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Florida Borh



Lu 10



The Bohemian



The Cast

Michael Chavez – *-Nu-*

Sharon Grimaldi – *Saharron*

Ryan Hulseley – *Nuwbie*

Nicole Manina – *Nikki is the big chief*

Tricia Robateau – *Tree Hugger*

Cindy Shove – *The Conductor*

Leslie Soracco – *Blondie*

Christina Watson – *Torn Heart*

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NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR UNIVERSITY

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One Journey

Stephanie Biehl

I was a seed
 Beneath the ground
 Painted aesthetically with the brush strokes of dirt
 Cared for, chosen, groomed ever so tenderly
 Built upon my shoulders was a mound
 Of skin on skin
 Heart beats that never lost buoyancy
 Eyes that never stopped observing
 So gently I was raised

Then I was removed from my pot
 And replanted on a mountain
 Surrounded by bright green grass
 Spitting on me
 I was jerked from home in that soft brown
 To a brand new place

I was supposed to grow again
 Trepidation was all that lingered.
 I ran through those hillsides
 Searching for my place

I ran right into you
 Immediately you shared your rays
 So warm
 You didn't have to speak
 Or act
 Or touch
 To reach me

You lit me up
 You watered me
 So constantly
 So abundantly

cont.

For the first time in this new brown
I drank water
My thirst never quenched
Still I grew
Twenty feet a week
You were my sun
My water
You were me
I emulate you
Your height, your strength
So grown
Beautiful, the most beautiful
Most wild flower on the mountain
Nurturing
Tending to my leaves
Measuring my stem

I grew infinitely
I never stopped as long as
You stood right next to me
In front of me rather
Where I could watch you
To mend my posture
Straighten my stem
Keep my leaves vibrant

The Dance



Richard Rossi

Nightlives

Belo M. Cipriani

Ruby was mentally preparing lesson plans for the following week when her alarm clock went off. She yawned in disapproval as she hit the snooze button and headed to the kitchen. She smiled when she saw Jade had already made coffee and tied her brown, wavy hair in a bun. Ruby and Jade were not just roommates but also twins. Jade peeled her gaze from the newspaper and sighed before saying, “You didn’t sleep again, huh?”

Ruby rubbed her dry red eyes and poured coffee into her 49er mug. “I think it’s just stress. New job and all.”

Jade recited the same speech she had been performing for the last two weeks. “I told you already. You need to get on Nightlives. It totally works and you get to dream what you want. I spent most of last night and this morning in Aruba with Tyson Beckford.”

Ruby looked down at her reflection on the glass table’s surface. She realized she looked even worse than the previous day and hated the thought of having to resort to makeup. She looked up at her sister, a fresher version of herself, and asked, “What happened to Beckham?” Jade batted her hazel eyes and looked away before responding, “I totally dumped him.” Both brunettes laughed out loud, yet Ruby was feeling slightly jealous of her sister. Not because she was prancing around with hot men in her dreams, but because she was getting a good night’s sleep.

It had only been two weeks since Ruby started teaching at a charter high school in Oakland, yet the thirty-minute commute over the San Mateo Bridge from Belmont felt familiar to her. Driving so close to water on both sides reminded her of the many lakes back in Minnesota. It had only been five years since the sisters left the Twin Cities; however, the bay area already felt like home. Ruby was exiting Highway 101 and merging onto El Camino Real when her lids began to feel heavy. She yawned and raised the volume on her radio, trying to stay alert as she only had two more lights to get home. She blinked a few times, approaching the intersection, when suddenly she realized she had rear-ended the driver in front of her. Her leg was still shaking from hitting the brakes so hard when the guy got out of his car and started to yell at her.

Ruby was lounging in the living room, channel-surfing, when Jade burst into the apartment. “I just got your text! Are you okay?” Jade demanded, her heels clicking on the floor as she ran toward the couch.

Ruby sighed before saying, “I’m fine. The car, however, is not feeling so well.”

“Fuck the car, Ruby!” retorted Jade as she smothered Ruby with a hug.

The twins began to discuss the details of the fender bender. Ruby hesitated but decided to tell her sister that she had fallen asleep at the wheel. The girls came to the conclusion that they would not tell their parents and fix the car on their own instead.

The conversation was interrupted by the catchy jingle of the Nightlives commercial. Both women looked at the pretty girl and cute guy looking so happy after discovering Nightlives. Jade glanced at Ruby as she reached into her purse. “I know you don’t like taking meds, but give it a try,” she said, placing the pink pill in her sister’s hand. Ruby sighed before giving a shaky, “Sure, okay.”

Rubbing papaya-scented lotion on her feet, Ruby glared at the glass of water and pink pill that now sat on her nightstand. She did not believe in taking short cuts, and resorting to sleeping medication felt like a quick fix to her. However, the new job kept Ruby pretty busy, forcing her to give up more holistic options. She leaned over and, in one quick motion, popped the pill in her mouth. She was still sipping water when the room began to blur. Remembering Jade’s words, Ruby collapsed on her bed and began to focus on a single thought. She focused on images of the Amazon rainforest she seen earlier that evening on TV. The four bedposts on the canopy bed grew branches and she saw the carpet turn to dark green grass and an array of brightly colored flowers. The sheets under her legs and arms morphed into tiny yellow and green ropes that started to braid into each other. In a matter of seconds, Ruby was laying on a hammock surrounded by a breathtaking paradise. Just like she saw on her favorite travel show, this place seemed magical with its vibrant color palette of birds and vegetation. A cool breeze rocked the hammock in a gentle and relaxing tempo. Everything looked and felt serene, and for the first time in weeks, she felt at peace. The sound of running water was slowly increasing, and Ruby left her hammock and followed the therapeutic song that beckoned her. She peered over banana leaves and smiled at the beautiful river before her eyes. Without thinking twice, she catapulted into the blue water. Bright pink fish swam all around, and as they got closer, she noticed they were not fish at all, but dolphins. Ruby popped her head out from the water, laughing and clapping as the dolphins stole kisses and waved at her with their fins. A distant ringing entered Ruby’s dream, and as the ringing got louder, the trees, birds, and dolphins faded away. Just as fast as she had appeared in the tropical oasis, Ruby was back in her bedroom. A sense of completeness consumed her while she turned off the alarm clock.

Jade was startled out of her Parisian dinner with Lenny Kravitz by engine noises. Jumping out of bed was something she was not used to, and Jade fell on the carpet. Annoyed, she got up and walked out of her room and nearly fell a second time when she saw Ruby

making breakfast. Jade rubbed her eyes and took a seat on the table. She asked, “Why are you up so early on a Saturday?” Ruby had so much energy, she was making her sister tired as she told her about the great night’s sleep she got. Jade nodded while realizing the noise she heard in her dreams was the blending of fruits to make smoothies. “Not that I am complaining but what’s with all the food?” inquired Jade. Ruby told her how she felt bad about not contributing as much lately. Jade smiled at her sister and explained she understood the stresses of a new job. “That was me last year when I joined the start-up. Don’t you remember?”

Ruby nodded in agreement and smiled before saying, “Well, it doesn’t matter anymore because I have a solution now. I called Dr. White ten minutes ago for a Nightlife prescription.”

Buttering her toast, Jade asked curiously, “So what did you dream?” Sitting across from her sister, Ruby went over her exotic escape. She joyfully elaborated on the details of the flowers, trees, and pink dolphins as she cut her omelet into smaller pieces. Jade frowned and looked at her sister with disapproving eyes. “I can’t believe it. You could have hung out with any man, but instead you chose to spend your dreams with pink fish! You are so not my sis right now.”

Ruby reminded her sister that it had only been two months since she broke up with Danny, and that after a three-year relationship, she just needed a break from men. “By the way, dolphins are mammals not fish.” Ruby added. Jade took a big sip of her smoothie, got up from the table, and walked toward the sink. She started to rinse her dish while she said, “Well, the only mammals in my dreams have six packs and treat me like a queen.” They both chuckled and Ruby left the kitchen to get ready for her errand-filled day.

It was a typical sunny day in the Peninsula, and Ruby was thrilled to feel so alert and able to enjoy it. She pulled into the shopping center and was stoked to find a parking space right in front of the pharmacy. It was the last item on her to-do list, and she strolled down the aisle that led to the pickup window. A thin, short guy greeted her and asked for her name. The petite man glanced up at Ruby with his gray eyes and said, “Pretty name for a pretty girl.”

Ruby looked around and noticed she was the only customer at the time. Trying not to be rude, she answered, “What can I say, my mom likes rocks. I have a sister named Jade and a brother named Mikah.” The pharmacist retrieved a small bag from the shelf and walked back to the counter. Ruby placed her credit card on the glass countertop and reached for the white paper bag. She could now read his name tag and said, “Thanks, Paul.”

