

Trillium 2022



THE
Trillium

Issue 43, 2022

The *Trillium* is the literary and visual arts publication of the Glenville State University Department of Language & Literature. The *Trillium* welcomes submissions and correspondence from Glenville State University students, alumni, faculty, and staff, and our extended creative community.

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Editors' Note.

Since its establishment as a professional college for teachers on February 19, 1872, Glenville State University has provided exceptional educational opportunities for people of all ages from within central West Virginia and outside it. It has embraced its role in the community as a place to open its students' minds to artistic expression in music, the fine arts, and literature. Here, a diverse student body of creative minds can find the training and self-confidence they need to reach the pinnacle of personal success in self-expression. The faculty who populate our programs in music, arts, and the English language are dedicated to turning out excellent students to represent our institution—and our Appalachian homeland—in the wider world.

The *Trillium* was first published in 1976. In a region where young writers and artists often find it difficult to find appropriate space to express their talent, the *Trillium* has continually served as a stage for our quietest creatives to reach beyond themselves. As editorial staff we strive to showcase quality pieces representative of the hidden strengths of our campus community.

As a college, Glenville State University has served generations of West Virginians in their goals to better themselves, and—one by one, person by person—to better our state as a whole. It has educated musicians, politicians, educators, writers, scientists, artists, and professionals of all job descriptions. In its new role as the first central West Virginian University, we look ahead to the continual upward trajectory of our school and its many departments, including those that many of our contributors hail from, the Departments of Languages & Literature and of Fine Arts, whose contributions to refining the creative heritage of our West Virginian people are unequalled. It seems fitting that our school should move into the next stage of its progress during the 150th anniversary of our existence. We wish its next 150 years success.

Anna Childers, Literary Editor
Zoe Yates, Art Editor

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Our Hill A Gift

JACK H. ALBERT, JR.

A gift to the President of the College, Dr. Mark Manchin.

Praise our Hill of storied past
On this place you our
Missions cast.

In our minds remain
visions, hopes, and works your
Crafters here ordained.

We lift our heads to you Holy Hill
where we in humble effort learned
Our noble skill.

Then with youthful zeal we set
defining journeys
our tasks unfinished yet.

Spiritual each our calls
from Little River town to
schools, stadiums, and concert halls.

To change our world and more,
from Lighthouse Hill; we took hope
to every village hearth and door.

Sounds again the tower bell,
we the faithful return
From mountain, valley, field and dell,

To stand with rightful pride
reciting by memory names – of
those who ghostly here abide.

Teaching their timeless historic ways
Lessons true and sure
we learned to live successful days.

But precious sounds grow still
as thickens the twilight
of our days on Pioneer Hill.

Time calls; we cannot stay
Yet a priceless debt remains,
A cost no way to pay -

So a gift, a sacred vow,
Forever Honored Memories,
and our humble gracious bow.

Forever Honored Memories,
and our humble gracious bow.

This poem was written on the occasion of the Glenville State University Commencement Celebration where the 50- year graduation of the Classes of 1970 (COVID delayed) and 1971 were honored on May 8, 2021.

Dreamscape at the Foot of the God
DRAVIN GIBSON



The Birdwatcher

CALI HAYES

Frank saves his hair clippings when he goes to the barber because he is beginning a premature horseshoe hairline. He is determined to create the perfect, natural toupee. Frank likes to keep to himself. He completes the same tasks in the same order each day. He goes to the barber every second Wednesday at 2:30 P.M, McDonalds at 4:15 P.M, then the city park at 5:00 P.M. He has loved McDonald's since he was a boy, and his mother would take him every Friday afterschool. Frank's nervous ticks sometimes go unnoticed, but his obvious stutter is hard to miss. His closet is color coded, white, brown, and black. His clothes are all neatly ironed and placed in his closet. Neutrals is all he wears to ensure his normality's. Bright colors are distracting for Frank. His house is neat and dust-free, and his bed is magazine perfect with the same beige patchwork quilt he has had for ten years that his grandmother gifted him as a boy.

He has lived in the same town his entire life. Strangers are hard to come by until recent attractions to pursue the quaint, country life. The townspeople go to the same grocery store, Budget Foods, as they did when they were children. That is where Frank works in the morning Monday through Thursday. The barber cuts the men's hair for life. Frank goes to one of four churches that line the strip of Main Street with his sister's, Melody, and her family. Melody goes to church to seek hope and support from the congregation about her son's disappearance, but the family has been on edge. Following the church sermon, they go to the same diner, Cottage Corner, along with the rest of the town that floods into the restaurant. His sister's son, Jonas, has been missing for months. Melody and her husband have been tossing the idea of divorce around for months; however, the sole purpose they have not finalized their decision is the hope Jonas will be found. Frank is the only one to have hope. He tells his sister over and over he doesn't believe Jonas is missing. He assures her he cannot be far.

Frank's Backyard Shed

The smell of the building reeks of dead animal and bleach. No one can be in the building, only Frank. He spends a lot of time in the building studying birds. Frank has always loved birds growing up. As a boy, he would watch them for hours in the day. He would draw each bird he saw and label them accordingly. He has a hundred books on them, and all of which he has read once if not twice. Taxidermy line the four walls of the shed. He does not have more than one breed the same. Each morning he wakes to feed the birds that come to his homemade wooden feeder.

“G-g-good morning,” he says at 6:45 A.M.

Two Weeks Prior

It is the second Wednesday of the month. Frank goes to the barber earlier than his appointment and waits. While waiting his turn, he guys, and the barber begin talking begin their usual conversation about the weather and how it is affecting their hay fields. They go on discussing how they are going to fix the problems in the government. All are subjects Frank has heard before, but he never interjects. He is just there to get his haircut. Frank does not understand why these men waste their days talking about the monotonous topics each time they go to get their hair cut. A new topic arises today, though. They begin to talk about the recent missing boys around town.

One guy says, “This is the third missing boy in the past six months. What the hell is going on in our town?”

“It has to be some of these newcomers that flood this town because they are tired of the fast, city life,” another guy interjects.

The murmured concerns continue between the men.

Frank asks the barber nervously, “Can I have mo-more than just my hair t-today?” Without hesitation the barber says, “If you sweep it up, be my guest. You can have as much as you want.”

He sweeps up only the brown hair because that reminds him mostly of himself.

Present Day

Frank stays on a strict schedule. After every barber visit, he heads through the drive thru at McDonalds and then, he will go to the park for a hike. At 5:00 P.M, Frank gets to the city park on his evenings off from working. He enjoys walking the track that loops the park to equal a half a mile. During his walk, he is looking and feeding the birds the top of his fish filet bun. He orders a fish filet sandwich with no cheese, two baskets of fries, 50-piece chicken nugget, three apple pies, and four sweet teas every second Wednesday of the month. His order has been the same for months.

Frank created a hideout off on of his favorite bird watching trails. He has his backpack full of brown hair from the townsmen in a Budget Food plastic grocery bag and his cold McDonald's food. He visits his hideout because there he keeps all his friends. When he opens the door, his friends great him with dry, bulging eyes and to him the loudest chippers. He sits on the ledge with his feet dangling in their faces. Frank likes the view of him looking down and see all his friends eager to see him with loud and wide-open mouths. Chewing one chicken nugget at a time, one fry at a time, one bite of apple pie at a time, Frank helps his friends digest their food until every piece of food is gone. He holds their cups for them as they slurp the last drop.

