling him that hot dogs grow on trees. He was around 3 years old but he really didn't believe me. He said, "Pap-Paw hot dogs don't grow on trees." At this time a plan was forming in my mind how I could prove to a 3 year old how it is possible for hot dogs to grow on trees.

To prove to him I was correct I had him go outside with me to the garden, seeing is believing. First we went to the bean poles which had dried vines and several dried green beans. The poles were set in sets of four like a tepee shape and then tied with strings to hold them together. If you use your imagination they might pass as a tree. I was hoping I could fool him on that part of the plan. Next I pulled some dried beans from the vines. L was not convinced that they were hot dogs. "Pap-Paw," said L, "these don't look like hot dogs." I had brought a metal pan to pick hot dogs in. I picked a large handful of dried beans to take to the house. I told him that I had to put water on them so they would fill out and be regular hot dogs when they swelled up.

We left the garden and returned to the house where I distracted my grandson. Having done a good job of distraction I quickly replaced the dried beans with left over hot dogs from lunch. I poured water over the real hot dogs and putting them on the stove to cook I removed them off the stove letting grandson L see that hot dogs really do grow on trees. I had made a believer out of him.

Thinking of this story always puts a smile on my face. If anyone likes my Pap Paw stories let me know and I will continue to write from my recollections of pranks and stories involving my grandsons. Just glad to be a Pap-Paw.

Of Teeth

HANNAH SECKMAN

I died last night in a dream.

...

It's nothing more than a shadow, a shallow heartbeat stuck to my ribcage, throbbing behind my own. My pulse burns red, heat on my skin like a fever, and my eyes reflect the sickness building there, never stopping to rest on any certain object but constantly shifting.

Still, my eyes are too slow to catch it. It remains a step ahead of me, just beyond my line of sight but always there, nonetheless. Just watching.

Under the bright lights of the convenient store, I can feel it. A quick inhale, a footstep that follows alongside my own, but nothing shows. I circle around again, walk down every aisle, look over my shoulder every fifth step, and when I'm sure that it's only the clerk with a bored expression on her face and myself in the store, I see it.

Just a blur of hastily painted neon colors and a flash of gold-rimmed eyes. For a moment, the second heartbeat that does not belong to me beats louder than the oldest drum, charging upwards to get lodged in my throat, swelling so that when I try to swallow I can't, and when I blink to clear my watering eyes, it's gone.

The coke I had in my hand is shoved back onto the shelf, the \$1.50 safe in my back pocket.

In the car, my hands dig into the steering wheel, eyes peeled back to try and see beyond where the headlights meet the pavement, because that's where it lives- just beyond the light. Rain falls gracefully from the sky and lands like pearly stars on my windshield, dotting orbs that seem to contain the entire Milky Way. It's calming, and I force myself to breathe, to physically feel my lungs contract and expand.

It's calming until I see the raindrops like pearly stars forming my name on the windshield. My mouth instantly goes dry and opens to form an o, but the

scream that intended to climb out my throat gets stuck in the middle. I slam on the brakes so hard that my head jerks back into seat, eyes forced tightly closed as the car skids to a stop in the middle of a lonely stretch of road.

When the inky blackness bleeds away from my eyes as I open them, the raindrops that spelled my name are gone. In fact, the windshield is dry. I hold my head in my hands and force myself to breathe again, sharp breaths that exit as a wheeze. My hands are gripping my hair, on the verge of ripping every strand out one by one until I can't feel anything anymore.

A soft chuckle comes from the back seat. "So messy when you're afraid." The voice that sounds like a penny scraping down a railroad track chuckles again.

The second heartbeat that does not belong to me goes silent. That's because it's in the back seat now. Every muscle in my body tightens, like a cord drawn back, inches from snapping off completely. I turn my head slowly, mechanically, as if I don't know the thing with teeth that lurks in my room at night isn't in the backseat behind me.

When I turn around, gold-rimmed eyes meet mine, and I feel an invisible hand squeeze around my neck, choking off the scream that once again tries to rise from my throat. It has a face, I think. It's not supposed to have a face. Neon colors outline every wrinkle, every crack that appears on its skin, now flaking and smeared along the edges. The thing's mouth is split up the left side of its face, skin bleeding in blotches of red, blood tinting the rows and rows of wet teeth red. I can see pink muscle move where its jawbone has been ripped back and forced upward; it twitches, and a tongue slithers out to run along the edge of the sharpened teeth.