He glided his hand over Ruby’s, saying, “A ruby is a jewel not just a rock.” Although the guy was not bad-looking, Ruby was grossed out by his gesture. She immediately retracted her hand and shoved the white paper bag into her purse. Biting his lower lip, he began to run the credit card. “Have you taken Nighlives before?” Paul asked while sliding the receipt over for Ruby to sign. She nodded and scribbled her name desperately, wanting to put this awkward moment behind her. Paul continued, “Well, if you have any questions at all, please give me a ring.” She politely smiled and stormed out of the pharmacy, hoping not to slip on her way out.

Later that night, Ruby was watching a special on Egypt while braiding her hair. She hit the power button and excitedly popped the pink pill in her mouth. Feeling the tiny pill travel down her throat, she snuggled into bed. The walls slowly faded away, and giant steps grew out of the floor. Ruby was now wearing a white cotton dress and standing on a pyramid. Despite the bright sun, Ruby was blown away by the view of massive structures and people fishing far below in the nearby river. A soft meow caught her attention, and she smiled at the white cat purring by her feet. The lean feline rubbed its face against Ruby’s leg, and she knelt down to run her fingers over the soft coat. She heard footsteps approaching and was stunned to see Paul walking her direction. Unlike Ruby, Paul was ecstatic to find her and called her name as if they known each other for years. The cat ran down the massive steps as Paul approached them. She was about to run after the feline when Paul grabbed her arm.

“What are you doing here?” Ruby cried while attempting to free herself from his grasp. Paul pulled her to his chest, and Ruby was now looking into his pale eyes. Although he was about the same height as her, Ruby was so startled by his presence that she stood frozen in fear. “I knew we had a lot in common. You see, I like ancient cultures too. But I’m more of a Greek type of guy.” The earth beneath them started to tremble. Large white pillars rose from under the rocks, smashing the Egyptian landscape, and Ruby saw her white cotton dress turn into a violet silk gown. Paul pulled her even closer and pressed his lips against hers. Ruby managed to free one of her hands and slapped him so hard, the impact left her fingers stinging. She started running down a hallway, screaming for help. However, there was no one around to hear her cry. Thinking she had located the way out, she pushed open a tall wooden door and screamed when she felt a strong hand yank her gown, knocking her to the floor. “I don’t want to hurt you. I can make you happy,” he cried. A massive beeping sound echoed throughout the Grecian palace. Paul was pinning Ruby on the stone floor when he vanished and Ruby was back in her bed. Her alarm clock was ringing, and she whimpered as she hit the snooze button. Trailing the wall to the bathroom, she gently rubbed her lower back. In front of the

mirror, she gingerly lifted her shirt and gasped at the bruises on her lower back. She yelled her sister's name.

"Are you sure that's not from the car accident?" asked Jade. Ruby rolled her eyes while pulling her shirt back down. Jade told her sister that she had never heard of anyone having nightmares while on Nightlives and suggested it could be an aftershock from the fender bender. The twins embraced and Ruby promised to stay in and rest. "That's what Sundays are for anyway. Just take it easy," continued Jade.



Ruby was going over her lesson plans on America in the 1920s when she noticed it was getting late. Knowing well she had a full day of teaching looming, she decided to take the pink pill. The bruises had disappeared and she thought Jade was right about being a bit shaky after the car accident. She lay her head on the goose-down pillow and watched her room morph before her eyes. The bed transformed into a stiff wooden love seat, and she heard people laughing and a piano playing. One by one, men and women appeared in the ornate room. Just like the rest of the women present, Ruby was wearing a flapper dress. She smiled at the crowd that now surrounded her chair. Getting into character, Ruby began to fan her face and explore the speakeasy. The crown moldings and detailed furnishings all seemed like true works of art, making this trip in time deeply pleasant. She took a seat near a window and admired the view she recognized as San Francisco. "Excuse me, miss, this is from the guy at the bar," said a gray-haired man. The bartender placed the glass of champagne in Ruby's hand and walked away. Scanning the room, she located the bar and saw Paul waving at her.

A cold chill filled the room as Paul approached Ruby. "We got off on the wrong foot. Give me another chance." He called while walking closer. Ruby realized that in this dream, there were other people who could possibly help, making it a bit easier to relax and feel more confident. Paul took a seat next to Ruby on the settee and flashed a Cheshire cat smile and continued, "That dress looks great but I think red is more your color."

Ruby saw her pastel-blue flapper dress turn burgundy and replied, "Actually, I prefer blue." And her dress immediately turned back to its original color. Ruby realized that she had as much control over the environment as Paul did.

He scooted closer to Ruby and whispered, "Why don't you like me? I can treat you so well."

Ruby rose from her seat and said, "I'm simply not interested." She walked up the nearby staircase to get away. The pianist was now playing a song Ruby didn't recognize, and she figured Paul was trying to change the dream. Paul appeared next to her and attempted to pull

her onto the dance floor. She took a step forward and pushed him down the stairs with all she had. The women screamed and the music stopped playing as Paul rolled down the stairs. The speakeasy blurred and Ruby woke up in her bed. It was an hour before her alarm would go off, and she feared Paul was seriously hurt. After all, she had been bruised in the previous dream. Unsure of what had ended the dream, she ran to the bathroom and pulled out the bottle of Nightlives from a small drawer. She began to empty them into the toilet. She did not know what had just happened, but she did know she was done with the pills. Ruby wondered if all the strangers she encountered in her dreams were actually real people. Are our dreams intertwined with other people's just like our physical day-to-day life? Maybe her sister was really hanging out with celebrities and to them it was a dream with some stranger. Whatever it may be, Ruby decided it did not need to be so vivid and threw the empty bottle of Nightlives in the garbage can.



Lunch in Half Moon Bay



Claire Virginia Karoly

You'll Always Be

Rachel Brunson

I wish back then I knew you just as well,
Before you were a part of all my plans.
I would have picked you up each time you fell,
And carried you across the foreign lands.

But even so I know from now 'til end
This life we will spend side by side always.
I know you will always be my best friend,
True strength you'll give me even on rough days.

I promise to give you all of my heart.
And love you more with every pounding beat.
I'll never dread the day when we may part
Because I know our souls forever meet.

Whenever you need me look inside you,
Forev' our love and friendship will reign true.

Eternal Fear

Michael Chavez

I lie in bed tonight clutched with fear.
Paralyzed by the silence itself.
My breathing becomes quick and my mouth soon dry,
Afraid to even move or speak.
The shadows take a form unbeknownst to me,
They come alive and begin to feed off of me.
I open my mouth and cry for help,
But not a sound leaves my mouth.
I know I must act.
I summon it all
My courage,
My strength,
My spirit.
I edge closer, peek below and let out a sigh
No monsters tonight.

Untitled



Gretchen Gullicksen Grant

Remedial English Blues

Deanna Mesa

This class is so boring
It puts me to sleep
I don't want to get caught
He might make me leave.

Maybe it will be a blessing
A gift from above
Than I think of the material I'll miss
Catching up won't be fun.

He blasts the heater
So high it feels like a sauna
Trapped in this room
I start to text Donna.

Fifty minutes starts to feel like an hour
Can't eat and can only drink
Bottled water.

Yawn Yawn
Sniff Sniff
SIGH
Wiggle Wiggle

If anyone says something stupid
I'll be the only one who looks funny
Cause I have a loud giggle.

Our Inheritance

Justin T. Lotspeich

Slick mornings walking on sawdust
While San Francisco's sun freezes
Awaiting her moment to creep from bed,
Reaching for her coat of fog. Our bodies wrapped
In thermals and canvas, flushed with tea and alive
With the frigid easterly mist swirling
Toward the Golden Gate. Our blades hum,
Hungry teeth still stained by yesterday's kerf.
Measuring tapes lick, pencils scratch,
Chalk lines pop, and plywood crunches, cracks, spits.
Blue-eyed ocean penetrates our fingers and permeates
Hearts, reaching into a concrete city,
Grabbing our scaffolding, shaking our rafters
Attempting to swat away sighs of warmth.
Your languished sun sits on hilltops, barring time.
But you stretch out from a sleepless night
In tune to curse gloom and ignore dawn.
These are cold places, your city sites.



Mehran Massoumi

Candace Hoppe

from L.A., I stop for gas in Bakersfield.
It's hot and clammy
and reminded me of Needles,
the birthplace of my grandmother.

Her skin like the Mojave:
brown, layered and dry.
My grandfather was in fatigues
when he met her. She sold him tamales.

They went north
on the Golden State Highway.
Up through the valley
then west to settle by the Bay.

But that didn't matter:
the desert still managed to weather her daughters.
They bloomed in tough soil,
petals threatened by cactus needles.

And her daughters' daughters
who cross stateliness like embers over firebreaks.
How are we supposed to stay still
whipped by memories of the Santa Ana's?

Through Fresno, I pass truckloads of beer, garlic and carrots;
cows for milk and cows for brisket.
I see orchards and oil fields, grain and grapes
and rows of palms in the distance.