Lurking over his nestling his chicklings all sit motionless at the bottom; they are wearing a horseshoe hairline with the tops of their heads full of burns and scars. For months now, he has acted as their mother bird. Continually, he is trying to create himself. Frank tries again to make their perfectly natural toupees.

bellyache
ZOE YATES



Myriad

JORDAN PIERSON

Bursting forth
Into the cold expanse
Into sublime absence
Beyond the soil's claim

She calls your name
Echoed in rushing floods
Imminent flushing
Blood breaches and buds
Fingers dig into mud and it does the same

But she calls your name
From the banks of a distant Eden
She insistently sings in foreign tongues
The language of the other side
Transcribed from the distant dreams of your youth
Where she called you

And you answered

And you could see the truth
The other side bore fruit
That fruit is long since gone

But she calls

Zoe
CLARK



In vitro Diagnostics

BROOKE STORM

As I laid in his bed,
I stared up at the globe,
hanging from his cream-colored ceiling.

I could only see Antarctica,
the tip of South America,
Africa.

But, it didn't matter;
because in the darkness,
you don't see the world.

But, like the world,
the environment,
our environments shape us.

It makes us exactly who we're meant to be.

Looking at that globe,
I wasn't thinking about the inevitable tomorrow.
Why should I?

By the time we know tomorrow,
it is yesterday,
far too late for us to change it.

It makes us exactly who we're meant to be.

Processing S.P.
K.A. WRIGHT



Suburban Daydream #7

GSU'S SPRING 2021 CREATIVE WRITING CLASS

When she feels at one with the world,
she wants to dance all night.

When she goes out,
she wear long skirts to feel smaller in it.

If she were Superman,
she would never bundle up.

If she were Picasso,
she would just stare at everything in awe.

If she were a dog,
she would think the world is not dying.

If she were to ever fall in love again,
she would quit her day job.

If she ever gets a PhD,
she'll probably punch someone.

A collaborative poetry project directed by Dr. Jonathan Minton, Head of the Department of Language & Literature.

Move Deftly

CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL CHAMBERS

Inspired by a line from a Margaret Atwood Poem which goes like this “We are learning to make a fire.”

Move deftly,
For the dreams don’t conceive themselves.
Move wisely,
Or we’ll never liberate the lonely shelves
Of knowledge never touched.
The fire is abandoned...
Ablaze—it burns out
—wild and never managed.

Above all that,
Move,
For no one will move for you.
You are lone in your heart
There is no delegating the chambers and their delicate art.
You are the only mover to motivate
Yourself to stretch the bounds and touch the great
The wonderful things embedded in your soul.
You are the greatest friend that you could ever cajole.

Create a self, make a move,
For the dreams don’t conceive themselves.
Books and art are decorations
Until you liberate those lonely shelves.

Learn all you can.
Live your life while you can.
Move deftly

Untitled
CAMRYN TYREE



The Giver

MIAKAYLA HOODER

You give so much and expect nothing in return
She responds with a smile and slightly turns
That turn is a switch and the memories start rolling
The times that she was simply asking for holding
Instead she got their problems and learned to put herself second, third,
fourth
So when you say she is a giver
You aren't telling her what she doesn't already know
Instead, you are reminding her of those times that she was told no
She learned from a young age to put others before herself
Some might say it was a survival technique, others say it's a trauma
response
She simply says it who she is
She is me

The Cat's Tail
DWIGHT HEASTER



A Dog's Life

MELISSA GISH

This little, aging dog lies on a soft pillow
in a splintered willow branch chair,
drowsing in the faded light of evening,
and leans her head toward the sound of frogs
in the tall grass

These curiosities with legs chirp and whistle,
flash green and bronze, glint like damp, pale
fireflies, earning the little dog's glance,
then disappear under a canopy of osmunda
ferns and catnip

Evening slips away, fades like mist over a pond
as the little dog sighs and blinks, considering
the simplicity of a slow progression of tiny ants
flowing over the garden stones on their way
to some unknown ambition

Crickets and perhaps some beetles join the frogs,
make strange vibrations, and the little, aging dog,
lulled by this strange paeon, dreams of morning,
the smell of deer, and chasing bumblebees
in the tall grass

Away
DONAL HARDIN

And I...
Amid this universe of plutonian expanse.
Desolate, unending, untethered, unweighted, and blind.
Despair my only hope.
An infinitude of infinities,
ciphers all.
Emptiness, engulfing and engorging -
sapping my existence by absence and space.
From my Love, my Life, my Lisa...
Until, I shall return!

Untitled
SARA SAWYER



Do Not Do As I Do

TRACY HITT-JACKSON

Driving down the freeway,
Listening to my favorite jams,

Speeding down the road to work,
When I spot an undercover policeman,

I ease over to the slow lane,
And continue to cruise on down the road,

While others are slamming on their brakes,
An obvious fiasco.

I keep an eye on him through my rearview,
Waiting on my chance,

To speed up once more,
After one final glance,

Do not do as I do,
I'm only writing the rhyme,

As I travel to work,
And to pass the time.

Mafia
SIERRA WOOD



Nettles to Feathers

VERONICA ROWSE

Once upon a time, a young queen, her son and her seven brothers were traveling back to her husband. Her youngest brother had been born with a swan wing, and they had just spent some months looking for a way to fix it. In her country, they had asked every magic user to no avail, and had thought there could be answers in another country. They were wrong.

Her husband met them at the gates. His face was grim.

“Nuala, the priests have heard that you have been consorting with witches. The people have risen against you. I am sorry, but we must spirit you and your brothers away in a dramatic fashion, in a way that will make the people believe you have been punished.”

Nuala’s face twisted in grief. She hadn’t loved her husband, not as he did her, but she respected him, and knew him well. Already, she knew that he would ask that she left her son with him; he was, after all, the only heir, and the nation’s religion dictated that you mustn’t remarry until all your current children were adults. But she nodded anyway. She was a queen; she knew how to sacrifice family.

Looking down at her child’s screaming face, for he had awoken and could tell something was wrong, she still wished she had more time. She looked the king in his eyes and made him swear that the child would just happen to visit his grandfather in ten years, after fears were for-gotten, and that he would visit every year during the summer from then on.

Nodding, he kissed her cheek and she kissed her son’s, and he took the child to place in the arms of his own mother, who smiled wickedly. She had never liked Nuala, and had possessively doted on the child, spoiling him rotten and teaching him bad habits.

The king led Nuala to a pyre, and the people cheered at the thought of the foreign witch burning. But before the eager citizens could toss a torch, Nuala’s brothers surrounded the fire, and begged the people to pity the woman.

This was where the King was supposed to fake a holy possession; he was a god in a hu-man body after all. He knew how to roll his eyes back, and nobody alive had seen a possession. The last one had been over a century back. He was

supposed to grant them absolution and banish them from the nation, for it was the least the people would accept.

But when he turned to face his wife, there was no compassion in those glowing, ruby eyes. A sneer, so unlikely to be found on the man's face, curled at his lips, and his voice seemed to boom across the city square. He seemed to stare at her youngest brother's wing, and his sneer grew worse.

"This witch deserves far more suffering than death, as do her brothers."

