

# **HORIZONS**

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# Prologue

These are some of the chapters in our lives.

They come together to chronicle our milestones and journeys. Within the chapters of our books, we enjoy the innocence of youth; we grow and mature; we forget and renew our identities; we fall in and out of love, and possibly succumb to the madness and crisis of what life throws at us.

This year, Horizons celebrates closing one book and starting another by presenting “The Book Ends of Life,” a collection of imaginative stories, raw essays, pure poetry, and symbolic art. Our collection showcases the creative beginnings and ends of these journeys.

Welcome.

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Curiosity  
Andrew Lawlor

Andrew Lawlor

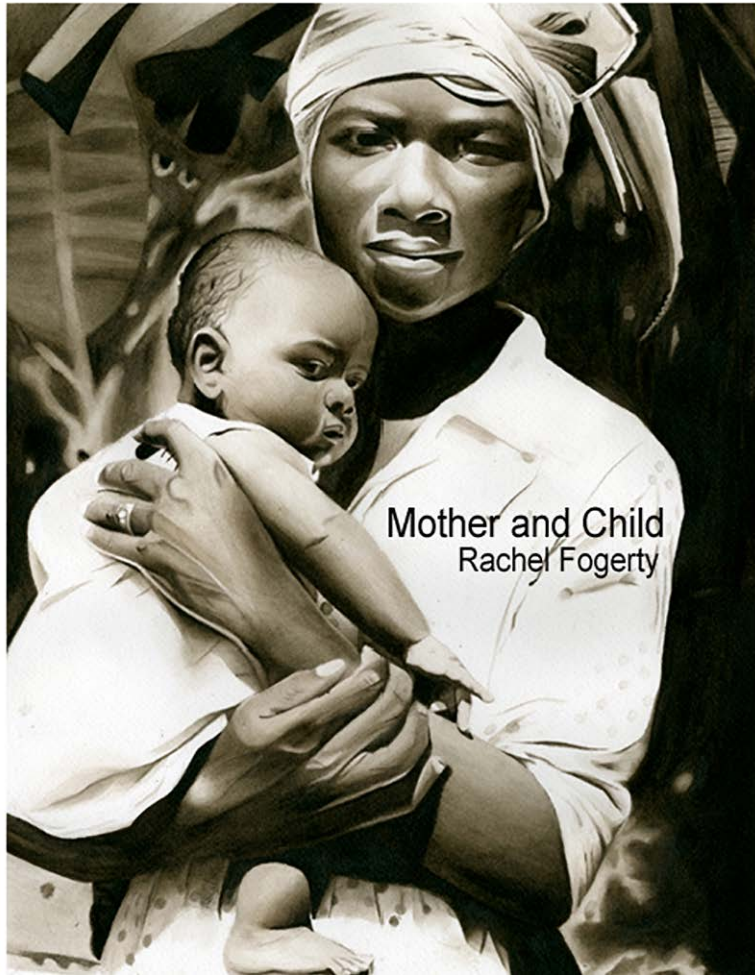


**The Thing with Feathers**  
Mary Awad

## Summaries

*Amie Reilly*

Chocolate covered ice cream faces bare feet chasing fireflies with a butterfly net Filling mason jars of magic fairies mystic sand toes listen to the tides of the conch Waves slurping popsicles sticking to sun warmed skin and pink freckled cheeks Stretching into open mouths of the ocean beating drums and hands outstretched Days and shortened nights that last forever beneath the starry blue eyes of summer Tides pulling memories caught in fishing nets and carried back to sea.



Mother and Child  
Rachel Fogerty

## Lou's Yard

*Noelle Monk*

Squawking birds. Hissing snakes. Growling felines. The sounds of the jungle met our ears as we swung from tree to tree in an effort to avoid the labyrinth below us. As I was reaching for another vine, I heard a shout from below. I looked behind me and saw that my comrade had slipped and landed in a pile of leaves on the floor of the jungle. Suddenly, the leaves gave way with the addition of his weight and he began to sink into a pool of quicksand. I yelled to him to keep calm as he tried to pull himself out with the root of a neighboring tree. All of a sudden, I heard a growl and, seemingly out of nowhere, a panther started stalking towards my companion, intending to make him its dinner. I tried to move quickly, attempting to make it to my friend before the jungle cat did, but I couldn't move fast enough. As I was repelling down the vine, the panther was crouched low, ready to pounce. My friend was a goner. In an instant, he let out one final snarl and pounced and—"Noelle! James! Lunch time!"

At the sound of the intruding voice, the scene started to disappear. The trees shrank to nothing. The foliage faded away. The panther transformed into a squirrel perched on a nearby birdfeeder. My vine dropped me back onto the freshly manicured grass, and the lake of quicksand released my brother, and he was left sitting in an empty kiddie pool. We stood up and looked around at what used to be our jungle. What met our eyes was the spacious backyard of our grandmother's house. If you give an imaginative child enough blank space, she can transform it into anything.

If you drove up to 1491 Mill Plain Road, you would see a two-story white house with blue shutters. You wouldn't have any idea that the backyard was transformed weekly into a scene taken straight from a storybook. When I was younger, Lou's backyard provided my brother and me hours of endless entertainment. The yard, approximately one acre, held enough space to allow us to imagine anything our hearts desired.

There were many elements that contributed to the magic of the backyard, but there were none as important as the shed. The shed was sandwiched between the garage and a small plastic playhouse and held everything my brother and I could possibly need. If the backyard was the canvas, the shed would hold the paint and paintbrushes my brother and I would need to paint the scenery of whatever game we wanted to play that day. Hula-hoops, baseball bats, and soccer balls were all kept in the shed. But the most important feature of the shed was the white Christmas lights that ran along the ceiling. The lights were turned on as soon as the sun set, when James and I had no intention of going inside for the night. We never wanted to be the last ones to turn off the lights for fear of the darkness of the backyard. Bets were always taken. The stakes? The loser had to turn the shed lights off at the end of the night. We never played harder than when being the one to turn off the lights was on the line. If you were the one to win, you'd rush inside, leaving the loser to make his way through the dark backyard by himself. The key to being the one to turn off the lights was to move as quickly as possible. With the enormity of the backyard, it could have been home to any number of scary creatures—vampires, werewolves, or zombies.

In the back right corner of the yard, where the trees that ran along the back of the yard met in a perfect corner with the trees that ran along the side of the yard, was a bush. The blackberry bush was set forward enough to allow the perfect cover of a hiding space that offered us the seclusion and privacy that was near impossible to find in the rest of the backyard. Lou didn't like us to hang out in the garage because of her gardening things and, during the summer, the shed became home to bees. The blackberry bush in the back was perfect if you needed to take a minute to yourself, especially if the game you were playing wasn't going your way. It was multifunctional—first base for baseball, a free zone for playing tag, and a hiding spot if we were bored enough to play hide and seek. Throughout the year, when we weren't hiding behind the bush, we were checking the progress of the growth of the berries. During the summer, the berries were ready to be picked and made into pie, but every year more were eaten than saved.

If you asked Lou what her favorite part of the backyard was, she would tell you one of her four different gardens. Her favorite hobby was gardening and she was neurotic when it came to things messing with her gardens—deer, rabbits, stray kick balls—if there was a single sprig of parsley missing, she'd have a conniption fit. A boxed-in plot of land adjacent to the shed, sealed in by 4x4s, held carrots, basil, parsley, peas, and tomatoes. When we were younger, being asked to water the garden wasn't an issue. Carrying the watering cans almost as big as us to water the vegetables was somewhat enjoyable. As we grew, it became more of a chore than anything and Lou had to bribe us to help her with the watering. But helping Lou pick the fresh vegetables when they were ready was fun, especially when she let us snack on them—this was before we learned that they were nutritious and good for us and so the snacking soon stopped. The old, aboveground pool, which was set parallel to the house at the opposite end of the yard, was torn down when I was six years old and was replaced with—you guessed it—a flower garden for Lou.

This was where she put in all of her gardening efforts and was totally off limits to us. We were told to stay as far away from the garden as we could. And although the backyard was big enough where we would have more than enough room to play without messing up the garden, James and I took Lou's warning as permission to sabotage it whenever we could, just to get a rise out of her. We'd take the pebbles surrounding the flowers and scatter them throughout the yard. We'd cover incoming plants with stepping-stones. If she dug a hole to plant a new flower, we'd fill it up as soon as she'd walk away to grab the new addition to her garden. There was always some sort of satisfaction every time we'd hear her yell our first and middle names—the sure fire sign to knowing we were in trouble.

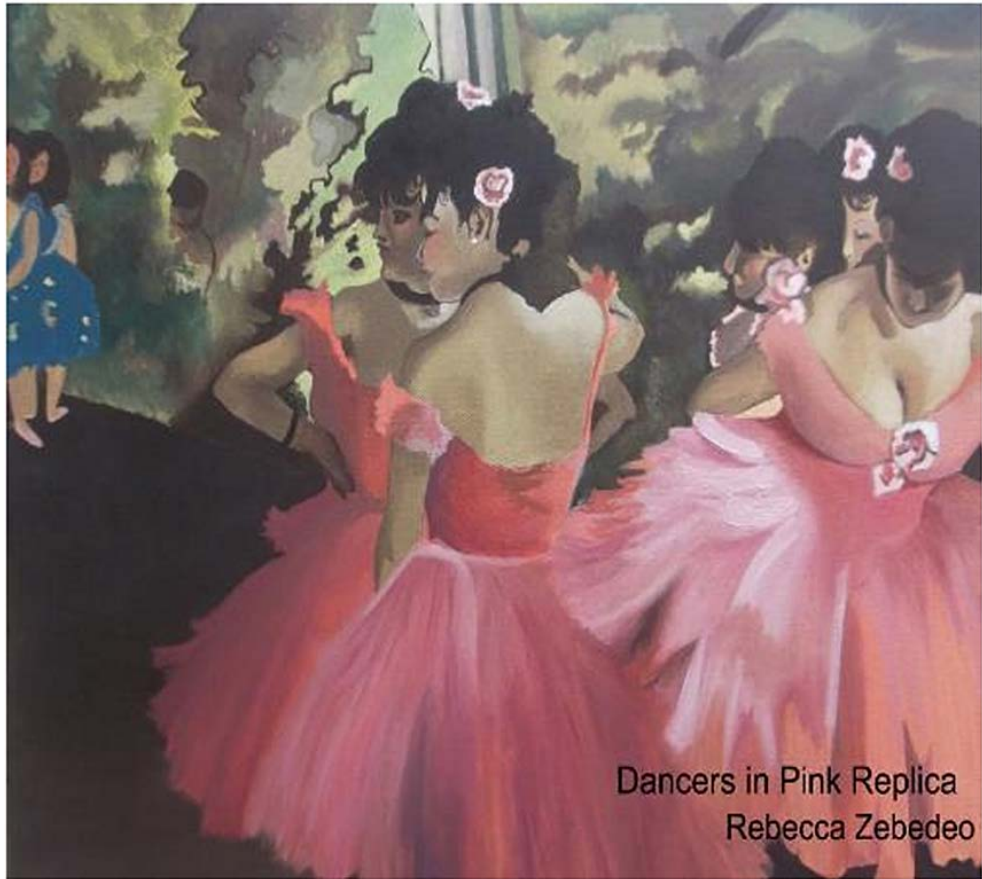
If you were to drive up to 1491 Mill Plain Road today, it'd be completely different from the house I spent all of my time in when I was a young girl. The house was knocked down and rebuilt. The white, cracked paint is now beige. The blue shutters are no longer there. A fence cases in the front of the house, not the short green bushes that used to adorn the front lawn. The tall trees that bordered the side of the house were taken down and replaced with a fence. However, through all of the cosmetic changes done to the house, the open space of the backyard has stayed. The blackberry bush is gone, as is the shed. The garage was the first to go and the gardens Lou worked so hard on were dug up. But the expansive backyard is still there.

Driving by 1491 Mill Plain Road, you will see a new, beautifully constructed house with a spacious backyard. Driving by 1491 Mill Plain Road now, I see the new house, but I also see the 4th of July picnics in the backyard and my uncles setting off illegal fireworks. I see my brother and me building a snow fort and having snowball fights. I see my younger self running barefoot through the grass, trying to catch fireflies. Although the house of my childhood has been altered, I will still look at the backyard and see a lone panther stalking through the grass, looking for a jungle explorer to pounce on.



Twilight  
Andrew Lawlor





Dancers in Pink Replica  
Rebecca Zebedeo



## “One Dollars”

Elizabeth Lezama

“One Dollars.” All the houses in Parque del Plata, Uruguay are not identified by numbers but by their names. “One Dollars” is the name of my grandma’s house. No matter how infrequent my visits have been over the years, that sign remains on the front yard, still standing strong.

My uncle named the house. It was a failed attempt at a joke that was supposed to merge two cultures together. No one had the heart to tell him it didn’t make any sense. Regardless of its nonsensical name, that sign with its shabby paint job and crooked base adds an element of uniqueness to the house.

There’s a slightly inclined driveway leading to the entryway. That driveway, in younger years, was a trek but has now transformed into a few, easy, upward steps. Reaching the top of the hill lends a view to barred windows, a heavy wooden door and a side entrance with a covered roof and patio space. Sitting around on the pavement in front of the house are my past visits: looking at ants climbing the house, deflecting water balloons from the rambunctious neighborhood kids, having conversations about life as the sun went down.

Entering the patio space used to be entering into the culture. I look around and everything seems empty. Family was too busy to visit this time. I remember. A table occupies the space and it is nearly impossible to get by all the grinning family members surrounding it. The men sit around the table shirtless and the women wear comfortable, flowing dresses, it is the only way they survive the scorching heat in the summertime. It takes nearly ten minutes to make the rounds, giving everyone a kiss on the cheek and receiving various rib cracking hugs. If survival is achieved after the initial welcome, the champion is given way to a myriad of feasting options. The table is covered with traditional gathering foods. Focaccia, stuffed pizza, a variety of cheese, bread and sorpresata, Pomelo, and the most important thing in Uruguay, lots and lots of meat. Chorizo, entraña, basio, chinchullín, all with a substantial amount of grasa.

Walking into “One Dollars” is quite a unique experience. The front door is never used. It remains locked in hopes of keeping away burglars. The side entrance through the patio leads directly into the kitchen, a place where homemade pasta, fresh fruit smoothies and delicious desserts are made. In a kitchen that is so small that it is difficult for two people to walk through, the best foods, which lead to the best memories, are made. My grandmother’s caretaker offers us food and drinks. We don’t know her and we don’t like her. I remember. Random goodies are grabbed at by little hands in places where grown-ups think they are hidden. The refrigerator opens to a slight relief from the sweltering heat in a house that has no air conditioning or fans. Inside, refreshments are always available. Pomelo, a popular grapefruit flavored soda, is the drink of choice. As the flies buzz around the boiling water and fresh tomato sauce that simmers on the stovetop, a younger me runs around, getting in everyone’s way and complaining that bugs are going to get in her food. They won’t do anything to you they say and shove me out of the kitchen and into the dining-living room.

The dining room and living room are attached. There is no separation in between. The only sign that half of the room is indeed a dining room is a white, circular table crammed into the corner. Breakfast, in more frequent visits, was eaten at this table. Toast with butter and jam or cereal were the simplest options and what were offered when my grandma got older and could no longer get us the traditional breakfast pastries. I remember. The table is covered in sugary puffs and pastries, some filled with delicious crema, dulce de leche or dulce de membrillo. I miss those. Sleepy teenagers surround the table as the concerned, underappreciated grandma asks us where we will be for the day and what we will be doing. The questions are evaded and she gets angry, promising that if we do anything bad she will call our parents in the States. As the other two prepare for a full day at the beach and things they should not be doing, I am sick and choose to move into the living room to relax.

The living room is composed of a guest bed that doubles as a sofa, a chair, and a small rectangular table, all facing a tiny box from which grainy images are televised. As I lay on the couch-bed, grandma sits on the chair directly in front of the television. No one can separate her from her daily novellas and I feel as though I have done something wrong to merit health problems and the unbearableness of the bad acting in a Spanish soap opera. The phone rings and rings and rings. Abuela, I scream out to her. She hears neither my yelling nor the phone's ringing. I finally yell loudly enough for her to hear me and I point. She picks up the telephone and excitedly shouts into the receiver, unaware of how loud her voice actually is. The bed I lie on has had many purposes, the most memorable one being the location my grandpa was put in when his Alzheimer's disease had reached its peak and he needed twenty-four hour care. I remember. My grandpa with his quiet loyalty and traditional hat lays helpless on that bed. Unable to talk, give us hugs, and tell us he loves us. He's not the same. My grandpa is gone but the emotions tied with that bed will never go away. They have become a part of that room. As I fall asleep to the sound of the novellas, my grandmother suggests I take a nap. I get up and make my way to the guest room, stopping at the bathroom before hand.

I remember. Never take a long shower. It costs money and your grandmother does not have a lot of money. Besides, the water is cold most of the time. Do not use up all of the hot water. Lesson number one when temporarily living in "One Dollars" is about the bathroom. Lesson number two, a self-taught lesson, came when my seven-year-old self fell off her bike and hit her knee on a rock. Bravely walking back to the house with a bloody leg, head pointing up and not a quiver on her lips, she walks right into the bathroom without telling the grownups what happened and without catching anyone's attention. Knowing it will sting, she washes out her injury with soap and water. Not a wince. The scar is still on her knee to this day. I look into the mirror over the sink. My eyes and cheeks look sunken; I have lost so much weight. My skin is so dark from the summer sun that I don't recognize myself. I wash my face, leave the bathroom and walk into the guestroom.

The queen bed and the single bed in the room are empty. They used to be packed. I remember. Going to Uruguay, in past years, meant five, sometimes six travelers. All of us had to fit in the guest room that held only two beds. I would sleep with my sister in the small, single bed and the baby brother would be with my parents. Kids had whispered comments when they thought their parents were asleep. Comments such as, "stop being so loud and go to sleep", would be heard from across the room. The last visit only included three of us. Twenty, seventeen and fifteen, it was the quinceniera's birthday wish to travel without her parents. That bedroom on this particular trip was the party room. Music went on, the windows were opened and the dancing commenced. Now, as the other two went on gallivanting with older Uruguayan guys, a cough ridden, skin and bones me climbed into bed and entered a comatose-like sleep.