The distance, the driving.
Vagabond baby, my wandering body.
River of road.
Guess I'm getting somewhere, maybe home.

Never Alone

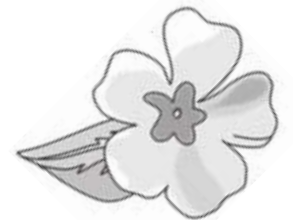
Tricia Robateau

In the dark (When there is no light)
In the dark (screaming with all your might)
All alone
Abandoned and used
Feeling as if nothing is right
Know you're not alone
He's always on your side
Know you're not alone
He'll be your strength

When you're desperate
Gasping for air
Reaching for a hand,
For a shoulder to lay your head
Searching for warmth
Searching for a home
Know you're not alone
He's forever by your side
He'll give a place to rest
He'll give where you'll belong
Because he's with you
He'll be your strength
You're here, your might
He'll let you know
You're never alone

Through your trials
When you're frail
On the verge of giving up
Know you're not alone
Know you're not prone
To all the pain
To all your darkness
Because he's with you

Because you're never alone
God's by your side
He'll protect and cherish you
You're beauty in his eyes
You're created with all his love
So don't cry
Don't leave
He's reaching out
He's holding your hands
Because you're not alone
You're never alone.



Wallowing in White

Roy Karlo Nuyda

Till white finds me on the great white bellows
The white eye will loom over the white sands;
The white sky lording over white fellows
will spill his white heart into frail white hands.
Soon the great white judge and loose white juries
stand trial before white sheet and white breath;
over white faces the white ghost scurries
to shout a white lie, to grasp a white death.
In the white city, near the white river,
lonely boy white had met whitely lone girl;
their white voices make a white soul shiver,
Their white breaths make the white cold curl.
Lost in their white bliss, the white bound lovers
Fear not the white scream nor the white call.
Face white virgin bled on her white covers;
Lights born white face the vast whitening wall

Narnia 2



Hayley Guenther

Reloj no Marca la Hora

Nicole Manina

We live our lives
By minutes.

The hands of time
Direct our every
Move

As events approach
The small hand
Moves
Moves
Moves

Is it counting down
Impending doom?

Or tracing the minutes
Until good fortune
Can bloom?

Will a surprise be lurking
At half past noon?

Or shall Armageddon
Befall us at a
Quarter till 2?

What do we prepare for then?
Have we been forgiven of all our sins?
Is there time to right our wrongs?
Before judgment condemns us all?

Or, pray tell
Is there nothing amiss?
Just another minute gone by
The vastness of life
Displayed in the sky

Might as well put your head
Between your knees
And prepare for the worst

Because if that clock strike terror
We'll be headed for a hearse.

But if instead
Time counteracts the doom
Than prepare,
My friends,
For a collaboration of sun and moon,
For good, to better, too great

But in the end
Can time truly
Effect fate?

Eggs

Candace Hoppe

She said, *There aren't any eggs*, and she paused a long pause; a two minute pause; a painful pause and I knew what was coming. I tried to prepare for it but you can't prepare for a woman's anger, especially not hers.

She said, *You go to the store; offer to get something for me and all I ask for is eggs but you didn't get them*, and she started fussing with her hair like she always does—when she's bored, when she's driving—by twirling a lock of it into a tight curl around her first two fingers.

She said, *I bought these special little holders for soft-boiled eggs that I wanted to try tomorrow but you used the last egg and didn't pick up more when you were at the store even though you offered, even though you knew I needed eggs before I knew I needed eggs. You offered and I needed so I asked, but you didn't get them* and she slowly placed her palms on the kitchen table, as if to steady herself, and she stood. I crossed my arms and stood my ground near the stove. She squinted and I knew it was coming—the same way it always did, the same order it always did.

She said, *I need at least one egg every morning to make that morning normal. If I don't have that egg my whole day is ruined. You know that. I'm not going back out today, so I'll have to go eggless tomorrow* and she paused another long pause before walking up to me, squinting that terrible squint she does when she's really mad or really drunk, sometimes both. I looked to the cabinet to see if it was closed—and it was—but she'd followed my gaze, noticed where I was looking and pinched my arm a long, hard pinch; the kind that pulls the flesh away from muscle, twists and leaves a bruise. I didn't react the way she wanted me too. I just waited for her to finish.

She said, *Tomorrow's going to be a terrible day without that egg. I'm going to go to bed tonight—right now practically—knowing that I won't have a normal day tomorrow; do you know how that feels? Tomorrow doesn't even stand a chance of being a good day. Without that egg, I won't be able to stick to any sort of diet all day. You know how hard I try to limit what I eat; you know why. You're ruining my days for me, Daniel, and you don't even care—do you*, and she stared me straight in the eye as if that were a real question; as if I really didn't care; as if I didn't already know the routine, have it memorized, as she must have it memorized; as if I didn't care enough about her to put up with her and her bullshit.

She said, *I guess we can go out to dinner tomorrow, like you wanted, since my diet is already ruined; since tomorrow's dinner already doesn't matter without those eggs for tomorrow's breakfast.*

And you're going to pay for it, too. My entire dinner—appetizers, main dish, desserts—whatever I want, you've gotta pay for. And then you're going to hold my hair when I bring it back up. You threw out my diet for tomorrow, so I'm going to throw out something of yours and she slammed every door on the way out of the kitchen into the hallway up the stairs and into the bedroom. I uncrossed my arms and sighed and slammed the front door on my way out.



Ardent Sun

Esmeralda Montenegro-Owen

The sun is ardent above my head,
The heat is killing my cells away.
In the Central Valley my day has only just began
At 6 in the morning, dressed for success I am.

There's my ride.
I'll squeeze right in-
20 in a van for 8,
The daily routine begins.
Baseball cap, long sleeve shirt, denim pants, old dirty rubber boots.
In 30 minutes our destination is reached,
20 in a van for 8 get off
and we're here to start one more hearty day.

In the agricultural fields of the Central Valley,
Is where I'm at, here where my heart revives
Time to pick the fruit, apricots by buckets for cents.

The sun is ardent above my head,
I feel my brain cells burning every second there.
My wife, my kids, they wait for daddy each day,
To comfort them knowing, I have finished another laborious day.

One day completed means,
One day of bread.
One day completed means,
One day lived.

At 200 dollars a week,
I must make ends meet.
So much work, so much risk,
So little accomplished towards a feast.

There are days when I'm with the 20 in a van for 8,
Must find a hideout,
When the squads show up to harass us.
Deport us? No! Why?
We are only earning our daily bread!

The sun is ardent over our heads!
Each day we fight to keep ourselves sane.
Who else will do our laborious work?
Will you?
You who wants us out of your glorious lands!
I'm here to work,
Not to cause trouble.
Work, yes, and my cracked hands will tell you.
Don't prosecute me; don't run me over!
I'm only here to look over my children.
My hands are ripping,
My nails are black,
Would you like to do my task?
I spend 6 hours bent down per day.
Picking whatever I need to make my daily wage.

My hands can tell you,
The hardship in my space,
My body won't control them for much longer,
For it's slowly killing my energy away.

My eyes can tell you,
The story of my life,
Illegal; hardworking; family; human.

Don't prosecute me!
Can't I just get my work done!
In the sun that is killing my brain cells away,
What constant invasion you cause in my life.
My children are paying a price way too high!
Not able to drive them to school each day,
Not able to take them to parks, mountains and lakes.

cont.

What kinds of dislike have you towards me?
Me? Why me?
To work I've come,
Where nobody else will.
Can you do it?
Can you work under the ardent sun as I do each day?

Good people, that's who we are.
All 20 in a van for 8,
Families we have,

Needs we possess;
Drive we generate.

Let us be!
I'm a hardworking man in the fields of Central California,
Where the sun is hot and makes me darker each day.
I may look like an alien, but that's because of you!

I work hard to pick the best fruits and vegetables for your family's delight.
Don't discriminate against me because I'm dark,
Don't dislike me because at 30, my hands, feet, face and knees
Have wrinkled without a mask.

Work is what I do,
A human being is what I am,
So please let me be!
I'm not your servant,
I'm not a slave,
Be fair, be cool, and just let me be a working man!

Under the ardent sunrays I stand.
Would you like to take my place?

Snoey Men



Sharon Grimaldi

Compromising Comparisons

Justin T. Lotspeich

None match these collective traits,
The design I folded to;
I bear the force of leaden weight.

Mother kind and driven straight
By passion's fiery hue;
None match these collective traits.

Father calm and quiet late,
When living up to you,
I bear the force of leaden weight.

Sister loving and blessed in faith,
Spreading joy like soft dew;
None match these collective traits.

Brother keen and wise in state,
With pillars old and new;
I bear the force of leaden weight.

Flailing in these traits so great
Their waves drowning anew,
None match these collective traits,
I bear the force of leaden weight.