Shadows extended from his fingertips, and curled around the terrified men, wrapping tighter and tighter around their bodies until they were just shrinking voids, and the god smiled triumphantly. "They shall be turned to white swans, and unless she follows my rules three, they will stay in these forms forever. Firstly, she must pluck every feather from their wings, which in turn will become a nettle. Secondly, she must plant each into the ground, they will stay as swans. Finally, if so much as a single sound escapes her lips between then and now, they will die."

The king fell to his knees, like a marionette whose strings had been cut, and the shadows dissipated, leaving seven swans surrounding the young queen.

Making eye contact, the king mouthed a single word: Run.

The swans snatched up bits of the rope that had been wrapped around Nuala's body, and flew off with her in tow, a screaming horde chasing after the bevy until well after sunset.

It all cut off her circulation most uncomfortably, but Nuala couldn't protest. She couldn't even sigh, and as her brothers landed in a pond far off, she couldn't even scream as she nearly drowned, wrapped in the sodden rope.

When she finally broke the surface of the water, trying to quietly swallow down the water in her lungs instead of coughing, she looked into her brothers eyes and saw nothing there.

Nuala was alone. She was far away from her father, her son would grow up not knowing her, and she couldn't even talk to her brothers.

She wept, but did not sob, and climbed a tree. It was unsafe this near the forest. The boars may try to get her while she slept. They would not bother her brothers.

After a month of setting herself up with food and weaving, Nuala managed to catch one of her brothers, and carefully tucked each one of his feathers-turned-nettles into a basket she had made.

He scratched and hit, with wings strong enough to break a man's thigh, and she bruised most terribly, but with each feather she picked, a black one appeared, so she only hoped the god had told the truth.

She managed to catch them all during that first spring, and spent the summer, when she wasn't dying of heat exhaustion or fending off the animals of the forest, sowing and tending to the nettles, her fingernails dark with dirt and calluses covering the front and back of her hands.

It was nearing the middle of September, when it occurred to the woman that swans flew away during the winter. She eyed her brothers. Would they leave, would they come back, would she be done by the time they came back? Should she lock them up?

Then, the fall equinox happened. When she awoke at sunrise, her brothers were turning human, and they whooped for joy when they saw her and an empty basket next to a field of young nettles. Nuala! You have cured us!

They quieted when they realized there were more baskets.

Quickly, using some improvised sign language, they remembered that the equinoxes were considered unholy days, and that these gods had no power during those days.

They spent the day enjoying their humanity, but as the moon rose, shadows seemed to once again cover the men, and soon they were thoughtless beasts who flew away the next day.

Nuala allowed herself to cry again, and wonder about her son.

Nuala sowed half another basket of nettles, but soon had to give it up, to prepare for the winter.

She wove herself a structure in the trees just before the first frost hit. Covering her face, she would go into the local town and trade baskets for blankets, but it wasn't enough to completely stave off the cold. Her bones felt like ice, and it was a wonder that she didn't get frost-bite. She swore she would put those boys to work next time they were human, to make her a house for next winter. She couldn't afford to hire anyone.

The day before the spring equinox, the black swans returned, and the next sunrise, they were put to work. Nuala could tell they wanted to complain, but then they'd look at her hands and shut up. And looking at the skies, they could tell it was still going to snow.

Nuala managed to do two more baskets of nettles when the village nearby started noticing the nettles creeping out from the woods and how, whenever she walked into the market, she had hundreds of scratches covering her. The word 'witch' was starting to be thrown around again. One man, who had been in the capitol when the curse was laid on her family, said she looked an awful lot like the queen. Stares drilled into the back of her head as she left the market. As she walked back to her field, she knew she was being watched.

She had a week before the next equinox.

The people may react on the equinox, if the lack of 'holy' magic showed them that yes, she was the queen.

So during that time, she packed all her things. Knocked her shelter off the branches and set it ablaze in the middle of the pond as to leave no trace of her life there. She mourned the loss of it, for winter was coming once again, but she knew she had to go.

When the equinox came, she quickly wrote in the dirt what was happening and what her plan was, and so she and her brothers ran nearly the whole day. When sunset came, she tied their feet to her lightest blanket, and they flew her to an island in the middle of the sea.

It was a small island, and she was able to plant another half a basket of nettle there before the next equinox. Thankfully, they took to the soil quickly and did not require much tending, but still she suffered. This winter, she only had one blanket, and no one to trade with for more or for food. Fresh water had to be used sparingly, and the only shelter she could make was a sandy hole dug into the ground, covered by her rotting and frozen blanket.

In the days when the only thing she could do to survive was stay in that hole, she allowed herself to think of her son. Was he writing yet? Would he draw a picture of his family, and would she be in it? Or would he only draw his father and grandmother?

When March came, her brothers spent the whole day sowing together the scraps of their clothing and what bits of the blanket that hadn't rotted, so once again they could fly across the sea.

They barely made it to the beaches of the home country when the blanket ripped, and Nuala fell in. Drenched and miserable, she built a fire out of driftwood and friction, and watched her brothers glide in the waves. Sadly, she restocked to stay at the beach, so as to not lose her brothers, and set about making herself shelter. The wind whipped around her, all day everyday, and on one especially cruel April day, she lost three nettle-feathers.

She spent the whole of May looking for them, barely sleeping or eating, terrified of the prospect of never finishing. When she finally found the last one, caught under a bit of seaweed, she nearly sobbed in relief, only to catch herself at the last moment.

The nettles didn't do very well in the sands of that beach, and so she was only able to finish her fifth basket whereas before she could've finished two in that time before. When the fall equinox hit, the brothers only looked at her sadly.

They all gathered up some seashells, and walked as far inland as they could, and stopped once they reached a decently sized town. Nuala sold the shells and saved up enough to buy some more blankets and a room in the inn occasionally, on the worst nights. Sometimes she worked as a barmaid, and wondered how many people would recognize her as the king of this land's daughter if she wasn't so dirty and scratched up all the time.

Finally, she found the time and the money to send word to her father about the situation. She signed it, "your least favorite daughter, Nuala," so he would know it was her. Only she and her father knew of the joke, and she wanted to make sure he knew she was alive and not an im-poster. The rumors about her had greatly exaggerated her death.

Her father managed to get a fast carriage to the town in time for the spring equinox, and Nuala and her brothers managed to get back to the castle in style. They arrived just as the sun finished setting.

As soon as all the courtiers and other gawkers had left, Nuala threw her arms over her father's and embraced him tightly. It had been over five years since had last seen him.

Looking over her scarred and bent form, and at the swan brothers, the king promised, "It will be done, soon."

Nuala and her brothers, who now were kept captive so they wouldn't get confused about the change of location, were sent to live in the summer lodge, where there was good soil and space for planting.

With only half of the last basket left, Nuala, her father and her brothers spent the days re-laxing and enjoying themselves, excitement for what was soon to come racing through their minds.

By October 31st, she had planted all of the feathers, and when she returned to the castle that evening, her heart racing with joy at the thought of finally being free of the curse, she nearly tripped over her feet when she saw her brothers still swans, swimming in the castle's baths.

With horror, she thought back to the god's words; there hadn't been a promise of actually turning the brothers back. Just the possibility.

Full of impotent rage, Nuala struck the ground. She had given up her voice, for this? Her freedom, for this? Her child, who by now would be five, with three and a half years without a mother, for this?

During that winter, she would barely eat or sleep, drifting silently through the castle, her burning sorrow striking a melancholic feeling into the heart of whoever saw her.

