

Ivy Quill



Volume III:

Triptych

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"Words - so innocent and powerless as they are, as standing in a dictionary, how potent for good and evil they become in the hands of one who knows how to combine them"

~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

Class Poem

Spring 2012 Creative Writing
Professor Claire Roof

One within one with universe.
She sat afraid to move or speak.
I walked out and glanced up at the clear blue sky.
And whether you believe it or not, you're right
And whether you believe it or not, you're wrong.
At first you didn't succeed, try and try again.
This too shall pass
for what it's worth this will last.
She thought to herself as she walked toward the courthouse
I hate the thought that winter can still come
I enjoy college more than high school.
Even though college is a lot more expensive
Money is not the reason I'm here; education is.
You can't be born smart; you learn to be smart
And sometimes being smart means not listening to your screaming
heart
And sometimes, the heart is just very still...



More Lessons I've Learned Along the Way

By: Kim Hivley

As I have said before, at my age the loss of youth is only tolerable if you have learned a few lessons along the way. Since my youth was many times intolerable here are a few more of those lessons I've picked up along the way:

- Never mistake kindness for weakness. You may someday find you have underestimated an adversary or overestimated your own strength. Either way, you are likely to take a pretty good ass whooping.
- Striving to reach new heights does not always sit well with everyone. You may have to reach these heights in spite of ankle biters.
- I know that bad stuff exists in the world, but I do not have to invite it into my house. So you carry a lot of negativity and doom around with you, don't wait around for a dinner invitation.
- When I was eight and did not like the way my life was going, I packed up my best toys and headed for the open road. There comes a time when you are too old to run away from home. At some point you just have to put on your Big Girl Panties and work through the problems, not run away from them. So stop bitching and blaming and figure out a way to fix it!!!!
- Ignoring me does not mean I no longer exist. It probably means that it will only be that much more annoying for you when you realize that I'm still around.
- When someone has affected you, acknowledge it.
- When searching, always look for the fantastic journey.

Heaven's Bathtub

By: Diana Moss-Clark

"Time for a bath," Mom said.

"Bath, bath, bath" screamed her rambunctious 3 year old.

Bath time was their favorite time of day! Little Lily got to play in a world of bubbles, delighting in the creation of bubble towers, and Mom got to sit down for just a moment and truly enjoy her toddler.

"Tell me a story mommy" Lily said.

"Ok, let me think. Have I ever told you the one about heaven's bathtub?" Mom asked.

"No" Lily lied. Lily asked for this same story every, but it never failed to bring the same sense of wonder and amazement to her angelic face.

"Let me think, how does it go again? Ah yes, I remember. I once took a very special trip with your daddy" Mom began, "we decided that we wanted a perfect little girl to add to our family. One night as we were getting ready for bed, your daddy noticed a door in our bedroom. We had never seen this door before. At first we were not sure if we wanted to touch it" Mommy said.

"Did you, mommy, did you touch the door?" Lily quipped.

"Well, after a little debate, I finally reached out and touched the door knob. The handle was made of pure joy! I could hear singing in my ears, like a chorus of angels heralding my arrival. I knew this door was a special; something told me that it would take me to a very special place. So, I opened the door." Mommy said.

"What was on the other side?" Lily asked now transfixed. Her bubbles completely forgotten as she listened, her chin, resting on the edge of the tub.

"Well, you see Lily, in heaven God has to have a special place where he keeps all his babies. He certainly cannot let them crawl all over the place alone, and his angels are too busy watching over them. So, in a very special corner of heaven God created the most beautiful bathtub. And it is here were he keeps all of his precious babies, who get to play and have fun while they wait for their mommies and daddies to come collect them." Mom said as she enjoyed the look of pure joy on Lily's face.

"Is that were you and daddy found me?" Lily asked.

"It sure was" Mom replied. "Even in the crowded bathtub we were able to see only you, sitting near the edge playing with your bubbles. Your daddy and I both saw you at the same time. As we approached the bathtub you turned to us, held up your arms and said "momma, dada, welcome" and we knew why we were there and that we had found our perfect angel.

"Am I still an angel?" Lily asked.

"You sure are! And you will always be my angel, Lily. Always." Mom replied. "Now are you ready to get out of this bathtub?"

"Yes" was the simply sweet reply.

Mirror, Mirror

By: Laura Mills

The mirror always hung
in the stone corridor,
flat and unassuming.
Winter light, living
like strange creatures
beneath the icy glass
sometimes a face,
sometimes not.

The queen could see a face,
broad purple lips and beetle-like eyes,
bony fingers restless along her hairline,
always an attempt to smooth, to correct.
She hated her winter skin
stretched like rice paper over blue veins,
and the way a few silver hairs caught the morning light
in the hall mirror.

Seconds ticked by,
then minutes. It was an
interminable time to wait
to be young again, to be beautiful.
Beauty was her poison;
she drank silver liquid from
the surface of the mirror, red lips
leaving a mark
like blood in snow.

I Write This With Fire

By: Aaron Heard

I was born child-ren of the scorned, where families mourn frequently. Hearts torn recently. My princess was sworn to perform indecencies, black ghetto trash but, it's sweet to me. Nothing nice, no sugar or spice, no sugar for rice. My little snotty nose brother, eating buggers and rice around roaches and mice. We lift our drinks to the sky and we toast to this life, and we boast and we cry because we know what it's like.

It's my eternal passion, my heart's desire...I write this with fire. Hot ink dripping, burning the pages...stop, think, and listen thoroughly while learning the stages. We'll be confined to these chains from the ass to the ash, and we'll be mentally restrained if we don't break away fast. We need pain in our path, to explain our wrath, its vital. No cash, just a mask and a motive...my title. Hardcore in despite of this hard floor, strapped with a survival knife while fighting this dark war. Sharpen my tongue, sticking it in poverty's lung. Your lethal weapon is your young, so I'm loading my sons. Now prepare to attack, lock in on your target, no cock it...relax. Shoot for the stars and do not come back! I write this with fire.

Home Is Where The Cold Is

By: Michael K

snores in the park on a stack of newspapers
kept warm in the dark thanks to those who blew vapors
an informative nark, givin up for such few favors
in a less than four minute talk, they got him on two cases

sentenced to a week in jail, sees none of his people there
beady eyes and greasy hair, people felt that need to stare
he should be bluer then the mat he's sleepin on
but he's got full course meals, and the heat is on

once the heat is gone, its back to a bleeding cough
hungers to be warm but he's lucky if he eats at all
tries to speak to god, but he doesn't answer him
he's slept on boardwalk, but never had a chance to win