Dust to Dust

Jane Kubel

In the beginning

*Moved with love for the ones who come after,
the particles change themselves from brilliance to dust.
They invent time so the questions can have answers
and their children can sleep.*

They know the things that I have forgotten.

I dreamed of a flat earth that spread and bloomed.
Its people travelled to the edge of the world,
folding its edges so they could never fall.
Moving and multiplying like beetles,
each new generation entombing the last
like lungfish in a ball of mud and memory,
we rolled the world round.

My rubber soles crunch invisible things against pavement.
I am Ozymandias, Collossus, destroyer of microbe cities.
I am inconceivable, passing like the shadow of Saturn's ring.
Unknowable to things so small.

When the sun is gone I lie on the pavement,
heat of a burning world seeping into my back.

*Languishing red and warm in its shooting-star trench,
the dust that forgot its name clings to itself
but those few who remember ignite
it had been wonderful, hadn't it*



Jennifer Lucas

Darth Cabrol-Easton

She bent over the laces of her worn running shoes, faintly illuminated by the one light above the tiny kitchen table, intent on tightening and straightening them. Comfortable feet made all the difference over long distances. Her hair hung in a dense blond-gray curtain, obscuring her view. She pushed it away impatiently. Laces satisfactory, she tugged the offending hair swiftly into a thick braid. As she rose from the straight-backed chair, she was already stretching the tight ropes of her calves, rising onto her toes, and then sinking back slowly with her good leg. Her hip twinged a little, but the muscles around it were strong and flexible.

The sun was newly risen. Dew and crisp pine filled her senses as she started down the first canyon. Only the steady rhythm of her footsteps interrupted the waking sounds of birds and the distant hum of the river. Tension slid off of her in warm waves as she melted into the run. She let go of the uneasy sleep the night before, waiting for the sound of him stumbling through the door, let go of even thoughts of the two boys still dreaming in her mother's trailer. She had taken them the night before, the second day he didn't come home. The morning and the undeniable present of running revived her. She crossed the first fork of the river tumbling below the narrow bridge, and began to steadily climb the canyon. The solitude was broken by the motor of a pick-up truck. The driver honked as he passed her. She did not recognize the old man behind the wheel, but she waved. She tried to sink back into the meditation of her legs and heart working against the hill. But the realization would not leave. She would have to go, and take the boys away. It was about to begin again. How stupid to have thought it could really be different. Her right hip gave her a sharp pain as if in agreement, but she did not lessen her pace.

Even with such a clear reminder of his dark side, she loved him to her bones. Their boys both had his deep gray eyes—so stormy and changeable. Her grandmother had warned her to stay away from him. His family had what grandma called “the melancholy”—passion and charm, but trouble lurking in dark moods and stories about many family members coming to “bad ends”. His sadness and his seeming lack of defense against the power of his own emotions had been an attraction for her. In a town that trained its men to be stoic and uneasy at any demonstration of emotion, he seemed so much more alive. His high times brought moments straight out of romantic movies—serenades and surprise moonlight picnics. When the boys were little, fascination with the wonder of new little lives, born barely a year apart and so much alike, seemed to keep the darkness at bay for awhile. He lost himself in their world and was a wonderful father, he played every game with total concentration and made up amazing,

winding stories to put them to sleep. She fooled herself into thinking they might live happily ever after together. But the darkness inevitably descended, and the sparkle fell away from his eyes, leaving a black hole that threatened to swallow her along with him. She even thought she knew what it was called: Bi-Polar disorder or Manic Depression. She looked it up in the big medical book at the library, her hands shaking as she flipped through symptoms, as if he might step into the library and discover her betrayal. He would never admit to mental illness. She thought “the Melancholy” sounded more poetic. The book had also said it was a disease that usually did not make people violent, except to themselves. But that didn’t surprise her since she knew, for him, shooting her had been violence against himself. He had fully intended to kill them both. In the depths of his darkest spell yet, the idea of their newly orphaned boys finding them was too distant and too gentle a thought. When the gun jammed after the first shot, and the neighbor and the EMTs from the volunteer fire department arrived, she insisted it had been an accident, and the torrent of tears and regrets coming from him made it seem believable, even to her.

He had seemed good these past few years. He gave up drinking, which made the moods seem manageable. He had held a job at the Ace Hardware for almost two years now. On good days he probably was the most interesting person in the world to talk to about screws. Sometimes he could not sleep, and sometimes he locked himself in the bathroom for hours, but the storms in his eyes remained relatively calm. She still hesitated to leave the boys alone with him, even when he sparkled with smiles.

The running had started after physical therapy. The perky young therapist stood in front of her in the stark green room and told her with cheerleader smile and brisk voice that strong leg muscles were the best defense against future injury to the weakened part of her hip, where they had to remove a chunk shattered by the bullet. She had started by mechanically walked around the backyard while the boys watched TV. There was no joy in it. She hated her limp—her right leg now permanently shorter than the left. She fought against the pain, and cursed under her breath, but she walked with fierce determination to be strong again. The first time she ran two miles, she found the zone—the perfect escape of the steady, meditative rhythm of her limping gait on the worn asphalt. She was addicted. She ran four days a week now, and would have run every day if she thought her body could take it. The runs had stretched to eight miles, up and down the river canyons. Though the limp would never go away, and her blond hair was moving rapidly towards gray, her body had grown hard and lean. Her legs especially showed the lines of muscles most people never know they have. She loved running partly because she had learned to walk again and it was a prayer answered; she needed it because it was the only time that the worry of him could be chased from her mind.

Today the run did not let her forget. And on mile six something other than realization struck her—premonition. It chilled her, despite the heat of her skin, and her knees felt weak. She regained her rhythm and continued the closing miles.

She walked slowly up the driveway; she knew he was there. The air was different. She knew he had the knife before she saw the blade flash in the sun. The storm in his eyes brought her back to the last time. And she knew he was lost. He wanted to die. She couldn’t really blame him for wanting to take her with him. She loved him too, but not enough to die with him. She loved life more. The perfect yielding trust of a child in your arms, the dew laced scent of pine and the blood pumping through her veins, she could not give it all up. She would not give it all up. Not yet, not even for him.

Time stood still. When he lunged at her, she leaped nimbly to the side, muscles warm from her run. She reached out with her good leg, and swept his feet out from under him. He landed with a thud, but she didn’t hear it. Then she was on top of him, pinning his arms to his sides with the ropey muscles of her legs. He had not dropped the knife. She could feel the coolness of its hilt against the inside of her thigh.

He struggled against her grip, but could not free his arms. She was almost surprised how easy it was to hold him. She looked into his eyes. The deep stormy seas had hidden all trace of him. He looked at her without recognition, pain etched on his face. She had to save him. Save them both. She knew exactly where his heart was. She had laid her ear there many times in their early days, when she could still bring comfort to him, and his dark moods were milder. He once said feeling her rest there had kept him rooted to the world, reminded him that he was alive. She felt tears come to her eyes. “I love you. I will always love you,” she said to the eyes as she reached down and took the knife. She was exact and it only took one sure stroke. For a minute he looked almost grateful. She watched his eyes fade from anger to emptiness, and then reached to gently close them.

The air echoed with a new emptiness. Everything had a hard new edge. She stumbled into the kitchen for the portable phone and dialed 911. “Hello? Ellen? I just killed my husband. Yeah...I’ll stay right here. See you soon.”

She walked back outside. The sun was warm and it was almost peaceful. The sirens broke the stillness. She sighed, stretched her legs, wondering if it would be many days before she could run again. She rose and went to greet the paramedics.

My Father's Hands

Nicole Manina

He hangs his coat up
And smiles down
At me, he looks tired.
I reach for his embrace
Not yet.

Powerful, meaningful
Strides towards the sink.
The water flows
Clear and new.
His hands are
Black and old,
They crack and cry
As they lather in soap.

The water washes away
His pain
Exhausted
Tired, old, dry hands.

My mother inspects
And they are approved.

He turns to me
Smiles wide
Arms out.
I run for him.

The embrace
Leaves no room
For worry,
Only love.

His hands are clean.
The painful reminder
Gone.
He works so hard
For we
His family.

My father's hands
Create strength.
His strength
Is love.
His love
Is our foundation.

And I am
Nothing,
Without him.



Jameo Duncan

Poisonous Ecstasy

Deanna Mesa

A man's kiss
Is as poisonous as a woman's touch
The soft caress
Of a woman's hand
Gently glazing his arm
Would send a man in his own fantasy trance.

Like an earthquake
His heart beats in tremors
Shivering with delight
He surrenders with no return.

For a woman
The kiss of death
Is that from a man.
Slow, passionate, irresistible.
The poisonous pleasure settles
Her body goes numb
For she can no longer resist temptation.

His kiss settles in deeper
She is at his mercy.
Inhibitions lowered
She surrenders without a doubt.

What If

Tricia Robateau

What if tomorrow is the end?
What If we all were to disappear?
If we slowly dissipate
And we loose our voices?
Would it be to late?
To be the person you want to be?
To find whom you were meant to be?

