

A watercolor illustration of the Eiffel Tower, rendered in warm, golden-brown tones. The tower's lattice structure is clearly visible, and it stands prominently against a sky of soft, blended colors including purples, blues, and oranges. Several birds are depicted in flight across the sky. At the base of the tower, a cluster of buildings with dark roofs is visible, suggesting a cityscape. The overall style is artistic and painterly.

Trillium  
2019

# Trillium

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The *Trillium* is the literary and visual arts publication of the  
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The *Trillium* welcomes submissions and correspondence from Glenville State  
College students, faculty, staff, and our extended creative community.

## *Trillium*

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**GLENVILLE**  
**STATE COLLEGE**

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*from letters*

Dear reader, our stories might keep us satisfied,  
but we must pause at each sacred, categorical vow.  
I would never break your heart or say anything  
to embarrass you. We will listen to each other  
because we must cooperate with the news of the world.  
We could gather in public squares and sing this as an anthem.

Dear reader, we were lonely, and became characters  
in the dark, like flowers crawling up a wall.  
We're more than our sentence. We're more  
than this mouthful of air. If you're telling me  
there are rivers moving between us, I will believe you.  
We fill the gaps with what we think should happen.

### People are Glass

People are glass.  
Shaded and unique,  
But fragile all the same.  
Time will pass.  
Become degraded and weak,  
But shimmer all the same.  
We will not last.  
In hurricanes of emotion.  
But steadfast, we remain.  
Tragedies approach fast,  
Leaving our panes wide open,  
But still, we survive the rain.  
People are glass.  
Products of endless hoping.  
Sometimes shattered and stained.  
However, far from crass,  
We are constantly growing,  
Learning from the past pains.  
More time will pass,  
We crack without knowing,  
Life causes more strains.  
Much like glass,  
We cannot heal what's broken  
Only piece together the remains.  
One day, we will surpass  
Our jagged edges in the open,  
Learn to live with our mistakes.  
Because people are glass,  
It goes without showing.  
At some point, we will break...  
  
...But still shimmer all the same

**Note:** Chaise Robertson was the winner of GSC's 2019 Spring Poetry Slam

## Thunderdome

We don't need another hero;  
We need about one zero  
zero zero zero  
to save us from the hopelessness and fear—  
oh, you're thinking,  
*Here's another weirdo.*

You're thinking  
we just need to build some muscle.  
All we need is one more two-bit hustle  
in this bullshit gig economy  
and we'll be plumb and flush.  
We'll feast on pig  
instead of crumbs and mush.  
We'll have benefits on top of wages,  
posh digs instead of cages,  
breathe big instead of always  
being smothered by the dust.  
All we want  
is life beyond the Thunderdome.

We live the waking dream  
and fish the toxic stream.  
What's a little fallout  
when we're all going all out  
just to pay the rent?  
What's a little disaster  
when our last cent is spent  
trying to keep the master off our backs?  
What's that little crack  
in the tailings pond dam?

So welcome to the Thunderdome.  
Welcome to the terrordrome,  
the fallout zone  
the home  
of the goddamn whopper.  
Mister Death's not stalking somewhere  
over the rainbow—he's here.  
It's dyin' time.  
Two men enter.  
One man leaves.

## **Voices Along the Road**

*(a song)*

You meet so many people, as you wander along the road  
Friends may come, friends may go, some stay as you grow old  
Others pause but for a moment, familiar faces as shadows fall  
Speak to something yet to be, or that you may have done it all before

In the kaleidoscope of seasons, time holds you as the years pass on by  
The prism is constantly shifting, hard to see what's on the other side

Always someone, something beckons, elusive truth, you need to find  
Deep in aeonian music, carried on the winds of time  
A plaintive, haunting call from a faraway tomorrow  
A sweet but aching echo from a yesterday long ago  
Many voices along the road

Friends, strangers, even lovers, glimmers of what's gone before  
A past into a present, to a future yet to unlock its door  
Gentle voices still whisper, drift down the road with a dying fall  
A love to be, a love long ago lost, or a love that might never happen at all

In the kaleidoscope of seasons, time holds you as the years pass on by  
The prism is constantly shifting, hard to see what's on the other side

Always someone, something beckons, elusive truth, you need to find  
Deep in aeonian music, carried on the winds of time  
A plaintive, haunting call from a faraway tomorrow  
A sweet but aching echo from a yesterday long ago  
Many voices along the road



### **Lost Tomorrows**

Crying for lost tomorrows as the stars all fade away.  
The end of life approaches, surrounded by photos and awards but not family.  
The light of epiphany shines as the final breath enters the lungs.  
Working too hard, chasing those dreams of money, of being successful. Yet,  
forgetting to look at the things that make mankind happy.  
The images of a family, of smiling children and spouse flash in the man's eyes.  
Tears well as the man realizes what he could have had, his lost tomorrows.  
The power once wielded is useless now. No bargaining with death, no trade  
deals, nothing.  
The cold hand of stillness creeps up the body. As quickly as the stars in his  
eyes glimmered, they faded away.

**Author's Note:** The poem "Lost Tomorrows" was inspired by a song sung by Wayne de Rosset at the *Trillium* reading in Spring 2018.

**II:38PM**

(*a song*)

*Music:*

(Note: guitar is tuned to e-flat.)

Verse Vocal Melody: A# Eb Eb F# C# Eb (notes of syllables)

Chorus Vocal Melodies: B E E E E Eb

B E E Ab b eb-g (third and fourth lines)

Verse Guitar Chords: Emb (first syllable of each line),

Eb (sixth syllable of each line)

Chorus Guitar Chords: E (first syllable of each line),

Eb (sixth syllable of each line)

Coda Guitar Chords and Vocal Melodies Same As Verse

(The “Ha ha ha ha ha ha...Fate” Vocal Melody is all Eb)

(Lines “They...” and “Fate...” are both whispered)

*Lyrics:*

They...

(Verse)

They know just what to do

They're coming after you

While you run out of gas

Your will it is not strong

(Chorus)

They'll hunt you 'til you're dead

They will remove your head

And in the darkness dine

On flesh and blood and bone

(Repeat Verse)

(Repeat Chorus)

(Coda)

That you before had known

It was indeed your own

Ha ha ha ha ha ha

Fate...

### **The Smoker**

He smokes cigarettes behind the belltower  
Bundled up in a dark weightless coat  
He's like a pile of yesterday's clothes,  
With fingers poked out, colorless and cold.  
They hold a bleached cigarette stem tight  
And his lungs are full of steam and smoke.  
His eyes are covered, but live sparks,  
Full of laughter, full of smiles and a compassionate heart.  
Here he smokes, his hands frozen by the hours  
A lonely pile of laundry, flesh, and bones,  
And he should have gone in an hour ago.

## Flowers

There is a new girl now.  
Not even a day old.  
Newly rotting from the stench of existence.  
What are your troubles to her?  
Singular in mind as her universe expands minute by minute,  
Second by second?  
Constant is she in her pursuit of God's ills –  
For who is more to blame for evil but the most righteous?  
Wary will she be of your touch, your words,  
Fearful of your power, singular also in her reality.  
But, then, there is the light:  
The sunlight on grass, moonlight on memories,  
Candlelight on heartache and emergency,  
Comforting...  
May you find yourself useful amongst the fireflies,  
Imparting allegory and metaphors,  
Reassuring her soft mind to the dangers of mankind.  
And once the callow song of calumny from her own  
Finds asylum in your sanctuary,  
May you finally be grateful for her indifference.  
For that is her power,  
Laid steadfast against the enemies of old.  
Hardened if not through some breathtaking sorrow,  
Then by the dereliction of hope;  
Until this stops,  
And new flowers grow amongst the weeds

### What I Know

I know nothing of the real world they kept repeating,  
Let me tell you what I know.  
I know the look of a starving nephew  
I know the smell of drugs covering him  
I know the look of a sister too high to speak  
Let me tell you what I know.  
I know the look of a drunken brother  
I know the sound of all the parties when he stumbles in every night  
I know the look of the pills he uses to stay “normal”  
Let me tell you what I know  
I know how to fight, there was no one to protect me  
I know the taste of insulin for my Father was too sick for himself and the smell  
so strong  
I know how to go days without sleep, so he would have someone at night  
Let me tell you what I know  
I know how to be a wife, because my mom had to work herself sick  
I know the feeling of a new house, because of all the times we moved  
I know the look of death because I watched his breath disappear  
Let me tell you what I know  
I know the look of addiction, I saw it everyday  
I know the sight of drugs and drinks, they were always there  
I know the life of being poor because they needed the money more  
Let me tell you what I know  
I don't know the life of a regular child with no worries  
I don't know the feeling of brothers and sisters playing happily together  
I don't know what it means to be a regular family and a happy child.  
This is what I know.  
What do you know?