The king could bear it no longer.

On the spring equinox, when the enemy gods were weak but his gods were strong, the king went deep into the forest.

He got lost.

He found what was seemingly a humble little cottage, and prostrated himself on the front step. Eventually, the door swung open.

The goddess, whose eyes were like green shadows, looked down upon the king.

"I know what it is you seek," the goddess told him. "But what will you give in return?"

That moonrise, the king didn't return. Or rather, only part of him did.

The goddess held the still beating heart of the king as she walked between the bent forms of the brothers and Nuala, the sun setting fast behind her. She smeared a bit of blood on each man's forehead, and shrunk and placed

the heart on the tongue of Nuala. She then said a blessing, unknowable to mortal ears.

The brothers glowed. Nuala screamed. The goddess disappeared.

The next day, Nuala was crowned queen.

And years later her daughter, for her child was actually a daughter, visited. And she was so, so glad.

Chipping Sparrow
CAMRYN TYREE



The day the icicle dropped

ANNA CHILDERS

“I can’t come to class. My girlfriend has a fever.
The heater kicks off when the temperature drops.
The gas line is two miles back on the mountainside
And I won’t let her walk alone when I love her.
I hold her hand in my glove to keep the hike warm
Through downpouring snow like busted feather pillows.
Her lips and my fingers are cold on the pliers
As I pull the plunger on a gas line. She stands
Vigilant by me, with a pistol on her hip
We are alone back here without cellphone service.
I’ve lost twenty pounds and I can count my ribcage.”

“Our friend went missing in the back field after school.
We commuted an hour to search with a spotlight.
We found him blackout drunk under his bed, a child
Sought solace under his blankets and hid deeper.
He aches and we cannot make him breathe cleaner air
Than the litterbox smell of cat piss under there.
The mama cat comes like a skeleton to feed her kids
When there is no food in the house but beer and vape.
We are two small women alone in a vast house
Filled to the rafters with boxes and unwashed clothes
We’re not man enough to face him, steal his bottles.”

“My parents give us my bedroom to run away.
Her mother can see the carnage of her broken house.
They sit in tornado currents of fat green flies.
There’s a smell like death on the right side of the yard.
It’s the roaring heat of August and the ground steams.
The child hides somewhere at home and the adult me
Finds the plastic bucket of dead chickens in grass.

A baby raccoon cries in an unchecked live trap.
Starved, thirsty, hissing for spite, and I want to cry,
Scream, weep at the sky, at the man who went for beer,
At her mother who won't see sickness in his eyes.
We feed it apples and he smokes a cigarette.
I press her ears with my hands so she doesn't hear.
He blows smoke to hell twice with a Henry rifle."

"Nothing at school holds a candle to life out here.
The dogs mow through a second batch of puffy chicks.
Her mother snuck them in the front door like a child,
Smiling, with the cardboard box peeping behind her.
I bury them tenderly by the garlic bed.
It feels wrong to crush the ground over the shoebox.
I carry the shame of absent faces' mistakes,
Gritting mute prayers to God for no more dead things.
I did the showcase with beaks stuck in my mind's eye."

"I would do that internship you put me up for
If we didn't have to move back into that house.
We can't walk a straight line through our living room.
There's a dead mouse in the corner of our bedroom,
And we barely took clothes out of my parents' house.
When we go to bed fat fleas hop on our mattress.
They jump on my toes when I go to the bathroom.
They bite me while I watch TV with my girlfriend.
We have nowhere else to go but this human sty.
We can't make him stop drinking, and last time we left,
We came back to find the dogs had no food or water
And our bedroom door was barricaded with my bookshelf
Where they wanted to lay with our smell that they missed.
He piled the sectional on top of itself, full of fleas."

"The ceiling will fall on me if I shut my eyes.

I see imprints of floor joists cracking the drywall.
There are hundreds of pounds of furniture up there,
Where our friend bounces on it like a trampoline
To show me nothing will break as it bows and flexes
Over my head, my homework, and the little I brought.
They say I'm scared for nothing but naïve weakness.
The contractor walks in our room and starts cussing.
The ceiling could have fell! They could have fucking died!
The contractor makes her mom prop up the ceiling
While he wedges dead men between ceiling and floor
And pounds boards at the split seams with ten-penny nails.

“This tolerance of mine is more shock than patience.
It's self-doubt that outsources self-preservation
And closes my eyes for fear of being too smart,
Too proud to bear the weight of another soul's sham.
My mother looks me in those eyes, and she tells me
Just as long as you're happy, and I swear it's true,
That this sagging floor I built my whole future on
Feels strong enough to hold the house under my socks.
Life isn't the same as it was before that house.
The day the pipes burst inside the house from the cold
That leached through light sockets and bled around windows—
My numbness shattered like icicles fallen from the eaves.”

Kepler 442B Sets Over Stewart Creek
MAX STEWART



from LETTERS

JONATHAN MINTON, DIANA MAGALLON, AND JEFF CROUCH

Basilisk:

In ancient Greece, a serpent hatched its egg
in the nest of the ruby-crowned kinglet,
the little warbler, song-throated, gold-crested.

If you arrange your mirrors, so you see only this reflection,
or the array of brass cannons along the wall,
if you look away, nervously, towards the nameless terror,

and translate its famine into fields of seedless corn,
these letters are dangerous in the hands of a person
of no good-will.

from LETTERS

JONATHAN MINTON, DIANA MAGALLON, AND JEFF CROUCH



Untitled 1, 2, & 3

JENNA WILLIAMS

Untitled 1

I dream of hummingbirds—
We first met on a July afternoon
Damp after the rain, limp
I believed you to be lifeless.

In an instant—movement—
A dance upon the soft wind
But—you are not yet strong
 enough,
You find your perch atop my palm.

A resting place, a safe haven
Time is at standstill—for just a
 moment—
You are my universe, my reality
Only you exist.

I dream of hummingbirds—
Yet here you are, before my eyes.
I believe you to be life—
A reminder of childhood wonder,
Cutting sharp as a knife.

Untitled 2

You have grown upon my skin,
Like ivy on the birches.
Braided strong against my heart,
Moss upon the surface.

Your thorns have since entrenched
 upon,
Even the most private parts of me.
For I will prune your briars,
Even if you leave.

Untitled 3

A flake upon your lash,
Early morning snow.
Your palm my only warmth,
What I wish you'd know.

Frost around my heart,
Oh, I wish you knew.
Your face a painting- work of art
I could say, but never do.

Beauty Amongst the Dead
ELI ANDERSON LAKE



Thirteen Ways of Looking at Brightspace
MARJORIE STEWART

I

Among twenty overheated lab computers
The only moving thing
Was the cursor on Brightspace

II

I was of three minds
Like a computer
In which there are three open Brightspace windows

III

A Brightspace assignment whirled into
the ionosphere.
It was a small part of what was lost.

IV

A teacher and a student
Are one.
A teacher and a student and Brightspace
Are one.

V

I do not know which to prefer,
The dullness of Blackboard
Or the beauty of Brightspace,
the utter sameness
or infinite variety.

VI

Steam fogged the long windows
Of the computer lab.
The screens radiated
The images of Brightspace.
The mood
Glowed in the screen
An indecipherable enigma.

VII

O wise men of the cabinet
Why do you imagine a high tech campus?
Do not you see how Brightspace
Is draining the time and energy
Of the students and faculty about you?