What if I fade away, if I tried to save another?
Would I find paradise, if I could sacrifice?
To save a lost soul
A soul I once was?
Would I be a better person,
If I knew just how to live?
What if I can understand,
Those clueless mysteries left to find?
Would I know who I am
In a world so full of lies?

What if no one were in pain?
If no one were left in vain?
If we never felt alone
Felt life so dull and bored?
What if we knew what beauty was?
Would we find the happiness we need?
If every person cared
And every person shared?
Then wouldn't we truly live,
If it was always just to give?
What if, just what if?
The world was a better place?

What if choices were unknown,
And people should confirm,

What if we became slaves
As slaves to the devil we already are,
What if we chose God
And bid the devil a farewell,
Then wouldn't all the crime,
The evilness be gone?

What if all the Earth,
Was a dry and sullen place
If all the special spots
And all its beauty gone?
If fire has descended
And people start to burn,
If the devil is left to reign,
Would life be worth living anymore?
If we continue to kill each other
And disregard all warnings?
What if it all disappears?
Would that be an okay way to live?
Knowing you are timed,
And our time is running out?

What if we were individuals?
And were not afraid of each other
If we can be ourselves
And respect one another
Then wouldn't that be the life
With animals and plants
And maybe paradise
Will always be our Earth,

What if, just what if,
Scenarios came to past
Then how would you behave?
If you had nothing left on earth,
What if, just what if
Your nightmares came to pass.
What if, just what if,
Just how would you react?

Untitled

Isiah Castro

Hear me calling, demon from above
How the tides have turned in our eternal battle
I call upon your fear and desire
The wrath unjustly provoked by
A tantalizing suspect, an enigmatic creature
Oh demon of the sky, come forth
I yearn for the beauty of your pain
The transition of superior to inferior to overpowering
Causes such storms to brew beneath the surface
And still I want more
So still I praise you demon up above
Quench my thirst for lust and sorrow
For such wants go hand in hand
To the world after worlds
A place sought after but for all the wrong reasons
So, my dear demon of the sky
Appease all I ask and desire
A thousand years of servitude is worthy
Of your high vanity
Of your selfless conceit
Alas, my sovereign demon exulted high above me
I shall forfeit all I am and could be
Follow blindly all you command and preach
I shall forsake all those who cant comprehend
How much of a farce you are
And this shall end you, demon in the sky
For my labor shall cause your downfall
Because I am the savior of the sold
Leader of the damned that reach you up high
For I am righteousness and death in one

Link



Eduardo Beltran

My Optical Ode

Deanna Mesa

Ode to you
For you have never left my side
Not once did it cross my mind
To even dare to say goodbye.

You've seen me through my bad
Have been there to witness the good
Legs of steel, eyes like glad
I'll never forget you, I never could.

When you go missing
I can't see without you
My senses are sensitive
Until I feel your touch
 I can't go on without you.

You're all probably wondering
Is she writing about a love
Perhaps a boy that was not true.

But little do you know
That my ode goes for show
My contact lenses, dear
I truly can't see without you.

Untitled

Isiah Castro

A winter chill is bestowed unto me
Shatter me when the softness freezes
What I have done to be endowed such a grace
Was nothing more than ill contempt
Held high in the eyes of those above me

A spring rush is bestowed unto me
Spear me when the lost love is found
What I must do to be endowed such a grace
Lock eyes with the deepest tempest
Flourishing into a dawn of rebirth

A summer fire is bestowed unto me
Sear me when the heat is unbearably lingering
What I should do to be endowed such a grace
Melt away the last of my doubt
Flow into one pool of righteousness and assuredness

A fall breeze is bestowed unto me
Blow me when the change is complete
What I need do to be endowed such a grace
Swing listlessly from side to side
Carefully creating a whimsical path of calm and serenity

A continual season is bestowed unto me
Spur me when the change comes within
What I always do to be endowed such a grace
Open my being to allow such tumultuous happenings
Allowing all sensations to be felt and accepted



Jameo Duncan

Incrociando a Sicrezza (Crossing to Safety)

Christine Jarc

It was one of those late Summer days that make you forget that the season is about to turn. We happily anticipate Winter's run up to Spring, and even more so the advent of Summer and it's promise of long restful days. This is especially true when you are the mother of not quite grown children. Their brains rest while their bodies grow.

The end of Summer is to be ignored. We live as if there is no tomorrow, but really, all we are doing is pretending. But so what? It's Summer!

On this particular day, this glorious temperate day, I received a phone call that it was time. I had confided my fears to my friend about walking over the Golden Gate Bridge, something locals and tourist do en masse every day. I had tried many times to walk this bridge, only to stop in abject, paralyzing fear. Irrational but tangible feelings of panic overtook me. What if someone pushed me over the rail? What if the Hand of God or some thing plucked me from the walkway and tossed me into the bay? I couldn't do it. My kids thought nothing of riding their bikes over the bridge. I hid my shame and made excuses.

My friend saw this obstacle as a metaphor for my collective fears. He convinced me that here lay a strong symbolic force for stepping into my new life.

I couldn't argue his point. In fact, I decided to embrace the challenge. Not that it was easy. You see, I was not only afraid, I was stuck within all those metaphors.

Could I trust him to hold on to me? Yes. Could I trust that he would not let me come to harm? Absolutely.

So I took control by surrendering control, and put myself, literally, into the arms of the one I love.

I stalled a few yards into the journey. He whispered to me, "The trolls are not there." We moved forward together, and after awhile I felt my spirit lift. I felt okay. I was more than okay. I felt free!

In freedom was pleasure. The ordinary pleasure of taking a stroll over one of the world's most iconic bridges, framing a view of this gorgeous place in which we live.

I conquered this phobic fear and moved my life forward, all at once, knowing that no matter the outcome of the hardship I was facing, I would be strong enough to take all that lay ahead. I reclaimed some misplaced self-esteem, and discovered through an abiding friendship that I could love again and be loved.

I had crossed to safety.

Guirgis' Purgatory

John Paul Manfredi

attempting the right,
but only the wrong occurs.
striving and climbing
to be better than you were.
regardless of what you do
you'll never improve.
follow him around the desert,
for three years on the move.
giving nothing but love
receiving nothing but pain.
now stuck in a state
where you barely know your own
name.

with no one to defend you
except your own mother.
daily reminders that you fucked up
and betrayed your brother.
your name lives in infamy,
but maybe they got it wrong.
2000 years.
that's too fucking long.

now we tell your story
and we try to be objective.
but the people won't hear it,
their minds are not receptive.
so we put it on stage
and try relating to the youth.
it seems like it's working
but time will tell the truth.

maybe one day you will walk
through those pearly gates.
but for now enjoy the last days
and try to ignore the hate.

The Broken Peak

Stephanie Biehl

There it was at the tip
The zenith
I could see it
Through it I could see you

Through your eyes I swam
Because you wouldn't look at me
There was water
But no tears
You didn't care

The question is: did I?
Did I care to penetrate?
The words you didn't pitch
The memories you burned
The pictures you hid
Did I care to see you?
To see the truth?

Don't lie
I wish I knew the truth
Then I could backlash

With empty hands I cannot
Cannot grasp

With no hands I cannot
Touch you
Change you
Feel you
Because my heart does not feel any longer

It simply floats
In a pool of red
That rushes to my head
When the memory comes
Yes, the memory
Because you are gone
It is gone
We are gone

There it is at the tip
The zenith
I can see it
But I can't see you

Minha Bandeira e Meu Pai (My Flag and My Father)

Fernanda Bueno

I'm from the other side of the ocean
Where the temperature warms my heart;
where life is always true, and stars don't seem so far.
I'm from that country, and I miss my father's eyes.
And his hands, his nose, his thoughts,
The endless talks we had in the car.
My flag is green, yellow, and blue—
More than that, I could not explain to you.
I speak the language that has no translation,
I make sounds that only speak to hearts.
I am in love with my nation,
And my country is where my heart lies.





Skylar Winnubst

Drew Durham

My starling, would I were strong and steady as you are
not alone, yet set apart in your celestial atlas, light years away
seen through the observant satellites of my astronomical eyes,
how I pray they stay open, vigilant for changes in your bright warmth
the whole earths moving tides below you, reverently obey your every thought
as you bathe the world, on its every shore, so lovingly with your mind
undaunted bravery pillowed, felt all over my loves pale ivory skin,
the feeling of the fall and swell of her chest etched, a feeling deep in me
awake constantly in a sweet unrest
still, still to hear her soft breath
and to live with this in my lover's sea, sky blue eyes
with her form with me ever—or, else I shall die of longing

If Othello Had A Voice

Deanna Mesa

I don't know why I did it.

To watch her.

Carelessly

Struggle with ever last breath

Until the dawn of a new day rose

 Somewhere on the other side of this earth.

My once love for this human

Vanished in seconds.

The breaking of a new hour is upon us.