## Planted

Green or brown  
you cloak the hills  
in round animal shapes.  
Kudzu.  
Strong as mountains,  
you hold them  
hostage 'neath your leafy coat.

Long ago we met  
when you and I were green  
you shiny, thick and well-seated here,  
I a thin-skinned-teen,  
urban outlyer  
not seeing my place  
among soft-hilled homesteads  
and people  
whose lives tucked into this land.

You stayed and preyed  
injecting your roots  
where native plants once flourished.  
I stay to celebrate and sustain  
this fragile landscape  
of rutted faces  
meth and pills  
coal and Celtic culture  
African ancestry  
German and Slavik  
banjos and bastards  
fiddles and ferns  
illiteracy and sacred obstinacy  
that has managed to say *no*  
to being dismantled dismembered  
unremembered,  
surviving dozers and draglines  
that tear at our hearts  
land coal gas  
rivers  
fish.

I live among people who persist  
with plates of chicken and dumplings  
dig wild ramps  
hunt ginseng  
persist in sawing  
the Orange Blossom Special  
with a Soldier's Joy  
flatfooting  
square dancing line dancing  
lining out hymns  
hemming britches, sewing quilts  
sowing on the mountain  
planting for posterity.

You remain  
how long,  
carpetbagger plant?  
I am planted for the long haul.  
We can both root  
on dry rock outcroppings  
aiming to displace one another  
you to remain alone, aloof  
king of the hills.  
I crave the company  
of mountain laurel  
bloodroot and ginseng  
and cling to mountains  
for love of life.

**Gabi**

you are my shine  
you are so goofy  
you can be kind  
you are so hyper

you are a Boston Terrier  
you are a Chihuahua  
you are forever small  
you are my puppy

you saved me  
you love me  
though you nibble on me  
I love you, Gabi



**Dear Sunshine**

darkness, darkness, darkness  
it's all I see anymore  
I want to see the sunshine  
Where are you?  
dear sunshine

so much negative energy  
I don't know how much more  
I really can't take much more  
I miss you so much  
dear sunshine

arguing, yelling  
I feel that's all we do  
classwork, homework  
there's no time to be us  
dear sunshine

I want you to be happy  
I want me to be happy  
I just want us to be happy  
So why aren't we happy?  
dear sunshine

**Bird Feeder**

Silhouettes of birds in trees  
Like paper cut outs in the leaves  
The silver sky the negative space  
Between the limbs patterned lace  
I sit in silence on the porch  
Watching them chart their course  
To the feeder hanging there  
As if suspended in the air  
My presence makes some too shy  
They whirl as they get close by  
Others just fly straight in  
And sit around the feeder's rim  
Rose-breasted grosbeak and golden finch  
Blue jay and Cardinal, red inch to inch  
I sit quietly and stare  
As primary colors flutter there

**Fig Tree**

Fig tree, fruit to all those  
come and gone,  
stare down your branches  
with your human eyes:  
God give us this day;  
distressed fathers,  
deceased mothers—  
children chatter on sidewalks,  
play hopscotch.  
In the forest, construction men  
cut the wood, make naked landscapes-  
strong men, strong lives.  
We all stop to contemplate  
this theorem.

### **Flight of The Dragon**

The noble figure graces the purple mist, as I await the summer lands with the dragon's kiss. Gently she carries me upward while the stars do gleam. I close my eyes, take a breath hoping this not be a dream. Her eyes like creamy jade, her scales like spun gold, as I languish in her beauty while my body doth grow cold. She turns her head and softly whispers in my ear, "Be still my child, our journey's end is near." As I draw my last breath, my spirit knows no fear, enveloped in golden wings, she sheds only a single tear. When I awake, my joy unbound, as I stretch my wings, my new life found. With eyes of green and scales of gold, I know now my purpose of which I was told. My journey begins anew and in flight I do say, "Fear not my child, new life is but a breath away."

Why?

Why does God love you?  
Does God love you?  
Why?

He loves you because He loves you;  
Because He loves you  
Because He loves you

Because

He loves you

Because He loves you

Not because of what you do,  
But because of what He's done  
He says, "I love you—  
I gave it all  
I say 'I do'  
Do you?"

## **My Cutie**

You know, blessings come in many shapes, forms and sizes  
For me, my best blessing came in a woman that amazes in so many ways  
My cutie is five foot three, blue-eyed, brunette with some other, let's say "prizes"  
She's so smart, she's so talented, she's truly set apart, I could go on for days  
My cutie is fun, quirky, not out done, and is as pretty as a hundred sunrises  
She's funny, she snores, she loves her smores and she is truly my craze  
My cutie loves television and books, and with snacks she loves to graze  
She's so sexy, so gorgeous, so pretty, she covers all of the beauty clichés  
My cutie is my rock, my roll, my soul and with my life she stabilizes  
She's hot and crafty, so wonderfully wacky and for me she energizes  
My cutie is dependable, trustworthy and never morally compromises  
She's a woman of many talents, but as a mom and wife she specializes  
My cutie is crazy creative and when I see her she sets my heart ablaze  
She's so much in enumerable ways and is so freaking cute with her surprises  
You know, I could go on and on about my cutie with endless praise  
For me, my best blessing came as proof that God maximizes  
My cutie, in the end is so precious if I don't end these love exercises  
This "poem" will become a bunch of love essays

**Author's Note:** Dedicated to my wife of 24 years and the love of my life, Susan Bone

### Deep Cuts

Deep cuts, Deep Thoughts  
Hard fights, bad thoughts  
What's my purpose on this earth?  
Invisible to family  
What's my worth?  
Be strong, I tried  
Can my life just go as smooth  
As the rivers flow  
My life filled, with so much despair  
Pain I cannot bare  
Deep cuts, Hard life  
Dark tunnels no light  
I dwell on after life  
Dear lord I sacrifice  
Now you lay me down to sleep  
These deep cuts shall stop my weep  
Forgive me lord if I have sinned  
To my loved ones  
My heart I give  
I am happy now  
So let me live  
Deep cuts, long nights  
Flatline I'm alive  
One love, One life