I can hear the second heartbeat in the heavy silence of the car, coming now from the thing with a mutilated face, beating wildly until it turns into a hum, and it opens its shredded mouth even wider, tearing the skin open past the temple. Small tendons break loose and hang limply like wet strings of red ribbon, and I force the vomit that threatens to move past my throat back into my stomach, even if it leaves an acid taste on my tongue.

The thing with half a face leans forward, and my nose is flooded with the overwhelming metallic smell of blood. I jerk back, hand fumbling behind me blindly to try and reach the door handle, but the thing's claw-like hands, fingers stretched long and bent in awkward angles like they'd been broken every morning and taped back together every night, snatch a hold of my jacket, dragging me back toward it.

This time, the scream that's been burying itself in my throat tears free, shrill and deafening in my own ears. It pays no mind, and the top of its mouth by its temple twitches like it's smiling, teeth glistening with spit and blood. This is the part where you wake up, my mind screams. Just wake up!

Except I don't.
I never do.

...

I died last night in a dream. I dreamt of teeth, of death, of a thing without a face. This isn't a dream this time, though. A thing with half a face, full of teeth, swallows me whole.

There is no comfort in the blackness.

Lost Beach

BEREK CLAY

On a beautiful beach on a small island in the North Pacific, a man walks along the wet sand to keep his feet cool after a long morning of checking fishing lines and crab traps. He heads towards home with barely enough food to feed his female companion and their children, so he would probably go hungry tonight unless she had found enough ripe tubers today. Hopefully his oldest child had been able to climb the trees to get some fruit to eat and juice.

Meanwhile, a woman walks out from the small forest with a baby cradled in a sling over one shoulder and a bag of tubers over the other. She hopes that her male companion caught enough to the family. The middle child couldn't find any berries on the bushes today. The oldest barely got enough fruit to make the water palatable.

As night falls, everyone eats a meager meal of fish and tubers with stale water from the spring, each grateful for the meal. The woman is grateful to have enough to eat to be able to suckle her baby, the rest just glad to not to have rumbling stomachs.

While everyone sleeps the man looks off the horizon wondering if he will ever see another ship or plane come close enough to signal for rescue or will he live out his days humbly here on this island. Does he really care anymore he now has the family he always wanted and here on the island he is the richest man he could ever be, would he signal a ship if it ever did show up, would she signal a ship if she saw one this woman who had a totally different life before they met on the boat that got them stranded here and so many others lost at sea, would people look for just two missing passengers, how long has it been since then, would the flares still work. That's enough for now time to sleep, more things to do tomorrow.

Black Magic 8-Ball

SAM EDSALL

Curiosity had gotten the better of him, as it always did. Irwin was at the top of his class, a real jack of all trades. This was remarkable for his age. But that didn't keep him from being pestered by bullies or rejected by his dream girl. He was fourteen and in the eighth grade. The last year of middle school... He couldn't imagine what lie ahead. Most of what he did was study, day and night. A real workaholic for his age, he also mowed three of his neighbors' lawns in the springs and summers and shoveled their driveways in the wintertime. One day after shoveling the third neighbor's driveway, he decided to do some exploring on his own.

He went to the attic. He hadn't been there yet, not since his family had moved in, which was when he was only three years old. Something was up there, he felt. Something needed discovered. It was almost as if it had a life of its own. So he went on up there, curious as he was. Dust caked the floor. Cobwebs hung from the ceiling and looked like ghosts, the sort you would see on television or in films. This didn't scare Irwin. Nothing really scared him at all. In fact nothing would scare him until...

He discovered it. It was sitting in a corner. A round, black object looking as though it had been there for quite some time. No boxes were near it, which made Irwin suggest that his parents didn't see it when moving in. Or had they? Regardless, they wouldn't care. Irwin picked it up and held his flashlight to it. The blue triangular answer sign read "YES".

"Hmm... This must still work. Do you still work?"

Irwin shook it. The answer was "DEFINITELY".

Irwin, excited to have found this new toy, asked it a few more questions. All three of them were silly ordinary questions.

"Will Jenny ask me out on a date?"

"YES"

Irwin didn't believe it, thinking that it was just another kid's toy. Nevertheless, he

brought it down from the attic with him. By now his father was home from work. His stepmother would be roughly twenty minutes later. Irwin had their timings engraved in his head damn near precisely. He wondered why they didn't. He never really thought of that anyway.