Blurry eyed and body pained, I wake up and sit up in the bed. The house is silent and everything is dark. It must be nighttime. I get up and walk out of the room. I open the adjacent room's door slightly. Grandma is sleeping in there. I remember. Nap times on that bed when the other room was full or the perfect place for hide and seek because no one but me dared to enter grandma's room. As we got older it turned into the preparation room, a place to put on dresses and apply makeup without being disturbed. Now, the room is dormant, used only when my grandma sleeps. I walk through the hallway and into the kitchen. Looking out the window lends a view to a brick BBQ and stools or tree stumps in front of it. I remember. Twelve in the morning every night, when the family was over, was when dinner was ready. The preparations commenced at ten. Of course there was snacking in between, and by snacking I mean full meal in appetizer form. The men, sometimes joined by a rebellious me, would sit in front of the cooking meat. Telling jokes and talking about the family. Iconic Uruguay was in my backyard. Now everything is so dark it is almost unrecognizable.

It has been four years since I last visited "One Dollars." At this point in time it is uninhabited because my grandma is too old to stay there by herself and it is too expensive to find her a permanent caretaker. Although its rooms are empty, the memories of that house are stained into the walls and they come alive every time I visit. From the front yard, through the small interior and into the back, there is not one piece of land that is without memories.

## **The Change of Time**

*Evan Morse*

The end of summer dies with the death of leaves,

Falling down to the base of the trees.

What a pity is life be to smothered out by the change of time,

To be thrown away like a contract unsigned.

And to what attempt can one stop this event, To what extent  
is death to the living already sent.

Waiting for time to show them their grave, Descending to  
death without seconds to save.

The sun awakes and sleeps each day the same,  
Unchanging, unaltered, unpleased by any pain.

There is no thought given to the passing of a leaf,

There is no funeral, honor or grief.

Their only memory is found in a mound of the dead ,

A leaf pile creating a comfortable bed.

To a happy child who does not know,

That the change of time is also his show.

## A Walk Through Time

*Kimberly Woodruff*

Glistening blue eyes gleam back at the new father as he envelops his little girl in a plush pink blanket, awaiting his wife's arrival from the grocery store. This moment of stillness allows him to realize the beauty of creation, holding it so close to his heart. He thinks back and wonders how he came so far without realizing the love and joy he would find in having a baby girl. Someone to guide, and protect, and to love unconditionally cherishing each milestone to come.

By age nine, his little girl stood by his side behind home plate.

"Come on, Skippy!" her daddy yelled. "Let's go play some ball!"

And boy, did she love following in her daddy's footsteps. Number 9, the family legacy, lived on playing catcher of the softball team. Year after year, he guided her into a real ball player, a little girl whom he could be proud of. Win or lose, he held these moments so close to his heart because to every beginning there is an end.

Under the Friday night lights, his spot was always claimed on the 50-yard line, ready to watch his little girl cheer on the night. "G-O, Let's go Rams, G-O Let's go!" Friday night at the stadium turned into ritual for nine years along with the \$1 hot cocoa he brought to his little girl at half time. On Senior Night, he slowly walked her down the field to receive her award and in that moment he knew that Friday nights would always be held close to his heart.

When Freshman Move in Day came, he suddenly realized all the moments he would be missing in his little girl's life when she'd be away at college. Three years down the road and saying goodbye only got harder each time she left from break.

"The house is so quiet without you here, Skipper! When will you be home next?" he asks his little girl over the phone, eighty miles away.

As time trickles by, the days begin to slow, but life keeps at a rapid pace. While he brushes his teeth before bed, he looks up in the mirror and sees his little girl in the photo she taped up; she's dressed in her cheerleading uniform from Freshman year in high school, that familiar smile glistening back at him. A beautiful little baby, but a gorgeous young lady stands before him each time she comes home to the family.

"I don't think I can make the trip this weekend, Dad. I'm sorry I'll be missing your birthday this year. Wish I could be with you and the family," says his daughter, just a few feet away.

Bags and clothes weigh my arms down as I creep out of the driver's seat, striving not to make a peep. Silently, I gesture the back door open and my puppies exuberantly greet me. My cover is blown. The surprise ruined.

"Welcome home, Skippy!" beams my dad. "We missed you!"

"Happy Birthday, Daddy!"

This moment he holds close to his heart.

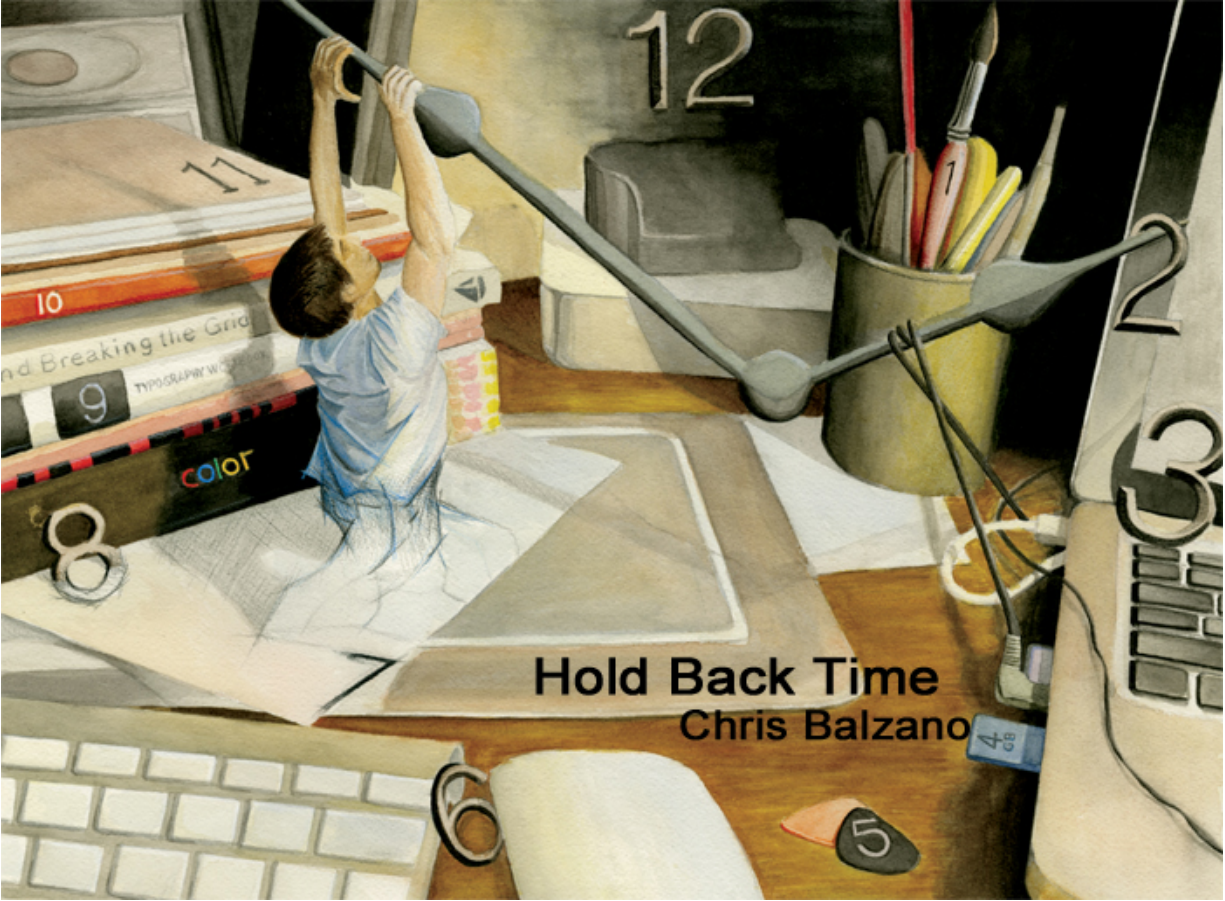




Reflections of Zelda

Michelle Navarro





**Hold Back Time**  
Chris Balzano

## Give Me a Dose of the Past

*Linda Vichiola-Copolla*

I dress my mind in the past because it makes me feel comfortable and happy. I watch current fads but I don't follow them. When I visit thrift shops and estate sales, I eat up collectibles that remind me of my youth.

My taste in nostalgia began thirteen years ago when my mother sold our family home. My brothers and I cleaned out the attic and tossed things from our adolescence into a dumpster. When we finished, the dumpster held two decades worth of pop culture artifacts. Among the things we discarded were old toys, groovy style clothing from the 1970's, a pair of platform shoes, a broken Rubrics cube, and disco roller skates.

When I see newer versions of old trends being sold in department stores, I begin a journey of mental time travel back to the era I grew up in. Whether or not I purchase an item depends on how strong of a memory it provokes.

For example, when Milton Bradley released an anniversary addition of Candy Land in a special collector's tin, I ate it right up because the game board and pieces were identical to the version of the game my brothers and I played as children.

It seems this sort of nostalgic feeling is exactly what manufacturers are hoping shoppers will experience. In his article titled "Nostalgia is Good Medicine" Psychology Today columnist, Clay Routledge, discusses this marketing strategy as he examines the positive effects of nostalgia. According to Routledge, studies have shown that fond memories can be conjured up simply by "providing consumers with products they are nostalgic for."

I love to watch clothing come back into style that was considered "hip" thirty years ago because it allows me to re-experience the fashion craze that was popular when I was growing up. Platform shoes are one example of this. During the disco craze, men and women wore these high-heeled monstrosities. Now they're back in style for women, and whenever I see someone wearing them, I am not only amused that I once owned a pair, but also by the skill it takes to walk without tripping.

I know what is vogue in pop culture will turn up at rummage sales once people get bored with it. At second hand shops, I often see electric typewriters, acid washed jeans, boom boxes, Walkman radios, and Atari game systems. I'm sure someday I'll come across iPods, worn out pairs of Uggs and Wii game systems.

While it's not uncommon to find a cookbook for a fad diet, I rarely find vintage recipe books at the used bookstore. I think this is because people never become bored with the memories they have of sharing meals with their family. In fact, Routledge says that nostalgia is a psychological medicine because it provokes a positive feeling by allowing our minds to conjure up past experiences that we remember as fulfilling and worthwhile. Because family recipe books offer a serving of nostalgia, they ultimately become valuable heirlooms.

I now have the cookbooks that were passed down to my mother from my grandparents. When I turn the pages, it's always to the meals and desserts I remember enjoying the most as a child. If I'm feeling lonely, the recipes help to reunite me with a time when everyone in my family was still alive and healthy. I especially enjoy baking my mother's favorite pineapple upside-down cake recipe from Betty Crocker's Picture Cookbook. I've used the recipe so many times I know it by heart:



## Pineapple Upside-Down Cake

Melt  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter in heavy 10" skillet or baking dish. Sprinkle  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown sugar evenly over batter. Arrange drained pineapple in attractive pattern on the butter sugar coating, and garnish with maraschino cherries and pecan halves

Make the cake batter:

Beat 2 eggs until thick and lemon-colored (5 min.)

Gradually beat in  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup sugar and 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring

Sift together and beat in all at once 1 cup sifted flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking powder,  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt, 1 tsp. vanilla

Pour cake batter over the pineapple and brown sugar in cake pan/skillet

Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean

Immediately turn upside-down on serving plate

Do not remove from pan for a few minutes

Serve plain or topped with whipped cream

Eating a slice of this cake reminds me of my mother's smile and warmth as she served it for dessert on Easter Sunday.

No matter what it is that I find nostalgic, it's the memory of happy times that makes me feel good.

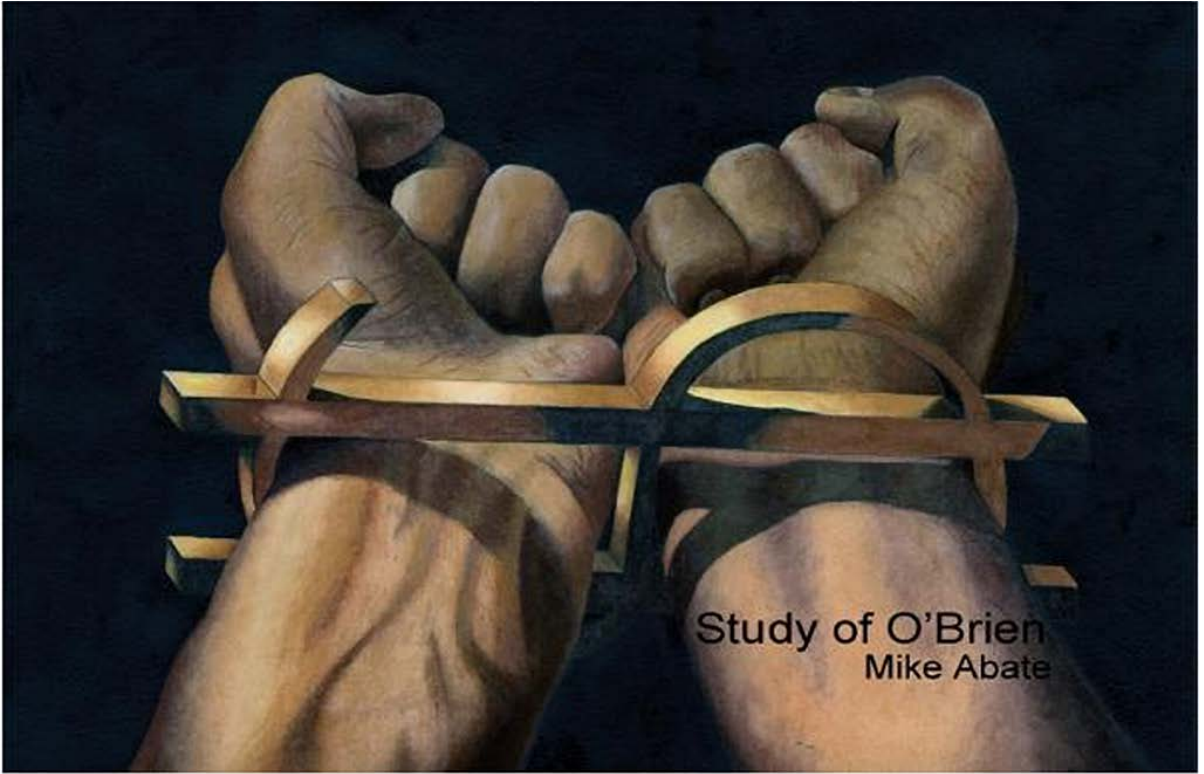
**Pinned Down**  
Vincent Ramaglia



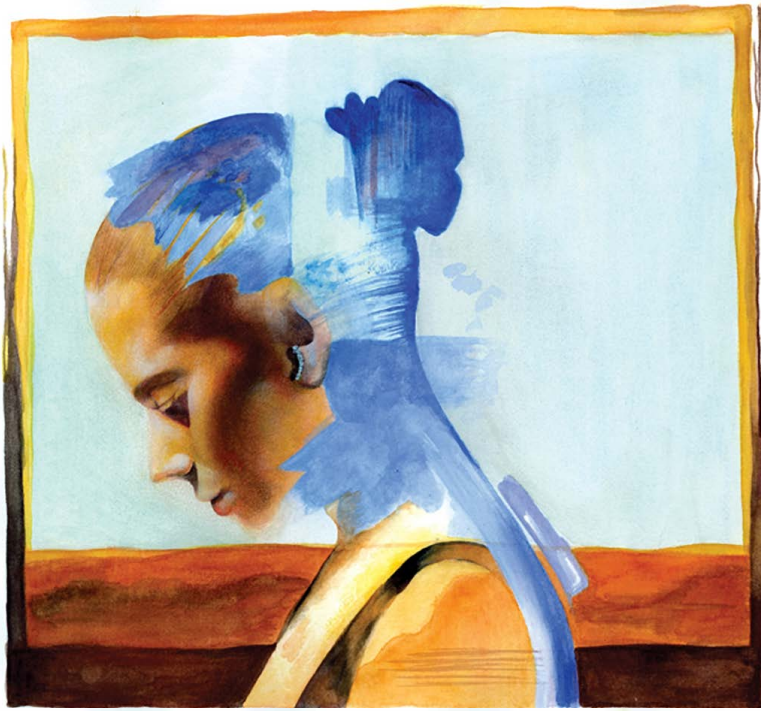
## **Definition of the American Dream**

*Michael Manning*

Every family in America had something to be proud of. Whether it was a business, a car, a home, an impeccable financial status, or just good health. They all wanted something to own and show-off. That was how the American dream was defined. Of course, it only worked in the region of suburbia. Everyone knew it. It had been the unwritten code of American living for a long time. What started in Levittown, Long Island swept the nation and reached other parts of the world. That was what made the U.S. a place for people to make their mark and be proud.



Study of O'Brien  
Mike Abate



Study After Sano

Rachel Fogarty

## Envelopes

*Sujatha Herne*

August 1988 - April 1989

Kigalia, Rwanda, Africa

The man and woman had always wanted a child. On weekends, they willingly babysat for friends. At family gatherings, they found themselves spending more time at the “kid’s table” than with the grown-ups. And out in public, a crying baby, or young child throwing a temper tantrum, never seemed to bother them. Although they could not have a child in the

“conventional” way, they were never discouraged. The man had spent his early 20’s in the Peace Corps and dedicated his life and career to helping people in third world countries. He knew, all too well, that there were thousands of children that needed homes; it was not unexpected to the man and woman’s families when the couple began the process of an international adoption in December of 1987.

The process was daunting and living overseas added another layer of paper to an already growing pile that did not seem to end.

Even still, they were determined to complete their family.

The man and woman thought long and hard about where to focus their adoption efforts and settled on India. With a rich culture and beautiful land, they also knew that many of its citizens lived in abject poverty and too great a number of children would never set foot inside of a school.

