

REFLECTION

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Reflection submissions are evaluated and selected anonymously.

The *Reflection* staff would like to thank everyone who participated in the literary and visual arts community on campus by submitting to the journal. Joanne Shiosaki, Kayla Cartelli and Jeff Dodd deserve our praise for facilitating an instructive and positive experience.

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And that night, just after I got home, Father came back to the house and I screamed but Mother said she wouldn't let anything bad happen to me and I went into the garden and lay down and looked at the stars in the sky and made myself negligible.

Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

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Dear reader,

You probably don't know who I am. You may not know who many of these contributors are. Or maybe you do. Maybe you know from where these artists and writers have been inspired. Maybe you were there when they found the idea for their submissions; the moment where they synthesized an element of their reality, a thought, an event, fortunate or unfortunate, which led to creating something beautiful, something sad, something happy, something funny, something new. Maybe you don't know. Maybe you weren't there. Most likely, you don't. Most likely, you weren't.

I'm not saying you should or should not have been there. I'm simply saying that these private, quieter moments are invaluable, immeasurable, and incomprehensible. These moments serve as bridges to the pen on paper, the paintbrush on canvas, the lens capturing one's desired image. They have lead to the juxtapositions of things, ideas, feelings within these pages that you find you may or may not be familiar with. You might know them. But maybe they seem otherworldly to you.

At the very least, I ask that you let these journeys in, as strange or uncharted as they may be. Surrender to these potentially anonymous projects of failing before reaching perfection. Allow yourself to be submerged in their worlds. That is what makes these pieces so distinguished. That is what makes these contributors so talented and brave. That is what makes this kind of creativity so frustrating, challenging, unique, and, ultimately, fulfilling.

Surrender to their quieter moments and yours. You may be surprised as to what emerges.

I hope you enjoy the journal.

-Mitch Gomes, Editor-in-Chief

Fire

Talena Kelln

It is flamboyant, scorching
 And hot
 Stretching to clutch
 Every sense of the body
 To entice the clock
 Into pausing
 Or it is quick
 Longing to touch
 But in fear, it teases
 And flits about
 Sparks, in futile agony
 Trying to ignite
 To become flame
 Then it is smoldering
 Learning to seduce
 Moving leisurely
 And with a passion
 It glows and keeps just
 A subtle heat
 Enough to warm the heart
 To relieve its former pounding
 And oh!
 The aching
 As this golden blaze vanishes
 Into a black whisper
 Kiss me again.

Skipworth Street

Megan O'Malley

the walk-home road is honeycrisp
 letters of love
 from oak to elm
 lost in gravity
 stamp the path with pigment

 the cassette tape unwinds
 magnetic entrails
 in the secret of my
 coat pocket
 my fingers feel knit twist

 this is the season
 of unmarked postage
 and broken songs

Infinity Epistolary

Christopher Barker

Dear stranger,

I hope we meet soon.

Our paths almost crossed yesterday when I was in the grocery store scanning the under-ripe tomatoes, and you were scanning the price tags of canned tomatoes one aisle over, so we never saw one another because I soon found the perfect tomato and left; or perhaps you weren't in the grocery store last night—maybe you were sitting in South Korea, outside of a temple, begging passersby to add a shiny, copper Won to the rusty tin can you found in the parking lot; but still, maybe that was not you because you were the tiny infant in South Africa who, guided by the hands of the village's doctor, emerged from a warm womb; it is even possible that you have yet to be born—a fragile fetus forming into a poet that will one day be sitting in cafés throughout Australia, breathing in mocha and breathing out unconceived words; and scarier still, you may have existed centuries ago as an emaciated slave in the hull of the *Henrietta Marie* in which case we'll never meet face to face.

That's not to say we haven't met.

A professor I once had the pleasure to know said that every person I ever meet has infinite worth. We may not meet in an Egyptian marketplace to barter over an overpriced basket that you wove or on a gondola in Venice that I row for your family, yet I feel compelled to emote my eternal gratitude for your existence. Young, old, eternal precedent, I recognize you in every zeitgeist, in every school of thought, I see you, I know you, and I affirm your existence.

With sincerest regards,
a product of you.