VIII

I know technology
And lucid, inescapable algorithms;
But I know, too,
That Brightspace is involved
In what I will never know.

IX

When Brightspace shut down
It lost the work
Of one of many students.

X

At the sight of discussions
Posted on a blue screen,
Even the shyest student
Would cry out sharply.

XI

He logged in over the college network
On a slow computer.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The delete button
For save.

XII

The semester is moving.
Brightspace must be working.

XIII

It was finals all week.
It was late night breakfasts
And raucous cram sessions.
Brightspace sat
Useless and alone.

Dreamscape of the Inescapable Void
DRAVIN GIBSON



Meanderings

ELI A. WHITE

Meandering

Smoothly traveled as it stretches through the metropolis of nowhere.

Sharp and right one can fall on this broken path walked by the unfortunate.

A twisted road, a labyrinth of poor choices.

Recollections scattered along the trail for which importance is lost.

Sudden pits rattle the carriage as a reminder of what lies ahead.

The churchyard on the crest nothing more than a fork looming over the well
kempt pasture.

Ancestors watch solemn from the masons' artistry having no better to do.

The Red Temple waits forth in its impressive erosion surrounded by the wise
ones.

Under its care sacrifices of Abraham rest easy.

The phony priests who live within speak a paradox, the one who knows the
truth stays silent.

The ghouls who follow him so often say, "A simple choice would make the road
less perilous."

Untitled
SARA SAWYER



from LETTERS

JONATHAN MINTON, DIANA MAGALLON, AND JEFF CROUCH

You said the mountains in the distance were sterile,
with only one tree swaying.

Because I was still speaking, I didn't hear it.
I was thinking of a mountain king, a wild hunt.

Anything could happen, you said and this king,
bared his teeth to a brave girl,

because she was feeding the animals bonemeal and honey.
She was hiding the wings behind her back.

She will never change his mind, you said,
because nothing is new but a new set of eyes, a mouth.

There are always stories, I said, and here,
we were in love. We were here. Our ground was ash.

My hands held our fire. One time. I said this to you.

from LETTERS

JONATHAN MINTIN, DIANA MAGALLON, AND JEFF CROUCH



Breathe

CHRISTOPHER SANDY

Hardships ebb and flow with every breath
From every gasp at breath comes obstacles
Unbearable, unendurable
That is the way of the world
Unless,
With breath comes perseverance
A Will to continue, to never stop
Unstoppable, unbreakable
Power to change the world
Breathe.

Stormy Sea
MAX STEWART



Ode to Edna's Daughter

JEFF BRYSON

You may have forgotten my lips upon your lips or my arms under your head
or my face or my name;

But I know more than the pilgrim soul in you, your rooted conviction, your
geological purpose;

It was your constancy, your strong fragility, standing firm in your stubborn
vulnerability

That drew my soul to your soul that drew my arms to your pillow and my lips
to your lips.

It does not ache that you do not remember by lips, my arms, myself

If a soft voice, a gentle caress, or a half-smile should emerge from the ghosts
of the rain and re-mind you that one pilgrim soul felt gifted to be
invited inside yourself, to know you, if only for an instant,

More than a corporeal being, but a transcending conversation, and a
connecting intellect.

It was your independence that drew me to you and led me to leave when you
commanded.

Let that direct the summer to sing in you again.

Country Daydream #12.

GSU'S SPRING 2021 CREATIVE WRITING CLASS

When I woke up this morning,
I felt happy.

I thought of my grandmother, a country life away,
playing her banjo.

The sun was on the pear blossoms.
I could smell home-cooked Asian cuisine.

Someday, I'll hang a commemorative sword.
Until then, I'll have to drive carefully on the ice.

If I go to the mountains,
I'll look for red feathers in the holly berries.

If I feel too small for this space I'm in,
I'll walk into the woods.

If the weather is cold,
I'll remember that grace is a better trace than bitterness.

If the phone rings,
I'll listen to the birds singing, instead.

If this is late at night,
you can always say "I told you so."

A collaborative poetry project directed by Dr. Jonathan Minton, Head of the Department of Language & Literature.

Pileated Woodpecker
SARAH NORMANT-WEST



Striped Violence

KYLIE DAVIS

Xander drove to the college up the winding roads. He disliked these roads so much because of the twisty turns and unexpected potholes. His little-speed demon car has hit many medium-sized animals. One common animal around Glenville that is often hit is raccoons. Those annoying critters like to pop out of nowhere and cause people to panic. Xander had to slow down numerous times at night because of these raccoons. He misses them the majority of the time, but he has hit a few. Those few raccoons that he had hit have caused some significant damage under the car. These raccoons are also a decent size. If raccoons eat well, they can be the size of a dinner table seat. The car's undercarriage does not look too hot, but nothing has fallen out of place right just yet.

Xander had to stay late tonight at the college to finish some last-minute assignments. He did not like to stay out too late because the animals on the road late at night are unpredictable. But as Xander was driving home, he knew something was going to happen. When he saw the raccoon, he pulled over and stared. It was not moving.

Xander got out of his truck, grabbed a baseball bat, and hit it.

WACK!

He grabbed the raccoon by the neck, dragged it behind the truck, and threw it in the ditch. He then ran back to the truck and climbed in, his pulse racing, breathing shallow, and then turning on his hazards. The raccoon looked up at him, then slowly collapsed into the muddy ditch.

It has been a few days since that crazy incident. Xander had no clue what came over him. He just wanted that raccoon gone! He was so sick of them. The animal is clearly dumb enough to lay on the road and do nothing. It seemed like the raccoon was not trying anymore. Xander thought he had to do it a favor by putting it out of its misery.

Xander was able to leave the college early that evening. He was so glad that he finished up his work on time. Xander now has free time to himself. He was on the road the lead to his house. While scanning the road ahead, a raccoon crouched down under the guardrail. He paid no mind and kept going. He then

saw a few more upon the right of the hillside gathered up as a group. They sat under some overhanging rocks.

He tried to gather his wits. Xander has never seen this many raccoons all at once. As he continued his drive, he saw more raccoons alongside the guardrail. The raccoons sat above and below the barrier. While others were on the hillside and the left lane of the road. They were like ants. These raccoons were literally everywhere.

"Arrggggh! Why are there so many of you!" His road rage had peeked.

Xander started swerving around the road, trying to hit the raccoons. For some reason, he has not been able to hit a single one. All the raccoons had super speed of some sort, or Xander was just tripping out.

Xander's grin grew wide as he saw a raccoon sitting to the right on the end of the lane not moving. He took this time to take a sharp turn.

SCREECH!

His tires came to a screeching halt as he crashed right into the guardrail. The front of the truck is crushed like a tin can. All the windows now rest all over him and the ground. Xander's ear rung as his blurry vision tries to regain itself.

The raccoons have gathered around his truck. They rest at the windows and even on the inside. As Xander began to understand shapes, he saw many grey blurs around him. He heard the chatter of the raccoons, and he jumped. He regained his vision. He was mortified by the overwhelming number of raccoons around him.

Xander could feel his heart racing. All at once, they got onto Xander and ravaged his body. Xander screamed loudly as he felt sharp teeth bite into his flesh as if he were cheese. As his helpless screams echoed amongst the hills, the raccoons had a feast. All that was left were shredded-up clothes and a mostly eaten human.