Deep Cuts

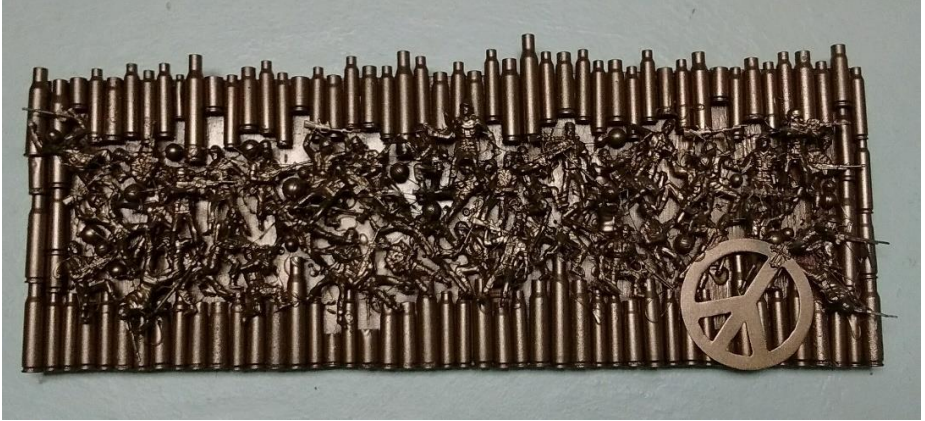




Melissa Gish

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Tell Us One More Time



Campus Carry



Marjorie Stewart

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**Mudluscious**



Matthew Welch

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## Heart of the Tempest





Sarah Normant

Robey in Winter



The Octopus

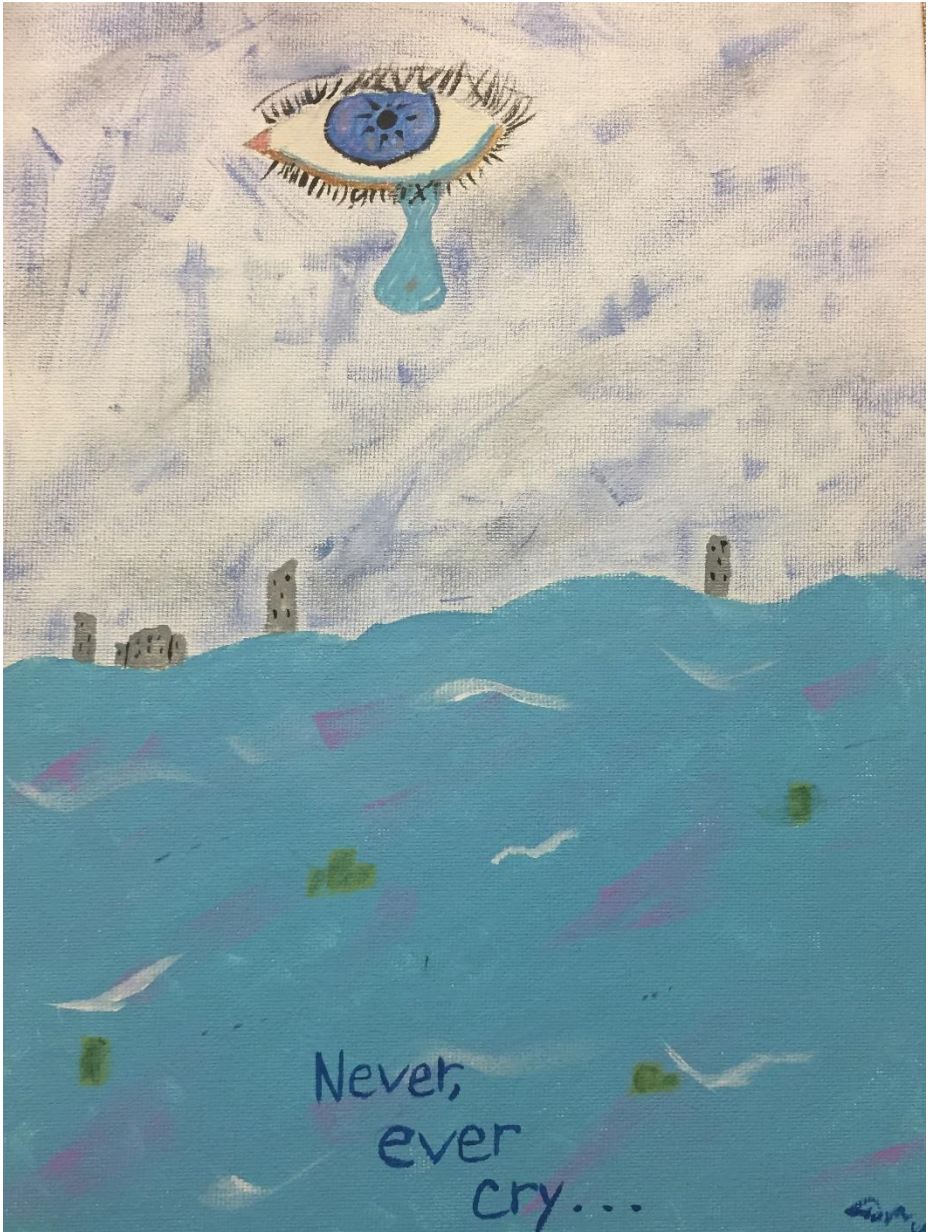














Dreamscape #1



Paris 4099



Mazie Elliot

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**Brothers**



Highway 25 Covered Bridge, Ashtabula, OH



MazingArt



Peacock



Roses



Getting There



Chesney Brown

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**Good Morning, Beautiful**







Jeffrey Bryson

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Glade Creek Gist Mill Window



Politics as Usual

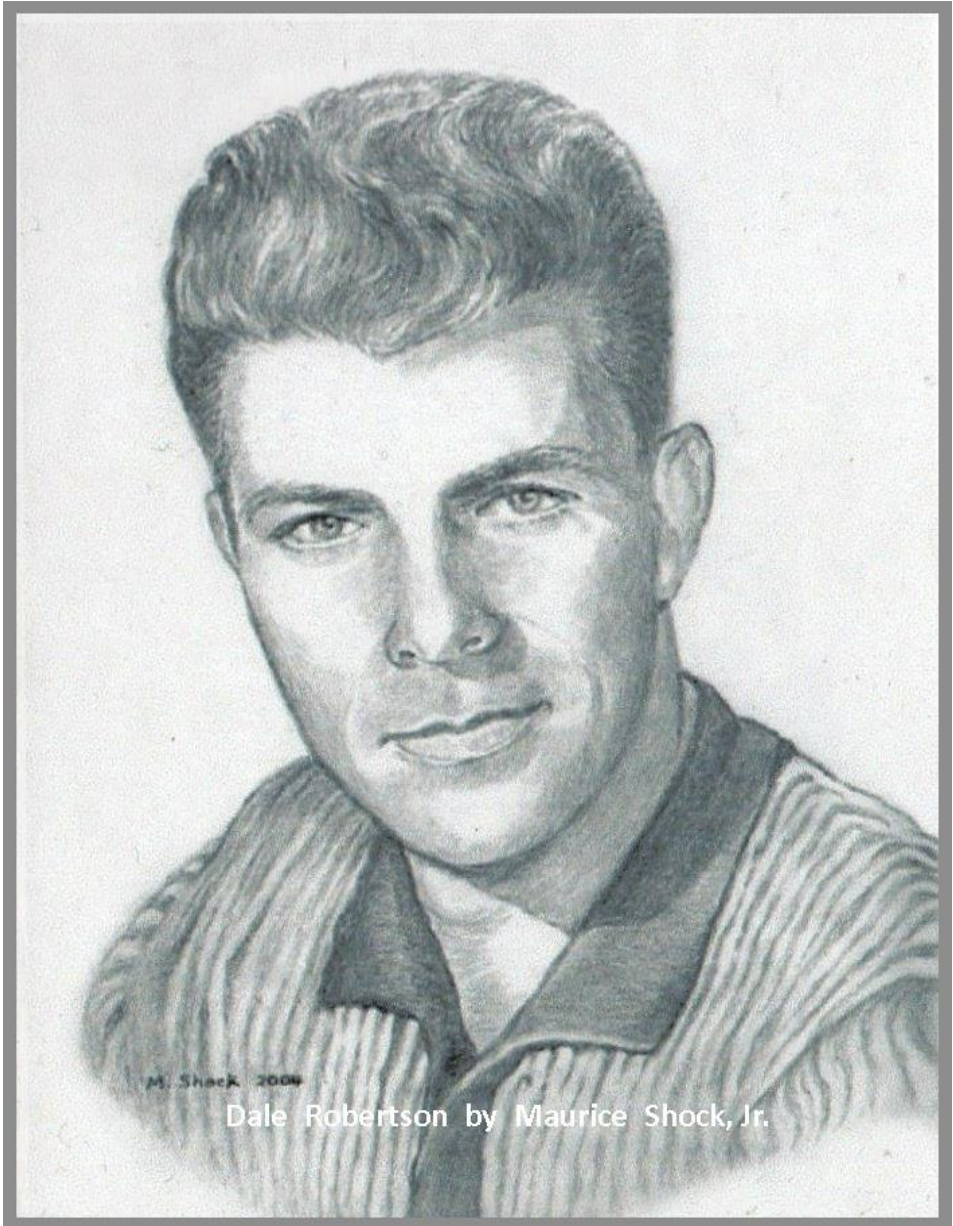




Maurice R. Shock, Jr.

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Dale Robertson



Dale Robertson by Maurice Shock, Jr.