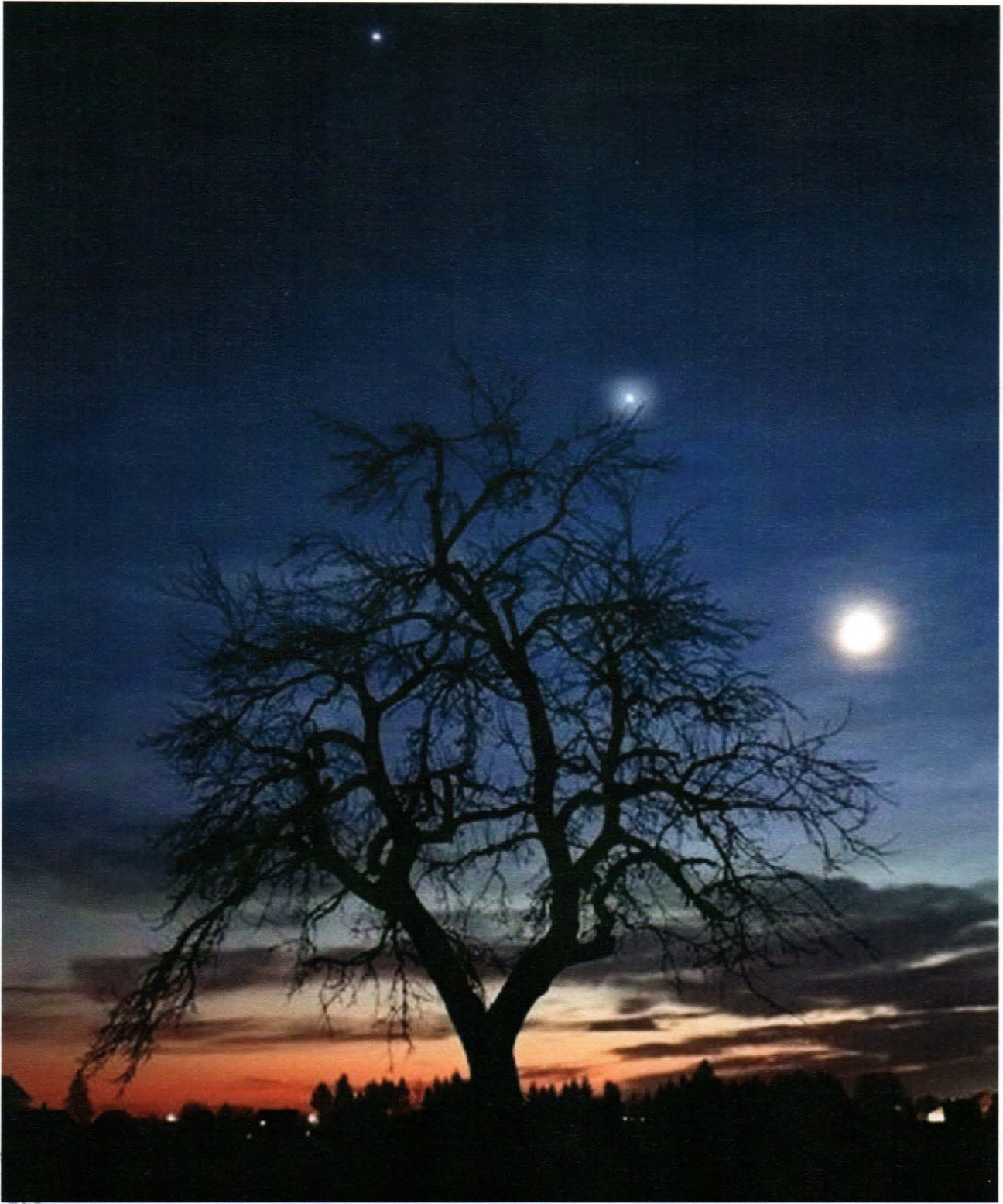
born in the trash, his umbilical chord, was attached to an outlet
and man he hasn't found an out yet,
so he sits lazily, gets faded the cracks in the wall baffle his scull pipes mak-
ing his mouth sweat

hasn't eaten the past three, this alley cat sleep in the back of a Rally's, can't
see him less you search in the trash heap
a verminous cat, stench of bourbon attach, searchin for a permanent nap
but he's too pussy, to snap the curve in his back

scratching your screen door, asking to eat your, scraps that you scraped in
the trash before, the raccoons eat more than their fill
storin a steel piece to jab into the back of the next person
who's got an orange to peal, is this how reality feels

never had a dream, or read a magazine, his baggy jeans
covered in hard vomit, a car coming, but he's fast to lean
instinctively he'd vent to these people and instantly win sympathy
you ask him why, he's like "it made cents for me"

now his pockets jingling, somthings gotten into em
a burst of confidence has his empty heart rekindling
has enough for a half of a pint ,another few blasts from the pipe
either way he has enough to last him the night



Moon, Venus, Jupiter Line Up

By: Jonathon Smith

An Ode to the Two.

By: Farai Gotora

Ladies, gentlemen and the undecided,

We are gathered here to celebrate the union of two beloved friends. Whether you are a friend of the bride or companion to the groom, I am sure you'll agree this is a most joyous occasion.

Very few people can say they have not benefitted from this union and despite your obvious differences, you two are meant for each other. I can honestly say the world is a better place because of you.

To Saturday:

Thank you for being a reliable oasis after five days of fiery hell. Thank you for allowing me to forget about that wretched alarm clock and sleep in. Because of you Saturday, I can walk in my pajamas up till 3pm unashamed. Saturday, you are more than just an excuse to relax though. As you progress into the latter stages, you allow thousands to dress up in skimpy outfits that leave precious little to the imagination.

You allow the young and the young at heart to first dance, and then stumble the night away.

Which brings me to Sunday:

Sunday, to some you are known as "Bucket Sunday". Within your hours, some regurgitate and empty out their bowels into unfortunate buckets. You let these sloshed individuals nurse their hangovers.

To others however, you are Holy Sunday. You are a mainstay day for those that worship and pay homage to their Deity. But Sunday, you are a lot more than that. It is during the course of your day that virtually every man in America becomes an immobile zombie.

For you see, the sacred watching of NFL games is reserved for you Sunday. Thanks to you NFL on Sunday, aliens could invade our planet and not a single man would be bothered.

Sunday, you would be perfect but excuse me to say this... you give way to Monday. Monday, that dreary heifer that has us all back to square one! But that's another salutation for another time!

So may we all raise a glass, juice box or can to the union of ages, the combination of the century: Here's to you Saturday and Sunday!

Thank you!



The Rules of the Game

By: John Comeau

The object of the game
is to find the hidden door.
Some find it very quickly,
but it can take a hundred years, or more.
The body you will occupy
is durable and strong.
It communicates with others
and is capable of song.
Players may team up,
though each must find a separate door.
You can construct your own way out,
but that affects your score.
Players gather money,
which is used to purchase
weapons, food, love, and more,
which will aid you in your journey
to that final hidden door.

The Lighthouse

By: Gina R Lambert

As I am walking alone down a deserted lakeshore
I think of you
Wishing together
We could share this magical view
Watching a lighthouse blinking in the distance
I dream of the days we were together
And I feel as though
You are now the lighthouse
For no matter how far I walk
It cannot be reached
The memory of that walk will stay with me for the rest of my days
Just as the memories of our love
Never dying.

Gifts

By: Eshanya Walls

Looking I see wisdom in those expressions smiles made of breast milk, skin not touched, innocents heard, the perfect gifts.

I cherish along the growth; my gifts; life, lessons, and knowledge of another.

Once wrapped in an amniotic womb; my gifts, my whole being able to watch without placing on a shelf.

The small sounds make imaginary words of appreciation; of love; yet, no one understands those words but my gifts and I.

My gifts are made of precious glass, they peak and gleam when the sun shines, never to be broken.

My gifts are of generations; past, present, future. They are of low tone notes that glide up and up with the angels voice.

Live, laugh, love, my gifts, your bow is not untied. Peace, harmony, serenity; my gifts, is how you were placed within my reach. My eyes stare down my gifts.

Pure as the first flight of a butterfly, the world has meaning. Magical as the first baby's cry, my gifts are my meaning.

Love Lost, Pride Found

By: Tashaun Massey

He would sit there quietly, day in and day out, so closed off from the goings on of the seeming excitement of the teenage life. I'd watch him, three seats diagonal from me. Gazing out the window and occasionally glancing at the people we shared the classroom with. His hair would drape in front of his face from time to time, hiding the most beautiful pair of green eyes I think I'd ever seen.

I made him smile once. We were in the same group during a project in class. I had to remind myself how to breathe. I was so taken aback by the light that shined in his simple graceful smile. I wondered in that moment, if he saw me the way I see him. I wondered if he'd accept me the way I had already whole heartedly accepted him. I was in love, but I had no clue as to how to tell him exactly how I felt without making him run away from me.

Last night, I saw his face on the news. The headline read, "Youth found dead, possible suicide." As my soul wept, I watched and waited for more word on what happened to my beloved. An hour passed, the headline changed.

"Another teen commits suicide due to bullying." His face on the screen again. Tears blurred my vision as the woman spoke next to his image. "Investigators say that parents found him this morning with two notes. One addressed to the family, explaining things and the other addressed to a possible classmate whose name was not released to us."

I cried myself to sleep.

The next morning, my body ached and eyes burned. I took my seat without a word to my friends and sat silently staring at my desk. I looked up when the teacher's silhouette appeared, blocking out the bright sunlight that tried its damndest to warm me. I wasn't prepared for the sadness that showed so plainly on her face. My mouth opened slightly as she handed me a delicately folded piece of notebook paper. My heart stopped when I read my name written in his flawless scribe at the top of the paper. I cried heavy tears as I read the last words he'd ever say to me with his sweet voice echoing in my mind.

"Tommy,

I know it was you who put love notes in my locker. I know that you would sit and watch me whenever the teacher had her back turned. I know because I watched you too. I wanted to tell you for a long time how I felt about you, but was afraid of how you would react. I've been in love with you this whole time, and as I am writing this, I realize that you may have loved me too. I'm sorry I couldn't hold on long enough for us. But, I want you to know that, you were the only thing good in my life. Thank you for accepting me.