They filled out and signed request after request. They had the right papers notarized and the right papers photo-copied. The house was inspected not once, but twice. Character references were contacted and happily obliged with letters of encouragement and confidence in the man and woman. The cook, gardener, and housekeeper were interviewed. The doctor was seen and a marriage counselor too.

The man and woman waited daily to hear any updates. They were optimistic, but the waiting was hard. It was not until one hot day in August that they got what they had been waiting for. As she inspected it, she noticed a return address she had never seen before.

She called out for her husband and he met her in the living room. When he saw what was in her hands, he seemed to understand why she had pulled him away from his book.

Together they read over the paperwork. It was finally happening. There was a four-month-old baby girl in India that was waiting for them. A small black and white photograph was the last thing pulled from the envelope.

The baby looked tired, as if the photograph was taken just as she woke up. They did not get much in the way of details, only a name, a story of a young mother, and not much else.

The black and white photo was immediately photocopied and then framed. The couple took turns sitting down and typing out letters to their parents that night. Each envelope they stuffed included the black and white photocopy. There was so much more to do and they knew they would not be united with their baby for some time. But their happiness could not be contained. The months that followed seemed to focus on the prospect of the baby’s arrival. The room that was once a den was going to be turned into a baby’s room. Slowly, stuffed animals, blankets, and clothes started to line the floor. Next came furniture and a big padded fixture for the wall in the shape of a red heart flanked by a colorful rainbow. The walls were painted yellow and a changing table was set up next to the crib. Gifts from friends started to fill the closet while books the woman ordered specially started to fill the shelves.

Months went by with more paperwork, envelopes, and anxiousness. To alleviate some stress, communication between the couple and the orphanage started. The woman wrote letters to Mrs. Kumar, the head of the orphanage, asking questions and expressing gratitude.

The man sent a disposable camera and it was sent back full of photos.

The second picture the man and woman saw of their daughter, she looked happy. Smiling in the arms of caregivers, the man and woman got a better idea of what the orphanage was like. It was not the worse thing they had seen but it was certainly nowhere they could have imagined growing up.

No matter how fast they wanted to have the baby with them, they knew that these things took time. It was still hard. They spent the days learning more about India and talking about things they would do as a family. The morals and values they would want to instill in their daughter were discussed along with just how much they couldn't wait until they were all together. It took eight months.

Before they knew it, the man and woman were on a plane from Africa to India.

They were finally going to meet their baby.

The plane ride was sleepless and the ride from the airport to the hotel was silent. Both realized that they were in such close proximity to their child; all of the days waiting were finally paying off.

They went to the hotel to wash up and sleep for a few hours then walked around finding somewhere to have dinner. Their food was good but neither of them could focus too much on their surroundings. They would not be meeting the child until the next morning.

But the man and woman were both so excited.

23 April 1989

Tandur, Andhra, Pradesh

Kokila Orphanage

The couple walked in and, even though their joy could be sensed by the smiles on their faces and tone of their voices, you could see anxiousness outlined on their brow. The man was average height. He wore jeans, sneakers, and a short-sleeved button down shirt. His face was adorned with big glasses and a Nikon camera hung at his chest. The woman was shorter than him, wearing khakis, sandals, and a similar style shirt. Before they had walked into the front door, the man had asked an employee of the orphanage to take a photograph of him and his wife.

Mrs. Kumar greeted them and the woman hugged her immediately while the man stood back, smiled, and shook her hand. Something that had been in the works for so long was now coming to fruition.

The child they had only read about for all those months, whose face was familiar to them only through photographs, was in the next room.

Mrs. Kumar explained that the baby girl was a happy one and that she was well liked and would be missed very much by the caretakers. She also explained that she was shy at first and to not be too worried if she cried or reached out for someone else's arms. The couple looked at each other and walked in to the next room holding hands. They had waited for this moment for so long and could hardly believe it was upon them.

The baby was wearing a yellow dress with frilly white socks and a string of plastic pearls. Her headband was the same yellow. A young woman who worked with Mrs. Kumar was holding her. As the man and woman looked at her, with smiles on their faces, the baby looked up and into the eyes of the young girl holding her. The young girl smiled at the man and woman and held the baby out to them. The woman took her in her arms while the man stood next to her.

Most of the communicating was done through smiles, nods, and gestures. The language barrier was obvious but the baby's frown and sudden apprehension as she was plucked out of familiar arms and placed in between two pale strangers was obvious.



The woman tried to sooth her. She explained (in a language not understood by most in the room) that everything was okay. In between quiet assurances and rocking back and forth, up and The woman had expected this, she knew that the likelihood of the baby acclimating to them immediately was a silly notion, but she still hoped the baby would not cry this much. The man stood with the camera now in his hands taking pictures of his wife and daughter, together for the first time.

The woman smiled and tried to direct the baby's attention to the man.

The crying went on for about 15 more minutes before Mrs. Kumar announced that lunch was to be served and the baby would need to rest during that time. The woman looked at her husband and he nodded as she reluctantly passed the baby into the arms of a waiting caretaker.

The crying stopped almost instantly.

The man and woman were escorted into a room with concrete floors and a long table made up with mismatched plates, cups, and silverware.

It was a happy day and was to be treated as such; the new mother and father were seated in the middle of the table and made small talk with those around them. Mrs. Kumar had invited members of her family to the lunch along with staff members of the orphanage. Everyone remarked at how pleasant the baby was while filling the new parents in on her eating and sleeping habits.

The man seemed to ask the more technical questions while the woman kept looking around. She kept wondering what room her new daughter was in and how long it would take her to stop crying at her sight, sound, and touch. She looked off into the distance while she contemplated all of this and then focused her gaze straight on Mrs. Kumar and asked how to make the baby stop crying. Mrs. Kumar smiled and said that she just needed to make the baby feel how much she loved her. The woman thought about this for a moment and the meal went on.

The man and woman went into the room where the baby was still asleep and just watched her. Without words they both knew how happy the other was and how amazing it was to finally be in this moment. Eventually the baby woke. She was still groggy when the caretakers picked her up and put her into the arms of the woman but this time she didn't cry. The baby looked up and then the woman closed her eyes and hugged the baby in her arms, following Mrs. Kumar's advice.

The man took a photograph.

The baby fell asleep shortly after that and when she woke up there were no more tears. The rest of the day flew by. The man and woman watched the baby interact with children. Most were older but they all seemed to take a liking to her. They looked on as she walked along with the help of a bouncing support system on wheels. The teenage girls who worked the orphanage seemed to be paying the most attention; constantly scooping up the baby for more hugs and kisses than normal. The rest of the time she was in the woman's arms, resting on her hip.

Occasionally, the man would take the camera from his neck and the woman would hold one hand out for the camera as she used the other to pass the baby into his arms. They made it look easy, as if they hadn't been doing this for only three hours. When he held the baby, he made silly faces at her to make her smile and laugh. He walked over to other children who were busy playing games of kickball and cricket; he would put his head closer to the baby's face and whisper questions about the game.

When it was time to say goodbye, every single man, woman, and child followed the new family to the gates of the orphanage. Everyone hugged and said goodbye with smiles on their faces. The children held onto the baby's feet as they said goodbye in a language the man and woman did not understand. The shouts could still be heard in the distance as they walked away down the bumpy road and into a waiting car. The couple could hardly believe that they were leaving with their new daughter. All they could do was smile.



24 April 1989 - 7 May 1989

Tandur, Andhra, Pradesh, India/Westport, Connecticut, USA

The new family quickly fell into a comfortable routine. The man comforted the baby in the early mornings and early evenings while the rest of the time, the woman was favored. One day the woman took the camera from the dresser and took a photo of the man feeding the baby.

Meals were spent in her lap and naps often followed on her shoulder. The days getting to know each other were spent walking through the Taj Mahal with slippers on their feet, sitting by the pool at their hotel, or exploring. A notable adventure around town included a monkey jumping on the woman's head while the baby looked on, not sure what to think, and the man snapped a picture for their scrapbook.

The baby grew more and more accustomed to them and them to her. They learned the baby could walk when holding on to furniture or their guiding hands and that she seemed to wake up twice every night - both times for a drink.

As they explored this new country and got to know this new child, they also discovered things about themselves: the woman was quick to soothe the baby and was confident that she would always be able to stop tears; the man learned how to change a diaper and warm a bottle and wondered why it was ever something he feared.

There were moments the man and woman looked at each other and time seemed to stop. Sounds from the baby would bring them back into the present and all they could do was smile.

After some time, the family had to part. It was only temporary and was always part of the plan, but neither the man nor the woman could have anticipated how it would feel to break apart their little triangle after such a short amount of time. The man was headed back to the family home in Kigali, Rwanda with work to attend to and lots of photos to show the cook, gardener, and woman who would soon transition from housekeeper to nanny. The woman and baby were heading to the United States to visit with anxiously awaiting relatives.

On the day the family had to go separate ways, the man held the baby in his arms as long as he could. The tears from the goodbye lasted on to the plane and up in to the air. The baby eventually quieted down and slept but the woman could not. She looked out the window and was both exhausted and elated. She was sad to have left her husband at such a wonderful time but knew that the family waiting at the other end deserved an iota of the happiness they had been feeling.

The plane landed in New York City just as the sun was rising. The woman waited for everyone else to exit the aircraft and then gently woke the baby who seemed disoriented and more interested in sleeping on her shoulder. Customs was a lot easier with a sleeping baby and the exhaustion seemed to stay at bay. It wasn't until the woman walked away from baggage claim that she realized how tired she was and just how much she wanted real sleep. The walk to the arrivals area seemed to take forever and, in the final stretch, she started to walk faster and faster until she saw her mother and father, her baby's new grandparents, waiting.

The new grandparents were looking around with smiles on their faces. The grandfather held a camera in one hand and brochures in the other. When he saw the woman and the baby, he held his camera up to his left eye and she started to walk faster. The grandmother saw this and looked in the direction of the lens. She opened her arms and walked towards the woman. The embrace was soft and secure. The baby did not know what to do so she just looked around. The grandfather put down his camera and stooped down so he was at eye-level with the baby. They took each other in and the baby smiled which prompted him to chuckle.

The grandfather directed the walk from the arrivals gate to the car. He carried the luggage and mentioned some of the brochures he had found in the airport. The glossy papers described baby classes, baby concerts, baby seminars, and baby playgroups. He was throwing himself into the world of all things baby - Nothing was unexpected.

Long before this day, he had written his daughter to let her know that he had been doing research about India and that the baby would have been used to eating basmati rice.

He had gone to the grocery store and bought some.

He was surprised when he found it on the shelf not too far from Uncle Ben's. At checkout he couldn't help himself but to tell the cashier about the impending arrival of his granddaughter.

The grandmother walked coolly on the edge of her party, smoking a cigarette, making sure to blow the smoke away from the baby. She just watched and was happy that her daughter had found the piece of the puzzle she had been looking for.

When they got to the car, the woman let her mother and father situate the luggage and show her how to place the baby securely in the car seat. It took five minutes and six hands, but finally the baby was strapped in and ready for the car ride home.

The grandfather, who usually had no patience for other drivers, drove cautiously in the right lane and didn't even honk when a car cut him off. The baby and the woman fell asleep in the back seat while the new grandparents spoke softly in the front about how happy they were to be a part of this.

Pulling into the gravel driveway woke the baby. She opened her eyes and was once again in a new place. The driveway curved and made way to a little blue cape. Holly bushes lined the walkway and potted flowers flanked the front steps. Other cars were in the driveway and the second the grandfather put his car into park the front door of the house swung open.

A man in his early 30's walked out and down the steps opening his arms to his sister while greeting his mother and father. The man looked into the window at the baby then back at his sister. Following close behind was the woman's little sister. She looked into the window and then went one step further opening the door and insisting on getting the baby out as soon as possible. The grandfather and new uncle went into the house with the suitcases and baby bag, while the women got the baby out of the car seat and slowly walked to the house.

The women stopped as they walked up to the house and pointed out the pretty flowers and plants to the baby. As they got closer to the house, the woman noticed a plaque to the left of the door. It read: "Grandma and Grandpa's House". She smiled knowing that the joy of this occasion was not limited to just her and her husband. The woman and baby were last to enter the house while the new aunt, uncle, and grandparents stood in a semi-circle around the living room. Pink balloons dancing around the room and a banner that read "WELCOME HOME!" were the first things the baby fixed her eyes on. Cameras flashed and the baby put her hands in front of her eyes and turned her head into her mother's neck. The woman soothed the baby and walked around letting her touch the balloons and various other things in the grandparent's living room.

After the grand tour of the living room, kitchen, and sitting room were over the woman sat down on a sofa and placed the baby at her feet. Everyone followed but no one joined the woman on the couch. Instead they sat on their knees smiling and talking to the baby.

The rest of the night was spent much of the same way. The woman was able to rest a little bit, knowing that four other sets of eyes were constantly on the baby. They slept that night in a guest room and the baby hardly made a sound except for waking up twice for a drink – A habit the baby had always displayed to them and one she was prepared for.

8 May – 17 May 1989

Westport, Connecticut, USA

The next morning, the woman walked into the kitchen with the baby and her father motioned for her to hand the child to him. She obliged and the baby seemed happy to be near him. Soon after, he left for work and the woman and her mother planned out their day.

First they gave the baby a bath in the kitchen sink. The two women worked as a team, much like the man and woman had. The baby was content in the warm water, being doted on with gentle hands.

After bath time, the baby was dressed and the three of them headed out to the grocery store and then the baby store. Baby food, diapers, wipes, pacifiers, and formula were purchased.

They could not go more than five minutes without a stranger commenting on how happy the baby looked.

When they returned home they ate lunch and then played. The woman and her mother took turns crawling on the floor next to the baby while she explored, or holding her hands and walking from room to room. When the woman's father got home, he promptly scooped up the baby and spent the night with her in his lap, even through dinner.

The next day the grandfather stayed home from work and relatives came to visit. Everyone fawned over the baby's features – dark hair and big eyes, so unlike their family. Visitors came from Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York. Each person brought food and some sort of gift for the baby. Everyone wanted to hold her but she preferred being held by her mother and grandparents so she watched the people around her from the safety of their arms.

17 May 1989

Westport, Connecticut, USA/Kigali, Rwanda, Africa

The day had come for the woman and baby to head back to their home in Kigali, Rwanda, where the man waited for them. The woman's mother and father had known this day would come. They were pleasantly shocked at how close they had grown to the baby in such a short amount of time. They knew the family would be moving back to the states in the next year or so and that there would be a visit or two in the interim. It just seemed like such a long time until then.

On the morning of May 17, 1989, everyone woke up early. The bags had been packed, reluctantly by the grandmother, and somewhat excitedly by the woman, and waited by the door. The grandfather brought them out to the car and the grandmother held the baby while the woman walked around the house one last time to make sure everything was accounted for. She was leaving some simple things at their home, things she had plenty of.

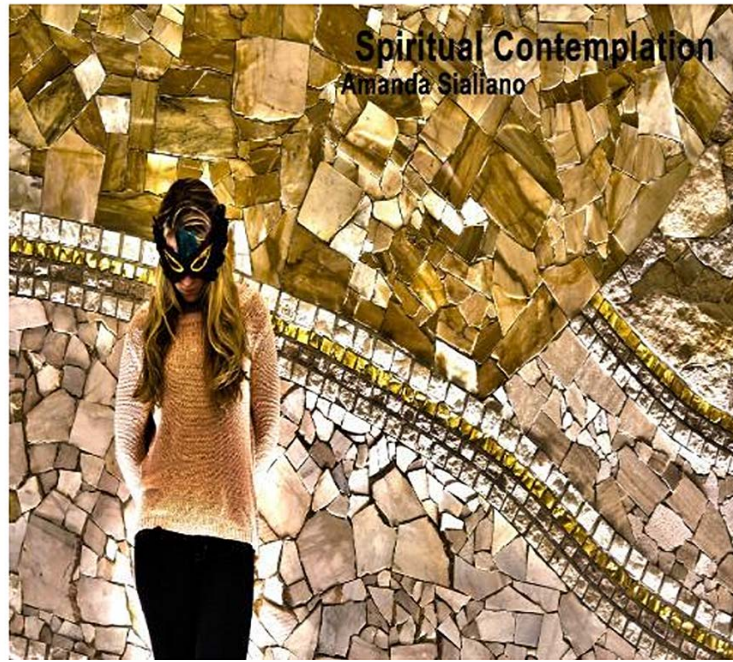
This way there would already be stuff in place for their next visit.

The car pulled up to JFK international airport and the grandparents got out of the car first. The grandfather arranged all the suitcases on a cart and the grandmother held the diaper bag and her daughter's purse. The woman got the baby out of the car seat and all three walked into the airport. The grandfather put the baggage up on the counter at check in and the grandmother held the baby while the woman arranged their passports and boarding tickets.

All too soon it was time to say goodbye. The grandparents took turns hugging the baby close to them and telling her how much they loved her. The woman looked on and although it was sad it was also happy because she knew the man must have been missing her and the baby terribly. The woman hugged both goodbye and promised letters and photos as often and she could. The woman and the baby made their way toward their gate. The flight home was tiring. The woman slept when the baby allowed her to, although it was not much. The woman did not know if it was the altitude or the absence of the grandparents that was upsetting the baby. She expected it was more the latter. The baby had gotten used to them and their constant love and affection over the past few weeks.

When they finally landed the woman felt the same relief wash over her just as she had when she landed in New York. The woman and baby once again made their way through customs and into arrivals where the man was standing. Ever so predictable his camera was around his neck while his hands held a stuffed animal for the baby and flowers for his wife. The woman walked in his direction and the baby seemed to recognize him and, as they got closer, began to smile.

**Spiritual Contemplation**  
Amanda Sialiano



## Freshness Guaranteed

*Colleen Mason*

(Train and station noises. Three or more people are sitting on a bench at a train station. ONE is reading a newspaper; a good-looking young man, HE, is listening to an iPod nodding and occasionally moving with the music; the third, a young woman, SHE, is texting. SHE puts her phone away and stands up and addresses the audience).