"Son, what were you doing in the attic?"

"Just looking around, Dad. How was work?"

"What's that you got there? Work was fine, by the way."

"A magic eight ball."

"Oh I had one of those when I was a kid. The damn thing never worked, though. But then again... Sometimes it did, now that I think of it. But those times were very few and far in between. Did you finish your homework?"

"Yes, Dad. As a matter of fact it is on the kitchen table waiting for your inspection."

"Ah there's none needed today, my boy. I think I trust you by now. Any bullies take your money today?"

"No. I avoided them like the plague. I think I am getting better at that."

"Alright. Well that's good. I'm going to watch TV and wait for Cherie to get home."

Irwin paused. He hated Cherie with a fiery red-hot passion. Not even two months after his parents had divorced, his father married Cherie. Cherie. He hated that name.

"Okay, Dad."

Cherie came home ten minutes later. She was somewhat early this time.

"Irwin. Lemme see your homework."

"Cherie it's alright, he--"

"Let me see it!"

Irwin handed her his homework.

“What’s this? A ‘B’ on your geometry test? You’re grounded.”

“Cherie I don’t think that’s--”

“HE’S GROUNDED!”

“That wasn’t even part of my homework!”

“GROUNDED! Go to your room!”

Irwin went to his room, hating the world, especially Cherie. He wanted her dead. He wished she had never been born. He took the magic eight ball, shook it, and asked it if Cherie existed. The answer was “NO”.

“Irwin! Dinner’s ready!”

Surprisingly it was his father saying that. Usually Cherie notified him of whenever dinner was ready. Odd?

“Coming, Dad.”

Irwin got up from his bed and walked from his bedroom into the kitchen down the hall.

“Now son I have a date tonight, so I want you to hold down the fort until I get back.”

A date? This was weird. Where was Cherie? Surely that magic eight ball didn’t work. Something was not right at all.

“Uh... Okay. I guess I’ll just watch TV or read until you get back...”

“At-a-boy.”

His dad slapped him on the back as he said it.

Irwin could not believe it. He had made his stepmother disappear. His dad was going on a date! He never said with whom, but that didn’t matter. What mattered was that the damn thing worked. He wondered if it would work with the previous question he asked it. The telephone rang. He answered it.

“Hello?”

“Is Irwin there?” a young female voice asked.

“This is him.”

“Oh, good. It’s me, Jenny. I was calling to uh...”

Her friends were in the background, urging her to finish the sentence.

“I was calling to ask if you would go with me to the movies tonight.”

“On such short notice?”

He looked at the clock. 5PM on the dot. His dad wouldn’t be back until at least eleven o’clock, or at least that was how it was when he and Cherie would go out.

“Yeah. In fact we’ll pick you up in a few if you want. The movie starts at six.”

“Well alright! I’ll go!”

“Great! See you in ten!”

Irwin couldn’t believe it. Since he didn’t believe it, he decided not to get all excited about going on his first date. “This has to be a weird dream,” he thought. Just has to be.”

Sure enough, there was a knock at the door. It was Jenny. As soon as Irwin opened the door she kissed him right on the cheek and took his hand, leading him to the car. Driving the car was her sister’s boyfriend. Her sister was a couple years older than her, and her boyfriend was a senior. They were going to see a different movie.

“Ask him!” her sister said.

“Irwin... Will you be my boyfriend?”

“Yes!”

It was the best night of Irwin’s life.

The next day, however, would be awful. Matt Griggs would make it that way. He was Irwin's worst enemy, and at times, worst nightmare.

"Hey Irrrrwin!" he said, grabbing Irwin by the shirt and slamming him against his locker. "I heard you got a new girrrrfriend. Well in case you were wondering where she went after your little movie date last night, she went to my place and we did it all. night. long."

"Shut up, Matt! Irwin, it didn't happen."

"Oh yeah it did. You screamed my name."

Then Matt slammed Irwin against the floor. Jenny came to his aid.

"Never in a million years would I so much as touch that creep. Are you okay, Irwin?"

"Yeah. It's the usual from him. Didn't you know I'm his favorite?"

"Actually I never knew you guys even talked... Well, you know."

Before he knew it, school was out, and Irwin walked home with Jenny. She only lived two blocks down, anyway. She had to use the bathroom. It was now or never. Irwin raced to his room and grabbed the magic eight ball.

"Will Matt Griggs die of AIDS?"