I love you with all my heart,
Justin"

Note to the reader: I hope that if anyone GLBT or not, gets anything from this, know that everyone is beautiful. Be sure in the notion that everyone deserves the right to love openly.



By: Alisa Schell (art/poem accompaniment)

Tapestry

By: Alisa Schell

The stars have fallen from the sky
They've landed into my heart
I've been left in the dark
Dancing in the shadow of your life
I can't carry it if I seek to survive
The sun has failed to rise
It's landed in my soul
Spinning wheels of solitude
I'm weaving the tapestry
Of time and dreams
I've become the light
Dancing in the twilight of your being
The world and I are one.

Damn you Mr. Cusack

By: Charles Phillips

Here it comes
that same weird feeling that I hate to have
I want my moment in the sun
I want my moment to hold the boom box
My moment to run down the beach and just stare
Stare at your reaction from all the flowers on the lawn
tulips and daisies your favorites
all red and yellow
they make your smile look the best
I love the different things this moment will bring.
The moment when I can walk through time and space to get to
you
push the popcorn out of the way
and reset the drink
Play that song that makes you feel good from your front lawn
knowing that I make you feel better and that the world makes
sense again
so I can see your smile
so I can see the sparkle in your eyes
Well I think that the moments almost here.....
I cant wait
The slice of life is making me feel better and the best is yet to come
I'm looking for my Garden State
my time to Say Anything
I'm done Waiting For Forever
and all this after One Crazy Summer
because I'm not looking for The Last Kiss Goodbye

Haikus

By: Alan Szarka

Abandoned and alone
The lost hound howls mournfully
Searching for master

Thousand silver sparks
Filling the sky with their light
Banish the darkness

The Brilliant Night's Sky

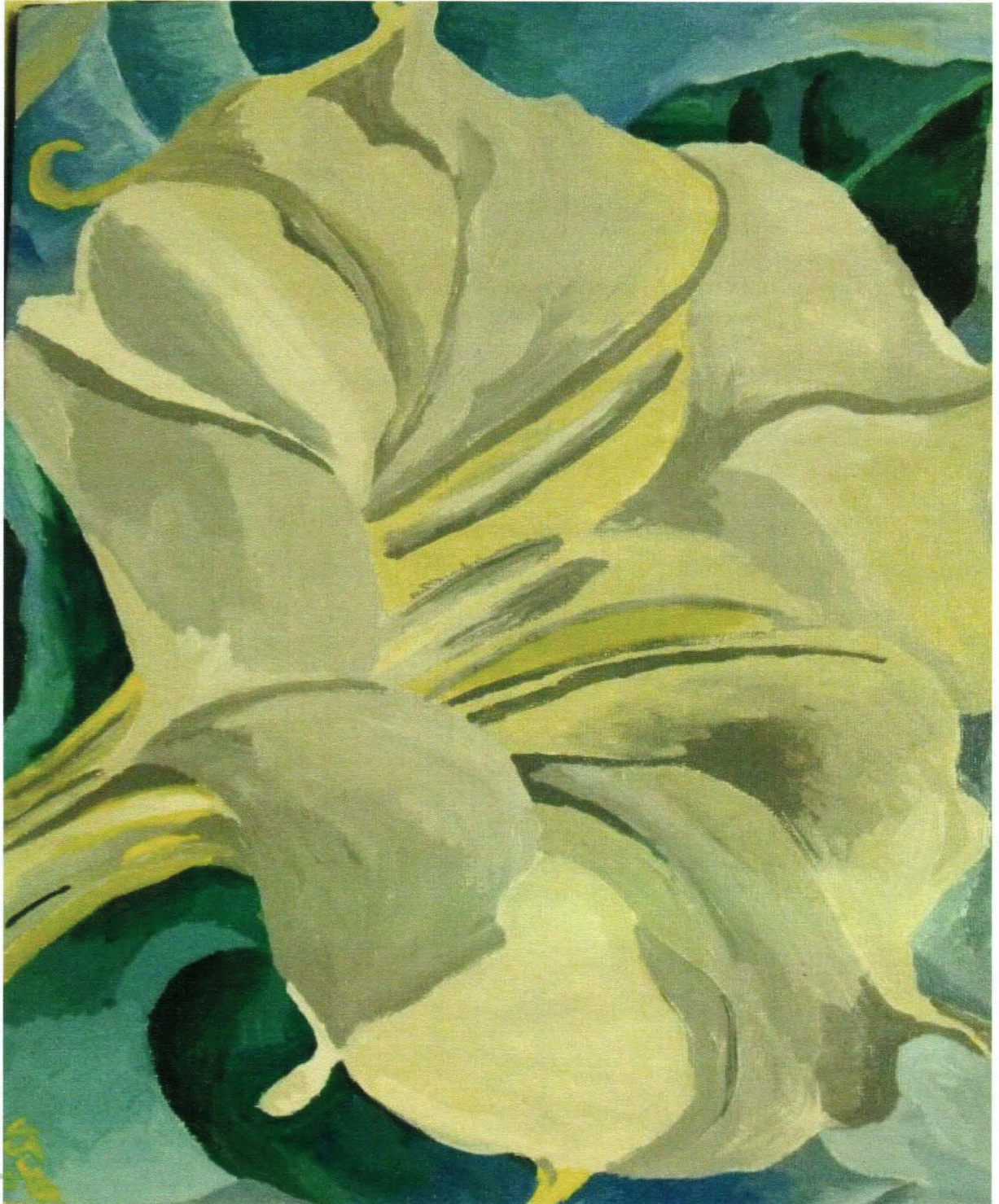
By: Kristi Woodard

Under the dimly lit brilliance of the night's sky,
Embraced by the swift, nocturnal essence of the ember speckled clouds hanging
overhead,
Gleaming down with the haunting ambience of the moon's affections,
The glimmering moment in time,
Enveloping the natures of the two entangled spirits,
Love is as if it is an unspeakable notion concerning the pair,
Yet, reverberating to and fro, between the existence of unprofessed lovers,
She—Feminine,
He—Masculine,
Together—entangled in the tranquilities of each other,
That unspeakable adoration tempesting sparks from within her chest,
Hearts thumping the echoes of an obsessive duet beneath the translucent twilight,
Speaking her breath into the night's air,
His name on her lips,
Such a sweet-nothing mist rising towards the stars,
Nestled together upon nature's mossy environment,
Wanting—needing to express the words trapped within her hidden desires,
She is powerless in her heart's attempts to sense his yearning hopes for romancing
her spirited nature,
Lying lovingly amongst one another,
She can only conjure the ideas with the gleaming hopes of her heart,
That he is the unique soul meant to match hers for eternity,
A soft encounter of comforted affection upon his lips,
The stellar glimmer of the moon twinkling down upon the pair evermore,
Love humming through her body for him just as the cadence of the night's activi-
ties fills the dark skies,
Often her thoughts drift, drift, drift away and wonder,
Wonder if he will ever know that she lives with the unspoken tension of blos-
somed love,
That he holds her heart in such a precariously gentle manner,
She is clumsily in love with his spirited, wise soul,
Lovingly lying, entwined, together—lovers; yet strangers to the truth of each
other's desires.

Dancing with the Devil

By: James K. Orr

I'm dancing with the Devil, in this dance towards death
Dancing in demise with each passing breath
Dancing with the Devil but I'm dancing slow
After all, there's only one direction left to go
Down that long dark hallway into that shallow hole
Where deities and necromancers judge your soul
Against the weight of a feather, the wood of a cross
The sacrificial blood on the alter tossed
From Stone-hedge to the Vatican and in between
The book of the dead from some Tibetan scene
Resurrection, reoccurrence, incarnations too
Until the you and you and you and you become just You
Alpha-waves emerging, omega waves return
On ceaseless seas arise, yang's full moon oneness sets
The circle complete in complete complement
I'm dancing with the devil, in this dance towards death
Dancing in between with each dancing breath
I'm dancing slow,
I'm dancing slow,
I'm dancing slow...



Leave These Songs

By Claire Roof

Leave these songs on the red silk fabric of our memory
As no one knows the time we hold
Close to the violet linen of our hearts...

Journey men, and women cry...war begins in the outlands
Takes us all to childhood, and as children we play in the palace ruins
Children skateboarding on the rubble glass broken sacred streets.