SHE: There is nothing so perfectly ordinary as a toothbrush. Or the act of brushing your teeth.

I spend a lot of time waiting to get from A to B. I like taking the bus and the train and, if I can afford it, the plane. But I hate taxis. Those drivers get pushy. So I find myself in a lot of different terminals and in a lot of different company.

And for someone like me, in the spring of youth, and totally juiced up on all of those hormones, I get to have a lot of those encounters. The kind where I see someone or I talk to someone and suddenly my heart starts pounding and sweat is everywhere.

I know, totally gross, and (an abrupt, interrupting pause to look at the audience sternly). Not like that kind of encounter. Really, come on. I've got class.

And, I'm only human. These things happen to everyone. And if you say it doesn't, I'm, like, going to like, punch you so hard.

(Angry/flirtatious wink/gesture/wave/eye roll).

So one sunny day I had one of those moments with one of those people and it was like Hans Zimmer was directing the orchestra of my life. I'm hearing harps and flutes and violins (cue flirty, romantic music) and there were butterflies (ONE throws confetti in the air)...

(Trail off a bit, then come back to reality. Music stops).

What? You don't know who Hans Zimmer is? Work with me guys. I was having a moment.

It was so magical. The scene was set. We were in that wonderful zone in the in-between, courtesy of the station: that place where everyone is waiting for something of someone. And we had the right number of people – (pause) two (simultaneously gesture with two fingers). And it felt like, if not the right time, then a good time.

And this part of me was just trying to think of something to say. "Be cool," I said to myself. But it's hard to focus when my primal visceral parts are (loudly) FREAKING OUT.

(Quickly) And then BAM.

I didn't brush my teeth this morning.

(Long and) And I had garlic breath.

And I became this cringey and embarrassed mass of jell-o.

(Sigh, pause).

Talk about hitting a brick wall

If I breathed anywhere near this guy I knew that I was going to knock him out. And not in a good way.

(Pause).

You know, that morning, when I realized my toothbrush wasn't in its spot I just put on the “fuck it who needs it” attitude. I didn't think that maybe I might run into my future on the train. This morning wasn't going to be a big deal, you know? I was just going to sit for five hours. No one was going to care about my dental hygiene, I mean, I didn't.

Jeez do I regret that now. And that everything bagel, that too. Especially that.

So, me, and this guy, we had some (very sarcastically) really great conversation.

(Train sounds get louder, the young man stands up).

HE: (Hesitates) Is that the train to Boston?

SHE: (Turning partially away from HE awkwardly, shaking her head.) No.

(Young man sits down. Train sounds quiet down.)

SHE: And that was it. That's my story.

Here we have two people; one normal (points to HE), the other one, me (gesture to self), hunched over being awkward and pretty much talking to myself because, oh man, if this guy falls over and dies because of my killer breath, I won't be able to live with myself for the next five hours on that train. And here I am right now freaking out about what could have been.

Why didn't I just bring gum? (ONE throws confetti at SHE) Why? (Turns to look at ONE)

## **“The Multi-Purpose Plain T”**

*Leah Arsenault*

Choosing a boy is like choosing a new car. Right away you are drawn to its appearance. Its style can range from sleek and stylish to reformed and classy, or even a complete mess. I have recently been observing boys who are like the stylish car, and I have noticed that they wear their t-shirts in layers. They come across as these preppy boys most times, with a plain white shirt covered with a nice colored polo, a stylish sweater, or even a plain colored short sleeve T. I have seen them pair this look with some nice khaki pants or colored shorts, but rarely ever jeans.

It may be hard to understand this group of boy, so let me explain other types of groups to clarify what they are not. There are the punk types; boys who wear very tight jeans and band T's, or even just lots of black. They would usually wear the V-neck style undershirt. There are the ghetto types; boys who wear very baggy pants with their boxers hanging out, and long shirts that are usually about two times as big as they need them. They would usually wear the wife-beater style undershirt. There are the sporty types; boys who wear comfortable wear, like Nike or Adidas sweats and shorts paired with a cotton T. They usually do not wear an undershirt at all, considering their main priority is comfort, not style. Lastly, there are the boys without a clue, who throw on whatever clothes they can find. This clothing style may include wearing things that clash, like plaid with stripes. If they have the sense to throw an undershirt on, it usually is any type of t-shirt, colored and all. Now that the few main types of boys are listed, let's get back to the preppy boy.

It appears as if good-looking, preppy boys flock together. I have seen about five to six of them standing around outside the dorms talking in masses, and there always seems to be at least one girl around. Honestly it is very rare to see them without a girl. Is it because of their well-groomed, casual look? Or because of their nice flow. Oh yes, these boys usually have some nice looking hair. It is either long with some voluminous curls, or super short and clean cut. I figure they must care about their hair because they definitely take time to pick out their clothes. Mine as well complete the full look, right?

Now let's talk about their eating style. I assumed their plate would be nice and organized, since they come across as so clean and tidy. However, when carefully observing them in the cafeteria, I noticed just how wrong my assumption was. These boys pile on the food, layer after layer, just like their shirts! I'm talking rice on top of chicken on top of salad on top of pizza. Oh yes, and do not forget the cake falling off the side. It is absolutely disgusting, and as I was observing this, my appetite literally vanished.

Continuing my meticulous, stalker-like watch on these boys, I began to notice their social habits. There is a lot of laughing and hand slapping involved when they are together. It seems like they know anyone and everyone around, and yelling names or inappropriate comments across the street was the norm. Having attention drawn to them appears to be something they do not even notice, like it just happens all the time. This action makes me view them as cynics, like they feel completely superior to others.

Now let's get back to their shirt wearing style. Why must they layer them? Is it a comfort thing, like a safety blanket you always have to have with you no matter what? Or is layering a cautionary thing? Like to catch all the sweat that occurs when they secretly feel nervous talking to girls, even when acting all super confident? I just do not know, and I am determined to figure it out.

In a fashion blog called “Wasabi Nights,” Lisa Bruckner writes that white shirts worn as undershirts “serve both function and fashion” for guys. I was right in the fact that these plain white T's serve as barriers to protect the other shirt from sweat, body odor, and deodorant stains. However, I learned that this tool also serves as a fashion piece by smoothing out the torso and hiding chest hair.

You may think that buying a plain white t-shirt is a no brainer, but you are wrong! Brands and fit do matter. The saying, “what you pay is what you get” truly applies when buying guys undershirts, and Lisa makes that clear. The better the fit, the more smooth your torso will appear. While opposite of girls shirts, it is almost impossible to find a decent, tighter fitting undershirt for a man. As said in Lisa’s blog, the shirt should be “thin and comforting” while “conforming to your body shape.” There are a few different styles that male undershirts are offered in. The three most typical are V-neck, crew neck, and tank. Men usually call the tank type a wife-beater. What you wear is up to your personal preference!

However, what the plain t is paired with allows a man to express his true style. In the 2011 Esquire article, “How to Wear Trends Like a Man,” it discusses the plain white undershirt is mentioned in almost every look discussed. For example, the article describes a casual look of a cotton shirt (plain T) paired with a cotton blazer, as well as many other styles of jackets and polo’s to pair it with. Here we see that this shirt is a must for a stylish look, which explains why I see preppy boys pulling it off all over campus!

After observing the intriguing male, I have come to a few main realizations. The wearing of the plain t-shirt is mainly for the purpose of an undershirt for comfort, however it does play a fashionable role as well. Preppy boys are the most common type to wear it due to the fact that they dress in the types of clothes you usually layer it with.

I have also come to the theory that they act they way they do because their clothes give them confidence. When they know they have their protective undershirt layer to catch sweat or help their torso to appear smoother, and they have their stylish clothes layered on top, why wouldn’t they feel on top of the world? They are able to look around at others and laugh, most likely picking out which other guys tried their look but failed at it without the layering; therefore denying them as friends.

The preppy boy is of a different kind, super aware of his attractive appeal, using it for his advantage at all times. He is like a Mercedes Benz, super flashy and always being shown off. I purposely am drawn away from this type of boy, due to the fact that sometimes it seems they care more about their own look than I do! Yet in today’s world, this type of boy is a major turn on for many, and I believe I have found one of his secret perks; his undershirt makes him feel unstoppable.

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Edward Scissorhands  
Alicia Provenzano



The Endless Journey  
Meaghan Souza

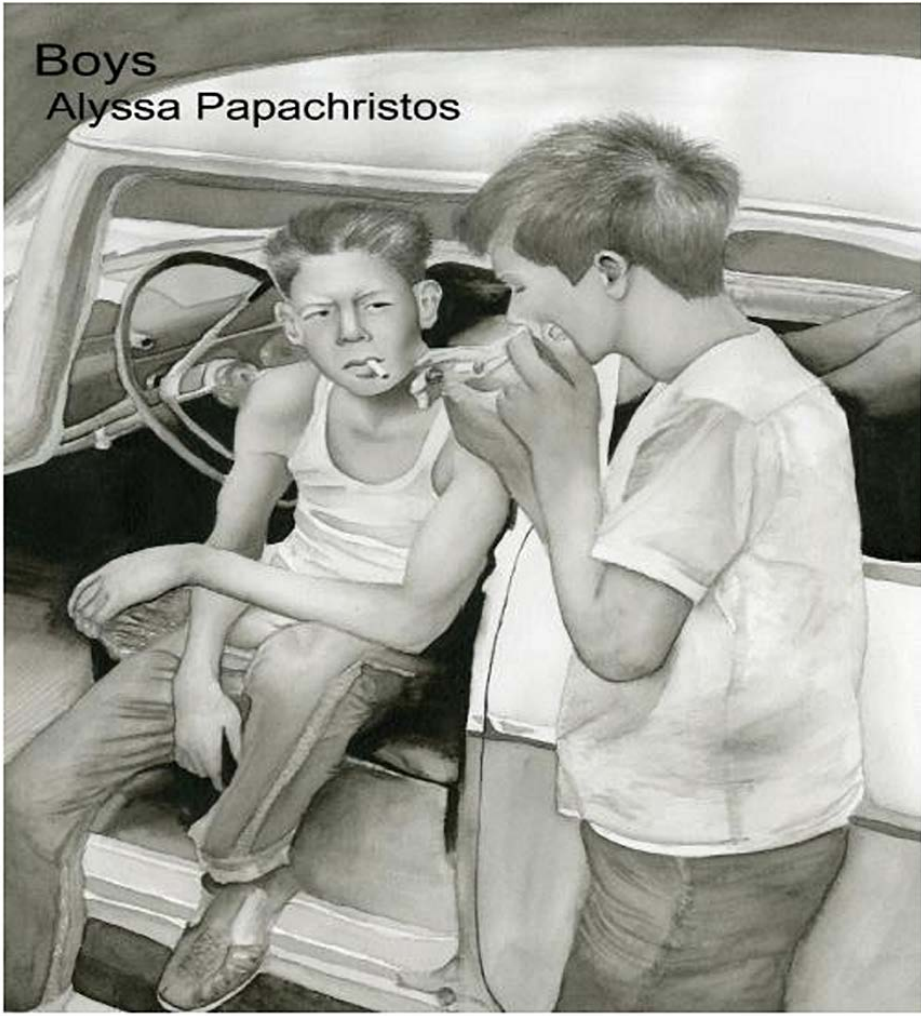


**Untitled**  
*Keisan Gittens*

A thought is distinct from an action, separate from its intention and unaware of its result. Sometimes I think that I am just a thought un-manifested, due to broken Potential. Really my thoughts are just a car on a road because I find myself thinking in loops, committed to one way of thinking and sharing the same ideas as other people. People cut me off. I drive through familiar territories. Other times I find myself in jams, on less travelled roads, stopping to accommodate others, driving off the road, driving off of cliffs, and even driving under the influence. Mostly my driving is solitary but there is room in the back and shotgun is available but sometimes I regret picking up strangers. From a driver's point of view I think it's funny that people start off as strangers and then eventually we end up swapping labels calling each other friends, lovers, coworkers, enemies, depending on what circumstances the relationships are under. Wouldn't it be funny if people said to each other, "You're a stranger, let's keep it that way." Lets remain strangers. I guess technically that's what we're saying to every person that we ignore. Like driving in different types of weather, relationships can be slippery, cold, foggy, clear as day or dark to name a few.

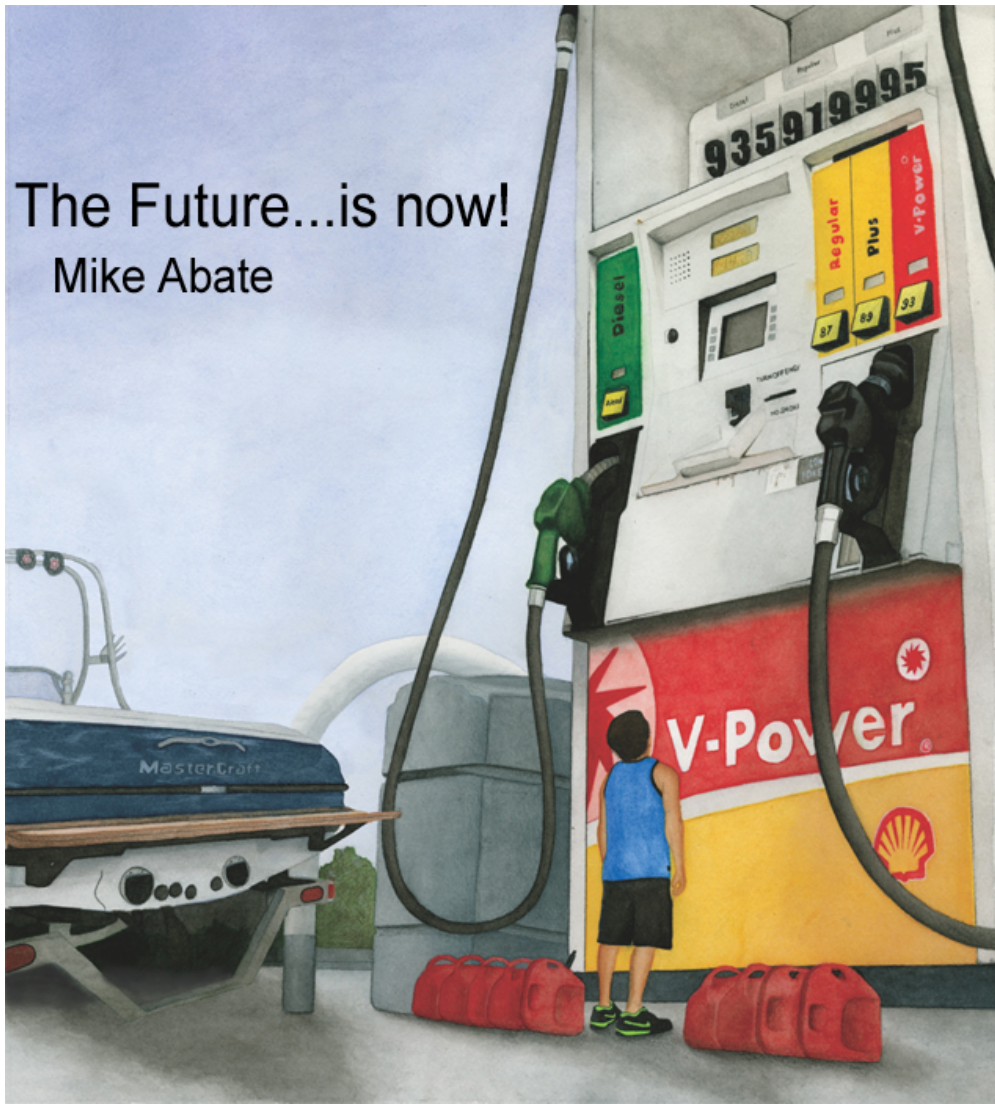
As a driver I think driving sometimes takes too long. A person once told me that time is a man made concept, usually used as a cure for worry and anxiety and a way to teach someone patience; for time distinguishes events from one another. As a driver though, distance distinguishes events from one another. But is time a consequence of distance or is life a sentence, an allotment of time in a place? You are sentenced to 45 minutes in the oven under the conditions of 350 degrees. On that note, how arbitrary are the instructions for people? You know? Born in Egypt in 1979. A place in time. Distance is a way to spend time. It's more progressive to think of life as an allotment of time on a path.