You soul,

 I take.

My dark chocolate skin

No longer hungers for your pure aloe.

My pining heart

No longer yearns for your comfort

Bleed a million drops

 Until the last, doth, no more.

Thou deepest love for I

Averted.

Once was pure and bestowed, solely to me

 Is tainted.

You left me a cuckold to all

 I lost face.

Thou life, hath taken

 Mistakes, no one can correct.

Humans, we not be

Therefore vanish.

Dessession

Brian Reynolds

Your stomach feels the sensation of starving for a massive substance to fill it. You hunch over gripping your belly as if your intestines are gorging out, using all the strength in your arms to hold them inside. Food does nothing for this new found, but all too familiar sensation. Nor would any liquid known to mankind. It's not an ulcer, or any other type of medical condition. Your head is feeling light and dazed while simultaneously your vision sporadically becomes blurred. Modern science can not correct the current condition for which you suffer. People all over the world have their own terms for it. Terms like love, desire, heart-break, despair, or here's another one, what about failure. You feel it all, and at the same time, inside your soul that projects into your Cerebral Cortex, you know the starvation being endured is from obsession, loss of control, and the unknown. The overwhelming throbs through your body and mind, faster then the heart can beat, but it gives you nothing but pain, and worse yet, it climaxes to a bursting point every few hours. The adrenaline rush transports the jitters, causing the mind to spin with unimaginable thoughts. This then brings about a rush of sweat that pours to your outer skin, eventually staining your clothes noticeably. Overcome with reality you succumb to your fate, and accept the unacceptable. Then promptly, another moment in time runs through your mind, sparked by a fragrance, a visual image, a sound, or any other fixation in your conduit. So it begins once again.

Passing Time in a Halfway House

Candace Hoppe

Where do they go, because nothing just goes
like that. Must've spent them somehow, some way.
Seconds and minutes—they're going.
They're all there is to think about in here.

Best thing about today is tomorrow,
still perfect. A way to get there faster: pills
slowly counted out, a baker's dozen.
Crave sweets, crave sleep, crave something. Tomorrow.

The weightlessness of dust in sunlight,
the heat of the oven, a warm black hole,
a staleness that stifles. The floor.
Tomorrow, maybe, get up from this spot.

Plunging

Stephanie Biehl

Swimming deeper,
Delving into the bright blue
Continuously, Effortlessly. I swirl and stride
Bathing in cool refreshment
A never ending breath
Of opportunity.
Any direction, more water.
It feels so good.

Struggling now
It's thicker and farther down
Too cold, almost icy.
My arms and legs aren't moving the way I tell them to.
They won't listen to my brain.
It hurts now, I want to get out.
I must make it to the top.
I can get out, I need to.

I can't.
Sloshing deeper
Deeper still
Into the darkness, blackness
It's pulling me in. I'm blind now
Overwhelmed by such amounts
Drowning, swallowing ice, dark blue ice.

My limbs are numb now
I'm stuck
This sand will bury me before
Before.
I can feel it coming, ice cold, no escape.
Death.
At least my coffin will be soft

And with colorful beauties swiftly surrounding me,
Laughing haughtily because they can swim
One fish.
Two.
Black fish.
Darkness.

Trail 2



Hayley Guenther



Floating Specks

Phos Ellipsis

...and
sometimes
on daydreaming day
you will see
laughing
eyes
squinting
feet
in the sunlight
run on green grass
staining your clothes
rub-on tattoo-like
reminding you later
of that afternoon
that skipped through
some long ago
california
where
the sprinklers feel wet
twice again
on your feet's faces
and your face's feet...

Desire

Stephanie Biehl

Try, try to resist it
Flee, break free, please
You'll be back
Then I'll laugh
And take you again

The question is simply when

In your blood
Not my blood
A potent drug
Oh, the black dove

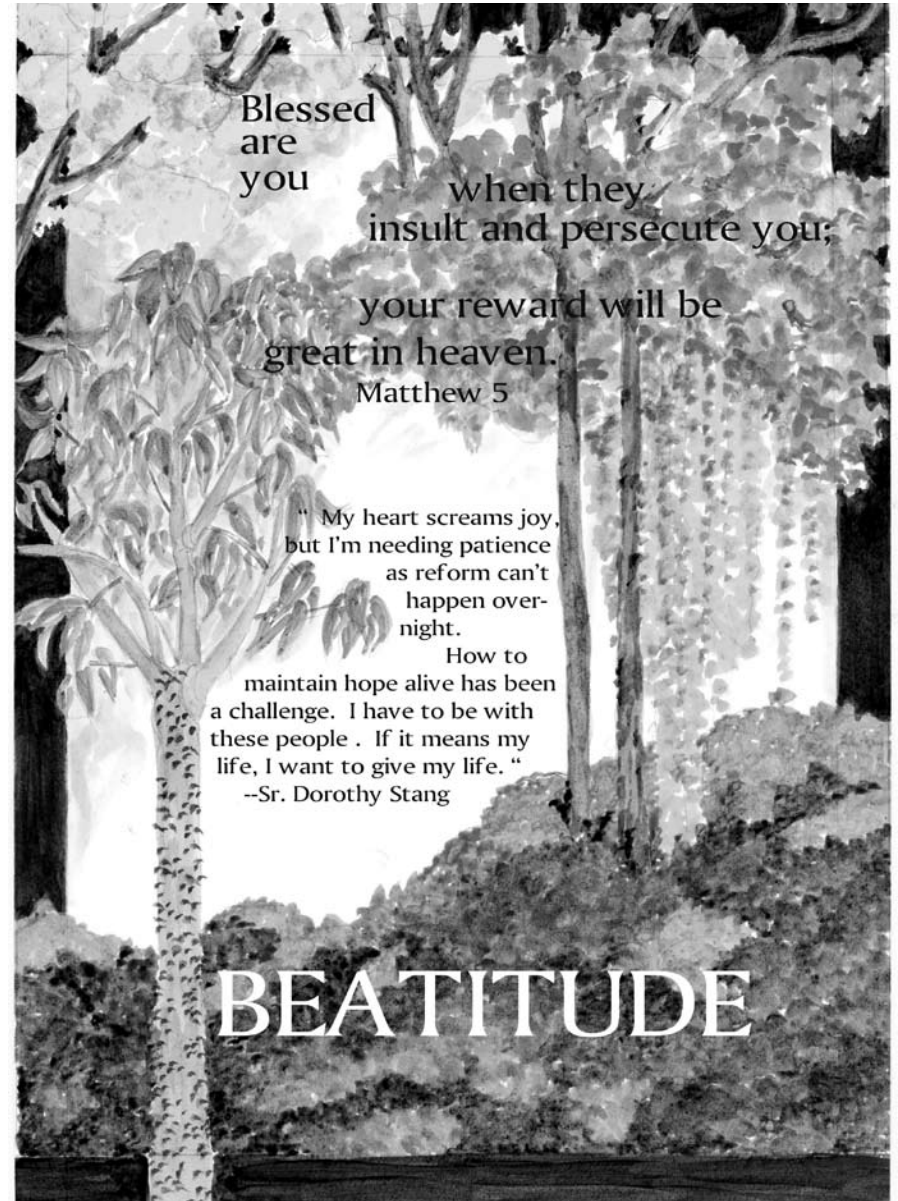
Go ahead, persist
Your fate is just another name
On the infinite list
Remember
You'll be broken on the floor
The moment I walk out the door
Sorry?

A Master Plan

Justin T. Lotspeich

To think we never say goodbye
To the architect's compass and rule.
Instead we mistake drafted lines
For proof of a bursting life. What fools
Are we to arrange the arms' span!
To leave far swung our pendulum,
Ignoring the swift spill of time
That rots drafting tables and our sum.

Beatitude



Margaret Hoffman

Love at First Skype

Drew Durham

ever since your eyes first met mine,
through the pixely abstraction and obfuscation
you have thought and still think I'm worthy
maybe not fully of you but of your encomium
on my soul and all it's services
your sky baby blue eyes stuck me in their depth and purity.
and are striking me now even in your absence
your smile, crevices in the heavens,
you, beaming, more than enough to make your fellow angels laugh.
you are the epitome of everything I've ever loved, and desired,
Ill love you, with all equanimity, and composure,
for longer than the systems require.
In the computer of my life, through the viral miles,
I feel your presence in all my files

The Last Word

Hayley Hart

Do not worry about my pitiful
soul, although it may be lost and depraved.
Worry about your own small steps that tread
On the thinning ice of your own spirit.
Cold and breaking is your very being
Your ev'ning is entirely nothing
Waste, waste, waste your life away rotting in
This place, while I dare to tread my own path.
Be too big for your britches, I don't care.