Songs sang from the back of dream room transgress these merchants at sea
Men being pirates, explorers being brave to the tips of the polar poles,
Nobody is watching humans playing marbles with planets,

Tossing the orbs like silent victim goddesses...
Sew together the dreams of children watching Dexter,
Who struggles in the battle of the hungry dark, and the light of day.

Miss not the sign, you, and I and the others, we will have but one chance
To be in the running, not with the bulls of Spain,
But into the fresh air and to the taste of honey...

This will not be the quiet road of monks, but the busy streets of trucks,
Carrying their heavy loads of dreams...

Death of Kindness

By: Ateenya Matthews

There's no more passion; puddles of lies.
Unforgiving hearts; broken goodbyes.
Unfriendly smiles; torturous teeth.
Lips of kill; Breath with heat.
Outburst of anger; mind explosions.
Redden faces; evil motions.

Three Little Pigs (as told by the wolf)

By James Leyba

It has been a tough couple of months. I have gone from living a pretty nice and care free life to having some serious troubles. I live in the woods and have about twenty acres. As a member of the I.W.B.A, International Wolf Builders Association, I noticed three houses had been built by my property. Some I decided to go and take a look at them. The first house was made of straw and from what I could see it was not up to code. So I knocked on the door and ask to see their permit. The person said, "Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin". So I huffed and puffed and blew the house down. When I saw that it was a pig, I ate him. The second house was being built out of sticks and from what I could see again it was not up to code either. So I knocked on the door to see their permit and again I was told, "Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin". So I huffed and puffed and blew that house down, too. It was another pig, so I ate him too. I finally came to the last house and it is a beautiful brick home. So, I knock on the door and ask to see their permit and was told a third time, "not by the hair of my chinny chin chin". So I huffed and puffed and blew until I was blue in the face. So I tried again and thought to myself, either this house is up to code or I should quit smoking. So I decided to get on the roof and climb down the chimney and surprise the owner with inspection papers. As I climbed down the chimney, I was surprised myself. There was a pot of boiling hot water at the bottom of that chimney. I burned my feet, legs, and bottom so bad that I've been in the burn clinic for months. So next time I see a home being built out of bricks, I'll just mail them a letter.

The Soul Harvest

(Inspired by Tom Fleming's *The Soul Harvest*)
By Andrew Beidinger

I sit in the trees
In the field
In the hills waiting,
Watching the Autumn Lord
Pass through the land.

I see the antlers on his head,
Black as a night sky.
I walk with him amongst the mortals,
Picking out which ones to die.
Ah, the joy of the harvest.

As a death maiden, I make myself ready,
Ready for the joy of this night;
My sisters and I flaunt at the dead,
Teasing them with our delight.

We torment and tease
And vex with delight,
We are the dark fey,
The children of Night.

The Beach at Tossa

By Jake Curley

Dark clouds, no chance of sunlight,
The gun metal sea shows no calm.
The magic vision
Threads rocky cliffs,
The ramparts and battlements
That withstood time's marauding.

Old sea, middle earth,
Yields the daily bounty still.
Despite our bloody hunger
And the grasping, clutching fists of need,
Drivers know no weather,
Only the eternal world below.

We tell our story in whispers,
Players, and dangerous screams,
Then fold into the weathered cobblestones,
Our insistence fading
Beneath the mossy green.
Crows circle our waving flag,
Only to find the empty shell.
We fall and fade
Into tomorrow's past.

Wind your way
Through these old narrow streets
The twists and turns,
The tripping cobblestones,
But leave a lingering scent
Of God's hard won kindness.

I, Too

by Eman Alkotob

I, too, speak American
When I walk down the street
Paying attention to my feet,
People stare
As if I have just thrown a chair
And when I smile
It takes them a while
To realize I mean no harm
And they have no need to alarm.
I am a Muslim
But not the ones portrayed on film
Those are the ones that do not follow
And instead cause sorrow.
The religion that I believe
Is very misconceived
I wish people would understand
I do not want to bomb their land
Because this land is mine
I was born here
So do not fear
And please accept that it's fine
For me to be Muslim
And cover my hair
With the scarf I wear.
I, too, am American.

If I Could Live Life Again: I Would...

By Aaron Heard

I would move forward with zeal and grace, ambitiously treading toward my goal, trampling over all that dare to stand in the way of my success. I would battle procrastination with the swift sword of motivation, methodically chopping its obstacles stacking each stumbling block, one topping the other, manipulating their destined purpose and to now serve as stepping-stones; assisting me in the steep climb to great fortune's peak. I would take advantage of every talent gifted me by heavenly power, and no longer would I take for granted his good grace and favor which he has so faithfully bestowed upon me. I would trust that there is nothing to fear, for I am clothed in the impenetrable armor of undying love. I would not worry with doubt because my confidence is secured in knowing that I am protected by his promise... almighty is his word and so almighty are the forces that conserves me.

To live again is in my will as part of my inheritance, and since now I know my power... I will bring death upon the habitual thoughts which hinder me. I will rebirth the spirit of productive mind. I will live life again... I will.

Contigo

By Veronica Jurek

These obscurities
are strengthened
by our insecurities
This whole picturesque
was solely inspired by
the grotesque
These shaking bones
aren't cold
they're tired of being alone
The music playing
though catchy
is keeping us from fraying
My love for you though
has been held so high
by our one low

Is This Really Helping?

By Kim Hivley

I have been living the life of an adjunct teacher for many years now. What this means is that I whore myself out to any available school that will let me teach a class or two so that I can support myself without having to live at home with my parents. What this also means is that I have several days a week that I am gone from home for 12 hours, which doesn't sit well with the dog who allows me to be her human (She is right now looking for a new family. I'm sure I saw an ad in the paper).

My mother, in an effort to keep me from moving back in with her and my father, has graciously volunteered to come over one day a week and help with some of my household chores and keep the dog company. So, now that you know the back story, let me tell you why I am bothering to mention any of this to you. So, one of the chores that my mom has been doing is the dishes. I have a very small kitchen that is in a very old house (100 years old this year) and it has one light fixture in the middle of the ceiling. The complaining about the burned out light bulb in said ceiling fixture started several months ago. Apparently, in the middle of the day, when there is sunshine, one light bulb in the ceiling fixture is not enough light to do the dishes by. I was told to change the light bulb. (I personally think that it has never been about the lighting, but is in fact about the horror of knowing that a light bulb is out and not changing it. She has also told me repeatedly that the blinds in the side by side windows upstairs are not pulled up evenly and that this too needs to be fixed. Again, I remind you I work several 12 hour days a week. Blinds are not my thought at night as I drag my sorry, tired butt up the stairs to bed).

I have tried, a couple of times, to listen to my mother and change the light bulb, but I have been unable to get the globe off the fixture. I knew that somehow it twisted, but I couldn't get it to let loose and well...the light bulb still hasn't been changed. So, my mom said she would drag my dad over someday and they would look at it. Well, that day happened this week. I came home from work on Wednesday to a note pasted to the door frame that said, "Don't walk under the light in the kitchen." My curiosity got the better of me and went to the kitchen to see what might be wrong. There, hanging from the 3 wires that should be neatly tucked into the casing, is the light fixture. So, I called my mom and asked what happened. Immediately she began laughing. I knew this was not going to end well.

The story goes like this, and I'm paraphrasing, "Well, your father was trying to turn the globe and...well...the whole thing just came down. And we didn't stay to fix it because your father didn't really feel very well and he wants to bring his own tools because he never knows where to find any of your tools and so we will be back tomorrow to fix it. Just don't walk under it in case it falls all the way off."

So here is what I'm hearing in my head. They came in, broke my house, left a giant fire hazard, especially if the light does fall all the way off and I have bare wires smacking each other back and forth all night and that they are trying to kill me because you can't really walk through the kitchen without walking under the light, unless of course you climb on to the counters, and make you way across them and it will probably still somehow fall on my head. At this point I'm reconsidering whether my mother is really helping.

The next day arrives and all day I am imagining what might be transpiring at my house. First of all, my parents are going to be working together and this is never a good situation. They have been married for 48 years and let's not beat around the bush here, they are just really sick of looking at each other. The fact that they don't poke each other in the eye every time they see each other is a miracle and today they are going to be working together in the small kitchen, in the really old house where the simplest of projects, like changing a light bulb can become an overwhelming

event. All day long, I am imagining the loud arguing that might be happening. Now, I live by myself and I'm pretty quiet, and with all that ruckus, my neighbors are likely to think that something horrible is going on and call the police. I now have this vision of my parents in handcuffs being hauled away while my light fixture still hangs by its 3 threads.