Gordon West

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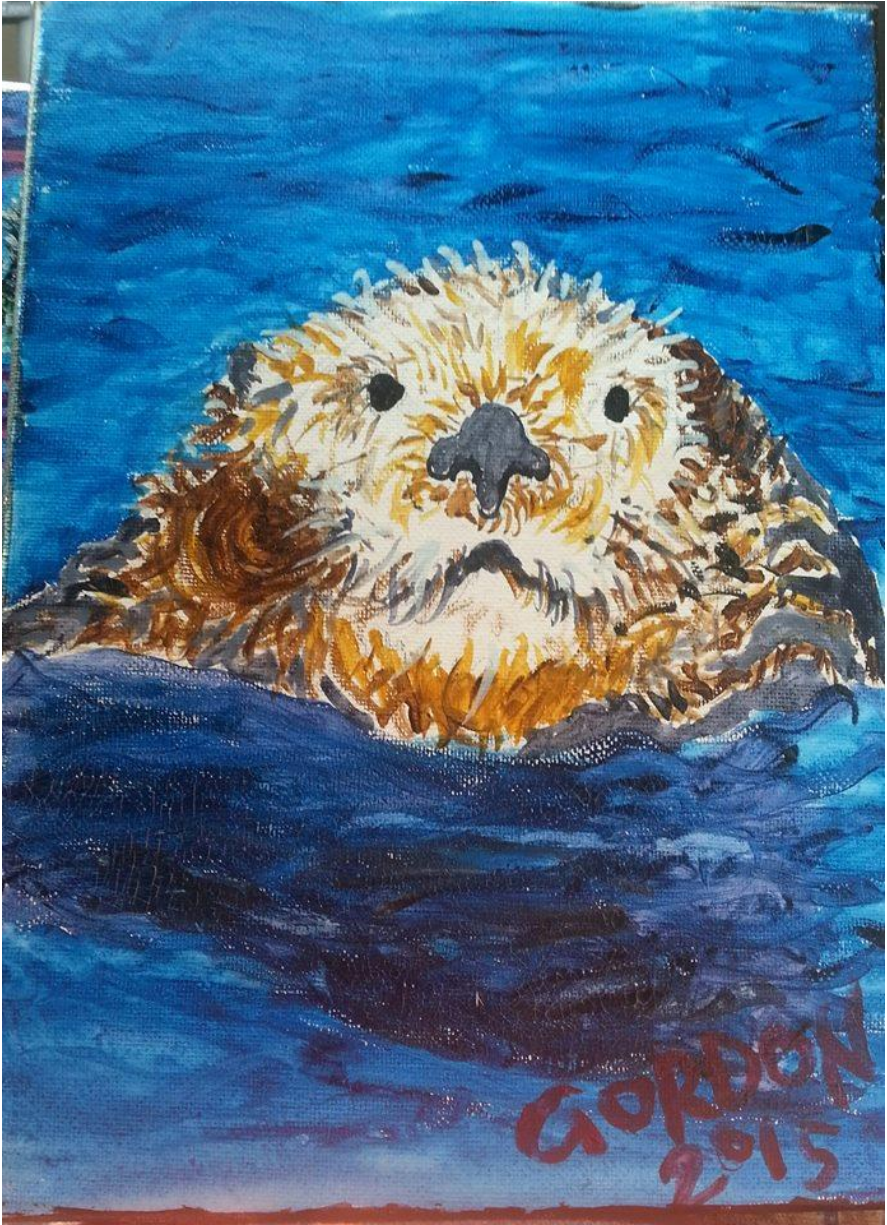
Desert Song



Gordon West

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Otis the Otter



## A Portrait of Domesticated Predators

There are yellow buttercream cupcakes and wafer thin fruit filo cups heaped on a scalloped bone china pedestal, and a coconut chiffon cake is center stage under a spotless crystal dome. On a cheap faux silver platter polished to shine like a mirror is arranged a checkerboard of rich chocolate and red velvet cream cheese cupcakes. To the right, a stainless steel ice cream machine drips on a wire tray with water spots. The dining room is dense with smells confectionary sugar and soapy dishes blasted clean by industrial dishwashers, and backstage, where the man in charge bosses courses to the serving line, originates wafts of spicy shrimp gumbo.

Waiters in bowties walk fruit salads to the plate, and now they wait behind the main line, their fingers in latex gloves balanced on granite countertops by hot pans. Somewhere in the silence a man sneezes. The doors stand still in their frames.

They wait.

Two-thousand feet rumble the floor like elephants lost in an indoor corridor, and that begins it: The twilight migration of hungry students' dinner.

Through glass walls and doors they see faces before the doors burst inward, and in streams an army, talking, scanning cards, sneezing, texting, laughing, wiping runny noses on sleeves, yelling because someone stepped on somebody else's toe. The migration is accompanied by a constant and deafening murmuring of all noises, indistinguishable from one another in the overlapping blur. The bowtied waiters go grinning to their positions, armed with serving spoons and spatulas: It's a delight to observe the voracious herd at close distance, mere feet away, but their weapons are necessary to rebuff impatience and the impolite complaints, roared loudly, about the service.

At this dinner a stray waitress finds herself caught laying a tablecloth in the open. As a trio of students advance, the waitress – in view of the entire chattering herd – spreads the tablecloth, plunks a cobalt blue vase stuffed with plastic daisies in the center, and sprints to the safety of the kitchen, where she watches, wild eyed, as the trio advances on the table to attack their prey.

They have found dessert.

Two members of the trio split apart. These are strong, athletic specimens of the species, given to inhaling whole tables full of food, cloths and all, when their

muscles are drawn tight and their stomachs shriveled empty after running miles for no discernible reason.

All their attention now is focused on their prey. They select an injured tower of cupcakes, which leans slightly, as the easiest avenue to sugary deliciousness, and with many quiet manly signals of eyes and hands, they send the third student of the trio around the back of the table, where prey is most vulnerable. He draws himself down in a crouch on the carpet, frog-like, and prepares to pounce – but a newcomer has arrived on the scene!

“It’s the last piece of pumpkin pie!” she cheers, and threads her way through the line of hunters, her smile disarming, as smiles of students who cut in line must do. “I want that! Excuse me!”

She forks herself a slice, thumps it on her plate in a careless mess of sweet pumpkin ooze and hot water piecrust crumbs, dollops a scoop of whipped cream on top, and leaves in a hurry, the pie mangled on her plate.

The crouched hunter, skinny, all of him rickety legs and elbow joints, stands agape. His bony hand hangs suspended, mid-reach, above the empty pie plate, much too slow and kind to snatch food away from pretty female competition. Clearly he’s starving, this thin, frail boy, and we may rightly assume he won’t live another day without that good piece of pie.

“I guess we’ll just eat cupcakes, then,” says one of the student athletes.

He stretches his hand out and snatches two up in both of his curled fists, and he’s so near death with hunger, he sinks his straight white teeth into his prey before he makes it back to the table with it. Red food coloring bleeds out on his hand, and he wipes it off on his jeans with a satisfied smile.

“Good cupcake,” he says.

“Mhm,” grunts the other (which means he agrees).

The third student, left alone by his friends, looks at the now empty dessert table. A big green fly buzzes by his ear. There is no dessert left to eat. He will starve tomorrow – and so humanity’s eternal contest for survival goes on.

## My Visitor

Gather 'round here I want to tell you a little story. This story could be about the way I am making a bonsai planter out of a block of wood. I am making it much the same way the Native Americans used to make a dugout canoe. I have taken a small section of log and built a fire in it to burn out the excess wood, then scrape out the charred part until the hollowed area is big enough to use for a pot.

I could tell you about the fire itself, how the translucent amber tongues danced and leaped wantonly almost lustfully grasping for the atmosphere and the vital air needed to fuel the flames as they consumed the wood turning it from varying shades of brown and gray, to charred black and then to ashen white; or even the smoke as the thin wisps of ghostly vapor swirled up in a mini tempest like a tiny tornado driven by the unseen rivers of air that not only fuel the flames but push the smoke which ever direction it decides to go until the smoke thins and disappears, but no, smoke and fire have been described a thousand times and about as many different ways, and making a planter that way is as exciting as watching paint dry. Every few minutes adjust the coals to make sure that the fire burns where you want it to, blah, blah, blah.

The real story is a 10- minute lifetime that took place in the form of a chance encounter between two beings and this is what was going through my mind and what I imagined or at least wondered if, was going through the mind of the other.

While walking around the yard I happened to be picking up small branches and twigs to put on the fire and trying to stay awake when, what should be within my reach but a small snake.

Not being particularly afraid of snakes and somewhat familiar with the types native to the area, I immediately recognized it as an eastern ribbon snake or more commonly known as a garter snake. Now don't think I'm sexist, but I can't tell a boy from a girl when it comes to snakes so for the sake of the story I am just saying it's a him. . .anyhow, he made no effort to bite and no effort to get away, as wild snakes go, he seemed rather friendly.

So, with snake in one hand and sticks in the other I headed back to my chair in the yard to watch my fire and now study my new visitor.

He wasn't especially large, about as big around as an old piece of cotton clothes line and about 14 inches long, with brown eyes. I could tell he needed to eat because he wasn't very fat yet. I tried to study him a little closer right away but at first all he seemed to want to do was slither and wrap around my fingers until he got. . .I don't

know...comfortable I guess. After about three laps around my wrist and fingers he settled right down and remained motionless for the rest of the entire visit.

I started to study him closer then, that is when I learned he had brown eyes, but I had also noticed that he had little black spots just above the edge of his belly scales, evenly spaced about an half inch apart; I have handled these snakes every summer since I was old enough to catch one and I think this is the first time I have ever noticed those little black spots. This particular snake, I also observed, had been injured, several times. By what I had no way of knowing but the scars were obvious, and most recently (it appeared) was his tail, it looked smashed and mangled, but healing.

I remember thinking to myself, my friend if you could only speak, would you tell me of a close call with a lawnmower, or perhaps just barely making it across a road getting your tail

caught under a car tire. The scars on your back, did you escape a raccoon or a dog or cat? Maybe it was a hawk or even a lawnmower there too. What must YOU be thinking? You are watching me and are you worrying, here I am in the hands of a behemoth that I have never come in this close contact with before, do I stay motionless out of fear, or respect? Will I be held captive or will I be set free?