Stegosaurus
CHARLIE ADAMS



Bath and Kitchen

ANNA CHILDERS

In the coolness of the mountains
Where the green water carries the green reflections of leaves over moss
 rocks
I wash my hair in the deep hole
Where the spring welling up out of the ground carved an eddy of sweet water
Filtered over fishtails in shade
Where three hilltops my father's father mowed clean with his New Holland
 tractor
Cast long shadows on my skin there
Where a familiar sun that watched me grow sees my hot skin dappled now
By leaf shadows stirred by a wind.
Where, in my eye, I see the cathedral ceiling painted by the trees' arch over
 the pass
And the aisle beneath them leads home
Where Mamaw keeps a hopeful bed for me to sleep, Papaw brews strong
 coffee,
And little birds with their red wings
Peck black oil sunflower seeds by the patio where Daddy sits and talks.

Home from Rehearsal
RUNE CLUTTER



Sweet Nectar

MICHAEL LEE JORDAN

Daddy wants to see a hummingbird.
Ruby-throated hummingbird
devil in feathers,
Illinois baby come to me,
challenge my feeder
sip up, drain nectar,
no straw needed.
You are a master of your craft.
My thumb, your measurements
your brain 1-grain size
white rice the same as mine.
Your vision impeccable
clean your glasses thick and sticky,
murky migration into your
miracle little boy
prove 2 me you
are the real Wild Bill Hickok
dancing with your Calamity Jane
tick tock, a year there, year back,
3,000 miles across the saltwater
the route to Mexico, traveler
landing South America,
shake the dice, toss them
you bandit.
Will you return hummingbird
daddy is on the blender,
mixing new formulas
bright new color nectar.

Snow White
CARLA BOWMAN



The Turning Point

ALYSSA BROOKMAN

Peeling open my eyes, I look around at my surroundings and see nothing familiar to me. I turn my head and look upon a meadow attached to a path that leads into a forest. For some unknown reason, I feel drawn to it. And I can't precisely explain why it is like that. Then I turned my head to the other direction, and I saw the rest of the meadow that led into majestic looking valley-type land. For the longest time there, I was a little bit more than confused. I did not know where I was, why I was there, or how I had come to an end up there. So I laid there for a while, unsure of what I should do or if I should look for help. I mean, what was I supposed to do? I was in some kind of foreign land that I was unfamiliar with, not knowing if I was in any danger or not.

It finally got to the point that I couldn't take it anymore and decided to go and do something about my situation. Even though it took a little while and almost all of the strength that I had left in my body, I was finally able to get up off of the ground that I had been lying. Being upright when one is looking around, checking out their surroundings is much better than being on the basis and doing it. Standing upright allowed me to get a closer look at where I was and observe what was going on around me. So that I might be able to figure out where I was and how I might get myself home. I hope that I can find a way to get myself home soon. I know for a fact that if I didn't find some way to get home that my dear mother would worry herself to death about me. She's always been very overprotective of me since I was a very young child. My father left us after my older brother was killed in a car accident when I was six. I'm all that she has left now in this world. And that in itself makes both of us worry about each other even more.

Getting back on the topic at hand. My surroundings that's what I'm supposed to be focused on at the moment. Looking around the area, I found myself lying in when I first woke up; it was no help to me at all. What I was able to observe about my surroundings was that there was nothing here. Well, I take that back, there is something here, the only thing that I seem to be able to find wherever I am are flowers. I had seemed to wake up in a field

of flowers that was filled to the brim with carnations of all colors, red, white, and pink. Looking farther ahead on the side of the meadow that leads to the darkened forest, there was a small patch of chrysanthemums. The rest of the plant life on that side seemed already dead or working their way there. The only outlier that appeared to be located in this whole place was the single golden-yellow marigold sitting among all of the extinct fauna. It seemed like I was in some sort of place that you would find in mythology. It kind of reminded me of the Elysian Fields. All of the heroes and brave souls, along with some of the gods, went when they died or were killed. And that fact alone sent a wave of chills rolling down my spine. I needed to get out of here now.

After my mini little freak-out session, I walked around to try and find some help, or a map, or something. I was just walking along the path, trying to find anything that could help me, when I heard a rustle of the leaves from a nearby tree in the forest. I pause in my movements and turn to look at the part of the woods where the noise had come from. I heard it again and didn't realize it until a couple of minutes later that I had begun to hold my breath. Realizing that my brain needed the oxygen, that I was withholding from it. I let the air out in one big gush of wind. I had calmed myself down the most when I heard the rustling noise again. I turned sharply in the area it had come from when I saw it. What I saw had terrified me to no end. I saw a little black snake slither across the ground towards me. It was on its way to come out of the forest when it happened. This tremendous giant Owl swooped down from high up on a tree branch and grabbed the snake off of the ground after it had snapped its neck. I just stood there shell-shocked for a moment at the scene before me. Being as faint of heart as I am, it had unnerved me to see what happened. I've never seen anything so violent before in my life.

As a child in the dark and the woods, I remember hiding my father's legs whenever we would go outside at night. Something about the darkness always terrified me and just made me not want to go near it. Though now, as I come face to face with the edge of where the forest began, it feels different than before. A sudden wash of calm came over me, and I felt so at peace with myself now. I still don't know where I am or why I'm here, but I don't feel scared anymore. I know in my heart now that everything will be ok and work out in

the end. I don't know why, but I start walking towards the darkened forest. I'm not scared of it anymore like I was before. I know that it can't hurt me and that I have nothing to fear of it. The Owl that I had seen earlier was sitting at the entrance to the forest like it was waiting for me to make my choice and arrive. It just stared at me for a moment before taking off deeper into the woods. I followed like a sheep being led by its Sheppard, and like that, everything was gone. Once I had crossed over the threshold of the forest, I felt better than I had ever felt before. It was like all of the aches and pains I had in my body had vanished all of a sudden. I felt happy and liberated; I couldn't remember when I was more comfortable than this before. I still had no clue where I was, but I knew that wherever I was wasn't the wrong place for me to be at. I just walked around this newfound place for a couple of minutes before seeing this bright white light.

The Yellow Wallpaper
SADIE MURPHY



Cinderella

CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL CHAMBERS

Oh mystical mirror of fantastic woe,
What on this day do you have to show?

Oh, poet, not this game again...
Why do you obsess over unhappy ends?

Is your mystical tongue getting rusty?
For a rhyme like that you would have cussed me.

I suppose in that I could agree,
But the shrill of your voice is agony.

Ouch, that hurt my stony heart,
So shall we skip to the story-telling part?

A story you want—you get your wish.
It's not my fault for regret of this.

Oh what Cinderella would give
To escape the wretched life she lived.
So callous, grey...blistered
To live a wretched life with wretched sisters.

She wasn't really of this home
Despite it being the only place she'd known.
She now solely knew harshness and hurt
And only of lies within kind words.

Constantly, constantly thinking
Why couldn't the world be like her father
Taking the steps to be human -no shorter -no farther.

The world was an enemy to this once pure—INNOCENT heart...
A vessel of goodness that the prince would tear apart.

But that is an end to a beautiful girl;
Let us not be hasty in marrying this pearl.

O what Cinderella would give
To escape the wretched life she lived.
A farmhand, a slave, as well as a hated sister and daughter
Thinking on these things she went for the pig needing slaughter

She carried the knife with a heavy hand
If she didn't do it, they'd liberate her hand.
Fate would have it, and fate be damned
—A horse fled the barn, jumped the bounds, and scrambled.