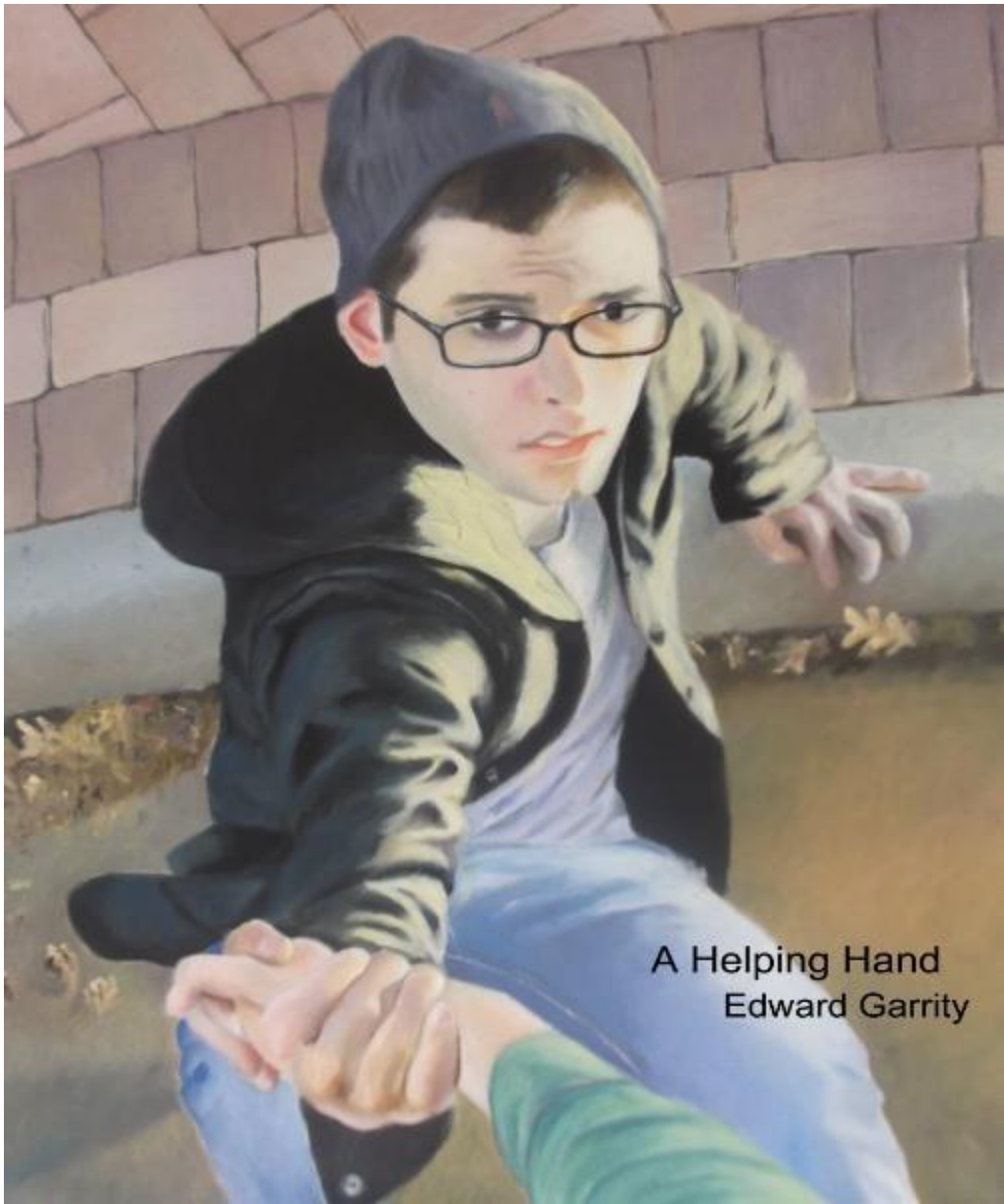
Boys  
Alyssa Papachristos





The Future...is now!  
Mike Abate





A Helping Hand  
Edward Garrity

## **Myth**

*Tess Kallmeyer*

Do “myths” still apply to modern society?

Can people in today’s culture continue to believe in “myths?”

What is a “myth?”

The online Oxford English Dictionary defines “myth” as: “a traditional story, typically involving supernatural beings or forces, which embodies and provides an explanation, or justification for something such as the early history of a society, a religious belief or ritual, or a natural phenomenon.” The origins of cultures and the ways that societies would define themselves often relied on myths and the ideas they represented and explained. Each culture had its own set of mythological beliefs and redefined myth for its own use and then relied on the telling of myths to sustain its cultural beliefs.

Myths relate to cultures through the idea that they set the boundaries for what is acceptable to believe in. Myths give us the ability to find others who believe in the same myth and forge a connection over that shared belief. Written for the *Scientific Journal of Humanistic Studies*, Adina Bodrogean’s article “Myths and Values in Action in the Literature of English Language,” refers to myths as a “reflection of man’s experiences.” As human experience changes, so do the myths and the interpretation and beliefs that go along with the myth. Bodrogean poses that the ideas based in myths are deeply intertwined within cultures and only survive if they change and alter along with the beliefs supported by the culture.

The idea that myths change over time will allow for its survival into the future; but only in forms that the society can support.

Even though the word “myth” only came into usage in the 1800s, the idea has existed since cultures and societies began trying to define themselves and the natural world around them. Myths often began as a way for cultures to explain creation and give a purpose to our existence, but would often morph over time to fill in for what phenomenon needed to be explained. Each culture has its own distinct ways of explaining how or why it existed as well as to define natural occurrences. Myths are often used to set parameters for a culture, as a way to define which culture is which, and to give people a way of identifying each society.

Over time, the myths we see as valid as well as the types we tell have changed, aligning themselves with the change in culture as well as belief systems. Jeremiah, a 21-year-old graduate student from Pittsburgh, defines “myth” as a “collective story that set the general framework for how we structured our culture.” He also went on to explain that while some people still put stock in myths of older cultures, those are considered to be conservative and people are constantly looking for new myths, by which they can define themselves. On the other hand, Melissa, a 19-year-old from New Fairfield, defines myth as “a story of origin for a culture.” She believes that those myths still exist, but they just evolve with the times. While both interviewees define a myth as some basis for a culture, it is in the evolution of the myths that the opinions differ. While Jeremiah believes that myths are created based upon what society needs to see or needs to explain, Melissa believes that the myths we see today are just evolved versions of the myths of other, older, cultures.

A myth today stands for something different than it did when it was first told. When a myth was first told it was the definition of the occurrence, it was not the aspect that needed to be defined, as it served as a definition. Today, as the belief in myth has changed, so has the definition. Today a myth has become known as a fictional or unbelievable occurrence, like the existence of Santa, which for each individual has come to stand for or mean something slightly different. Over time the definition of a myth has become more personal.

Corina Daba-Buzoianu and Cristina Cîrțiță-Buzoianu, in their paper “Myths Beyond and Throughout History. A Study on Traditional and Modern Myths,” which was published in the Scientific Journal Of Humanistic Studies, showcases the differences between traditional and modern myths, and defines the concept as “myths... establish new exemplary models in order to give meaning to man’s actions and in order to reply to man’s fear and dreams.” In their study, Daba-Buzoianu and Cîrțiță-Buzoianu cite the idea that myths can be studied as something or some idea that is very old, but never as something or some idea that is eternal. One of the reasons given for myths not being eternal is that the implication would be that all of history is then just a continuous repeating of myths as they are inherited from past cultures.

Myths were often seen as the solutions to the problems that seemed as though they had no answers. When there was, and sometimes still are, problems, or phenomena, that seem to defy explanation a myth was put forth to be the answer to the problem. These do not always have to make sense to us as an outsider to the problem, but a myth can be shaped or molded to fit different types of problems, to fulfill the need for an explanation.

Not only do cultures need to support the myths for them to continue to survive, but the myths also need to support the culture for the beliefs to continue into the future. This reciprocal relationship allows for the progression of the myths and the sustainability of the value of the myths.

Even today the form of myth we believe in has drastically changed from its original meaning. Words and their definitions have to evolve over time, or they will be faded out of everyday language and become obsolete. In his essay, “Myth In History,” from History and Theory, Jeffery Barash writes: “conceptions of myth are closely related to their respective assumptions concerning the historical significance of myth and regarding the sense of history...” By being able to link myths back to history, we are able to see where they may go in the future, and how they may change. The myth of Santa can relate back to this idea, as how we perceive what he stands for has changed, so too has how the idea of Santa is held with each individual and their culture.

This doesn’t mean that myths will be eliminated from our cultures or from how we explain what we believe. It means that as our needs to explain what we see around us change, the way we tell and present our myths change as well. There is no doubt that myths will continue to exist in the future, but the capacity to which they influence society will change. The fact that we are gradually relying less and less on stories and mythsshow that we are moving toward a culture that looks to answer all doubts with facts rather than some type of belief.

Lane Wallace, who writes for The Atlantic, wrote an article, “Changing Our Cultural Myths.” Wallace describes a myth as the “kind of glue that simultaneously helps to bond disparate people together into a unified whole and also helps explain and give order to a sometimes chaotic and confusing world.” Wallace cites the writer Alan Brinkley, who wrote an autobiography on the founder of Life, Time, and Fortune magazines, Henry Luce, and discovered that Luce helped to shape the myths that represented the era in which they were founded. The myths that were portrayed during this era showed an almost idyllic want for the time. This was a time that was “blighted by Depression, prejudice, social turmoil and the shadow of war,” and these myths that were created by what society wanted to see allowed for a simplification of life. Wallace writes that “life is almost invariably messier and more complex than the myths or ideals portray it.” But isn’t that the point of myths, to simplify explanations? No matter what the myth represents it has always been used to simplify a reasoning of a belief or give a complex idea a simple explanation. Over time this should not change, but the way myths are explained and the types of ideas myths that are believed in will change as we go into the future, as that is the aspect of myth that has always changed.



Defining a myth is not just about what the tale or story says but also what it represents. A myth is some type of story that gives an explanation but serves to give a society and culture some idea or way of thinking, about the concepts they could not yet explain, to believe in. Today many do not believe in myths as the word was originally defined. However, today people still refer to myths and the qualities that were associated with myths in every day life, giving credibility to those myths that were used to explain the unexplainable.

A myth can represent different ideas to different people, not every person is going to interpret the myth in the same way. Myths don't just explain why the natural phenomenon occurs to those who didn't understand, but they serve to give a reason for why people or animals act or seem to act the way they do. Myths explain and give people an idea to believe in when there is something or some aspect of nature or their culture they want to explain. Each ancient culture has some type of myth or mythological belief system, and each is different, but still served to explain the same phenomena.

One person's myth or legend is another's cultural belief. The value that people place on myths depends on the perspective they have of the belief the myth represents. The value of a myth can and does change drastically over time. The importance of myths fluctuates over time as those who believe in the myths either have some other influence that changes their belief or another myth comes along that better satisfies the culture. We, as a culture, can give a myth validity as well as strip away believability and credibility from stories we decide are outdated or no longer serve to explain the phenomena they once did.

In the article "What is Myth?" by Professor Mary Magoulick, in her textbook, the value of myth is described as changing throughout time. As people and the cultural beliefs they follow change, so do the myths they believe in. Value changes because the culture forces it to change. As people and their theories outgrow "old" myths, new or altered versions of the myth, form to take its place. Magoulick refers to older, as well as ancient myths, like the myths of creation, to show that they are still in existence today, just in a different capacity than they were originally.

What once stood for a story that defined a system of beliefs or ideals now stands for something that cannot be believed, or must be questioned in some fashion. The believability of stories has come into question and as we venture further into the future we are relying more on what we can tangibly believe in, what we can actually prove and see. This reflects how our society is changing, and how our beliefs must change with the ideals put forth by people, or they will be left behind and forgotten about.

The value we place on myths declines as we get older, and we often seem to almost grow out of the myth. As people grow up the idea of a loss of innocence is referenced, and that often goes along with the maturing of beliefs. Whether or not we need to still believe in someone like Santa Claus is debatable, but we need to somehow support the idea that there is someone out there who is full of good. But as we grow up Santa Claus becomes a less valuable way of explaining or believing in someone with those characteristics. As we get older, our need to explain happenings gets more sophisticated and the reasoning we once believed in is no longer valid. What we can no longer believe in is decided by society, and that forces us, as we grow up, to look at what we believe in and question the value of that belief. For example, we can continue to believe in the idea of Santa, as we grow up, and what he represents, but not the reality of a Santa.

For me, a myth represents a story that served to provide an explanation for whatever event or characteristic could not be explained, or a way to describe how a culture came to exist. The way a culture defines itself can be told from how the myths of the culture define what happens, and how the culture exists within those myths. Even though over time the definition of a myth has not really changed, the way a myth is represented has, allowing for the progression of the word through time and cultures.

Myths by definition seem to challenge today's common thinking. Myths, which were once conventional thinking in society, have been phased out to defying common sense and conventional thinking. Myths over time have gone through a shift in perspective. What were once considered to be common explanations and reasonable explanations have become a challenge to the new versions of common thought and conventional thinking.

As each culture is different, we cannot assume that myths are just simply handed down, but they do in fact change with the times to fit each specific culture. For me, myths are something we need in order to survive. If we have no fairytale to believe in, where do we get our sense of wonder and amazement? To believe in something that has no real explanation is hard, but that is where we learn who we are and what we want to believe. Our beliefs are our own, and we don't have to take others' ideas and force them to fit into our lives, but rather shape them into what we need and create a myth that fits our own lives.



## **Believe**

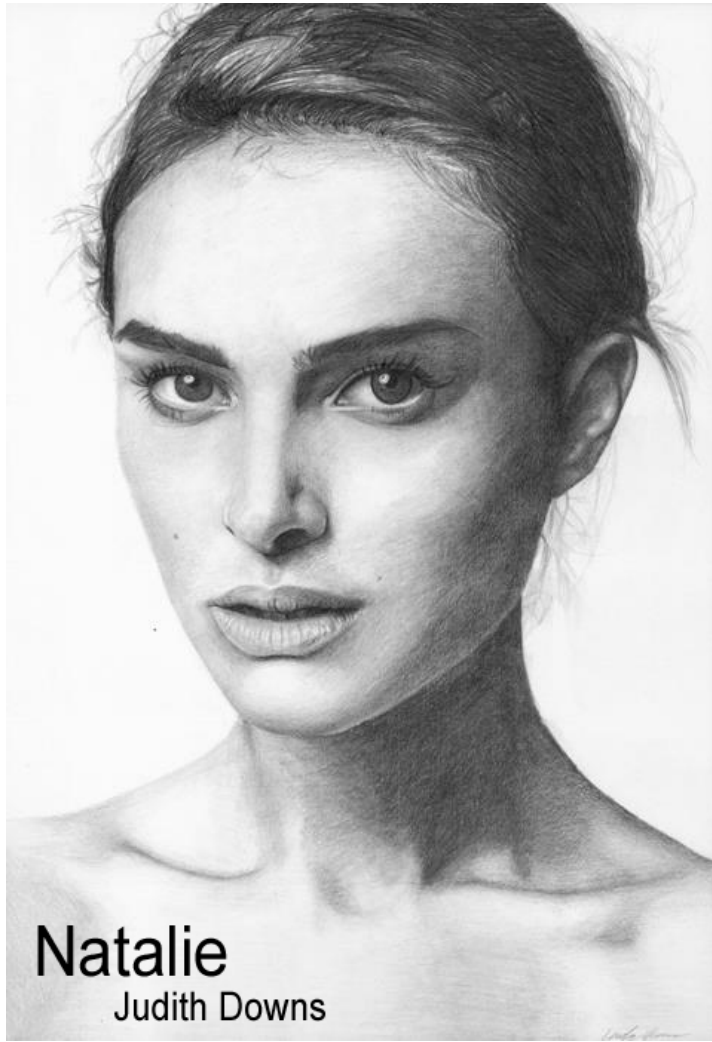
*Giorgio Scalone*

I've Seen it comin' from a premonition  
When I was born people said another god had risen Some say  
different cause they can't admit the kid is gifted I don't hear  
opinions because all the truth is missin'

Like a fascist, Christians  
Fail to wisdom in this religion  
But I bet they believe when God's wrath has risen  
The apocalyptic end to the world we live in

When New York City floods  
When the fire burns out the sun  
When the whole earth turns to dust  
And there's no longer dawn or dusk

Just eternal darkness  
I'm just trying to see the light, till the bulbs are sparking I'm not  
just a rapper, I'm a lyrical artist  
All these Material things takin' away from what art is



**Natalie**  
Judith Downs

## Vulgarity Works

*Gina Gallo*

Very casually, comedian Chelsea Handler walks onto a small platform. She introduces herself and with no hesitation she gets right into her act. In this short piece from the YouTube.com clip “Secret Stand-Up: Chelsea Handler (Hilarious!),” Handler states:

You know when you’re dating someone like the first couple times, weeks or something and you’re dating and in a new relationship and you go to the bathroom and sometimes girls don’t know if it’s going to be a number one or a number ‘twosie,’ sometimes it’s both, sometimes it’s a double jack pot, and you’re like ‘Oh.’ Like you go down for one and you’re like Oh, something’s creeping out here. (“Secret Stand-Up: Chelsea Handler (Hilarious!)”)

This stand-up routine was performed in Handler’s earlier years of being a comedian. It just goes to show that Handler never fails to open up one of her acts without a bang of vulgarity.

In this particular stand-up routine, Handler speaks about girls who have recently started dating a guy and their experiences while using the bathroom. She also speaks about people who have babies and after the baby was born they refer to their age in months instead of years. Handler relates it to being a grown up at a bar and saying: “yeah, I’m four hundred and eighteen months, come and get it.” She says this while rotating her hips around, causing the crowd to burst out into laughter as she controls the stage in which she stands on.

Handler never once uses a prop besides the microphone she carries in her hand throughout the performance. She never hides behind the microphone or uses it as a safety net. Instead, she uses it to show the sense of control she has taken over the stage. She does this by holding the microphone very firmly and demanding the presence of those who are watching her. She dresses very plain, jeans and a black shirt. This allows more attention to be on what she is saying, rather than what she is wearing.

Her body posture is very relaxed, which allows the audience to feel relaxed as well. Handler uses hand gestures and body movements to get her point clearly across and create more humor. She also changes the pitch in her voice throughout the routine, showing great emotion or pathos. The demographic Handler appeals to is younger individuals, adults in their twenties and thirties.

In order to build a relationship with the audience, kairos is everything and Handler uses her timing perfectly. She makes sure to stop in the perfect places, so that her audience has time to process everything she has said. For example, “And I come out and I’m like hey, do you want to get something to eat, like quickly and he’s like (pause) did you just take a dump (pause) it’s like no I didn’t (pause), that’s pretty disgusting that you actually say that, why would you say that, did you take a dump in your pants, you sick-o” (“Secret Stand- Up: Chelsea Handler”). As you can see, Handler puts a pause in just the right places.

The Davis Theory is depicted perfectly in Handler’s stand-up. The Davis theory involves laughing at indifference and that is exactly what Handler makes her audience do. She makes fun of adults who have babies. It is as if just because they began having babies that they now all of a sudden have to talk in months. She also makes fun of the fact of how hard it is for a girl to take a “dump” on the first date. She uses the stage rather well. She makes sure to use the entire platform, rather than just one part of the stage. Another theory that is also seen which demonstrates one of the theories of humor is the incongruity theory. The incongruity theory states that humor is irrational and we laugh at something we consider taboo. That is exactly what Handler allows her audience to do. She takes something totally inappropriate and makes her audience laugh because of it. Her comedy deals with the violation of expectations. What we think is going to happen in situations does not.