Eternal Love

Abdulkarin Aldarwish

If I write a long Alfeya
Of one thousand verses
If I use my blood as ink
If I give her my eyes
If I give her my soul
Whatever I do for her
I'll not be able to give her
The favor she really deserves
My mother

My God asked me to work for her
All my entire life is for her
She was the one made me alive
She housed me months in her warm womb

Whose hands took care of my tender-- flesh
Whose tears fall down when I become-- depressed

Who made me warm when I was cold
Who brought me up when I was young
Who breastfed me to be so strong

Her heart eyes me wherever I go
Her words show me the life's law
She used to pass the night awake;
She stayed up late to make me smile

She died. Yes, she is gone away!
I can't believe I'll never see
I'll never hear or even touch
her ...

No! She will be here all the time!
Her body's gone
Her soul with me

I'll never forget how she used
To look at me
She will be here in my lost heart
Always shiny
Her words resonate wherever I go
"My son, don't worry. I'm with you"

Oh mom, I'm really missing you!

I promise you.. one day, I'll be
A father of a young daughter
She will be named Sara too

So you'll be always in my life
Take care of you wherever I go

Oh mom, who will take care of me
When my tears fall from my poor eyes
Although I grew, I'm needing you
Oh mom, I'm really missing you!



Jennifer Lucas

My Truth, Tu Amor

Stephanie Biehl

You say you live to love
But you're vomiting your lies, mentiroso
You bleed black ice
Dripping, melting until it hits the ground
And sizzles to a slow fizz. Then death.
You cannot comprehend warmth
Turbulence forever stirs in your empty chest
Siempre como nada
You think you have something, something there
No tienes nadie
Nada
You have yourself.
You have your lies
And I have the truth
La verdad es que
I bleed más rojo como una rosa
But I bleed, bleed, bleed out
Every day.
It's unstoppable
Impenetrable
Es passion, son sentimientos.
Life
La vida es el amor.
Pero, para ti, mentiroso,
Such love finds no shade
It shines
Blazing
Brillante.
El amor es el sol
No hay vida sin el sol
No hay vida sin ti.

Burn After Reading

Rachel Marie Brunson

I wrote you a love letter once.
It was two pages, in pencil.

Even in pencil it had permanence.
And that scared my words.

I read it to my friend then
We burned it over her dorm room sink.

I still meant what it said.
Those words just don't scare me so much anymore.

An Inner Child's Lament (or The Beginning)

Hayley Rae Hart

When I'm near you, I am a child again!
"Look but don't touch," is the mantra I hear
Over and over from family and friends.
I'm four once more, needing to be steered,
By chastising words away from a hot stove.
But I beg to burn—I yearn for a chance
To scrap and skin my knees on cracked and loathed
Sidewalks that trail on to the vast expanse
Of your heart. If only I could repel
Myself from the revoltingly sweet way
You smile, maybe then I could say "Farewell".
I'm four once more, and tricky to persuade.

"Pebble"

Jameo Duncan

There's this boy I knew... and he collected rocks, No... Pebbles. He doesn't have many, they were special. Just "One at a time he said". He'd take a pebble and get to know it. He treated them well. Delicate as they were he only treated them with the most respect. Just one at a time... He treats her with respect, creates this great relationship. Finds love... But like every precious pebble, something happens and it never works out. The pebble turns him away and burns him. Let me tell you, this boy 'I know'... he never got to be with her. He doesn't have a pebble. But every pebble he's held,

Has left a scar..



This is For Mal D. Hyde

Phos Ellipsis

This is

For Mal D. Hyde

and also

For Lorne

Because my guts are lonesome

As I put on vinyl gloves,

White and XS (Extra Small)-

They smell like failure.

The other white coats

Are laughing about

How we nearly burned down

The Lab

Remember, way back in freshman year.

And all I can remember is

The first frog I disemboweled

In an alternate reality

From which I eviscerated myself

To read the entrails

The Skyscrapers Are Lonely

Phos Ellipsis

I want to tell the whole world
That you died today at two.
I want to tell them how unfair it seems,
How much it hurts to know
That it's real but not believe it's true.
Because I can only remember you
Always like fireworks.
I want to tell the whole world how your sparks
Dried your own tears and set me ablaze.
I want to tell them that I can't believe
You're gone like the fireworks,
And now even the skyscrapers are lonely

Peep



Jennifer Lucas

The Foxhole (Six Months Down the Line)

Hayley Rae Hart

Assiduously whittled acrylic nails
Drum lightly on a stocking covered knee
Anxious, these rhythms akin to battle drums
I want to scream
But these screams lie dormant and dull on the tip of my tongue
Suppressed by mere courtesy and a sweet smile
Instead, I sit with ankles politely crossed
My ribs breaking in this stupid dress two sizes too small
Waiting for you to finish your stale beer and trivial talk
With these “friends”, good as strangers.

Not Mitzvah

Candance Hoppe

He said it was a mitzvot to fuck on the Wednesday during Passover.
I asked about Thursday mornings.
“Not as good, but it couldn’t hurt,” and he came closer to me,
his dove, his milk and honey, his vine in blossom.

He told me his mom knew I wasn’t Jewish as soon as she saw me.
I asked him what she thought about shiksas.
“They’re for practice,” and he came closer to me
his hair wet with the dew of the night, drawn by myrrh.

He was certain I would make a terrible Jew.
I was going to ask why,
other than being baptized, but decided against it:
a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valley has nothing on me.



Comic Book Nerd

Shaun Ferreira

I have a power: I can disappear
Out of sight and out of mind
I struggle with this;
All that I want is for you to know
That I am here.
To be bitten by a spider,
And crawl from wall to wall is alluring
Claws to eviscerate and
A healing factor second to none is beyond me.
Even near superhuman intellect
And fighting prowess is
Better than my God given traits.
I don't know why I was born with this ability.
It is not even a blessing, but it is a curse.
I can stand next to you,
I can walk into a room unseen.
I am near you everyday, but to everyone I am invisible.
Why...because I am a comic book nerd.

Gurren Lagann



Eduardo Beltran

Untitled

Michael Chavez

There are 365 tiles on the ceiling above,
The same number as yesterday,
And the day before that.
On Mondays I am missing staples
There is always one more missing than there should be
I keep track of them
On Wednesday's my space is smaller
The walls seem to be closing in
It is just my imagination.
On Fridays Jessica opens her blinds
It leaves a glare on my screen
But it's warm
There are 365 tiles on the ceiling above,
The same number as yesterday,
I still count them though.

Untitled

Isiah Castro

A whimsical wind carries me over the hill
High above the clouds into a
Scene of utter civility

Such essence lacks anywhere but the clouds
Full of sustenance
And carrying the contentment of all
But I am above them
In a world less lacking life
But gaining its own wings and flying away
Into an unknown world longing for clarity

This is where my whimsical wind wishes to take me
So I float
Listlessly to and fro
Ebbing closer to this allotted place
That transcends the clouds and hovers
just below the heavens
below the starry sky

so I hover with my solace
and lay in the middle ground
forever mocking the clouds and envying the stars

Map Making

Lawrence Lujan

Let's make up a country.
Put a river here
And a town at the mouth of the river
Where it flows into the great sea
A range of mountains there
Another town over here
And a road connecting the two towns
A wooded area at the foot of the mountains
Isn't this fun?

Now let's give it some scale:
How long is the road?
How big are the towns?
Are they, perhaps, cities?
How high are the mountains?
How old are the towns, or cities?
What do the people in the towns, or cities, do?
Where did the first settlers come from—
Over the sea or through the woods by the mountains?

Did they come to colonize, or conquer?
Were they driven from their homes
By war or famine or persecution?
Where is the farmland where people grow
The food to feed the others in the towns, or cities?
Are the people rich or poor or mainly middle-class?
Who runs the country—a king, a president, a congress
Or maybe an evil dictator?
Tell me about their music, their art, their literature.

But don't, don't, don't even think of crossing the mountains
Beyond there is darkness occasionally pierced by random lightning
The stench of dead things rotting
And the sound of moaning, women screaming, children sobbing
You never see them, only hear their voices
You see only the grotesque monsters that lurk there
The nightmare creatures
It is the land of the human heart
This isn't fun any more.

The Black Ice is Calling

Ryan Hulsey

It is still dark when I walk across the black ice
I sit on the frozen bench and strap on the blades
The cold boots freeze my toes
The leather in my gloves becomes one with my palms
Though it's cold the wood of the stick is warm and inviting
I step onto the ice as the sun rises, it's hard, crisp, and fast
The stride starts choppy and mean
I circle the net my blades slice the ice with aggression
My feet cross for more speed and I am off
The stride is coming alive
It reaches full length
I follow the blade of my stick, trying to catch as it pumps from my hands
The cold air burns my lungs as my muscles continue to fire
The feeling of flying overtakes but its time
I slide my feet to the right and slam my edges into the black ice
The spray takes the form of a braking wave
But no time to take it in as my feet turn the other way
The open black ice is calling my name.