When I got off work I called my parents house. When I got their answering machine, all I could think was, oh no...this can't be good. So, then I dialed my own number and sure enough my mother answered the phone. I asked the question that I was sure I didn't want to know the answer to, "How's it going over there?"

Again, I'm paraphrasing, "Well, your dad finally got the fixture down and his fingers are too fat and the wires are too short, so we had to call for help." Apparently, after a heated argument about who was going to call my uncle, who both of them don't like, they had to call and ask for his help in getting the new light fixture installed. Now, what you need to know at this point is that my uncle claims to be capable of doing electrical work, however, everything that he has ever wired in his house doesn't really work all that well. For example, when you turn on the bathroom light, it blows the circuit breaker for the living room. I'm not really very confident about what is going on at my house.

I finally got home and my mother is still trying to figure out how to get the globe off the fixture that is sitting on my dining room table. All while rattling on about how she needs to borrow my car to pick up some bathroom fixtures because the plumbers are coming to install it on Tuesday. Here is what I'm hearing. We are hiring professionals to come fix our house, but for you we are ripping things apart and bringing in your incompetent uncle to fix this mess up.

About an hour later, after a lot of banging, my uncle calls me out into the kitchen to show me the new fixture that is being installed. One that should be more light bulb changing friendly. It's hanging very cock-eyed and is nowhere near the ceiling. Apparently, from his explanation, the well for the light isn't as deep and the two-by-four in the ceiling that supports the box for hanging the fixture from is crooked. Here, is what I'm hearing in my head. So, the drunk uncle and the idiots who have lived here before you, again did a really lousy job of installing something. The only way to fix this is to rip down the entire kitchen ceiling.

An executive decision was made that we would again shop for a ceiling fixture that might have a deeper well and might hide the rest of the mess behind it. Several days have passed. What is still have in my kitchen is the cock-eyed fixture, which by the way only has 1 light bulb in it, a bucket of tools, a ladder and a stool. I wanted to microwave some popcorn and to do that I had to rearrange the kitchen. When I complained about this to my mother this was her response, and again I'm paraphrasing, "This is all your fault."

Fernando The Feeble Ferbie

By: Bobby Cozzie

Spending purgatory with your mother fucking sucks; it's nothing but eons and eons of non-stop nagging.

"I told you to go to church – If you didn't masturbate so much God wouldn't hate you – I'll bet you Stacy Gardner's boy isn't in purgatory – If your father saw you now – It was all those darn cartoons and your rap music, I told you they were a bad influence – I just don't know where I went wrong with you – Is that the same shirt you've been wearing for the past six months? That's disgusting. You need a shower. And you need to use soap – I can't believe I have to take care of you even after were both dead – This is just like you, giving up again. You gave up on going to Heaven, just like you gave up baseball and going to school and getting a degree, and now you've given up showering and changing your clothes? – You deserve to be here – You need time to think about what you've done – Yea this is right where you need to be – Do you even realize what you're doing to your poor mother? No. Because you don't care, because you're selfish..."

So I chopped her head off, and I've been living happily with Satan ever after.

Nothing but dead writers (all the fun I could have)

By Charles Phillips

Poe died from alcoholism
Bukowski of cancer
Hemingway a well placed gunshot
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Shelly drowned while fishing
Hendrix vomit got him
Thompson another well placed gunshot but his over the phone
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Williams choked to death on a cap
Aeschylus a turtle dropped by eagle talon
Twains spirit rode a comet after a heart attack
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Marlowe a dagger to the eye after a bar fight
Anderson a toothpick was his downfall
La Mettrie a feast of truffles was too much to handle
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Li Bai the moons embrace lead to a drowning
Andersson swallowed some cyanide
Woolf drowned with pockets full of stones

All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Path her head in the oven
Chatterton enjoyed some arsenic
Brontë two to tuberculosis
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Oh I could go out by suck starting a gun
maybe even like a drowned man
or even Alcoholism
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
Medicine that could do me in
A knife fight that I could be in
or maybe struck by a car
All the different ways I could go
I've thought about how I could do it
and all the ways interest me
But I think I'd like to go
like that the way Bukowski, Hemingway, and Poe
May I never reach old age

If: For a Woman

By Tashaun Massey
(Response to Kipling's IF)

If you can keep your heart from breaking,
While watching burden fall upon you.
If you can smile in the face of the doubting
And skip while they laugh at you.
If you can still love harder, with more passion than before,
While singing joy and offering peace.
If you can give without wanting more,
And your embrace is warmer than fleece.

If you can dream -- and make them real.
If you can think -- and hold the capacity to listen.
If you can look passed the ideal,
And be confident in beauty from within.
If you can befriend your enemy
Without contempt or scorn.
Stare down pride and vanity,
Leaving them powerless, and you - no longer torn.

If you can heal a wound with a kiss,
Or fight monsters with the shine of your light.
If you can trust Cupid's arrow to never miss,
Or swear you've witnessed angels take flight.
If you can keep your virtue,
And admire the sinew of your own curve.
Embracing the light within you,
Bursting forth with tremendous verve!

If you can walk with Queens and count yourself an equal among them,
Or talk with the unfortunate with genuine compassion.
If you can give strength like the hymn,
And keep time in glorious fashion!
If you can give without demand,
Or gracefully carry Earth upon your shoulder.
If you can still hold hope in your outstretched hand.
With this, which is so much more, you'll be a woman, my daughter!

Volume III: Triptych

It is the poetry that denies you

Keeping the scent of the river out of your hair
Has been impossible
It surrounds your young blonde hair like invisible sugar candy

The sounds of you, swimming in the dangerous,
Deadly local current, haunts me even now,
In this stifled classroom,
Where your mother's eyes are like abalone,
Glistening in the California remains.

Do you even feel the motion in your name?
Do you comb your hair towards the twelve-year-old girls
Asking you for answers in junior high?

You take my three-year-old daughter out
The wearing blue screen door,
To show her the summer sprinkler

You watch her carefully,
Glancing back at your mother, aunt and me.
As if we could believe, you two really existed outside our own
Childhood or bodies...

We sweep up the glass from your feet as you run towards the dog
You tell me you are the best football player on the block,
Your cousin disagrees with you, you two wrestle
And fall to the floor
Laughing, as your grandmother yells your names from the kitchen

The bowling alley captures you with tokens and popcorn,
Babysitters who keep an eye on your shirt,
On your pretty young aunt, bowling up next,
And on your laughing white teeth.

Do you know your mother loves you like gold?

At nineteen, the thought of you being one more baby to bear
To a girl married at sixteen, broke all dreams and sang such
Exhaustion from our perplexed hands, we did not know how
She could even find your name in her despair.

And yet, somehow, the Saint Joseph River still singles
You out for summer danger

All she can do is ground you. She is a soft touch.
As you, oh last son after son after daughter,
Have our hearts on edge
As you grow.



The Eyes

By Diana Moss-Clark

The eyes looking back at her were those of a stranger. The eyes, so disconnected from the person, she fails to recognize her ownership of them.

Surely this could not be her reflection? Surely, the mirror was some sort of a game! What sort of magic did this mirror contain? She quickly wondered if it was fun house mirror brought in by her roommates to prank her?

The eyes looking back at her were so empty! Their effect on her like walking to swamp, or quicksand; she could feel herself falling into their depths. A void of nothingness dwelling within the blue realm of the twin irises.

Who was this person? This reflection? This imposter! She wondered who had stolen the youth from the cheeks of this poor stranger leaving behind an empty shell of a woman? She did not know. Could not pretend to know. Dared not to think on the subject any further.

She turned from the mirror and walked out of the room. Forgetting the eyes with their vacant depths, she rejoined the party. Smiling sweetly at her date, she accepting the drink he offered her. Whomever that woman was, it was not her!

That was all she needed to know.