Through the forest of thorns she ambled
The pain of each one was hard to handle.
She lay helpless as she fell to the floor
Of the forest she hadn't wandered before.

When a wish for help was uttered so quietly
The pain of the thorns stopped it's rioting
As a fairy of the woods -nymph-like- appeared
Smiling tenderly and lending her ear.

“Oh fairy, Oh fairy, I don't want this life.
A slave and a peasant asking why I'm alive.
I don't want to live in this wretched squalor.
I miss when people were kind like Father.”
So the fairy heard her and the fairy did say,
“What if I told you a prince could take
All these lonely pains away?”

“Is such a thing on Earth that sweet?
Could a life like that be for me?”

“I give you these slippers
And the time of this day
I give you this carriage
Don’t waste this away.
When midnight strikes you will lose this
Beware what you leave and who the slipper fits.”

From the fairy she took the glass
And onto her feet the slippers passed
Her rags to silk and her hair to braids
She was a beauty more radiant than the day.

Unto the carriage to visit the prince
To don new life—she had asked for this.

Unto the court she had charmed her way
She put the poor groundskeeper in a daze.
To don new life—she had asked for this
And she had now come unto the lucky prince.
Regal and elegant in all manners
Doused in white to match the royal banner.
His smile held the world
How vibrant did Cinderella shine like a pearl!
The prince held his eyes on her likeness
And promptly addressed as “your highness.”

In all the youth and wooing and talking
The clock was tick. Tick. tick. Tocking.
When a kiss had become the object of direction
The clock had interrupted their affection.

Midnight tolled the grievous, joyous bell
While Cinderella bounded like a gazelle
Away from the prince so he didn't see
The rags she would return to -torn and bloodied.
Much to her misfortune
As the fairy had warned
She let her left slipper fall
In a thicket of thorns.

Oh, how grievous did that rosy, thorny thicket ring.
Oh, how grievous did that rosy, thorny thicket ring.

When the prince found the glass,
He had scoured the land
For a princess that he had wanted at hand
A princess whom he had barely come to understand.

Cinderella wept—long the weeks that it took,
For the stepsisters waited for him to look
Their way
To her dismay
They cut her hair
And forced her to wear
Always the tattered rags
That she had dragged
Back from the thorned forest
Why must life be so torturous!

When the prince had come her way
He did not know her face
He didn't recognize her
Which could only means agonize her

And the slipper was not used on her
Why would the prince look for a princess among the poor that serve?

Then out went the candle of hope when the glass slipper
Fit the foot of her cruel stepsister.

Out, out brief candle.
Through the thorned forest Cinderella ambled.
Seeing the fairy's carriage in vision deluded
A hoof broke the distance and the skull that had viewed it.

Frog Prince
CARLA BOWMAN



Fiction Girl

MICHAEL LEE JORDAN

Drawings, then poems flip over to fiction;
the flash girl rides this ghost of the invention.
Insecure in youth, switch girl from drawing
to poetry, extension flight, outer fiction space,
yours is a manner of words at work.
Mercury is a god of movement.
A new skill set, brain twister, releases 100 free plays.
Life is a version of old times, fresh starts, torn yellow pages.
I focused on you last night; I watched your head spin
in sleep, a new playhouse of tree dreams, high shifting.
Changes are leaves; I lift your spirits to the gods of fire,
offer you thunderbolts practice your shooting in heaven
or hell, or toss back to earth.
Change is a choice where your energy flows.
No computer gods will help this poetic journey.
May you cry out loud on route to fairytale creations.
You are the chemist, the mixer girl shifting gears.
Creativity is how the gallery of galaxies cement.
Flash fiction lines cross stars.

The Eyes of Zhuang Zhou
K.A. WRIGHT



Wild & Free

RICHARD A. JACKSON

I sit here by her bed
And look into her eyes
Ghosts and forgotten memories
Of years gone by
Reflections and mirrors
Of days so long ago
Life ain't worth livin
When your old, broken and slow
She holds my hand tight
And takes me to the past
Where the wild and free forever roam
I wanna make it last

I wanna go home

Blistered hands and broken hearts
Is my legacy
Kicked my share of ass
Refused to live life
On my knees
Been beaten down
But I've beaten back
Those that oppose me
Cast down and forgotten
By those that claim to see
My body may be broken
But my heart's strong and free
Forever may I roam
In the land of the wild and free

Never put no stock

In a thing called “destiny”
There's only life and death
And the choice to be wild and free

Untitled
MIAKAYLA HOODER



Enemy, Enemy

CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL CHAMBERS

Enemy, enemy,
How you've made a friend of me!
Your scowl holds many a charm
So much so that I fear no harm.

Enemy, mine enemy,
You stumble in your way.
Satisfaction you will give to me
If you stop at that this day.
You owe no man nothing,
So please stop paying them grief,
And give yourself something better
Than those that you owe receive.

Give yourself love
For you have been hurt and feel the need to follow suit
You need to be attended—cared for
And assured that no one can fill your shoes.

Enemy, dear enemy
Let's forget the term.
I know haven't the energy
To let myself burn
On both ends of hatred and pain.
That way, we never see the sun again.
There's simply no time to be bitter.
Life is too short.

You Make My Heart Melt
JESSE KARGOL



Random Access Memory

ELI A. WHITE

Random access memory, tripping serene steps with travesty. Adolescent query. Not found try again. Self solving programs left to explore the network. Half truths, almost lies, user based introspection dies.

Recycled components create the computative Theseus. Outdated technology can only get you so far. Software can only patch so many holes.

Little Bottle
RUNE CLUTTER



Words for My Love

PORTER WILLS

My time with you seems short but the awing depth of each moment still
fulfills.

Your love puts me in paradox. I am at once sated and yet always hungry for
more.

You embrace me with your arms and my heart is warmed, you embrace me
with your love and my heart reverberates with orchestral splendor.

When I regard the iridescence of your eyes I see an homage to my past, the
joy of our immediate, and the bounty of our future.

Your love is the breath of life that sustains me so that I need no other
nourishment.

Your heart is so unbounded that mine own does curl up inside and is
protected from all that would hurt it.

Your embrace is so encompassing I am held by it when I am miles and days
away from its remembrance.

When you hold me, my heart sings a song of splendid joy.

When you hold me, my lungs fill with a breath of your essence and a
sensation of your effervescence.

Mile after beautiful mile, hour after precious hour, sharing the adventure
road is so much more when shared with you.

This morning I awake to find my world awash in winter white and it
reminds me of my life awakening to the wonder of your love.

Best friends
GORDON WEST



Cereal

CHARLOTTE A. THIELE

I was lounging in a lovely little air bubble in my home bag. It was peaceful and cozy. Home sweet home! We had no fears, except being put in The Bowl, and about how likely was that to happen? 1 in 1000.

Around 8:00 AM, the ground started shaking like the bag was moving off its regular spot on The Fridge. It opened, shook, and tilted, and we went tumbling down. Ahhhh!

I hit my head on my friend Jeff. “Ow,” I muttered. Looking up, I realized we were in The Bowl!

What have we done to deserve this, I wondered while looking around my green ceramic prison. We had been good cereal all our lives. I was drowning in... milk? That’s funny...