"YES"

"Can it be right now?"

"MOST DEFINITELY"

Jenny came into his room.

"What's that thing?"

"Oh just a little toy I found in the attic. I'm actually thinking about selling it. It seems pretty vintage."

"I like it. You should keep it. It's adorable!"

“You’re adorable.”

They kissed. Then Irwin’s dad came home.

“Son! Where are you?”

Irwin raced out of the bedroom and into the living room.

“Right here, Dad.”

“Is everything alright? You get your homework done?”

“Yeah everything is fine. I got it done.”

“Well good. Listen, the guys wanna have a guys night out tonight. I am once again leaving you to hold down the fort. I’ll be back a little later tonight. So you just be a good boy and make sure all is safe around here. Got it?”

“Got it.”

His dad took off. Irwin watched his dad pull out of the driveway. Then he went back to his room. Jenny was holding the magic eight ball.

“No wait! Don’t!”

“Irwin what’s wrong? I was only gonna ask it if I’d be an astronaut some day.”

She shook it.

“NO”

“Hahaha! I guess it’s being honest with me. You ask it a question!”

“Uh I don’t know about that.”

“Irwin. It’s a toy. Ask away...”

“Fine. Magic eight ball, will Matt Griggs have never existed, period?”

“MY ANSWER IS YES”

Jenny laughed. It was a cute little laugh. Then Irwin asked her about him. He had to. It was the only way to prove whether or not it was true.

“Jenny. Do you know of a guy named Matt Griggs?”

“Matt Griggs? No. Never heard of him.”

A great sigh of the deepest relief swept through Irwin.

He didn't know what else to ask it. So he put it up and he and Jenny went to the living room to watch some TV. At around eight o'clock she went home. His dad didn't arrive until after midnight when Irwin was already asleep. The next day would be a constructive one for Irwin.

He woke up and put two toaster pastries in the toaster, part of his normal morning routine before heading off to school. His dad was already at work. His dad usually woke up and left for work before he was even up. But before he went to school he decided to play with the magic eight ball again.

“Magic eight ball... Hmm...”

He couldn't think of a darn thing to ask it. For a moment he stood there, hesitating. Hesitating because he could think up a million things to ask it but not be able to decide which question he wanted to ask it. He felt very powerful.

“Am I twenty-two years old, with a college degree and married to Jenny?”

“YES”

Everything went black. The blackest it would ever be. Irwin couldn't think. For a second there it was as if he never existed. Then he came to. It was their wedding reception. Three months prior, both he and Jenny had graduated college together. Irwin couldn't believe it. He had all of the knowledge he would have learned from high school and college. It wasn't just another thing.

“But where do I live?” he thought...

Jenny led him back to their new home, which was surprisingly enough in the same neighborhood as his dad, who had payed for it in full. Irwin could not believe it. He also landed a job as a teacher at the local middle school, teaching English (his favorite subject). Just the day prior, or so it seemed, he

had gone to that same school as a student. It was Jenny who had reminded him of all of this, as if it was meant to happen that way. Then Irwin wondered where the magic eight ball had gone.

It was in his study, sitting on the desk next to his laptop. "My own laptop", he thought. My own study, my own house, my own beautiful wife, my own awesome life...

Sure enough, the next day, he went right to work as the eighth grade English teacher at the middle school. He even knew exactly what he was doing, which was remarkable since he was just in that classroom what he felt like was the day prior to this. His same desk was still there, even. But then again he also felt as if he had lived another eight years in some other life, the other life he had wished for. It certainly was not a bad thing to him, though. He embraced it. But his wife, Jenny, on the other hand, was not so happy.

She'd had a bad day at work and would be home a little early. She'd been fired from her job for mysterious reasons. Even she could not believe it. She stormed into Irwin's study and grabbed the magic eight ball. She shook it and asked if the world would end right at that very moment. The answer... Was "YES"



ARTWORK

Untitled
(Ink, 7x9")

HAROLD REED



Young Elvis
(Graphite, 11x14")