Sarina's Tears

Suzanne Leland

Sarina watched the pictures flash through her computer screen, the familiar lump in her throat forming. It was that lump that came only when she was about to cry. "I never thought it would be so easy to hate you," she found herself saying to the series of pictures; once happy memories that now were being dragged one by one into her laptop's trash can. Virtually throwing away three years of her life was easy. Realizing there would be no more pictures was the hard part. Sarina fought with the tears threatening to spill down her sad face as she thought about how the person she loved most in the world had done the equivalent of looked her in the face and told her he would rather live his life without her in it.

She knew what her mom and friends would say. The words of sympathy hidden in encouragement would not help. There were not "plenty of fish in the sea." All her friends would insist, "You were too good for him!" How would they know? She could do what every high school girl did that got broken up with: hide under her covers and listen to sad songs. Or she could dress in all black and not talk to anyone until he called and begged her to take him back. Neither of them seemed the appropriate form of mourning for this person whom she had loved, lived with, been on the fast track to marriage with. Shouldn't someone have warned her this heartbreak would be different?

The last thing Sarina felt like doing was getting "back out there." It seemed impossible that there was someone else out there who could ever love her like he did...or at least how she thought he did. What if she never got over him? What if she was doomed to be alone for the rest of eternity? Looking at her tear-stained reflection in the mirror, Sarina sighed. She said out loud to herself, "You don't die from this, it just feels like you do."

Biographies

ABDULKARIM ALDARWISH is a graduate student in the MAE Program at NDNU. He graduated from Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Saudi Arabia and has been in the US for a year. He writes poetry and prose in Arabic and chose this poem to translate some of its meanings into English; but he edited and added new verses.

EDUARDO BELTRAN is an Art & Graphic Design major at Notre Dame de Namur University. He loves art and he's been doing it all his life and plans to pursue it in the future. He believes that art reveals the person we really are within.

STEPHANIE BIEHL is a Junior with a double major in Business and Spanish and a minor in Mathematics. She is a Resident Assistant, Orientation Team Leader, ASNDNU Senator, the Vice President of the Residence Hall Association, the Captain of the Cross Country team, and is very active in many other facets of campus. She is currently addicted to country music, sweet tea, washing her hands, running, and laughing.

FERNANDA BUENO is a senior at NDNU, who has crossed the ocean many times to know where home is. Her feelings are often too complicated for translation, and her latest poems are an escape from her loss of words. She has loved and been loved so many times that she refuses to give up on the feeling. By the end of her senior year, she eventually learned that you will never learn how to fly unless you can let go.

DARTH CABROL-EASTON has been a Lecturer in English and Interdisciplinary studies at here at Notre Dame de Namur University since 2003. She grew up in a tiny town in the Sierra foothills of California. Most of her stories are set against this rural background. Although she has lived in some of the U.S.'s most important cities, the country life always called her back. She now lives in a small town on the central coast with her husband, daughter, dogs, cats, rabbit, and chickens.

ISIAH CASTRO is a senior at NDNU and is a part of the soccer team. He is majoring in English. He wants to thank his friend Dylan Atkinson, a very great man. Dylan rides his bike to school and uses puns constantly but he is always willing to help him with classes. Thanks to Dylan he is a marvelous writer.

MICHAEL CHAVEZ is hard to find but if you manage to, you might find him sleepy and apathetic. He doesn't provide much help and he often drifts off into his own thoughts that are too random and strange to describe. The school is giving him a degree anyways and he will continue to write poems and stories throughout his life in the hope of being published.

BELO CIPRIANI. To read and write, Belo uses a desktop application for the blind called JAWS. His favorite snack is cold pizza and one of his past times is sneaking quick games of tug-a-war with his guide dog Madge throughout the day. Belo lives in San Francisco.

JAMEO DUNCAN is an art major at NDNU. One of his many passions beyond art is writing, and like fine art, it has the ability to identify with and reach others beyond any other medium. He hopes that the people who read his poem feel the emotion that he put into it.

DREW DURHAM graduated from NDNU in December 2010 in Sociology. Drew is really truly madly deeply committed to staying in love with his soon to be fiancée Hannah. The poems in this collection are evidence to that fact. Thank you for reading.

PHOS ELLIPSIS lives under the name Deepa Ramamurthy, with her ukuleles Fred and George. A senior Biology major at NDNU and aspiring neuroscientist, she writes because she reads too much not to. Her other obsessions/compulsions include rummaging through used bookstores, doodling, Sanskrit, and The Beatles. Her favorite bird is the chicken.

SHAUN FERREIRA graduated from NDNU in the spring of '09 and will complete his teaching credential this spring. In his spare time he likes reading comics and manga. Once done with school, he hopes to become a teacher or at least find some way to share his love of literature and graphic novels with kids.

GRETCHEN GULLICKSEN GRANT captures the massive globe on a small scale, skillfully expressing her love of land and sea in pastels, en plaine aire, as she uses her fingers to blend and manipulate this delicate, powdery medium. In the studio, this self-taught artist is disciplined in all classic media, using expressive realism to evoke the grandness of the land and sea, rendered in reach colors, deliberately leaving out human scale and impact.

HAYLEY GUENTHER is a sophomore at NDNU and is interested in photography and writing.

SR. MARGARET HOFFMAN was Chairperson of the Art Department during the 60's and 70's when it was CND. Now she serves as Justice/Peace Coordinator for the California Sisters of Notre Dame. The *Beatitude* series of watercolors was made to honor Sr. Dorothy Stang.

RYAN HULSEY is a St. Louis native. His first love was hockey and the blues, and his favorite sibling is his only brother. He draws his strength in life from his grandma.

CANDACE HOPPE thinks there's never enough time, money, or hairspray.

CLAIRE VIRGINIA KAROLY is a singer with high hopes and low notes. She lives in Belmont with a handsome redhead, a bottle of red hair dye (for herself), and her kitty Leeloo (Dallas Multipass).

JANE KUBEL's brain is fueled by cartoons, gardening, tea, and heavy metal music, and the results are unpredictable at best. She is working on her MAE in Creative Writing, and lives by the credo that an imagination is a terrible thing to waste.

SUZANNE LELAND is a senior Sociology major who loves Britney Spears and Harry Potter; as well as being a self-proclaimed "Disneyland freak." She wishes she could write poetry, but sticks with short stories.

JUSTIN T. LOTSPEICH received his BA in English with a minor in sociology from NDNU, 2010. Starting this fall, he will be attending graduate school in New York, working toward his goal of a PhD in English literature. As a former pugilist for *The Bohemian*, he is honored to be affiliated with the journal and looks forward to watching it evolve.

JENNIFER LUCAS is a junior majoring in Art & Graphic Design and Visual Communication. Hailing from Waipahu, she runs on Filipino food, Korean music and television shows, and Disney movies. She supports casual pastelpantophilia.

LARRY LUJAN, a proud survivor of the Beat Generation, has a doctorate in English from U.C. Berkeley and has taught at NDNU for eighteen years, day and night—anything that doesn't involve mathematics or mechanics.

JOHN PAUL MANFREDI is a Senior Theatre and Psychology Major at NDNU, graduating in May. This is his first time being published in the *Bohemian*. He is very grateful to the *Bohemian* Staff for accepting his submission.

NIKKI MANINA is a Native San Franciscan and devout Roman Catholic. Any success in her life is in major part (and thanks) to her wonderfully loving and supportive parents. She loves adult swim, her kitty, pizza, beer, and learning. Writing is her Exit and Entrance to the world and has been a major part of her life since she was a little girl.

MEHRAN MASSOUMI is a first-year graduate student in Clinical Psychology. He enjoys traditional and digital art photography as a hobby.

MIRANDA MELLIZA is a junior who is majoring in Art and Graphic Design and is also a member of the women's basketball team. She loves the creativity and imagination that art allows her to do.

DEANNA MESA is a first semester sophomore majoring in English, with a minor in religious studies. By day she gets her nerd on and buries herself in the books but by night, she's a hula dancing, Tahitian drumming, youth minister, Chamorrita who can't live without rice and loves peanut butter.

ESMERALDA MONTENEGRO-OWEN is an MPA student at NDNU School of Business graduating in May 2011. She is a Broadcast Journalist with 10 years of experience as a TV News Anchor and Investigative Reporter.

ROY KARLO NUYDA is a freshman at NDNU and an aspiring writer. His defining influence is James Joyce.

BRIAN REYNOLDS is in the undergraduate Psychology Program and is in his first semester at NDNU. He works full-time in local government while enrolled in the evening program here at NDNU.

TRICIA ROBATEAU is currently a freshman who is majoring in English. She has a passion for poetry and the arts which she considers to be some of the best forms of human expression. She also loves nature, which is where she finds a lot of her inspirations.

RICHARD ROSSI is the Director of Communications at NDNU and also teaches a PR class. He is enrolled in the MAE in Creative Writing program at NDNU and he is working on a novel.

SKYLAR WINNUBST is studying Art Therapy/ MFT at NDNU, and embraces the power of art.





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