While some may say that Handler's comedy can be quite controversial, many people think it is funny. Some may say they do not like her comedy because it is too vulgar for them, especially the piece about using the bathroom. Many people like to act like talking about using the bathroom is so wrong when we all know going to the bathroom is a natural thing, so why is it such a crime to talk about? Others find her sense of humor great. They find light in topics that Handler brings up and they admire her sense of bringing laughter to those awkward situations, or at least those situations that people think are awkward.

Personally, I find the vulgarity of the routine rather funny. Handler just makes it work. This is the point that Virginia Heffernan makes in her on-line New York Times article, "A Pop Savant, Up Late and Armed With Wit." Heffernan states: "she's a writer, above all, she can turn a joke around fast. She's genuinely good looking, and has a way of saying withering things through a smile that works." To those that do not speak Handler's language, she may come off trashy to them. It is just that type of humor that you either find funny or you do not at all and if you find Handler funny, then you absolutely love her comedy.

I feel that people take life too seriously sometimes. Handler knows how to make light in some of the worst situations. She makes jokes about situations that many rather just not talk about, such as the stand-up routine previously mentioned about girls taking a "dump" on their dates. Many may find that rather disgusting and many may find humor despite how gross it may sound. Many rather just pretend these topics of life do not exist. This is the point that Karl Taro Greenfeld makes in her Time article, "The Anti Oprah." Greenfeld states: "she has become a symbol of our mania for compulsive and frank discussion of what previous eras would have been divulged only to ones shrink or simply buried and left to fester in our deep, dark subconscious."

Handler has such a willingness to talk about anything and that is what makes her so talented. She has no filter what-so-ever and this has a lot to do with her childhood. According to Greenfeld's article, Handler grew up in Livingston, New Jersey and she was the youngest of six children. Handler's father was Jewish, her mother was Mormon and she sought attention from them even if it was not always for the right reasons. Many feel, Handler really began to change after the death of her older brother Chet which is when she cried out for the most attention. After her brother died, her family was so consumed with the grieving process that Handler began acting out for attention. Handler wanted to lift her family's spirits after such a tragic incident took place in her life. The fact that she can create humor in some of the darkest moments in her own life, says a lot about the individual Handler really is. It shows that she doesn't make comedy to disrespect people, rather she does it to bring joy to people's lives. In any occupation, when a person does their job with a meaning behind it, they succeed.

She is a very confident person and that is sometimes key for demanding people's attention. Handler shows all women out there that it is possible for woman to be just as funny as men. According to Greenfeld, Handler allowed for a whole new audience to be brought to stand up, young women from age eighteen to thirty four. Comedy is so much more than just getting up on a stage and making people laugh; it allows people to relax and for a short time, forget about the everyday worries that consume and control their lives.

Those who do not like vulgarity will not find Handler's stand-up funny, but what is stand-up if you can't even laugh about inappropriate material. I feel people just have to let loose sometimes. Let's face it: half of the material that is funny out there is highly inappropriate and if you don't laugh, you are just missing out on the fun!

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Out on a Limb  
Alicia Provenzano





## **Some Say**

*Evan Morse*

Some say life is a journey, a path upon the way,

I say life is a lesson taught from day to day.

Some say life turns with the tide,

I say life is stored inside.

A force breathed into all at birth,

It is a chance, a hope, of impossible worth.

A beauty within, a code unwritten,

Its element unknown to man, a knowledge  
forgotten.

Yet all that exist functions in its code,

From the Serpent to the whale to the toad.

All exist in the unknown,

Its beauty however surely shown.

It is in the world that surrounds,

Life is seen everywhere and all around.

The birds in the air,

The child in a mother's care.

The moon wanes and the dead decay,

But new life is created each day.

And so what is one life worth?

To be able to function on this beautiful earth.



Down the Stretch  
Elise Lorenz



Monhegan Island

Meaghan Souza

Gliding  
Vincent Ramaglia



## **The One In Love With Life**

*Matthew Wagner*

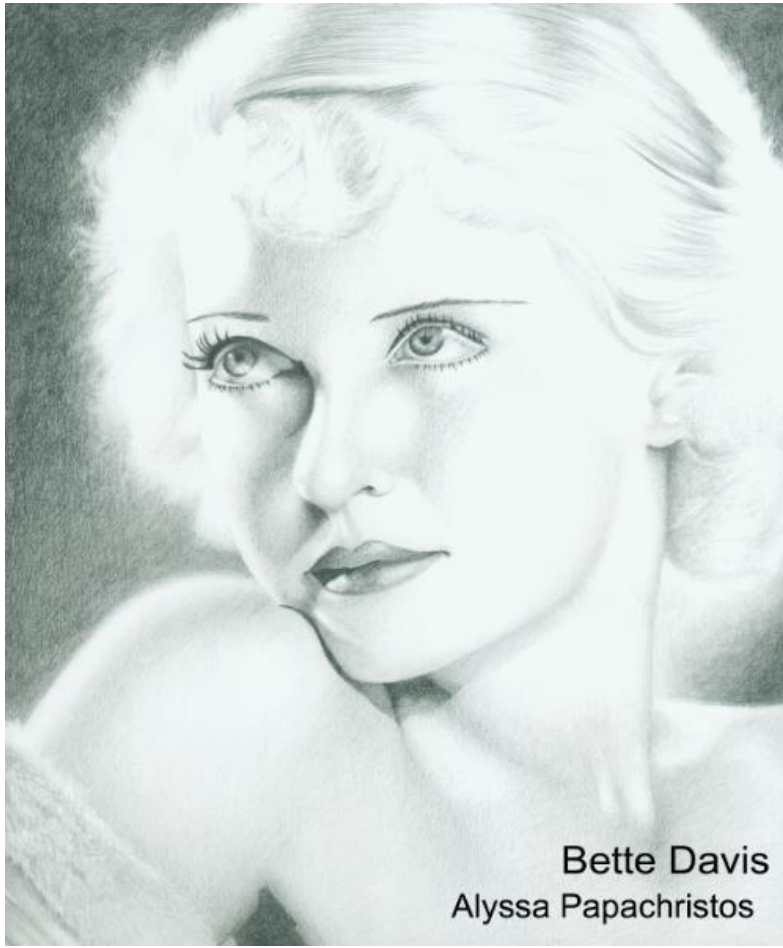
A soul that stretches through the sky  
Through all the land and sea  
Of one that's so in love with life  
And all that it can be

She finds a ray for every cloud  
A bird for every tree  
For one that's so in love with life  
These sights are always free

Through deepest sadness she can reach To  
heal the hidden glee  
As one who's so in love with life  
From pain she needn't flee

This gift is not a secret kept  
There is no firm decree  
For she is one in love with life  
A love for all to see

Her soul is beauty infinite  
But here's epiphany  
That she is too in love with life  
To be in love with me.



Bette Davis  
Alyssa Papachristos

## How to Prepare for a College Date Night

*Noelle Monk*

The guy of your college dreams asks you out on a date for this Friday and dinner and a movie are on the agenda. You're excited, but you're also a bit nervous. I know your mind is probably going a million miles per hour—"What am I going to wear? Should I go dressy or casual? What should I order? A salad's my best bet, right? What movie are we going to see? I hope it's not that new scary one about feral children."— But don't worry just yet! Tell your brain to take a chill pill before it explodes. I'm here to help you out and give you my tips and tricks to prepare for your date with little to no stress

Try to get as much information out of your guy as possible. Where are you going? What restaurant are you going to? What kind of movies does he normally go see? Once he sheds some light on his ideas for the night—hopefully he's not trying to keep everything secretive—you can start planning.

We'll start with your outfit. Get an idea of where he's taking you to eat. I doubt he's planning on taking you to a five star restaurant, so feel free to leave your mini dress and your stilettos tucked away in your closet. Dark-wash skinny jeans are always a safe bet and a cute pair of flats will never go out of style. My advice? Stay casual with a statement piece to dress your outfit up. You can't go wrong with a bright shirt, a blazer, or a chunky necklace to spice up your look.

In her article, "10 First Date Tips," written for Discovery Fitness and Health, Maria Trimarchi writes about her picks for a first date outfit. "The truth here, though, is that your confidence will take you further than the shoes you choose. But even if you're confident in your T-shirt and jeans, you shouldn't count on them to make a good first impression. Take a cue from where your date will be: Whether you're dining at an upscale restaurant or a corner cafe, you'll want to dress appropriately for the venue." I couldn't have said it better myself.

Next up is dinner. Go for something light. If you don't normally order salads when you're out with your family or friends, then don't order one to impress your guy. Trimarchi recommends, "Sure, you'd like to hear the specials. But if they're a list of gassy, garlicky, greasy or messy foods, avoid ordering them. Stick with menu items that are small and light (no one wants to be bloated on a first date) -- and don't forget to check for post-salad greenery in your teeth."

As for the movie, discuss your choices ahead of time. He loves horror movies and you love chick flicks. Maybe meet half way and go see a comedy. Everyone loves to laugh. Try to pick a genre before you go out. Compromise and see something you'd both get a kick out of.

Date night has the possibility to be very nerve wrecking, but don't let it ruin your night! Pick your outfit ahead of time to cut down on the time it takes for you to get ready. If you're still anxious about it, do a test-run the night before. Get ready like you would for your date and have your friends give their opinions. If you can get the name of the restaurant from him, do some online research. Check out the menu and pick out a couple of options for yourself. If you settle on a movie, go online and look at the trailer. Check out the reviews too. If it looks like a dud, then let your guy know and pick something else out.

Date night is supposed to be carefree, so have fun with it! Don't let your nerves get the best of you. Hopefully my advice was helpful and you can have a stress free night with your guy.





Frog  
Alyssa Papachristos



## One year Wiser

*Stephanie Taglianetti*

The scene opens in Sarah's bedroom. Sarah and Jenny are roommates, and Jenny bursts into Sarah's room and slams the door shut behind her.

Jenny: It's over.

Sarah: What's over?

Jenny: Adam and Me.

Sarah: (Almost hysterically.) Wait! What? Why do you look so calm? Why are you not freaking out? It's freaking me out that you're not freaking out about this ...

Jenny: All right, first of all, you need to stop freaking out. And second, I knew it was coming. I have had a feeling for a while now.

Sarah: (Offended.) What the hell, Jenny! Why didn't you say anything to me? I'm pretty sure we are best friends and I'm pretty sure that you tell your best friend when you have a "feeling" that your relationship is about to end ...

Jenny: Well, look how you're reacting right now! Oh my god! It's like you're the one who broke up with your boyfriend. And you fucking suck at lying to people's faces, Sar. When I told you that I bought Adam a ticket to visit me while I was staying in California for the summer, you got all twitchy and nervous and weird around him until you finally blurted it out ...

Sarah: Seriously? You're bringing that up again. UCK enough, I don't want to fight about this. It's totally irrelevant.

Jenny: Okay, I was just saying why I didn't tell you ...

Sarah: Okay, okay. But, what happened? You guys seemed perfectly fine when I saw you guys the other night. You seemed normal.

Jenny: That was the problem. We kind of reached a plateau in our relationship ...

Sarah: (Flatly; sarcastic/condescending.) A plateau? A fucking plateau? What the hell, Jen. We are 22, and you were dating him for a year. How is that even possible?

Jenny: Jesus, Sarah. Can you try and be a little less aggressive about this whole thing? Just because I don't look upset doesn't mean I'm not upset about it.

Sarah: I'm sorry. You know how I get. I am easily excitable.

Jenny: I know ...

Sarah: All right, tell me about the plateau shit ...

Jenny: (Defensively.) Okay, I know we were only dating for a year, but we were really close friends for three years before we even started dating and the year before we did start dating officially we were practically in a relationship anyways.

Sarah: Yeah, that's true. Everyone knew you guys were like, completely in love with each other.

(She notices that Jenny gets upset)

Sorry.

Jenny: It's fine. (Beat.) Sarah, I feel like Adam and I were just meant to be friends. Like, the entire year of our relationship just wasn't the same as when we were friends. We were so distant and disconnected this past year when we became official. It's like we both knew from the beginning it wasn't working, but we loved each other so much as friends that we just didn't have the heart to say it to each other ...

Sarah: But, that's okay, right? It's good that you guys noticed it now before you started getting more serious about it?

Jenny: Well, yeah. But that is still one year of my life that I am never going to get back.

Sarah: I mean, I guess try and treat it as a learning experience.

Jenny: I learned to never date your best friend.

Sarah: Don't say that. Besides, it's like practically an unwritten rule that you're supposed to marry your best friend anyways. Maybe Adam just wasn't your best friend. Just, like, a really, really, good friend or something.

Jenny: I guess ...

Sarah: Just stay positive, Jenny.

Jenny: I mean, you're right in a way. I did learn a lot. I guess the least I could say about of this whole mess is that I am one year wiser ...

Sarah: UCK you always say the most cliché shit ...

**I Know**  
*Brittany Burger*

Everyone had pushed the idea into her head.

You two would be perfect together. You are practically a couple already. It's the way that he looks at you. It's the way you look at him. Everyone is rooting for you two.

She tried to convince herself that it wasn't something that she wanted. She wasn't something that he wanted.

The thoughts started to consume everything. It wasn't that she was obsessed with the matter, but she wanted to know. Simply being friends when you want more becomes an impossible task.

This internal battle went on for years it felt like; in reality it was 13 months and 7 days. She finally told him the thoughts forced into her brain. Her friends promised she'd feel better once it was done. It would be a weight off her chest. She would finally feel like things were normal.

The eloquent speech she had rehearsed time and time again lying in her bed full of lines taken from *How I Met Your Mother* and *Grey's Anatomy* was forgotten in the moment. She would have settled for *Star Wars* moment since he never really fit the romantic leading man role. Anything would do, but she seemed to forget how to form sentences.

It might have been the shots that triggered her nerve.

It might have been that she didn't want to graduate never knowing.

Or it might have been because of the way he smiled at her as she told a dumb joke.

It didn't matter what it might have been. All that mattered was that the words slipped out.

I love you.

It wasn't said very loudly but it created complete silence.

She waited for him to say something.

His expression was impossible to read.

He left the room silently.

Why would anyone want this?

This is improvement?

That was the only thought racing through her mind. Her friends convinced her she'd feel better after this moment, but nothing felt better after this. She felt empty. She felt as if she had lost something she could never replace.

She thought of reeling the words back in. The silence they created would vanish. Instead they'd be laughing at something shared between just them.

She thought if she'd ever laugh with him again.

What would they speak about the next time she saw him? She prayed they could act like it never happened.

She was so lost in her thoughts she hadn't heard the door open.

"I know."

His words made her angry. You know?

But looking at him the anger dissipated.

He was responding in the only way his robot self could, through their shared film knowledge. He played the role of Han Solo to her role of princess.

She started crying as she felt his arms wrap around.

This is improvement.



WHEN YOU AND I WERE GETTING HIGH AS OUTER SPACE  
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D SLIP AWAY I GUESS I WAS JUST A LITTLE TOO LATE

Lyrical Poster

Alyssa Papachristos

## **The Brain in Love**

*Thomas Burke*

Now I've been in love plenty of times in my life. Unfortunately I don't think those feelings were ever reciprocated. I've been told I'm somewhat of an old soul, and I guess I felt emotion a lot stronger than those around me from a young age.

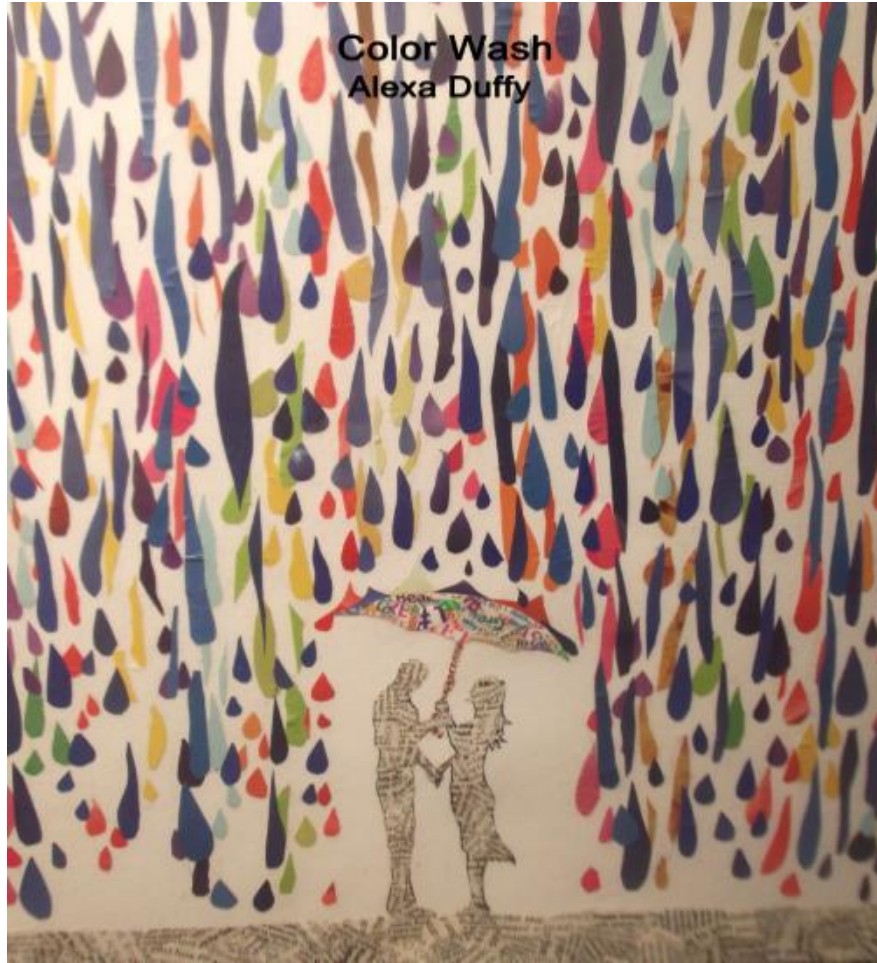
Silly me. I usually believe a person when they say something. I guess that's my problem and always has been. I like to see the best in people, and because of that I guess I appreciate things too much. I just can't understand how anyone can be inherently evil.