The Countryside Whirlwind

by Kristi Woodard

Clear skies; blue clouds high,
Trees stretching from grass to clouds,
Grass sways with the wind,

Picturesque skyways,
Many clouds flitting in haste,
Sought after: chased,

Chased by the clouds,
Clouds of unheeding danger,
Unknown yet to most,

A scene yet composed,
Phantasmagoric horror,
Does not best describe,

Scenes unperceived,
The storm will: crack, flash, whoosh—destroy!
Nature ends nature,

Tawny is the sky,
Intruding: deep brown clouds—flash,
Gusty is the wind,

In the air, one can
Smell the electricity ignite
The vulgar nature,

Penetrating rain,
Pounding: as if to be hail,
Rain: force of nature,

Storms will: crack, flash, whoosh,
Skies alive; clouds loom with gloom,
Clouds filled with—crack—flash,

Splish-splash, crack-flash—whoosh,
Wind spirals out of control,
The anger of nature,

Utilizing storms,
Destruction with harsh winds—ghastly,
Destructive nature,

Elemental gales,
Ends many creations—cruel,
Winding—the funnel shape,

Reaching from the sky,
God's finger controls the path,
Phantasmagoric,

Twisting; meandering,
Plummeting; stretched from gloom,
Gloom of the dark skies,

Trees stretching, tearing,
Ripping, from grass to clouds,
As do all others—gone,

God's finger funnel,
Winds through the countryside,
Tearing life and limb,

Crack—flash—whoosh: vulgar,
Wind grips rain; rarely hits land,
Life-force of cruel storm,

Running for shelter,
Men, women, children; try to thrive,
Stay safe and survive,

Survive the storm—crack,
Ride it out, through the end—flash,
The storm's vulgar nature,

Rain settles—wind dies,
Slowly; elements wind down,
Skies still eerie—stark,

Birds chirp—feels too soon
To chirp the terror away,
Yet, leaves all—relieved,

Sun eats the darkness,
Shines upon the marred mess,
Clear skies—again—clouds high.

Ready to Die

By Farai Gotora

The fear of hell
And it's flaming fires
Is not what kept me from electric wires
Tales of dark, unending doom
Did not threaten
Did not consume
I was numb and outside my body
Floating above
Like a ghost through those lobbies.
A calm demeanor
But the embodiment of hate
Visions of disembowelment
Leaving indelible stains
"A rampage to go down in history
Mother's holding children
Loudly weeping
Ruin much more than carpeted floors
Ruin their lives as they've ruined yours!
Don't worry about precision
It hit's who it hits!
Consider not the impact
You too will be gone after this."
Outside my body there is numbness
Outside my body, I feel no "oneness"
I consider the whispers
I do not expel them
Prepared and ready
Having no care
Fires of hell?
I'll meet you there.

Birth of a Great Writer: Chosen Fruit...Hand Picked

By Aaron Heard

Snatched from the guts of the earth and disconnected at the navel.
Sniff deep the sweet gift of life's breath.
Oh but there's no time to crawl...get up! Off your knees...stomp!
Put your best foot first, and may experience satisfy your hunger,
And your tears quench your thirst.
Very well then: and so you shall inherit growth rapid.
But observe the company in your world's keep;
Their smiles seem to wish for you greatness.
Now look closer...see between the teeth,
They have daggers for tongues with poisonous tips;
Beware when they speak.
Your knees tremble with doubt seemingly, but don't be weary mind
...Stand! On your feet...stomp! Put your best foot first again, and may
Experience satisfy your hunger pang, and your tears quench your thirst
As rain. For you were birthed by word pure and solid,
No force but the source itself is measurable, none as great!
So know that your protection comes from above;
Yes, the almighty arm of love. Its strength matchless,
Its embrace, outside of grace, exist none as reassuring,
And no hand possess a touch as gentle.
Forsake now, fear unmeaning...unbecoming; for it is not you,
But an illusion accepted.

Invisible Destination

By Laura Mills

The call of a train whistle echoes through the night. The sound is mournful, alone. It seeps into the hollow place in my heart and stays there for a long time, vibrating. This is when it's the hardest. I'm surrounded by darkness in the room with the blue walls and the glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling. John put them there for me, saying they would help me stay calm if I woke up in the middle of the night. But he forgot that stars fade, and right now they're so dim I can barely make them out. I close my eyes, listening to his gentle breathing next to me. How can he sleep so peacefully? I wake at the slightest rustle of the curtains, the pat of the neighbor's cat as he walks along the edge of the roof, the sound of a train in the night.

It's not like I'm afraid of the dark. In fact it's the opposite. At night is when I feel most alive, and I get restless. Once I got out of bed when I heard the train and went outside. My plan was to sit on the front porch and listen to the night sounds, but I got carried away. The next morning I found myself in my pajamas by the railroad tracks with a poorly packed suitcase at my side, as if I was going somewhere. As if I intended to abandon my wonderful life, my husband, my home. When I finally got back to the house, John was close to tears. He wrapped me in one of his bear hugs for so long that I thought he would never let go, and I breathed in the smell of his pajamas, coffee and cinnamon.

Since then, I try not to let the darkness take me away, but on nights like this, when the song of the passing train fills my heart with its bitter music, I have to be extra careful. I roll over so that I face the wall. We arranged the room this way so that if I tried to leave I would wake John up and he could stop me before it was too late. He treats you like a caged bird. The thought springs out of nowhere. I try to push it away but I know it's made its mark. Why are you still here? Why do you put up with all of this? You could be on one of those trains right now, traveling through the night to someplace better than here, a better life. I squeeze my eyes shut. Stop thinking like that. Go to sleep. This is where I belong. The hollow place in my heart expands and I can feel panic rising in my throat. I have to move. I have to do something. Anything. I sit up. I'll go get a glass of water. I pull my feet out from under the covers and push myself off the end of the bed. John is still asleep. Part of me is wishing he would wake up, but I know he won't; he sleeps too soundly for the night to disturb him.

I step into the hallway and start down the stairs toward the kitchen. Halfway to the bottom, something stops me. Outside, the wind changes. It whistles around the corners of the house, making the trees above me creak. My suitcase is in the

downstairs closet. I can almost see it in my mind's eye, brown leather, shoved into the back corner behind the vacuum cleaner. The wind calls to me. It speaks of far away places where nobody knows my name. My hand grips the banister, but I can't turn back now.

After that, I'm only partly aware of what I'm doing. I feel worn leather beneath my fingers. There's a pile of dirty laundry next to the washing machine and I stuff all of it into my bag. Then there's the sweet night air, cool against my skin. I run barefoot through the grass. The moon pulls me towards an invisible destination, past silent houses and humming streetlights. Someone is laughing and it takes a minute or two before I realize that it's me. I stand on the railroad tracks, and the sound of a train whistle answers my laughter. The ground vibrates roughly beneath my feet and suddenly there's a bright light in front of me, burning my eyes. The train gets louder. Now I can hear the steady movement of its engines, metal squealing underneath its wheels. Its whistle blows one last time in an ear-splitting blast that almost knocks me off my feet. The light paralyzes me with its gaze. Everything has become sharper and the night has turned cold. I can't move. Panic clutches at my throat and the space in my heart opens wide. Wait. This is not how it's supposed to be. But the noise just gets louder.

Suddenly a hand comes out of nowhere and I'm plunged into darkness. The roar of the train passes. We roll down the grassy slope and land at the bottom of a small hill. Someone has his arms wrapped around me. I sob uncontrollably into their shoulder. But it's a familiar shoulder. I close my eyes and breathe in the smell of coffee and cinnamon until the sun breaks over the horizon and the night folds itself into the hollow chamber of my heart, where it too, can sleep.

Maybe Moving Forward

By: Ateenya Matthews

Something froze me; I can feel my body stiffen.
When I thought I was progressing, I knew I was
only wishing.
Does time really fly or does it freeze? What I once
was feeling, it no longer pleases.
He's tempting me but I'm not failing, my soul feels
loose, prone to something.
My mind is scattered, not thinking right or wrong.
Just coping with the day; it feels so long.
When I move forward, I know it'll be sure. It's time
to step out; It's time to clear the blur.

Kid's Games

By: Charles Phillips

Thinking back to the kid's games we use to play
The lines we used to say
London bridge is falling down, falling down
with the chutes and ladders games we once played
and most of all Miss Mary Mac Mac Mac
Chutes and Ladders
as it seems that's what life's become
Chutes and Ladders
all of this on a trail path to try and find Candy Land
The hours of playing pretend really mean nothing to me any-
more
I wish they did
I really do
We all become Mr. Potato head
we pretend to wear a different face every day
never letting the outside world see our real face
instead we have to reach out for the other parts
I'm growing confused by the games that get left out and bro-
ken
I almost reached the prize at the end of LIFE
no completely sure if I wanted it to begin with
but, rather instead I just stand in the rain and scream
I scream "you sank my Battleship"
when I want to yell "YATHZEE"

Chutes and Ladders, Candy Land, Life, Battleship, and Yathzee are all trademarked games by Hasbro.