As a snake, I wonder if you even have that capacity? From what I read in my Bible I know there will be animals in Heaven, but will he be there; and will we remember each other and this act of kindness?

I enjoyed my small lifetime with my unexpected visitor, as I sat there pondering his thoughts against my own. I watched him breathe. I watched his eye follow my movement and then as quickly as it began, I thanked him for allowing me to have that time to visit with him and thanked him for stopping by. I calmly arose from my seat, walked over to the place in the yard close to where I found him, bid him a fond farewell, lowered my hand and watched as he slowly uncoiled from my fingers and silently slithered back into the tall grass where he came from.

Will we meet again someday, who knows? But, I'd like to think that if we do, he will remember me, I know I will remember the scars and remember him as the snake that came to visit me one day.

### **Trial By Fire**

The crowd gasped in disbelief as the countdown suddenly restarted.

“He’s still alive,” a woman cheered in the group of people gathered around the jumbotron. Everyone stared in shock as he rose from rubble of the recently destroyed building. He was horribly bruised, bleeding, and covered in debris, but he was still alive.

“For how long?” I mumbled under my breath. So, he survived the first trial. Whatever. He would never finish the marathon. He was running out of options and out of time. He didn’t even know where his companion was. He was just another one of the sacrifices we needed to continue surviving in this world. Surviving not living. There is a major difference between the two; don’t get them confused. As long as he’s there it can’t be me. I know that sounds bad, but it’s just how the world works. As soon as this kid and his companion die I will crawl back into my hole and hide away for another year. As long as I’m safe nothing else matters. As long as I’m safe everyone else can die.



## The Escapist

Magic isn't all it's cracked up to be. For example, there are 20 spells for making tea, but not one to save yourself from falling off a cliff. Maybe I was too busy clinging to said cliff to remember one. Although there is much doubt behind that sentence.

"Well," said a voice from above, "There's no where for you to run. I guess you could hide, but what's the point?" A girl with pink hair peered over the edge at me. Her clear blue eyes struck me deep with fear.

"Hi Clarissa," I said, faking a smile, "How's it hanging?"

"Pretty good," she said, "I'm about to kill my worst enemy. Her names Jeanette. You might know her."

"Oh," I said, "That's cool." I began to think of alternate ideas. I don't think antigravity would be too useful. I would just float. I wouldn't go anywhere. That wouldn't help me escape. I can't pull myself up. That would take too much time and she could probably still kill me. Maybe teleportation? Although, that's risky. If you can't actually see where you're going you could end up in a wall or something, but I was running out of options.

"Yeah," she said, "Goodbye." She put her hand up and began to mutter something in Latin. Her hand began to glow a faint purple.

I guess I needed to attempt teleporting. If I didn't try something I'd be dead. I thought of my lab where I worked on my spells and potions. I closed my eyes as I muttered my own Latin incantations.

When I opened my eyes, I had escaped death. Temporarily.

## **The Magic Rocks**

*(A Paw-Paw Story)*

Years ago while visiting my oldest son and his family I had the chance to play a trick on my two grandsons. They were under the age of 10 and the difference in ages was but a couple of years. We were at an indoor rifle range near their home in a WV eastern county. While my son was sighting in his deer rifle I watched the two boys in the parking lot. You could hear the muffled shots inside the building that was partially underground. The boys and I walked around the gravel parking lot just putting in time while waiting. The boys were looking at some pretty round and colorful stones in the drive way. They each found one they really liked and was going to take them home with them.

While walking and idea came to me that it would be a perfect trick on the boys to claim "Magic Rocks". I explained to them the rocks had magic powers and if you spoke the magic words the rocks would give you money. What are the magic words, they asked? I told them the magic words were, "Abra Cadabra". They said the magic words and no money appeared. I further explained they had to put the rocks on their dresser overnight and the next morning the money would appear. They did as they were instructed and put the rocks on their dressers and spoke the magic words, Abra Cadabra.

The next morning before the boys awakened I slipped into their bedrooms and put a handful of change under each rock. Sure enough when they got up the next morning they found money with the rocks. They were pleased with the money but I don't think they were completely convinced. I instructed them to do the same thing that night and more money would appear the following morning. Once again saying the magic words they went to bed waiting for the next morning for more money. The next morning they were excited because more money appeared

We had only a two day stay and had to go home. We usually check in on the family once a week by phone. The week following our visit with the grandsons we were talking on the phone when the grandsons said the magic rocks weren't working and they received no money. No money had appeared since Pap-Paws last visited. Thinking quickly to keep this story going for a little while longer I told them they just needed to bring the rocks to my house and we would find out what the problem was.

A few weeks later the grandsons came for a weekend visit with their not so magic rocks in hand. I took their magic rocks and looked them over very carefully turning them over and over. I said "I found the Problem". They just need to be cleaned and

polished, making sure to rub them very well. We cleaned and polished the rocks and said Abra Cadabra before putting the rocks on the dresser in their room.

While they were asleep I slipped some change and some bills under the rocks. The next morning they found money with the cleaned magic rocks. They were happy to see that there 'was still magic in the rocks. I did this every opportunity that I could get. Sometimes it was at their house and sometime at mine. It no longer mattered to them the money didn't appear unless Pap Paw was around.

One day I had this idea that I was the one being conned. I found out that the boy's had figured out that Pap Paw was putting the money under the rocks. As long as the money was coming in they weren't going to tell. The joke was on me and the magic rocks have disappeared a long time ago. The boys have grown and now have girlfriends and they don't have as much time for Pap Paw with all the things to keep boys occupied. Now I still have three other grandkids that are 5 and under. Well it's time for more magic rocks and the magic that children bring.

### **Rothgar's last flight**

The clouds were cold as Rothgar flew through the thick white clouds. He felt good about today's flight, the air was calm and the temperature was brisk. His wings beat hard as he accelerated for a climb to the upper limits of what was possible to reach. He wanted to try to go higher even if by a little bit it would be an accomplishment; if he lost consciousness he would have about twenty second before he hit the water below. He had been trying to break altitude records for his kind for almost a hundred years now and each decade he grew larger so it was more dangerous for his stunts, his larger size meant more injury if he made a mistake. His last attempt he misjudged the angle he needed to enter the high altitude winds and twisted his wing, it took three years before it healed completely. He spent the last three years gaining enough strength in his flight muscles to try again. The time before that there was a nasty squall that came without warning and he got struck by lightning and was unconscious for several weeks. This time he hoped he would break the record before the humans who lived in the nearby city managed to beat him to it. They managed to get a flying machine off the ground after he got struck by lightning almost twenty years ago and they have already managed to reach more than half Rothgar's current altitude, at that rate if he got injured this time the humans might break the record before he could. He braced himself to enter the upper winds which were always fast and aggressive. Using his head to pierce the veil between the winds and the calmer air below he launched himself into the upper winds. The temperature here was frigid and made his hot muscles ache with cold. Now that he was in these winds he could use them to propel himself fast enough to make the final climb to record heights. The speed he gained by the high winds was blinding, it brought tears to his eyes and forced him to shut his inner eyelids to protect from the stinging ice and glaring sun, he could still see just with an orange tint to everything. A few strained strokes of his wings and he has the speed he wants, he begins to climb again. The air starts to get too thin to breath normally. Rothgar has to take gulping breaths his head begins to spin as he breaks out of the high winds into the deep sky, a place no other dragon man or beast has flown. He finally did it he manages to look down and see that the clouds have parted and to his utter horror below him is not ocean like it was supposed to be but the town and fields. His moment of panic uses up the last bit of mental control he had on staying conscious and blacks out. Below him a man with a telescope catches a glimpse of Rothgar as he begins to fall and watches in stunned dismay. There is nothing the man can do as Rothgar falls from the sky towards the ground except pray that he regains consciousness in enough time to save himself serious injury when he crashes. Rothgar plummets faster and faster without any signs of waking or stirring, until a very loud thud is heard across the city, and Rothgar is no more. The humans mourn their friends passing and award him the record for highest flight with the testimony of the man who first saw Rothgar fall.

### The Office Shrine

We made her a shrine in her office. Casey even wanted to leave her corpse in there, but that idea lasted all of ten seconds before John threatened to kill him, too. So Casey and I drug her body outside and threw it over the bridge into the river. Casey had tears in his eyes and I opened my mouth to offer some sort of condolence, but I had nothing. Death didn't faze me anymore, so what could I say? I clapped him on the shoulder instead and went inside to finish the rest of my shift. I had paperwork to do.