Now I've seen plenty of evil. I've looked into the eyes of men who were intent on killing me, and I've seen the fear and sorrow in the eyes of men right before they kill themselves. I've seen this but I won't let it make me jaded; I will always see the best in people. Maybe I'm just naive.

It's been awhile since I've been in love but I know how crazy it makes you. There's no other feeling like it. I don't think love itself is an emotion because no other word has so many feelings attached to it. Nothing can make you happier, but nothing can make you cry harder.

When I was growing up I always wanted to be in love because I wanted someone to make me happy. I wanted someone else to do this because I wasn't strong enough to make myself happy. Now that I'm a little older, I realize love isn't about happiness or sadness; it's all about the emotions in the space between.

**Color Wash**  
**Alexa Duffy**





## Love

*Keisan Gittens*

Love is being happy with sadness. Content with disappointment. Seeing inconsistency as the only thing that is consistent. Love is antsy. Love is zealous. Love is uncertain. Love is out of control and doesn't know which way to go. Love is not a smiling girl but rather a jealous boyfriend who thinks he deserves you. Love is one of those things you call something else such as family or music, jealousy or hate. Some argue love is automatic. Why do we say "One love or One God?" Why are Love and God that similar? Because they share one thing in common. They both hang around the scene, the edge of existence and non-existence and call themselves "intangible." Look! That might be love off in the distance. Typical love. Something off in the distance. Love is walking home alone in the autumn night in the streets of a suburban area filled with gangsters and hoodlums and praying Psalm 23. All saying that prayer ever did was make me wonder just "how" it worked. Love is entering a musky room and turning on the lights. You know you might anger someone you can't see. Love is harsh to you. Don't worry— that's just Tough Love. You'll thank love in the end for being hard I mean. She has 17 different names that she goes by. None of them mean love. Love claims to be honest. Love is free. Love does not love herself. Love needs you to love her and she will love you. Love is really just your dog. Not something you would entertain but that thing that keeps you going. The only thing you put up posters for when it is lost. Or maybe love is hope. Hoping you find it.



The Great Below Maria Damiamou

## A Love Song for Grover

*Amie Rielly*

He read somewhere that the didgeridoo alleviates sleep apnea. He was pretty sure one of those giant music stores would have one so they went on Sunday morning.

“It’s the circular breathing,” the article proclaimed. “It teaches your body to breathe continuously, ceaselessly, and the apnea disappears.”

The music store is one of those huge, loud warehouse chains, and it has tiny doors. They open into the drum section because the drummer is always the sexiest. There are at least five plumber’s cracks competing beats and a ginger haired boy next to the cymbal.

In an adjacent space the guitars lean like high-end hookers, boldly sticking their necks out at each man walking by. As they walk past their boldly painted bodies she absentmindedly whistles “Foxy Lady” and he smiles.

Wooden beads unceremoniously mark off the cavernous room that holds the djembes and the bongos. “I bet they’re in here” he whispers and pulls her toward the scent of patchouli. There are many hollowed out woodwinds, but no didgeridoo.

All the way in the back of the store is the stuff people actually buy. New g-strings for guitars, drum sticks, wooden recorders for elementary school kids. Behind the counter and slumped in a corner under a mop of hair the color of vacuum cleaner dust sits a stoned clerk.

“Excuse me, sir? Your website said you have didgeridoos?”

“We have one.” The clerk reaches out his arm and it just appears. For a moment he is more than a failed musician in a dead end job who smokes weed in the storeroom and plays air guitar to his invisible screaming fans. That moment he is a shaman. What they were seeking was here all along, within arms reach but unseen.

He hands it over. “But it has a big crack in it.”

They laugh and they cannot stop

They laugh until they collapse into each other, exhausted and sore from the laughing.

They laugh until they cannot breathe.

That night they sleep in silence.



One Last Dollar  
Maria Damianou

## **Stress: It's Links to Madness**

*Caroline Bertram*

Stress, according to J. Herbert of the University of Cambridge, “refers to any demand (physical or psychological) that is outside the norm and that signals a disparity between what is optimal and what actually exists”.<sup>1</sup> To the average person, stress is common and characterized by loss of hair and sleep, gray hair, an upset stomach, a weakened immune system, and other unpleasant physical symptoms. Stress certainly has these negative impacts on the body, but as we see in J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wall Paper,” stress can also have negative impacts on the mind, leading to what we call madness.

The woman within Gilman’s story experiences stress from many angles in her life, some of which come from her family. She just had what appears to be her first child, and she tells her audience, “I CANNOT be with him, it makes me so nervous.”<sup>2</sup> She also worries about meeting her husband’s expectations. The way her husband, John, speaks to her, calling her childish pet names such “blessed little goose,” gives the reader a sense of how inferior the woman appears to feel.

Much of the woman’s stress seems to be coming from her relationship with John. The loving and supporting relationship that she should have in her life is instead one of power and mockery. The woman states that John laughs at her, and “one expects that in marriage,”<sup>2</sup> something contradictory to the loving relationship typically expected. When she was told she may need to go see Weir Mitchell, the woman states “I don’t want to go there at all, I had a friend who was in his hands once, and she says he is just like John...only more so!”<sup>2</sup> She expresses fear and distaste of John, telling us that the idea of being in the care of another man like him displeases her.

The woman shows that she has constant stress to hide who she is, and who she wants to be. She is not allowed to write as she wishes, and she must hide it from her family. She also confides in her readers that “[I] cry most of the time. Of course I don’t when John is here, or anybody else, but when I am alone.”<sup>2</sup> Her feelings of stress and entrapment in her relationships are enhanced by her physical entrapment in a dingy room. She is clearly unhappy in the room and is repulsed by the wall paper covering it. Her constant displeasure with her room becomes obsessive, and John’s lack of compliance to her requests for a change causes an even greater break in the woman’s mental wellbeing.

Though Holden, the narrator of *The Catcher in the Rye*, is not confined by a room or by a significant other, he does experience social stressors. Holden is a teenager who has no interest in the prep school education his parents are forcing upon him. He has failed out of several schools, and he has a lot of pressure from his parents and teachers to shape up. He is frequently reminded that “life is a game that one plays according to the rules,” yet this is advice he simply does not want to take.<sup>3</sup> Holden’s parents are disappointed in him each time they see him get the ax from another school. He is constantly torn between wanting to live up to the expectations that have been laid down for him, and wanting to live life his own way.

Holden also has to deal with a serious psychological stressor. Three years before he tells his story, Holden loses his younger brother Allie to leukemia. Holden admired Allie a lot, for “He was the most intelligent member in the family. He was also the nicest, in lots of ways.”<sup>3</sup> Holden confides in his audience just how the loss affected him, telling us “I slept in the garage the night Allie died, and broke all the goddam windows just for the hell of it.”<sup>3</sup>

It can be argued that these stressors affect the physical wellbeing of the characters, seen in Holden's gray hair, or the woman's exhaustion, but the stress affects their mental wellbeing too. Both characters exhibit signs of depression. Holden displays sudden feelings of sadness, or outbursts of anger. He also has random episodes of crying such as when he is with Phoebe on page 233, and random suicidal thoughts such as "I felt like jumping out the window."<sup>3</sup> The woman's signs of depression are more subtle. She tells her audience that "no one would believe what effort it is to do what little I am able" and that "I cry at nothing, and cry most of the time."<sup>2</sup>

"Stress has an important role in both the onset and course of mental illness."<sup>1</sup> The different stressful social and psychological events that these characters are experiencing are potential causes of their feelings of depression, and could be linked to their behaviors of "madness." Low self-esteem and life events, such as the loss of a relative, as Holden is experiencing, or lack of a confiding relationship and social adversity, such as the woman is experiencing, can lead to physiological changes that lead to depression.<sup>1</sup> These factors can lead to changes in cortisol or serotonin levels in the body, and can change gene expression in the cells of the brain, changing its overall function.

In scientific literature, many discoveries only show the physical affects that stress has on the body. Yet, stress does not just have physical consequences, but mental ones. From personal experience, I know that as stress levels increase, so do feelings such as lack of control, or feelings like the world is going to collapse around me. The madness of Holden in *The Catcher in the Rye* and the woman in "The Yellow Wallpaper" is caused by the social and psychological stressors that they have to deal with in their lives. Each character's mental instability will only continue if the stress within their lives continues.

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Johnny Depp  
Michelle Navarro

## **Hunger**

*Brent Middleton*

Temptation abounds in a house to vices. All the senses except for one before the mind falters at last.

Adapting to Hell

Heat is lost in a cavern

Grander than the world



## His Little Black Book

Elizabeth Lezma

I fell in love with a bland guy. Never upset, never too happy, never jealous, and never angry. Stable. We hit it off on the first date—he was a complete gentleman. Always opening doors for me, pulling my seat out and paying the bill. There was just one, little thing. He carried something with him. His little black book.

It was small, black, and plain and there were scuffmarks on the cover. The book wasn't store bought either; it looked more like a passed down journal, perhaps manually bound. Yellow tinted pages stuck out of the sides and it was tied together with three rubber bands that must have been tan once.

It didn't matter where we went; the book always came with him. When he opened the door, the book was in his hand. When he paid the bill, the book was on the table. When we had sex, the book was on the bed. Even when we showered, he insisted on keeping it on top of the sink, sandwiched between towels.

I didn't pay it any attention for the first few weeks. I didn't want to ruin the good thing we had going. But then, all of a sudden, curiosity took over. I would ask him about the book and he would quickly change the subject or act as if it was just another book. All the while he would still be holding that damned thing.

Finally, one day, I walked into the bedroom to find the book sitting on the corner table. He was out. But where? He hadn't said anything about going out, and why did he leave it? Why today?

Here was my opportunity but suddenly I was hesitating. Did I want to know? I undid the first rubber band and looked around as it snapped off. No one there. I slid the second further down until it fell to the floor. My breathing became heavy. I looked around once again. No one. I slowly removed the last rubber band. The small book felt heavy in my hand. I opened the book.

Robert Downey Jr.

Holly Johnson



Iron and Sea



Andrew Lawlor

## **Ode to Revolution**

*Iyesha Jalloh*

The canvasses of my mind tried to evade chiliastic visions of a formidable future between us.

But my subconscious seized my thoughts with dreams of your body entangled in mine.

In this extreme effort taken to calm my undying want for you, I only discovered a resilient desire that diminished my inherent capabilities to rationalize.

My frustrations seemed to emerge like the grave dissensions needed to fuel a revolutionary discourse.

My heart had gathered ammunitions and my fingertips were wholly consumed with writing the Manifesto of Love.

As I waged this mental war, I contemplated the unfathomable. I wished to quiet your democratic pleas, with my selfish wants.

Even endowed with monarchial powers, I found no secular policies that could sway your dissensions.

I relegated to calming my revolutionary prospects, crowning you the victor.

For you, my darling, are my bureaucratic killer of hope that has centralized control over my mind and heart.

## **Maelstrom**

*Justine Quammie Bassomb*

Her hair levitates like black satin and soy sauce and she bounds into the room on her ballpoint spindles. She picks at the floor with toes, jukebox needles on energizers, and she moves with kinetic flourish. Speed doesn't know fast compared to her skirt's relationship with the floor or her body's bond with her partner. She can do what she likes: jump on his back, nibble his nose even crush the big feet of flirty competition, and she would still be loved with her torpedo turbulence.





Night by SHU  
Julia Romano

## **A Single Shot**

*Michael Manning*

Have you ever been in the wrong place at the wrong time? I have.

How could this happen?

One day, driving home from class, this jet black BMW was on my tail. When I merged on main road, I was on his tail. He slowed down. So I passed him and he honked at me. Then he sped up and I cut him off.

I watched him in the mirror. He stayed behind me.

When I came to a "Stop" sign, the BMW pulled up next to me. I looked over and I saw the driver had a gun pointed at me. A single shot fired. A moment later, I was in a different place. A really different place. I saw my grandmother. She looked very peaceful than when I last saw her, about to be packed away.



**The Man in the Booth**  
*Samantha Malachowski*

There is a small town where most people keep to themselves. It's a typical town; population less than 4,000, average family household made up of 3.2 members, medium household income is \$4,380.

One of the few attractions in this town is Phil's Diner, located down by the water and open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

There is a man who has been sitting in this diner in the same booth at the same time every day for the past four months.

He orders the same breakfast: one black coffee with two sugars and a slice of nearly burnt white toast, buttered on one side.

At the door of the diner, there is a rack of newspapers. Most are local. One is national. He always grabs a local newspaper.

This man always scans the first page headlines.

Three days ago, they said:

**Coyotes attack pets; residents urged to take caution**  
**'Stephanie' anticipated to be worst storm of the season**  
**Local delivery man goes missing**

Two days ago, they said:

**Three car accident on Highway 59 causes massive traffic**  
**Mayor Dingberg approves new construction bill**  
**Ex-Librarian charged with theft**

Today, they say:

**Power outages from Tropical Storm 'Stephanie' leave hundreds without power**  
**School Lacrosse team advances to state championship**

He wears an ash gray jacket, accentuating his broad and pronounced shoulders. Never unbuttoned, always pressed. The matching slacks hug his muscular thighs and cascade down his legs, landing perfectly on top of his polished Florsheim V Cleat leather shoes. Never scuffed, always shining.

Sometimes he wears a white shirt.

Sometimes he wears a light blue shirt.

He likes to wear the same tie for a few days in a row.

A few weeks ago, he wore a black and gray striped silk tie for three days. Then he wore a burnt cherry plaid designed tie for six days. Five days ago, he started wearing a navy blue and soot gray striped tie.

His ties are always in a tight Windsor knot.

The first time he walked into the diner nearly four months ago, someone was immediately drawn to him. The way he glided onto the light blue vinyl booth seat, always centered, and ran his fingers through his short copper hair.

The way he would cross his left leg over his right thigh.

The way every move of his body seemed rehearsed and nearly perfect.

It fascinated someone.

Someone wanted to get to know the man in the booth.

Someone needed to get to know the man in the booth.

He takes a deep breath. He lets it go. He takes another one. Lets it go. It's time to do this. Now or never, he thinks. Just talk to him. He approaches the man in the booth.

At first, the man in the booth doesn't look up from his newspaper. It's like nothing else exists but that newspaper. Then, his eyes look to the top of the newspaper. Then they look at the warm body that just approached him. Then they lock eyes.

"Hi, I'm Dave." He stammers a little too quickly.

The man looking up from the booth doesn't say anything. He doesn't smile. Just stares. After Dave begins to feel embarrassed, the man's eyes crinkle with a wide grin.

"Thomas," the man says. He reaches his left hand out to Dave, keeping those eyes locked on his. He is very good at eye contact.

Dave can't help but return the smile.

He firmly grasps Thomas' hand. He has a strong handshake. Dave doesn't want to let go. He makes himself let go.

"Would you like to sit down?"

The invitation makes Dave's heart thump, thump, thump. Why is he reacting this way? Calm down, Dave. He suddenly remembers to respond to Thomas, and gives a curt nod as he slides into the booth across from him.

For a moment, Thomas just smiles at Dave from over his newspaper. It looks like Thomas wants to say something to him. His brow rises to just under his perfectly parted cinnamon sprinkled hair. He inhales sharply. Then he ruffles the newspaper and resumes reading.

Dave feels oddly disappointed.

Thomas' eyes remain fixated on the left page of the newspaper. Dave realizes he didn't bring anything with him to this man's booth. No food. No coffee. No newspaper. His hands feel awkward.

"Would you like a section of the newspaper?" It's like Thomas can read his mind. Before Dave could respond, Thomas carefully folds and slides the news section to him. Dave offers a polite nod and tries to focus on the text. All he can read are the headlines.

## **Power outages from Tropical Storm 'Stephanie' leave hundreds without power**

### **School Lacrosse team advances to state championship**

A movement catches Dave's eye. Thomas is pulling his tie it back and forth across his shirt collar, which is rubbing against his smooth, clean neck. He's loosening it ever so slightly. This makes Thomas look relaxed. His eyes remain on the same left page of the newspaper.

"Is that short for 'David'?" Thomas doesn't break his gaze from his newspaper. Dave is relieved but he doesn't know why.

"Yes," he replies.

Thomas slowly nods three times to himself, not lifting his eyes off the newspaper.

The two men in the booth sit in silence for another eighteen minutes. It's a comfortable silence.

A waitress walks over and asks David if he would like anything. He tells her he wants coffee. She tops off Thomas' mug and brings David his own mug.

After another twelve minutes, Thomas finally puts down his paper. David stops rereading the same headlines and looks at him.

"So, David," Thomas folds the paper neatly and places it to his left. He leans into the table. "Tell me about yourself."

Over the next seventy-six minutes, David and Thomas share scenes from their lives with each other.

"I just moved here from across the country," David reveals. "I don't really know anyone."

"I am not much of a 'people-person' myself," Thomas bashfully admits. "What about your family?"

There is a song serenading the two men during their conversation:

*And, I know the way you love, you make me feel so fine.*

*I love the way you love, because I know you're mine, all mine.*

Thomas is tap, tap, tapping his left foot to the smooth melody.

"I'm not close with my family," explains David. "We don't share the same views." "I understand," says Thomas, still smiling.

*Folks tell me, now and then, find somebody new.*

*I don't care what the people may say, I'm stickin' right here with you.*

David mostly talks about work and frustrations. Thomas mostly listens. Every now and then they both get refills of their coffees.

David and Thomas share a lot in common. Neither enjoy their jobs. Both prefer winter over summer. Neither eat thai food. Both enjoy theater.

"There's a show playing at 'Regal Crown Theatre' tonight," Thomas explains. He leans in closer to David. "I happen to have an extra ticket." His voice drops an octave. "Would you like to join me?"