Did I Mention How I was Raised....

By Kim Hively

Being inducted into the Catholic faith begins long before you are even aware of what is really happening to you. It starts with the 1st sacrament of Baptism. This was the day my parents drug me into church, sleeping and peaceful, all dressed up in a white dress, and promised they would raise me Catholic. At this point, the Priest throws water at you with a stick and the peaceful quiet is gone. Now, there is screaming and crying. This was my first protest at being forced into this promise my parents made on my behalf, and believe me when I say it would not be my last. My parents, however, got what they came for. They were issued the Baptismal Certificate, which for the good Catholic family is almost as important as getting a social security number. Without it, you really don't exist.

A Catholic child's indoctrination into Catholicism begins in earnest in the first grade. This is the time when the Catholic parents are forced to make the decision of parochial school or public school. I didn't know that we were poor, but we were poor enough that I had to go to public school, which meant CCD classes on Saturday mornings. CCD means the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. For those of us who had to spend every Saturday at CCD class, it's real meaning is Catholic Children Don't....get to sleep in on Saturday mornings, watch cartoons, play with friends until Saturday afternoon, or get to be Protestant and do all the fun stuff that happened on Saturday mornings. CCD classes ran from 9am until 11am every Saturday for, what seemed like, the rest of my life.

They lulled us in our 1st grade year with nice little stories, but that didn't last long. By 2nd grade, all hell broke loose. In 2nd grade we began preparing for the 2nd and 3rd sacraments, confession and communion. Even before we could begin thinking about participating in those two events, we had to learn a million prayers. Actually, it was three, but three is very close to a million. We had to learn the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Act of Contrition.

This is how it all works. In order to receive the Body of Christ (more about this in a minute) at communion, you had to confess your sins. This meant that you had to do confession first and of course your punishment, I mean penance, for your sins was saying prayers. So, for months and months and months, I recited prayer after prayer after prayer, for hours and hours and hours, while my mother corrected and corrected and corrected me.

Now here is what you need to know about confession. These are the things that you learn from your friends, who know all this stuff because they have older siblings, that is never taught to you in class. You never ever want to confess too much or too little. There is a pattern to follow. You should always, always, always confess to seven things in some order. You can say things like, "I hit my little sister," but you didn't do it once. No one does anything just once. And you couldn't do it three times, because that just makes you a bully, so you always do this twice. So, now that you know how this works, it goes a little like this, "Well, I hit my sister. Twice. I muttered under my breath that I hated my mom and dad. Twice. I was mean to the dog. Twice. And I called the neighbor girl ugly. Once."

So, if your decent at math, there were 3 things at twice, and then the once. This adds up to seven. It's very important to remember that if you're not all that strong in math, that you keep count on your fingers while you are making your confession. You don't want to lose count, ever. If you don't have enough stuff to confess, the Priest just keeps asking, "And what else?" And if you go over, well you're going to get a reputation as being a really bad kid. Everything is twice, and the magic number is seven.

I think this sharing of information between us kids may have gotten out and landed in

the wrong hands, however. Sometime, in the eighties I think, confession changed. We went from being behind a screen when we were confessing our stuff, to having to sit facing the Priest. This made it much harder to count on your fingers and keep track of where you were with your sins. It was almost a requirement at this point to really be good at math.

Once we had mastered our list of prayers, which we had to recite to the teacher, for which we got a check mark (and I have always wondered what would happen if we didn't get a check mark) when it was done satisfactorily, we then began learning the rules of engagement for confession and communion. As I have already mentioned, these rules for confession were mostly from our older comrades, but then there was the list of rules for communion. One of the big rules for communion was that we were never to chew on the bread that was placed on our tongue. That flat wafer was the real body of Christ and chewing on it was a horror beyond horror. It would be so bad that we, single handedly would be crucifying Him again (Just one more thing to worry about saying hundreds of prayers for!).

Here is what you need to know about that flat wafer. First, it is not actually bread. It is really a piece of cardboard and anyone who says differently is a big, fat liar. Second, if you leave it on your tongue without chewing it, it will be there for a month or longer. It will never melt or dissolve. It just sits there. And third, and this is the most important, it doesn't just sit there. There is something in that piece of cardboard that makes it jump immediately to the roof of your mouth where it will stay FOREVER! So, there you are, sitting there with this thing stuck to the roof of your mouth, which is really annoying and what are you going to do? Well, of course you are going to try to unstuck it with your tongue. So, you are pushing and scrapping the roof of your mouth, trying to get this thing to let go and you look up and there are hundreds, (maybe even thousands) of eyes staring at you. Why? Because to the casual observers perspective, this looks a lot like chewing. Then, the panic sets in. You know you're not chewing, but everyone else, including the priest, thinks you are, so now you're going to have to add this to the list of things to confess, but you never want to say you've done this twice. And there are going to be so many prayers for this. In your panicked state you realize, check mark or not, you can't remember any of those prayers. What comes after Hail Mary, full of grace... The only thing coming to mind at the moment is...full of grace, let me get this piece of cardboard unstuck without making it look obvious on my face. Making up new words was going to mean even more prayers. What comes after Our Father, who art in Heaven? Something about a name and a trespasser? Does the trespasser have a name? Yes, it does! It's called the cardboard wafer and it's trespassing on the roof of my mouth!! And it should have a name. A really bad name that will only get me sentenced to more prayers. I don't like any of this at all. It's so stressful.

I just wanted to get this sacrament thing done and over with. I was sick of CCD and all these rules. So I marched into my mother and said, "I just want to get this over with. Tell me what I have to do to finish all the sacraments." My mother, exasperated with me as usual, said, "Well, the rest of the sacraments are your confirmation(4) which you will do when your 13, marriage or becoming a nun (5 and 6), and the last rites (7), which you will get as your dying." I stood there in disbelief. The only way out of this was death? Really?

"Fine! I'll wait then." And I stormed off.

The Wanderer

By Eman Alkotob

The street lights flicker with dim light,
As I walked along the empty streets at night,
Looking—
Searching—
For my love.

“Have you seen
The beauty dressed in green?
Her gown long and pearls around her neck,
The locks of her curls fall as softly as a peck,
As she runs across the streets at night—
Not ever in the daylight?”

I ask such a question to all who hear,
But none of them listen and just tell me to scam in
fear.
Some hand me amounts of money,
Think I am a beggar who is being funny,
Yet, I am just a gentleman in search of
Lily, my lost love!

“Please!” I beg,
“Tell me where Lily lies—don’t pull my tired leg!
I want my wife to me,
I will even pay a fee!”

As I walk around the corner
Some mistake me as a mourner,
The darkness mocking my every move
With great disapprove.

It is then that I see—

Oh, can it be?—
A bundle of hair stacked in a bun—
The brightness as if the sun!
She walks, the woman, through a tall, vine covered
gate—
Of course I can't escape!
She beckons me to follow,
My speed very pronto.

I see her face—Lily, my lost love,
Dropping her white lacy glove
As she runs down the path,
It landing on an Epitaph
Of a woman's grave,
Entitled, "Here lies the brave
Wife and girl named Lily
Who died so painfully."
"Lily?" I ask myself, looking to the ghostly girl
Who stares at me from beyond, playing with her
curl.
"Lily is not dead—you are Lily who is lost.
I have searched for you every night and tossed
Unable to sleep since you have been away.
I have cried every day
Wishing for your return,
The feeling inside my heart as the flames burn!"

She looks at me with her mouth in a frown,
My eyes the color of dead brown,
Her emerald eyes glaring into mine,
My feelings the least from fine.
Her pale hand is held towards I,
But that is when I wake and check the time
Confused by the dawn,
And where my lost love Lily has gone.

Where the resolutions lay.

By Farai Gotora

Standing on the windy dock at that undecided time of day. Technically, its morning but the intensity of the darkness is enough to convince anyone that the sun will never triumph again. Other little boats bobble up and down in the mild waves. A few are capsized while some have sunk altogether. The lady to my left has an elaborate and very decorated boat. Her 2011 boat by the looks of it has had a good run. I strain my eyes a bit more as my 2011 boat navigates the darkness and the rolling waters. Some ribbons here, a badge there, 2011 certainly won't be the worst boat I've bid adieu.

It'll be able to hold its own when 2007 boasts of its glowing academic accomplishment. It will have something in common with 2008 the most though.