It was Casey's idea to build a shrine, a place to "commemorate her memory" is what he called it. He wanted me to help. I asked him if he was crazy. He didn't say anything. I asked if he wanted John to kill him, too. Again, he was silent. So I shrugged. "Sure," I said. "Whatever you want." I didn't have anything to lose.

Casey had me go out and get some flowers, but all I could find was this giant hybrid of daisy-looking thing next to the river. Casey said that was fine. He placed it in a cracked pot he had found in the storage room. I watched silently from the doorway as he tacked up some stupid poem he had printed off about love, and set up a picture frame, a close-up of her face that I thought was not particularly attractive, but I said nothing.

He continued to work on it, and over the week I'd take a glance inside while walking to get some coffee in my free time. There was always something new. On Tuesday, I saw a cat statue perched on the corner of her desk (I'd forgotten how much she loved them—was obsessed, really), and on Wednesday, her old sweater was arranged carefully over the desk chair.

I was surprised John had yet to say anything, and wondered how long he would let it go on. Maybe he didn't even know about it yet. Then again, I was sure he did. He knew everything that happened on the second floor.

But when Friday came around and I saw a skeleton sitting in her chair, the jaw cracked open so that it appeared to be smiling, I told Casey he needed to stop. "John's not gonna let that slide," I said, referring to the skeleton.

"Someone's gotta know what he's doing," he argued. "This has got to stop. Someone's gotta put him in his place."

I folded my arms across my chest. "And that would be you, by building a shrine?"

Casey shrugged. "Why not?"

I raised my eyebrows but said nothing.

...

When I came back the following Monday, I passed by her shrine as usual, and it was empty. No cat statue, no tacky poem, no skeleton—it was all gone. I walked down to Casey's cubicle to ask what he did with the stuff, and found it empty as well.

I heard John come up behind me; he put his hand on my shoulder. I flinched, but he didn't seem to notice. "He had to go," he said, and I just nodded. I didn't need the rest of the explanation. He removed his hand and moved to go back to his office. "Don't even think about building a goddamned shrine for that bastard," he said over his shoulder.

"I won't," I said, and went back to my office. There was paperwork I had to finish.

### This Is the Day

5:30 a.m.--I wake to the smell of diesel fuel, the howl of coal trucks as they battle the hill that presses against the motel. Chilled in the early morning air, I slide out of bed and go to close the window. I can hear the roar of a nearby creek swollen by last night's storm, the scream of a siren. I peer out at the road, but the road isn't there--only fog so thick that there isn't room for it in the valley. It billows toward me, and I feel it trying to wrap around me, come into the room. As I put the window pane between us, the fog gives up, and I watch it lift. A shaft of sunlight sheens the grass in the meadow between me and the highway.

6:00 a.m.--I have stretched and bent and reached and awakened. I have pulled on sweatpants and a shirt and my sneakers. I have time for a quick run before checking out. I tuck into my pocket some Kleenex and a dollar bill and take off.

6:27 a.m.--It has started raining, and I am not interested in getting wet, so I trot into a brand new My-Dee Mart at the top of the hill. The clerk looks me over but does not speak. I sit down at the back of the store and wait for the automatic self-serve coffee pot to finish brewing.

6:30 a.m.--The door opens, and I watch five small, dark-skinned men come into the store. They look around, their heads turning as if they were characters in a computer game. Oblivious to me and a freckled, balding man sitting near me, they approach the clerk, and I hear one of them ask for something--probably the men's room--in Spanish. The heavy-set, gray-haired woman shrugs her shoulders, offers half a smile, and says in an Eastern-Kentucky-thick accent, "I don't get you, mister." She looks back at me, but I shake my head. The man tries again, but the woman can only raise her eyebrows and shrug her shoulders. One of the other men mutters something, and all five men turn away. They move from counter to counter, shelf to shelf, picking out bags of nacho potato chips, Little Debbie cake rolls, bottles of sugary fruit drinks. Grumbling to each other, they pull change from their grubby jeans, pay, and single-file out the door.

The middle-aged man gets up from his stool near me. He walks to the counter and laughs. "It's a damned good thing you don't talk Spanish, Maggie," he says to the clerk. "You would of decked that little guy."

The woman stares at him. "You know Spanish, Josh? What did that fella say?"

"Well, hell, honey," he laughs, "you don't want them wetbacks pissing in your restroom, do you?"

“Ha!” Her response is quick. “I let you, don’t I?”

The man ignores her question. “Where you suppose they come from?” Then he answers his own question. “Wetbacks, I reckon.” He strolls to the front window and says, “Holy shit, will you look at that! They’re driving a fifty-grand car.” He glances over to Maggie, then back out the window. “Hell, the whole bunch together can’t have enough money to be driving that thing. You suppose they stole it?”

Maggie moves from behind the counter to where she can share window space. “Ain’t never seen them before.”

Her friend provides his opinion. “I worked with one of them Mexes one time. You can’t trust them as far as you can throw a Mack. Bunch of thieves and scoundrels, sure as you’re living, grabbing the jobs right out of a good man’s hands.”

We all hear a big engine growl into action. Turning away from the window, the man nods and shakes a finger at Maggie. “Next time them guys come around, you call the sheriff. Hear me? Doobie will run them out fast enough. Damn foreigners.”

He turns toward the coffee machine and sees me. I am standing now, looking straight at him. His eyebrows rise, and he stops talking. Then he looks back at the clerk and says to her, loudly enough that he’s sure I can hear him, “Now you gotta understand, honey, there’s good Mexicans and bad ones, just like everybody else. Right?” He is grinning at me, nodding. I just keep staring. He shrugs to the clerk. “See ya,” he says, and leaves.

“Jerk!” I hear Maggie say.

6:40 a.m. It has stopped raining, and I decide I don’t have time for the coffee after all. I am smiling as I head for a shower and my meetings. “Have a nice day,” I say to the woman.

4:37 p.m.--It has been a long day for me, one boring presentation after another, one dull discussion after another. Finally, frazzled and wrinkled, I am able to get away. We have company coming for dinner, and home is sixty miles away. I am driving fast when I see a roadside liquor store and, scattering gravel, pull into the parking lot. If I bring a little libation, my husband and the company won’t mind dinner being late.

I am the only customer in a barn-like room filled with a multitude of libations. The man behind the crude wooden counter is a true-blue bubba. So is the guy perched



on a stool near a bountiful array of potato chips. The clerk, shaggy-haired, long-bearded, beer-bellied and about thirty years old, grins and says, "Howdy!" His shirt and his jeans have seen many better days. The second man is older, mid-fifties it looks like. He just stares, first at my face, then at my clothes and what's in them. I say hi and hurry toward the wine racks. I scan the unfamiliar labels. Nothing says "dry white table wine," which I think will go best with baked chicken.

I look toward the clerk at the front of the store and smile. "I think I need some help," I tell him. Within seconds, both men are with me, the clerk on my left, his compatriot on my right. We all three lean close to the labels on the bottles, and it is soon clear that neither of them has ever tasted anything between Bud Lite and Wild Turkey. We debate: "This one?" "Maybe." "This one?" "Looks likely." "You ever tried this one?"

Five minutes later, the younger bubba's choice in my left hand, the older's in my right, the men escort me to the cash register. I glance down, and there in a magazine rack is a bevy of "girlies" that should be in brown paper wrappings. I can't help staring. My view and my education are cut off as the older guy, grinning like a frisky teenager, slides his big bones between me and the magazines.

I set my bottles on the counter, and there before me is a rotating foot-high rack loaded with tiny packets in iridescent colors--blue, green, hot pink, magenta. Each packet, obviously condom-filled, is printed to look like a ticket, these tickets offering the most erotic enticements I have ever encountered. I read two slogans which include words I have never seen in print. The clerk realizes what I am looking at and snatches the rack out of sight and sets it on the floor behind the counter. "Sorry 'bout that, ma'am," he says.

I pay for my purchase, and the clerk smiles big and says, "You have you a good evening, honey."

I grin back and say, "You, too."

The older man, his pants hanging on his hips, his shirt open two buttons lower than when I walked in, is holding the door for me. "Y'all come back now, you hear?"

I smile again and say, "Sure."

I can feel their eyes following me as I climb into my car. I close the door and turn the ignition. They are looking at the HOSPICE on my license plate, and I hear the older fellow call out, "Honey, you're sure the kind of treatment a dying man deserves."

9:17 p.m.--We have fed our guests, and we have brought them to a bluegrass gospel concert. It is only intermission. I have to go to work tomorrow. The dirty dishes are still on the table at home, and I would kill for a good, hot shower. But I am trapped.

The two groups of performers are good, but please, I think to the emcee, I haven't even changed my clothes since seven o'clock this morning. Please, I think to my husband and friends, won't someone suggest we leave?