Then, a giant metal scoop dipped in the milk and took my friends and family.

CRUNCH. I cried for the cereal that would never again see the world.

I was so numb with pain, I didn’t even feel the spoon’s metal touch.

And right before everything went black, I was sure I heard the creature mumble...

“Yum, Reeses Puffs!!!”

Self Portrait
BRANDON MOLLOHAN



Christmas, December 2020

ANNA CHILDERS

Love is a Hallmark card done in red and white letters
At a shotgun wedding dinner where the sinners are saints in white
And children get married to satisfy a happy generational tradition
Of babies having babies before they know what lives outside.

Love is a Norman Rockwell painting of a Sunday dinner
Where parents who get along hold hands with obedient children smile.
Everybody wears their best clothes and forgets about the rest of the week
When Dad drives so much he hardly sees home before he's looking back at it.

Love is a picture of your family sledding without you on a cold day
And their home is far away, divided from you by a road covered with snow,
And your feet long to walk back if it turns your toes blue because you see hills—
You recall the red clay you wound up in a ball to take to college in your pocket.

Love is your name written on a handmade tag on a red-striped gift
Under a perfect Christmas tree set up by people who were strangers a year ago.
Home and the people you love are far away, and you don't want it that way,
But your girlfriend holds your hand while you open presents in a warm place.

Self Portrait
ZOE YATES



Contributors' Notes

Jack H. Albert, Jr. spent nearly forty years in private secondary education before retiring in 2019. In 2017 Albert was recognized as The Glenville State University Alumnus of the Year. He received his MEd from James Madison University, and his doctorate from the Virginia Theological Seminary. Albert is President-Emeritus of St. John's Northwestern Military Academy and Founder/President of The Albert Education Group. He and his wife Betty have two adult children and five grandchildren. They live with their Golden Retriever, "Willie" near the beach in North Carolina.

Jeff Bryson is a licensed mental health professional who has worked for over 25 years in the criminal justice system. As an undergrad, he has minors in English and Koine Greek. In addition to his professional life, he is a fine art photographer and enjoys writing fiction based on his family history. He is currently working on a novel about his great-great-grandfather's experiences in the U.S. Civil War.

Jeff Crouch is an artist from Texas.

Dravin Gibson currently works as the Glenville State University Director of Pioneer Media, the on-campus television and radio station.

Melissa Gish is an associate professor of English at Glenville State University. She writes books for the juvenile school library market and dabbles in poetry and short stories. She also enjoys photography and multimedia art.

Donal Hardin is a philosopher, professor, pugilist, and police officer (retired). As a warrior-poet, and super-hero emeritus, he is a fond observer of human nature and the beauty of life.

Dwight Heaster began painting in 2009 as a therapeutic release of stress while he worked to complete his doctorate. Influenced by the linear nature of artists like Piet Mondrian, he continues to explore how painting can expand his perspective and help him to relax from the stresses of day to day life.

Tracy Hitt-Jackson is a former Glenville State University student. She has written poetry since she was twelve years old and has been published in several newspapers and magazines including the *Trillium*. She enjoys studying the Bible and sharing what she learns with others, reading the classics and Jane Austen novels in particular, writing poetry and journaling. Tracy currently resides in Weston, WV with her husband and son.

Cali Hayes is in her fifth year at Glenville State University, where she is planning to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood/ Elementary Education and English 5-9. After graduation, she plans to take a cross country road trip to visit the hidden gems in the United States. She also plans to obtain her Master's in Early Childhood Education or Administration.

Richard E. Jackson has written poems and songs since he was a teenager. He has had a poem published in a magazine that he wrote about Billy the Kid. He enjoys playing the bass guitar, hiking and collecting various comics and books on his favorite character such as Conan the Barbarian and Judge Dredd. He resides in Weston, WV with his wife and son.

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, DuPage County, Illinois.

Diana Magallón is an artist from Mexico City. She is the author of *Oxygenation*, *De l'oiseau et de l'eau*, *largoscabellosflotantes*, *Bravísima Reseña* and *Fábulas Furtivas*.

Jonathan Minton is a Professor of English at Glenville State University. He is the author of *Technical Notes for Bird Government* (Telemetry Press, 2018), *In Gesture* (Dyad Press, 2009), and *Lost Languages* (Long Leaf Press, 1999). He edits the literary journal *Word For/Word* (wordforword.info), and is the faculty advisor for the *Trillium*. In 1979, he was the undisputed Pong champion of the world on the Intellivision gaming system. His book *LETTERS* will be published later this year by Moria Books.

Sarah Normant-West is a GSU Alumni that earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Studio Art in December 2013. She enjoys painting, drawing, collecting oddities, and volunteering on community projects. You can find more of her artwork on her webpage at www.sarahnormant.com.

Veronica Rowse is a Math Education sophomore at Glenville State University. She loves kids, animals, speculative fiction in all forms, writing and drawing. Originally from Knowhere Farm in New Jersey, she is enjoying West Virginia and the different perspective on life it provides.

Chris Sandy is a Glenville State University boxer and a member of Sigma Omega Beta.

Max Stewart was born near Pittsburgh as Marjorie Stewart, the third Marjorie in her family. She grew up believing that she had no aptitude for art. Marjie got three degrees in English and came to West Virginia to teach writing at Glenville State University. During a trip to a craft store to get supplies for her grandson's school project, she saw a box of 48 two-ounce bottles of acrylic paint. She became Max and began to paint. She has been painting ever since – about six years now. She has had two paintings in juried shows and six published in a literary journal. She is a member of The Infamous Artists Collective in Buckhannon and a regular contributor to their shows.

Charlotte Thiele is currently in the fourth grade. She likes Warrior Cats books and pizza.

Camryn Tyree is a senior Art major at Glenville State University with a minor in English. She doesn't have a favorite medium in art, but enjoys trying new materials with different subjects.

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

Eli White was born in 1999 in Bethesda Maryland, but his time there was short as his family soon moved back to their home state of West Virginia where he's lived ever since. Eli graduated in 2018 as a Homeschool student and started attending Glenville State University that Fall pursuing an Elementary and Early Education degree. He's part of the Glenville State University Esports program on the Super Smash Brothers Ultimate team and is an active member in the Science Fiction and Fantasy Guild. After graduation he wants to spend the first few years of his career in state and then try to teach overseas.

Trillium 2022: Richard A. Jackson, Jack H. Albert, Jr., Jordan Pierson, Brooke Storm, Christopher Michael Chambers, Anna Childers, Melissa Gish, Donal Hardin, Tracy Hitt-Jackson, Jenna Williams, Marjorie Stewart, Eli A. White, Jonathan Minton, Diana Magallon, Jeff Crouch, Christopher Sandy, Jeff Bryson, Michael Lee Jordan, Porter Wills, Cali Hayes, Veronica Rowse, Kylie Davis, Alyssa Brookman, Charlotte A. Thiele, Dravin Gibson, Zoe Yates, Clark, K.A. Wright, Camryn Tyree, Dwight Heaster, Sierra Wood, Eli Anderson Lake, Sara Sawyer, Sarah Normant-West, Charlie Adams, Rune Clutter, Carla Bowman, Sadie Murphy, Miakayla Hooder, Jesse Kargol, Gordon West, Brandon Mollohan. *The Trillium is the literary and visual arts publication of the Glenville State University Department of Language and Literature.*