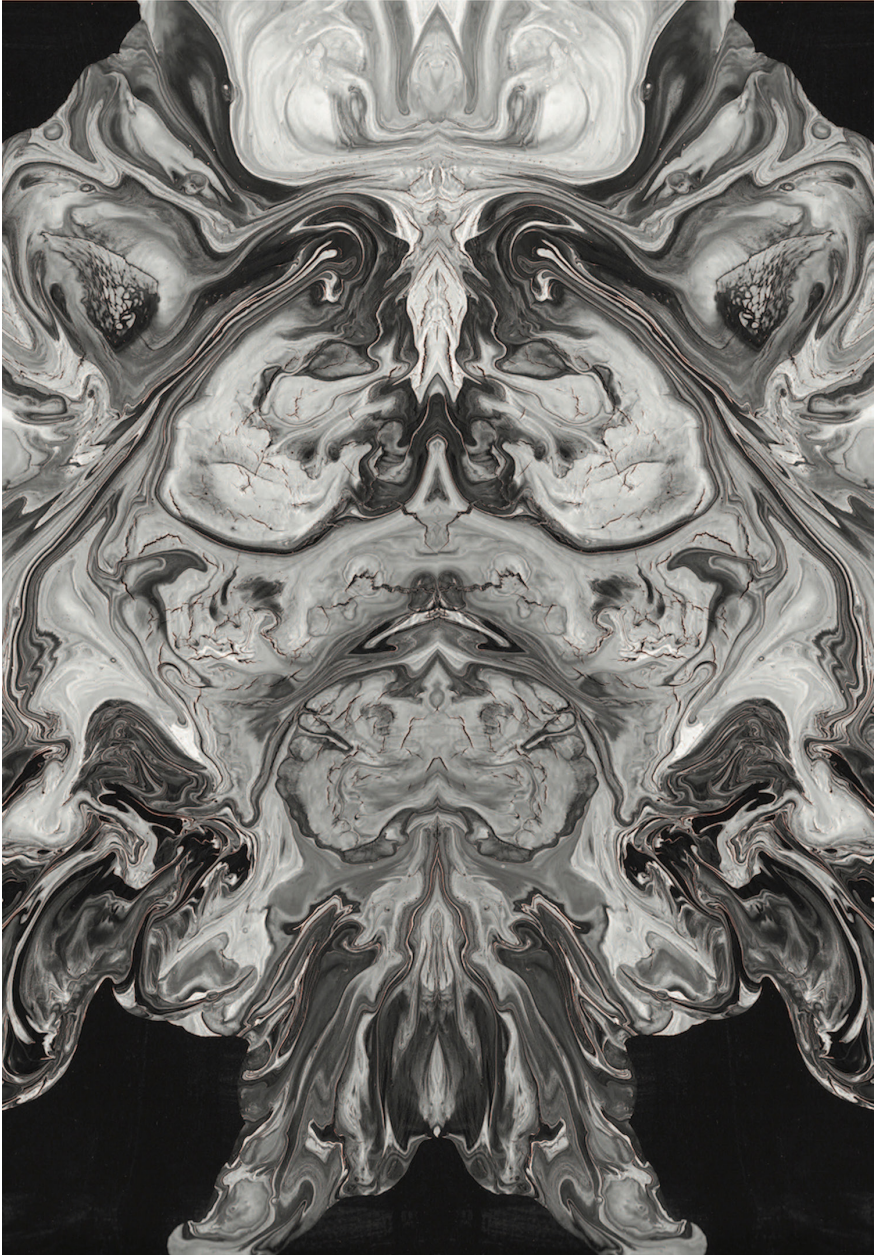
MAURICE R. SHOCK, JR.



Drawing of Young Elvis Presley
Maurice "Butch" Shock, Jr. 2007

**Cats consider the futility of life as a mouse,
pausing to examine a frosted thistle, vanishes
under the astonishing silence of snowy feathers**

MELISSA GISH



Leaning Tower of Pewter
(Ceramic, 9")

DUANE CHAPMAN



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Untitled
(Mixed Media, Watercolor, Acrylic Paint and Cardboard)

CEARA SCOTT



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Dark Flames

MARJORIE STEWART



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Winter Mountains Turn to Sea

(Oil on Canvas, 14x16")

HEATHER CHAMBERS



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Triumph
(Chalk, Pastel and Colored Pencil, 11x18")

MATT WELCH



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Self Portrait (Digital Media)

DRAVIN GIBSON



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Untitled
(Photograph, 11x17")

MAZIE SAHO



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

The Fire of the Mountain
(Photograph, 11x17")

SABRINA COCHRAN



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Long Neck Girl

(Markers on Paper, 9x12")

SHELBY RIFFLE



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Apple Bowl
(Ceramic, 12")