They don't. Instead, we simply stand to stretch, we make time-filler conversation, we look around and wave to a couple of neighbors. Our female companion makes a fast trip to the restroom with me, and then we are back. We sit down, and I dare myself to enjoy the rest of the show.

10:17 p.m.--It finally ends, or at least the music does. The lead singer of the final group, dabbing at his face with a soggy bandana, says, "Just can't let you good people go without asking you to pray. Please, brothers and sisters, won't you stand and pray with me?" We all creak to our feet and bow our heads. "Say a word of prayer for us," the singer says, "as we head on for Little Rock, o.k.? Pray for the other group, too, them guitar players, them banjo pickers, as they head to wherever they're headed." I peek and see him wipe away another round of sweat. "And now," he says, "please, you-all close your-all's eyes, and without looking at nobody else, you raise your hand if you're hurting." I think of my feet and my rear end but leave my hands in my pockets. "Raise your hand," he says, "if you think you need saving." I think of the laundry piled up in my basement, the stinking kitty litter box, the dirty oil in my car. Still I do not move a muscle.

"Folks," the man says with increased volume, impressive intensity, "this is the day the Lord has made. Raise your hand if you have cause to rejoice in it."

That does it. I think of the Mexicans' luxury vehicle, I think of Maggie, the My-Dee Mart clerk. I think of the Don Juan wanna-bes at Vernon's Liquor Store. I think of my steady though sometimes boring job. I think of my steady husband. I think of my steady heartbeat and my steady breath. I do indeed rejoice. I look up toward the stage, and I lift both hands high. The whole of Mingo County hears me shout, "Amen, brother. Amen."

### **Nice Doing Business with You**

Pvt. Servo gave Pvt. Daniels \$40 for the television right before they deployed to Iraq, the only crinkled bills he had in his weathered wallet at the time.

They had agreed upon a price of \$100. Servo vowed he would get him back when they got home.

Servo made it back a year later, though 24 pounds lighter, dark-eyed from sleep deprivation, and jittery all the time, reflexively scanning roadsides for bombs and rooftops for gunmen.

Daniels didn't.

Though Servo choked up during Daniels's field funeral in country with his boots, rifle and K-pot aligned into a makeshift tribute as taps mournfully warbled in the background, he felt kind of lucky once back in garrison stateside, watching the crystal-clear picture of a television he saved \$60 on.

They sent you abroad to die like garbage for no good reason at all. They surely didn't care about fairly compensating you and any little bit helped.

Everyone was out to exploit you, but Servo had somehow gotten over. He made it home safely, mostly intact, would be discharged soon, had saved more than \$20,000 while deployed abroad, and had a nearly brand-new television he saved a fortune on.

After some marathon cross-country driving, he made it back home to his mom's place in the evening a few weeks before he would return to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to try to finish his degree.

His mother hugged him so hard he worried his cheekbone would break. They talked over tea for hours, though he told her little about his deployment.

"I prayed for you every day. Oh God, I prayed."

After his mom retired for the night, he headed off to the Morgan Street Brewery in Laclede's Landing. He nursed a vague idea of finding companionship but ended up only nursing a few brown ales and robust porters. After a year in the suck, he felt as though an invisible membrane separated him from other people.

Stumbling out onto the cobblestone streets by the mighty Mississippi River that rumbled past, vast and inexorable, he realized he was in no condition to drive and hailed a cab.

Once safely ensconced back home, he still couldn't get back to sleep. Puzzling through the plug situation, he fired up Daniels's television in the spare bedroom. He lay there dead-eyed, trying to forcibly will himself to sleep with PBS on in the background.

A theatrical staging of E.T.A. Hoffman's original "The Nutcracker," strangely completely ballet-free, was playing. Clara grieved that her brother Fritz was killed in the war, and Servo just lost it.

He wept and wept, choking down heaving sobs, knowing he should never have made it back, that he should have paid his debt. He wanted to pick up the television and smash it into the wall or take it outside and kick it to smithereens, but he didn't want to risk waking his mom.

It was more than just \$60. It was a debt he could never really, truly repay.

## Bearing Cake

“Don’t let Daddy go down to the barn by himself.”

That’s what Mama said to me earlier in the morning, but it was too late—he’d already gone. The rope around his neck had broken when he jumped from the hayloft, but we had to call for help anyway because he banged his head on a pile of old paintings left by the handyman. Doctor Miska, who lived just down the road, had paid many visits to the farm, but when I phoned him that day, he said he couldn’t come because he had to heal a bald woman with six fingers. He told us to give Daddy another pill from the box on the plant stand beside the bed and call back in the evening.

It was just Mama and me at home with Daddy that morning. My sister, Fetty, was away with the car. Mama had made her drive our two great-aunts around to some rummage sales and out to the cemetery, probably to move fake flowers from other people’s graves on to the graves of their dead husbands again.

I thought it was best that Fetty wasn’t home anyway. She’d been the one to call for help last time, when Daddy jackknifed off the corn crib. He landed in the pig lot, breaking the backs of two pigs; his belt buckle severed a tail. Mr. Flicek, the editor of the county newspaper, was the first on the scene, but instead of getting help, he started taking photographs for the paper. Mama still believes that he was the one who gave Daddy the idea to jump at exactly 6:45 a.m. that morning, just after sunrise. She said he was trying to make the news as well as report it. Mama also believes that Mr. Flicek was the one who pushed Daisy Trnka into the Roemhildt’s well the other day. Daisy’s brother heard her screaming her head off, and there was Mr. Flicek, right in front of the well taking pictures of the heroic rescue. Mr. Flicek told everyone that he was out there to ask Mrs. Trnka about the quilt she sold on ebay, but you’ve got to wonder. Mama said he wanted a story to top the one he wrote the week prior about Helen Keogh getting sucked into a sinkhole behind the post office. “Kids in wells beat a flush,” Mama said.

I heard he’s a wife-beater, Mr. Flicek. I don’t know his wife. She never comes to church with him. Mr. Flicek’s first name is Chester (though I’ve never heard anyone call him that). Mostly, people call him Flea—like the bug. He’s 6-foot-4 and 265 pounds. I saw it on his driver’s license, which had a clipped corner and a row of chew marks along the bottom edge. I know this because I lifted his wallet and looked through it one time last summer when I was in line behind him to use the pay toilet at the fairgrounds. I gave it back when he came out of the toilet, figuring maybe he’d think it had been lost, that I’d found it, and that he should give me a reward for its safe return. He didn’t. In church sometimes, while the

minister is giving his sermon, I'll watch Mr. Flicek read paperback books and chew a fistful of green-apple bubble gum. He chews so hard sometimes that when the minister slams his hand on the pulpit, Mr. Flicek jerks and his whole head starts to vibrate like a lawn mower. Mama says hell is the only place for him—Mr. Flicek, not the minister.

So today we got Daddy inside and put him to bed. Then we set about cleaning the house for company. Mama made me iron the tablecloth, and I didn't burn it one bit. Mama smiled about that. Late in the afternoon, Fetty came home with our great-aunts; they were expecting to have supper with us. Fetty helped them unload all their rummage sale treasures to show Mama on the porch: four coloring books with plenty of uncolored pages, an Egyptian bird-faced statue with Cairo Super 8 Motel printed on its base, a harmonica, a plastic bag filled with Smurfs, and a pair of black shoes, one with a solid heel at least as big as my hand. Then they came into the house, Great-Aunt Edith clutching an ice cream pail filled with raspberries and Great-Aunt Jean swinging a paper cake box by the string that was tied around it.

"We brought dessert," they sang in unison.

I like cake, but I hate raspberries. They remind me of the time I was on the school bus and two bigger boys started calling me *retard retard retard* over and over again, and they wrote FACK IT in the dirt on my window.

My throat got really wet, and I threw up my lunch all over the window, all over the words. The food stuck to the glass and made a pattern like sheet music from band class: a piece of green bean—sharp; a piece of tater tot—b flat; and the raspberry cobbler—Beethoven's *Für Elise*. The boys hit me on the head with their fists and told me I should have gotten off the bus if I was going to be sick. Then they moved four rows up and sat down with this new kid named Jacob. He could run like Carl Lewis and hit like Kirby Puckett, but only when he wasn't being sat upon by two bigger boys.

After that day, I started sharing a bus seat with Lyle Malinski. He would tell me stories about his crazy mother who liked to wear his dad's trousers and wanted to run for a seat on the County Commission. "Women have no wilderness in them," I'd often say to him. Fetty said that to me once when I found her trying on one of Great-Aunt Edith's black wigs. Great-Aunt Edith always wears a black wig, but she often wears it backwards so the part goes down the back of her head, and she always wears rows of pearls tight around her neck like she's royalty.