"Welcome. 2011? Hi, I'm 2008."

2011 will approach timidly at first, thinking of the perfect ice- breaker.

"Hi! I've heard a lot about you! I must say, I went through similar situations and I admire your tenacity- but I'm not implying we're on the same level; in fact that would be disrespectful, totally disrespectful. You're a legend 2008, I mean Mr. 2008 sir shoot-"

"Real smooth idiot! Why don't you just do a couple of rock paintings and bash someone over the head with a club Neanderthal?!" 2011 chastises himself for that mortifying display and loss of eloquence.

"Dude, relax! We're family! We both had to be tenacious and hardworking. Sail with me." 2008 reassures the nervous newbie. The accomplished pair sail passed the bitter, fruitless duo: 2004 and 2009. They whisper something then start giggling. Despite the outward contempt and envy they exhibit, '04 and '09 know that 2008 and 2011 are so much more than they ever were.

"Don't mind them; we did more in our 28 days of February than they did in all 365 of theirs." 2008 says.

"2004 had 366 and nothing to show for the extra day!" 2011 points out, gaining confidence now. 2008 scoffs. He is ashamed to be directly related to '04. They were both leap years. They sail off into the memory bank where they'll be called upon, reminisced on and cherished for years to come, or until the adverse effects of age and/or liquor take their toll.

Elsewhere, the early 2000's huddle together, recalling their adolescent she-nigans. "Oh! Thanks a lot 2002! Because of you I had to kick that habit!" teased 2003.

"What?!" 2002 feigns outrage.

“You had quite a mouth on you and all that baggage carried over to me!” They all howl in laughter as 2003 re-tells one of the filthier jokes I had heard from my friends at boarding school. Their care free frivolity rings out far and wide. Despite being completely fruitless, I couldn’t help but feel sorry for 2004 and 2009. Both years on paper had the makings of greatness. “Important” birthdays were supposed to happen, 16 and 21 respectively but the memories of these monumental days are sad and painful to even recall that I have tried fervidly to suppress them.

Looking down, I smile inconspicuously and turn around slowly. Just like that, with the tick-tock of a watch, 2012 arrives. Ushered in with fireworks, steamers and cries of celebration in the various tongues of the world, 2012 begins her term in office. Gracefully she takes her position and acknowledges the collective and singular responsibilities that await her. Amidst the jubilation, a never ceasing question remains in her fresh brain, “Will I be like so many others and rock them with a disaster early on? And where will it strike this time? Haiti 2010, Japan 2011...” her thoughts trail off, she’s afraid of the recent trends and can’t help but wonder if she’ll go down as: 2012, year of the “insert disaster here”.

I, along with the entire population embark on this newly fashioned adventure. I have things I aspire for and no crystal ball can accurately call whether or not, they’ll be managed at all.

College for the Struggling Academic

By Tashaun Massey

It's exhausting living here. This hole, this dilapidated corps of a structure. It is the epicenter of misery, the foundation of distress, the metaphorical hell that all of humanity is expected to succeed in. This pressure, this manufactured ideal of superior intellect has turned into one of the few legal forms of torture. The struggle to focus on future gets lost in the moments that precede it. Its definition, buried in the stacks of wasted trees that snap the whip of oppressive labor. Breathing the air that ruminates from this place, chokes and stifles individuality. Repent! Rebel! Relearn! Relearn?...A bomb, yes, a bomb is the answer. It is the only hope for freedom that's left.

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Kim Hively – IvyQuill: Creative Writing Club Co-Advisor. Professor at Ivy Tech since 2000. Undergrad Degree from Bethel and Graduate Degree from IUSB. Who's friends happen to think she is one of the most amazing people you'll ever meet.

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Diana Moss-Clark - Diana is currently a student at Ivy Tech South Bend. She lives with her family and five cats in Mishawaka.

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Aaron Heard - A student in Professor Roof's Creative Writing class of the Spring 2012 semester with a surprisingly amazing talent for words.

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Michael Kindelan – A student at Ivy Tech South Bend who has no idea what he wants to do for his college education, though he is passionate with his interest in the written/spoken word. You can find him and his fantastical works here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/guse100>

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Farai Gotora - I'm Zimbabwean and I've been in the US for just over 3 years now. I am working towards getting a nursing degree and I attend my classes at the South Bend campus. I'm one of four kids, I write mostly non-fiction articles about little things I observe within myself and around me. I can do fiction but greatly prefer non-fiction articles.

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John Comeau - Graduated from ND 1974, MLS Indiana University 1995. Has taught at Ivy Tech since 1975

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Gina R. Lambert - I have been writing since I was 10 years old. I have been through many troubles in my 34 years of life. Through my darkest hours, poetry helped me make sense of my life and what was going on around me. I am a Criminal Justice student at Ivy Tech. I feel that I was put on this earth to help other people, and this is why I hope to go into the field of Forensics, so that I may seek justice for those who no longer have a voice.

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Eshanya Walls - Vice President and Editor of IvyQuill: Creative Writing Club. A poet / creative writer who attends Ivy Tech, South Bend, IN. She enjoys raising her three children, and writing about people, events, and situations she has encountered in life.

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Teshaun Massey - President and Editor of IvyQuill: Creative Writing Club. Inspired by Anne Rice and Edgar Allen Poe at a young age, she is an aspiring author in the midst of writing her first novel. Along with writing, she enjoys photography and tinkering with photo manipulation on Photoshop. Her works can be found here: <http://teshaun-jenea.deviantart.com>

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Alisa Schell - Member of the Creative Writing club and student in Professor Roof's Creative Writing class of the Spring 2012 semester.

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Charles Phillips - An offbeat poet, singer, songwriter, and actor that was raised in Edwardsburg, Michigan. While he experiments in many writing styles, he prefers to write in a form of poetry called Pocket Lice, which is just as offbeat as he is. He hopes to become well known in the writing circuit like some of his favorite writers. He is inspired by Charles Bukowski, Jim Morrison, Bootsy Collins, Tom Waits, and Matsuo Basho. He likes Handlebar Mustaches, The Transformers, and Tetris. You can find his work here: <http://chuckiebobphil.deviantart.com>

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Alan Szarka - Member of the Creative Writing club with a major interest in script writing.

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Kristi Woodard - Spring 2011, she graduated from Ivy Tech Community College with an Associates of Science in Social and Behavioral Science. Spring 2012, she began the process of obtaining her Master of Science in Correctional Therapy and will officially obtain a Bachelor's of Science in Criminology as well as a certificate in alcohol and substance abuse therapy from Indiana State University. Currently, she works part-time at Ivy Tech as a security guard, and she also volunteers at local Sheriff's Department educating inmates in self-improvement, and utilizing creative outlets to channel the stressors of life. In her free time, she works on her second novel, spends time outdoors, and loves canoeing with her boyfriend. One of her favorite authors of all time is John Steinbeck.

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Veronica Jurek - I hardly ever write. I used to write a lot. But then, well, I just fall in and out of things a lot. This is mostly to keep me thinking and moving. I do art as well, and I'm very good at that. I think a lot, which helps when I do these creative writings. But, I don't always write my thoughts down. So, I'll have some awesome rhyme or ditty and I don't write it down and then it's kind of gone forever. But, this seems fun, so we'll see where this leads me.

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Claire Roof - IvyQuill: Creative Writing Club Advisor. Graduated IU Bloomington Indiana 1981, Began teaching and tutoring at Ivy Tech 2007, became a member of the full-time teaching faculty in 2009.

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Ateonya Mathews - Ateonya is a 17 year old talented writer. She will attend Ivy Tech and move forward to a career in Journalism Education.

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Andrew Beidinger - A student at Ivy Tech South Bend. Some people who inspire him are Professor Claire Roof, Madonna, his close friend Madonna Estefan, Ru Paul, Raven, Ongina, Pandora Boxx, his mother, Shannel, Lady Gaga, Ricky Martin and many others! He considers himself to be an uber-nerd and quite proud of it!

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Eman Alkotob - A senior at Mishawaka High School and a health nut, she spends what little free time that she has getting some shut eye, sketching portraits, and creative writing. Indecisive about her exact college major, she hopes to someday work in a health related field leaning towards neurology.

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Bobby Coozie - Member of the Creative Writing club

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Nanne Binghi Barkdull - Amazing artist who's works can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nanne-Binghi-Barkdull-Artwork/89133298080?sk=wall>

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