TAYLOR BRUMFIELD



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Three Grouped Sculptures

DAVID LEE



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Eternal

(Acrylic Paint on Paper, 18x24")

VIRGINIA 'LIZZIE' ROGERS



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Ignite the War Mind
(Graphite, Charcoal, and Linseed on Paper, 24x36")

EZEKIEL BONNETT



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

A Night Out At The Robey (Colored Pencil/Sharpie, 11x14")

SARAH NORMANT



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)

Liquid Metal
(Acrylic on Canvas Board, 8x10")

HEATHER COLEMAN



Featured in the First Annual *Trillium* Art Show (November 2017)



**CONTRIBUTOR
NOTES**

Ezekiel Bonnett graduated from Glenville State College with a Bachelor of Science in Behavior Science and a Bachelor of Arts specializing in both Studio Art and Digital Media and Design. Most of his artwork is simplistic abstract pieces. He focusses on the ideas, emotions, or expression in my artwork more than art for art's sake. Most of his mediums are traditional, the majority being metalwork and mixed media. His work explores duality in the human condition, often in terms of psychology and philosophy.

Heather Chambers is from Tucker County, WV. She is a Studio Art Major and Music Minor at Glenville State College. This is her senior year, and, sadly, her last year here at GSC. After she graduates, she is going to continue her studies to get a Master's degree in the arts.

Heather Coleman is a Florida transplant who appreciates the wonder and beauty of the West Virginia landscape. Many of her works are based on trees, mushrooms, birds or other organic features inspired by nature. After she graduates in May from Glenville State College with an RBA, she plans to continue pursuit of art as a business endeavor and pleasure quest.

Wayne de Rosset retired from GSC after forty-three years of teaching in the Department of Language and Literature and serving as Department Chair for the last seventeen years of his tenure. He has been playing and writing music since his high school days in New Jersey.

Skylar Fulton graduated from Glenville State College with a BA in Elementary Education with a concentration in English Education.

Alicia Matheny has published poetry in *Whetstone*, *Ceremony*, *Laurels*, *Thick With Conviction*, and *The Poet's Haven*. She has taught as an adjunct English instructor at Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College, and now tutors a wide variety of students in Essay Writing and Literature at Tutor.com. She also is in the beginning process of writing her first novel.

Jonathan Minton is an associate Professor of English at Glenville State College. He is the faculty advisor for the *Trillium* and the editor/publisher of the literary journal *Word For/Word*.

Sarah Normant is a local artist that earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in Studio art from Glenville State College. Her artwork has been exhibited locally and throughout West Virginia. She has also volunteered her talent and time with local businesses including the Gilmer County Public

Library, WV State Folk Festival, and GSC organizations. Her recent artwork has been West Virginia themed, and mainly completed in colored pencil and acrylic.

Harold Reed is a Glenville State College alumnus. He attended from WVU with an MA in Education with an emphasis on art. He retired after teaching for 43 years.

Virginia “Lizzie” Rogers favors art that leans towards the more macabre or colorful side.

Hannah Seckman is a sophomore at Concord University. She is studying geology, along with English and Creative Writing. At the present time, she is working her way through *The Dark Tower* series by Stephen King, literature she would recommend to all.

Maurice R. Shock, Jr. is a retired West Virginia teacher and native of Webster County. He graduated from Glenville State College with a double major in English and Art. He earned his Master’s Degree at Marshall University, majoring in Art History and Painting.

Marjorie Stewart teaches English composition, journalism, and creative nonfiction at Glenville State College. She is also a poet, essayist and painter.

Melissa Gish is an Associate Professor of English at GSC. She is a writer and artist whose interests continue to expand in wildly varied directions.

Megan Stoffel is a freshman at Glenville State College. She is an education major, and is from Sandyville, WV.

Matthew Thiele is an Assistant Professor of English at Glenville State College.

Jared Wilson is an Assistant Professor of Land Surveying at the Landaplenty School of Natural Resources, Department of Land Resources, Glenville State College in Glenville, West Virginia. Mr. Wilson earned his Masters and Bachelor of Science degrees from East Tennessee State University in Engineering Technology and Land Surveying respectively. He is a licensed land surveyor in West Virginia and has performed land surveying related projects in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Maryland, and Washington D.C. He has served on the West Virginia Society of Professional Land Surveyors in the capacity of Chapter Representative, Director, President Elect, and President.

A Glenville State College
Department of Language & Literature Publication