So after supper, but before cake and raspberries, Great-Aunt Edith put on the black shoes from the rummage sale. She had to bend one knee to walk in them. Mama said

they looked good on her, made her look like a Romanesque sculpture. Then Mama mixed cocktails for the great-aunts: vodka seven-sours with two lemons. They made the kitchen smell like those little individually wrapped packages of Handi-wipes that Daddy used to keep in the glove compartment of the Volkswagen Beetle. I got car sick every time he opened one. Sitting in the lemony kitchen, my stomach began to churn. I sneaked into Mama and Daddy's bedroom and opened the box on the plant stand by their bed. It was full of pink and yellow pills. Daddy stirred. The blood had stopped gelling around his hairy nostrils and a pinkish color was starting to come back into the folds of his skin. I closed the box. "Please go back to sleep, Daddy."

I went back in the kitchen and sat down next to Great-Aunt Edith, who had taken off the black shoes so that Great-Aunt Jean could try them on. Great-Aunt Edith is my favorite. She smokes brown cigarettes but not in our house. Mama makes her sit on the porch to smoke. Great-Aunt Edith used to keep pet rats and let me play with them. She taught them to bring flowers in from the garden and sleep in her wig when she watched television at night. One day they all disappeared—all three of them at once—and even though the police and even Mr. Flicek investigated, no one knew where they had gone. Great-Aunt Edith had cancer two years ago. Now she carries around her amputated breast in a cat carrier. She says she's pretty sure she can ease its rage given time.

Great-Aunt Jean began clomping around the kitchen, one knee bent, in wide circles, like a monkey on a short leash. Mama passed out dessert plates and spoons, and Fetty started to scoop the raspberries out of the pail with a teacup. I could see inside the pail: the berries had bugs on them. Little black bugs with tiny yellow spots. Great-Aunt Edith began to pick them out and flick them on the floor. I put my hands over my plate, but Fetty dropped a berry onto my knuckle anyway. The red blob bounced and rolled onto the table, leaving a speck of juice on my skin. Great-Aunt Jean clomped over to the table and opened the cake box. There was half an angel food cake inside. "Ought to be about enough," she said.

Just then, a softball-sized clump of shredded newspaper, wet and wadded like a minikin hay bale, flew into the kitchen from the bedroom and Daddy's voice boomed: "What about me?"

**Charlie Adams** is from Bellevue, OH, but moved to West Virginia in 2003, where he is currently studying behavioral science at Glenville State College. He has five children, four step-children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

**Dr. Lloyd E. Bone Jr.** is currently in his 15<sup>th</sup> year as a Glenville State College Music Professor and 13<sup>th</sup> year as the Glenville State College Department of Fine Arts Chairperson. He is the marching, pep and concert bands director, brass ensemble conductor, and teaches applied low brass and many other music courses. Dr. Bone was the 2017 Glenville State College Faculty Award of Excellence winner and is the Co-Editor of the Euphonium Source Book, the world's first definitive text regarding the baritone and euphonium.

**Chesney Brown** is a student at BCMS in West Virginia.

**Jeremy Carter** is an Academic Success Counselor at Glenville State College, originally from Bluefield, WV, living in Glenville with his wife, Brittney, and son, Jobe. Carter completed his undergraduate studies in Music Performance at Charleston Southern University in South Carolina and was awarded a Master's of Music in Jazz Pedagogy in 2013 from WVU. He is currently working on a Doctor's of Musical Arts in Low Brass Performance at WVU.

**Anna Childers** is a twenty-two year old Freshman from Clay County, West Virginia. Before enrolling at Glenville State College she worked at gas stations and wrote (unpublished) novels for fun. Her favorite place to write is in any attic near a window, her favorite time to write is always, and her favorite thing to write about is everything.

**Kristen Cosner** is the Communications Coordinator at Glenville State College.

**Wayne de Rosset** retired from GSC as Professor Emeritus 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.

**Sam Edsall** is a senior at Glenville State College. He is a loving father and enjoys reading, writing, and playing music in his spare time.

**Melissa Gish** is an associate professor of English and a faculty advisor to the GSC Science Fiction and Fantasy Guild. She's an editor at *Aji* magazine and writes juvenile nonfiction books. She recently began a collection of gothic short stories set in her native Minnesota.



**Michael Lee Johnson** lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era, and is a dual citizen of the United States and Canada. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. He has been nominated for Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net awards, and is the editor of numerous anthologies, including *Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze*, *Dandelion in a Vase of Roses*, and *Warriors with Wings: the Best in Contemporary Poetry*.

**Carrie Kline** makes her life along the Tygart Valley River in Elkins, West Virginia. She is half of a musical duo with Michael Kline, both playing guitar and singing in high mountain harmony. They are folklorists, oral historians and lovers of life in the Allegheny Highlands, operating an enterprise called Talking Across the Lines.

**Robert W. Kniceley** is a sophomore studying History and Political Science at Glenville State College.

**Abigail Nicole Mayle** has loved telling stories for as long as she can remember. She particularly loves Sci-fi, fantasy, and the like, but really just anything fiction. She is a first-time freshman at Glenville State College with aspirations of becoming an author one day.

**Sandra Miller** is an amateur photographer from Buckhannon.

**Dr. Jonathan Minton** is an Associate Professor of English at Glenville State College, and faculty advisor to the *Trillium*. His books include *Technical Notes for Bird Government*, *In Gesture*, and *Lost Languages*. He edits the literary journal *Word For/Word* ([wordforword.info](http://wordforword.info)).

**Steven Morningstar** is an alumnus of Glenville State College as a 1978 graduate with a B.A. in Art Education K-12. He also has two graduate degrees from WVU, an M.A. in Art Education, 1982, and an M.F.A. in Painting, 1984. He is the retired Chair of the Fine Arts Department at Parkersburg High School, but still substitute teaches in three counties in WV.

**Sarah Normant** is a Glenville State College Alumnus. She enjoys collecting comics, figures, and oddities. Her favorite subjects for her art lately have been WV scenery and self portraits.

**Johnny O'Hara** is a sophomore at GSC studying Elementary and Early Childhood Education. A new creation by the grace of God, His greatest ambition in life is to know God and to make Him known. He loves because God first loved Him.

**Joseph S. Pete** is an award-winning journalist, an Iraq War veteran, an Indiana University graduate, a book reviewer, a photographer, the editor of the *Northwest Indiana Literary Journal*, and a frequent guest on Lakeshore Public Radio. He is a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominee who was named the poet laureate of Chicago BaconFest, a feat that Geoffrey Chaucer chump never accomplished. His writing and photography have appeared in more than 150 literary journals. Like Bartleby, he would prefer not to.

**Hannah Seckman** is a senior studying Creative Writing at Concord University in Athens, WV. She plans to attend graduate school to obtain her MFA in the fall of 2019. Outside of academics, when the time allows, Hannah enjoys reading and spending time with her aging black lab, Ranger.

**Lia Runyan** is a music performance major from Clarksburg, West Virginia. She graduated from Robert C. Byrd High School in 2016. Her passions include her wonderful dog Gabi, her bunny Thumper, and spending time with her niece Sophia and her nephew Dion.

Regarding his Dale Robertson sketch in this issue, **Maurice Shock, Jr.** says, “Western fans will remember Dale as the handsome actor who played special agent Jim Hardy in *Tales of Wells Fargo* (1957-1962). In later years, Dale also had a minor role in the *Dallas* TV series.” Mr. Shock’s father-in-law lived near the Robertson family in Oklahoma in the early 1950’s.

**Barbara Smith** is a retired Professor of Literature and Writing and Chair of Division of Humanities, Alderson-Broaddus University, Philippi, WV. She is the the author of over 300 published poems, short stories, journal articles, and 20 books, the latest of which is the novel *Winging It*.

**Dr. Marjorie Stewart** is an Associate Professor of English at Glenville. She paints under the name Max. Check out her work at [MaxStewartPaints.com](http://MaxStewartPaints.com).

**Nora Taylor** is an eighth grade student currently living in Georgia. She has been taking dance for five years and acting for eleven years, and also enjoys playing the piano and violin. Her oil paintings are inspired by Bob Ross, but she also loves pencil drawing. Nora’s other pastimes include hiking, playing with her dog, and hanging out with friends and family.

**Gordon West** resides in Normantown, WV. He enjoys music, comic books and is inspired by Van Gogh’s artwork.

**Edward Webber** is from Long Beach, California and attends Glenville State as a football player and Psychology Major. His work in this issue deals with those suffering from depression who may feel alone, and just want to be heard.