David thinks for a moment. He wants to say yes. Of course he will say yes. He wants to go anywhere with Thomas. He's so warm and welcoming. For the first time in a long time, maybe his whole life, David feels at ease with himself. He almost feels confident. Probably not as confident as Thomas, though.

"Well," David begins, touching his chin. "I did have other plans..." he lies.

"Oh," Thomas interrupts. "I understand, no worries." Thomas immediately dismisses the subject and returns to his newspaper.

David doesn't feel so confident anymore.

"But," he retracts his statement. "I can postpone them." Thomas looks up from over his newspaper.

For a moment, Thomas' face changes. His smile is warm, but his eyes are excited. His skin warps and his cheeks harden. He looks divine. Like a perfect porcelain doll. His eyes flicker. And then it's gone.

This excites David.

It's 6:22 p.m. and David is pacing back and forth in his apartment. He is wearing a white shirt, buttoned to the top, with dark gray blazer and khaki pants. His bed is covered with rejected shirts, pants, and ties as he searches for the perfect outfit.

"Fantastic," Thomas had said nine hours ago after David retracted his little white lie. They worked out specifics: where to meet, what time, maybe coffee afterward? Thomas looked at his Mido Powerwind wristwatch and excused himself from the booth.

"I'll see you later tonight, then," Thomas extended his left hand towards David. David wrapped his fingers around Thomas' and shared his intimate warmth for just a brief moment.

David couldn't stop his gaze from gliding over Thomas' perfect shoulders as he carried himself towards the diner door.

"Oh, I almost forgot," Thomas interjected David's thoughts, turning his body nonchalantly.

"Make sure you wear your best suit. The theater dress code is jacket and tie only."

With that, Thomas had left David in the booth to think about his subpar wardrobe and cheap suits.

Right now, David is deciding between a blood red and coal black striped tie or a midnight blue and vivid white polka dotted tie. The striped tie matches his outfit, but is cheap and not as elegant as David would like. The blue tie is made of silk, but has a Mariana stain near the bottom. He could always cover it, though.

He chooses the silk sauce stained tie.

When he buttons his blazer, the stain is covered.

After taking a last glance at the mirror and feeling more than mediocre in his suit, he heads out the door leaving the whirlwind of clothes behind him.

David doesn't have a car. He usually rides his bike where he needs to go. Tonight, though, he doesn't want to show this side of his life to Thomas.

Tonight, he wants to pretend.

He hails a taxi and asks the driver to drop him off a block away from the theater. It takes sixteen minutes to reach his destination.

The show doesn't start for another thirty-three minutes. Thomas had asked to meet him at 8:30 p.m., fifteen minutes before the show begins. It's now 8:12 p.m. David is glad he is early. That way, Thomas won't see how he arrived.

He walks towards the theater and sees a man dressed in black in front of the doors.

It's the man in the booth.

David isn't early enough for Thomas' promptness.

Nonetheless, he warmly returns Thomas' smile.

"David," Thomas reaches his left hand out towards David. He grasps it and Thomas pulls him into a short embrace. He pat pat pats his back three times with his right palm and then lets him go.

David feels at ease.

"Take a look at this," Thomas remarks as he reads a sign posted on the front door. "Looks like Stephanie knocked the power out." He looks at David and shrugs his shoulders.

"That's too bad," David is more disappointed than he lets on. He worries their night will end earlier than he anticipated.

"Well," Thomas taps his chest with his finger, seemingly lost in thought. "There is one other place we could go."

His heart soars and David exhales.

This is the last moment David remembers.

When David opens his eyes, he is disoriented. He doesn't know where he is. He waits for his eyes to focus and looks around the unfamiliar room.

There is a bed in the corner. There are items all over it in the same way his clothes were all over his bed just hours ago. The clothes that are still all over his bed.

The items on the bed in front of him vary:

A small black bag.

A Polaroid camera.

A Louisville Slugger.

Newspapers.

David notices there are newspapers all over the floor.

His head throb, throb, throbs on the left side above his ear. He tries to reach his left hand to touch it.

It's restrained.

He tries his right hand.

It's restrained.

He tries to move his legs.

They're restrained.

David is tied to a cold metal chair.

A door opens from behind David. Footsteps walk towards him.

"I'm sorry." Thomas' face appears in David's vision. He looks at Thomas with confusion. Obviously, he's confused. He tries to wiggle the chair and realizes it is bolted to the ground.

Thomas reaches towards David's face.

"I love you so much, David." Thomas trails his fingertips along David's delicate jaw line and pauses at his chin. His lips part as he grazes David's bottom lip with his thumb.

"I know I love you," explains Thomas, "because I accept that one day I will die. But to accept that one day you will die?" He's whispering to himself now. "It hurts so much. It's best to end the hurt as soon as possible, rather than wait."

David pulls his lips into his mouth.

Thomas looks hurt.

Offended.

"Waiting." Thomas looks down guiltily. "Life is just waiting for the inevitable."

For three seconds, Thomas stares intensely at David.

"Don't be mad." Thomas pleads. "But I have so much love to give." Thomas turns his back to David. The newspapers on the floor crinkle, crunch, crinkle with each footstep. Thomas looks at the bed. He walks towards it. David watches as Thomas' back rises and falls with every breath he takes.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Slight sob.

Inhale.

Exhale.

“Robert.” Thomas turns and faces David, who still hasn’t said a word. He doesn’t know what to say. He doesn’t understand why this is happening to him. All he wanted was to get to know the man in the booth.

He didn’t want this.

“Robert worked for ‘Dalton’s Deli.’” Thomas can’t meet David’s befuddled gaze. “I would order the same sandwich every day and he would be the one to deliver it. He was so beautiful.”

Thomas runs his fingers through his now erratic hair. His burnt wood hair.

“Every day I read the newspaper, waiting to see his name again. Waiting to be able to accept his death. To be able to acknowledge the inevitable.” Thomas’ left hand snatches the newspaper lying on the bed next to him.

It’s the newspaper from four days ago.

“Local delivery man goes missing,” He reads in a mocking gesture. Thomas drops to his knees. His rabid hands grab at pages of newspaper. He’s looking for something.

Crinkle, crunch, crinkle.

His eyes focus at the black and white splattered ground.

“All he was worth was a blurb,” he suddenly bursts out. “They objectify him by calling him nothing more than a ‘local delivery man’ and don’t even mention his name. He has a name! Goddamnit he has a name!

Robert!

Robert!

James!

Stephen!

Todd!

Thomas!

Thomas!

My name is Thomas!”

David realizes Thomas is yelling to no one in particular.

Thomas clenches his jaw. He stares at the newspaper scattered around the floor. “Nobody cares about the faggots.

Nobody loves the faggots.

I love the faggots.”

Thomas’ head snaps up and locks eyes with David.

David knows what to say.

“I’m not a faggot,” he finally stammers.

For a moment, Thomas’ face changes. His smile is warm, but his eyes are cold. His skin warps and his cheeks harden. He looks wicked. Like a grinning jack-o-lantern. His eyes flicker. And then it’s gone.

This frightens David.

Thomas wakes up at the same time every morning, 5:35 a.m. His tawny hair is tousled and wild. He hates when his hair isn't in its place. He avoids the mirror as he walks into the bathroom.

He showers for exactly sixteen minutes today. Lather, rinse, repeat, condition. He steps out of the shower onto the cyan rug and wraps a cyan towel around his waist.

Thomas uses a smaller cyan towel to dry his hair. He hangs both damp towels on a rack behind him. Thomas finally meets his gaze in the mirror.

Thirty-eight minutes later, his penny colored hair is in place. Each strand is where it belongs.

Twenty-two minutes later, he is wearing a light blue shirt. Buttoned all the way up and pressed. His ash gray jacket matches his ash gray slacks and his black shoes shine back up at him

In his desk, there is a locked drawer. Inside the locked drawer are thirteen Polaroid photographs. Some are blurry, most are grainy. On top of the pile lies a photograph of David, his eyes closed and serene. He looks asleep, lost in a peaceful dream.

Thomas reaches into his closet. There are a plethora of ties.

A black and gray striped silk tie.

A burnt cherry plaid tie.

A navy blue and suit gray striped tie.

Today, he chooses a silk midnight blue and vivid white polka dotted tie. He doesn't notice the stain at the bottom.

It's time to go to the diner, he thinks.

It's time to get breakfast.

One black coffee with two sugars and a slice of nearly burnt white toast, buttered on one side.

It's time to read the newspaper.





Emergence  
Maria Damianou

## "She's Packing Her Things"

*Amie Reilly*

She's packing her things, chewing on words about years wasted and spitting out incoherent insults. Books and socks and sex toys and what appears to be half a sandwich take her abuses like stoic soldiers, claiming their new positions within the damp cardboard box she found in the basement. When we first moved in, she meticulously arranged our smiling photograph faces on the blank face of the refrigerator. She's tearing them all in half now, pocketing all of her faces and replacing the torn halves of me back under the magnets.

With each load she puts into the backseat of her rusted out Honda I feel heavier. The final black trash bag is lumpy with half the contents of the silverware drawer mixed with her china doll collection wrapped in our shower curtain. When she heaves it over her shoulder I can't help but remember last Christmas when we spent the day getting stoned while we watched the snow fall during the commercial breaks of the Christmas Vacation marathon. She gave me a book of Goethe poetry and cried softly when she opened the complete DVD collection of The Simpsons I splurged on.

She kicks the cat out of the way as she slams the door. I don't understand why.

She loved that cat.

## Shaky Bolt

*Justine Quammie Bassomb*

My boyfriend let me die once.

We were on our apartment rooftop on Central Park West and he decided it was time for me to go.

So I grabbed onto the only un-attachable thing in the vicinity. See, his arms and legs were both prosthetics from the war so when we'd argue I'd scratch his arms, and he'd mockingly say, "Sorry Darlin', I don't feel a thing." And when I kicked his shins he simply unbuckled them and I'd tip over because how do you kick a leg with a disappearing act?

So here I am on top of this roof dangling from his dick knowing in my deepest pit that he cannot perform any more tricks.

But one more surprise, he drops his boxers and there it is a little screw that he unfastens and lets loose.

You might wonder how a dead person gives an account this good of the day she died, but maybe death is detachable too.

My boyfriend threw me off a building once.

We were on our apartment rooftop on Central Park West and he decided it was time for me to go. So I grabbed onto the only un-attachable thing in the vicinity. See, his arms and legs were both prosthetics from the war so when we'd argue and I'd scratch his arms, he'd mockingly say, "Sorry Darlin', I don't feel a thing" and when I kicked his shins he simply, unbuckled them and I'd tip over because how do you kick a leg that's not there anymore?

So here I am on top of this roof dangling from his dick knowing in my deepest pit that he cannot disengage himself from this one. But one more surprise, he drops his boxers and there it is a little screw that he un-tightens and lets' loose.

You might analyze how a dead person gives an account this good of the day she died but maybe death is detachable too.

## **The Silent Ship**

*Evan Morse*

*Life is often lived throughout the years without the thought of its presence,  
Yesterday leads to today, and yet the aspect of life is not sensed. There are only  
certain events that allow us to wake from this state,  
To realize that life has already gone by, for it does not wait.*

*What you did tomorrow cannot be changed,  
What you missed when you slept cannot be retained.  
To do things again is a gift that we cannot possess,  
It is a path that we cannot walk, a hill that we cannot crest.*

*Move in presence with time,  
Or be lost in the past behind.  
Life does not stop for those who do not grasp their day today.  
For it is a silent ship already sent upon its way*

## **The Journey Home**

*Evan Morse*

The journey home begins at birth,

The very second one is on the Earth.

It is a journey often changed about,

Between happiness, sadness and doubt.

Time is the only currency we know,

We spend time working, schooling and watching shows.

When your time runs out, and you're all alone,

That is the end to the journey home.

No matter how your time was spent,

You must pay the debt with an eternal rent.

A debt that he will pay,

To keep you home, where you will stay.

So how will you spend this day?

For your return home is not far away.



Let's give him  
Enough and On Time

Master Copy  
Sara Race

## **Uneasy Peace**

*Thomas Burke*

When Hassan finally heard silence, he crept out of his hiding spot he hollowed out of the earth. He made sure his makeshift shelter would protect him from harm while his father, Muhammad, fought. Hassan hated when the explosions and gunshots started because he knew there was a chance his father wouldn't come home. His mother told him they needed the money and they were afraid the Taliban would kill them if they refused.

When Muhammad was very young he fought with his father against the Russians earning him a reputation for his proficiency in combat. Once his people had overthrown communism in their country, Muhammad wanted to return home to farm and start a family but his father had other plans. Muhammad's father had political aspirations and forced Muhammad to attend university in Tehran where he studied Military History and from there studied at Oxford where he received a degree in Theology.

During his time in battle Muhammad began writing about Allah and his inner struggles with the acts he was committing. After attending school in England he returned to Afghanistan and confronted his father. No longer would he be made to be an instrument of war, he would move south and live on the river and grow corn. His father loved Muhammad and understood the pain of war. While he has his responsibilities to maintain he allowed Muhammad to leave and start a new peaceful life.

Muhammad searched throughout the Helmand to find the lushest farmland he could. When he found what he was looking for he hired local laborers to build a lavish compound and was very generous in paying for the work. He had built a fortune during the war and had little regard for money.

The next week after moving in he attended mosque and asked the imam for a wife. The imam directed him to a local landowner with beautiful daughters. Muhammad offered the landowner a hefty dowry. Between his reputation and his fortune any father would be lucky to give away her, so the landowner jumped at the chance.

Hassan was born almost 10 months to the day after the wedding and was the pride of Muhammad's life, he vowed he would never leave his son or force him to fight like his father did.

When the Americans came it all changed very quickly. The Taliban immediately sent for Muhammad, he knew he had no choice and reluctantly agreed. He refused to lead however afraid to send more boys to their deaths, and instead chose to only fight honorably face to face with his enemy.

Hassan was especially scared tonight he knew his father was alone and the only thing silence meant was death.





**Sailor's Memoir**  
Meaghan Souza

## **Strangling, Suffocating, Stifling.**

*Marisa Papa*

We filed into the pews, hands clasped and hearts pounding. We were all standing there waiting for the ceremony to begin. I kept my head down and my emotions constricted. I was choking on everything that was trying to get out. My scarf was wrapped around my neck, making me unable to breathe. I was anticipating the tears slowly streaming down my face. We all sat down. I prepared by digging my pointer fingernail into the palm of my right hand. For some reason this was comforting to me. Puncturing my palm seemed less painful than what I was soon about to feel. Her husband approached the altar to speak.

I looked up at him. The first thing I noticed was his tie. Not the look on his face or the tears streaming from his light brown eyes, but his tie. It was dark blue, perfectly straight, pulled tightly, just like I'm sure he had practiced and perfected for decades. He thought he'd be using those finely mastered skills for good—for proms, and parties, and weddings. He'd never imagine he would wake up one morning alone, put on his nicest suit, stand in front of a mirror, and wrap a tie around his neck. He'd done a lot of things for her, but he never thought she'd ask him to do this.

His tie was wrapped around his throat, keeping in everything he was feeling. Tight and tense he was almost done. He was about to do it. He would remain composed. He wore this tie proudly, in front of a few dozen weeping family members and friends. Choking on their tears, their bodies undulated up and down. He eloquently spoke the last words of his eulogy. He stepped off the podium, slowly and discretely loosening his tie, just as I loosened my scarf. We both released everything that was being restrained. He subtly pulled out a handkerchief from his jacket pocket and wiped the streaming tears that he had held in. It was over. He no longer had to have a strong exterior. No longer had to be put together or composed. Behind the hard shell of smiles and laughter he created, deep down, he felt the exact opposite--loss.

## **Don't Go Back**

*Justine Quammie Bassomb*

I saw her once more. Her brown side bang still hung rebelliously off the side of her face, while the remainder of her follicle vines fell anywhere but down, and her brown retriever eyes still looked up with lonely abandon. Where had she gone? How was her mind? These questions struck me like flyers swapping dates in the wind. I knew nothing of her after she ran and heard nothing after I shut the windows. And my mistake became evident the next day when without her unstable babble, road rage behavior and with touchable tracings of her obsessive hair pulling compulsion I realized the cracked mirror, she punched, only had crooked faces of me and me and me. But here she stood lips rough and plump like freshly picked sheep's wool and I only knew how to stumble forward and gather my old woman in my arms, thanking God she survived without me. I didn't know that she could.

Time left us behind before we dislodged our bodies from one another. And when I stared at her face again she started to laugh a laugh of uncorked sanity and unhinged amusement, an aerial vibration she knew I loved to hear. Now I reached for her again but she stopped me by slapping my forehead with hands flat and charred and rubbing the bruise to an abrasive fire. She jabbed at the air behind my ear with her index finger and as I turned I scanned an empty street unravel to reveal a little boy, a teenage girl and my wife. They stood transfixed and transfigured with vacant faces and squeezed palms. With mouth slightly ajar, I turned back to face her but she had already moved away, once more.

## Road Map: A Map to Finding Yourself

*Mary Awad*

*July*

Run away.

You are fearless.

Your hair whips against your back as the wind blows propelling you forward in an unknown direction. Is it the road less travelled? The beaten path? Or is it the road no one has travelled before and you're the first? It's because you are fearless. You strive to achieve. But what do you want to accomplish? As of now, you're not sure. Anything, you suppose. You could make something or do something or be someone- but that's not important to you. The feeling is. Knowing you made that or did that or were that, even if no one else does. Self achievement, satisfaction, self-worth, you don't know what to call it but you want it. The irony's almost tangible. But you know one thing: you can't achieve anything here. So you throw your things in the back of a used car your sister doesn't drive anymore and disappear. But you're not sad because you know you're on the right path because the only one walking it is you. Your hair whips against your back as the wind blows. You knew you should've gotten the car window fixed before you left. But your heart was always louder than your head and the desire to leave was so fervent that it muted your logic. And what your heart is saying now...it's what you've always wanted to hear.

Run away.

You are fearless.



Judgement Day Cancelled  
Edward Garry