Angles of '74

Abby Anderson



Flower Patch

Talena Kelln

To her colorful complexion there can be no equal
The yellowish girlish pink fades to red and red and red
While the way she droops reveals her story has a sequel
One I don't suppose I'd read to brood just before bed
But despite these clever notions, she stands quite tall
As if to give the other blossoms an address or potent speech
Maybe just to spite them and to not say anything at all
Or to present an aspiration; something they could one day reach
See how her petals curl and twist in mock modesty and how—
Despite the lacking rain—her stem remains a luscious green
The inferiority of the rest is almost funny as they bow
In respect to this thornless beauty and her desire to be seen
She looks so wrong out of place in this patch of empty blue
That I think I'll pick her up and simply bring her home to you.

Still

Makayla Wamboldt

I carry the sound of your laughter in my pocket.
On the bus ride home my eyelids fall heavy
like stones, a ritual of evening reverie.

I slip my hand between the folds and sift
the fading echoes of your happiness
until all falls to dust on the pavement.

Some days the sweet sound still crackles
close to my skin, like a sparkler dancing
with the moon.

Beanie Baby

Mitch Gomes

I haven't seen you play with them since you were an infant, but for some reason, they seem to be the go-to sympathy gift. Are you that bored here? You'd rather revert to a less developed state than reading a book, or watching a movie, or playing those games you're always glued to when I'm back home.

Something about the dolls has always been timeless, I guess. God knows how long it's been since I've cleaned my room, but I think I might still have one on my shelf; a red bull. Snort, I think his name was. He had a white snout and horns just as soft as his plush hooves.

You show me all the animals you've received in the three days since you were rushed into the emergency room: a duck, a dog, a bear, a bull. The heart-shaped red tags on their ears remind you what each of their names is. After you've shown them and introduced them to me, you toss them aside once they've played their part. It throws me off. Every one of them makes that sound so distinct and clear when they hit the other side of the hospital mattress: that splash of beads sewn into the stuffing, rocking from the lobe of their ears to the tips of their paws and feet.

"So I guess you're okay with killing them all?" I ask. You giggle, and as you show me the last one, the bull, the brown bull, you still toss it aside the same as the others, unchanged by my observation and numb to the possibility of each of them as living things, as conscious things that just see themselves fluttered about as you call them individually by name: "Jake...Bone...Pecan...Jersey." They lie lifeless on the off-white sheets of the mattress, unscathed.

Earlier this week, I should have known that this wouldn't change anything, that the diagnosis wouldn't leave you speechless, immobile, paralyzed, or absent-minded, that you'd still be the same as you once were. But all I could think about was how you'd need to adapt, that you wouldn't be able to comprehend how much more fragile you've become to me, how much more mortal you'd learned you were at eleven years old. All this time without speaking to you, all this time "being strong," but I see now in your eyes an understanding, a maturity I've never seen before. An ignorance in acknowledging where you are and what this means for the rest of your life. A healthy ignorance. A denial that this won't change your boyish charm, your goofy sensibility, your sensitive spirit. I imagine you accept and deny this change at the same time.

When I'm home, I'll see if I can find Snort. We can add him to your collection.

Eyes of Desperation

Katherine Sumantri



Winter Came Too Soon This Year

Meggie Tennesen

- I.
We are born in the warmth
and blossoms of spring.
- II.
You are the mother of all beauty.
You are the mother of hindsight.
Of tiny regrets and wrinkles of despair.
- III.
Just yesterday I found myself rolling my eyes,
once again, at the selfie you posted.
It's the same as all the others.
Yes, you're beautiful, we love you, but
please stop if just for the sake of redundancy.
- IV.
The seasons are a little off-kilter
this year. It seems as though
fall has been skipped like the
little white crayon in the box
and we just go straight from summer
to winter. I never like it when this
happens.
- V.
I don't think you wear a black cloak
and wield a gleaming scythe. I
don't think you're evil, either. I think
you're just doing your job.
- VI.
You loved winter. I remember, on one of those
slow days at work, we talked about
which season we liked best.
Mine was summer. Yours was winter
because you loved scarves and boots and
hot cocoa and big sweaters that you could
cuddle up in.

- VII.
We live and laugh and love
in the lushness of summer.
- VIII.
Some people see you as a god.
Others see you as a skeletal figure
in black, bearing a scythe.
Others still see you as their Father,
simply taking them home after a long, long day.
- IX.
I remember that time when you came
to work and asked me what cunnilingus
was. I was embarrassed, because you were
older than me and should know these things,
but I told you anyways and we laughed about it.
- X.
I hope you were gentle when you
found her in that ruined car. I hope
you told her everything would be all right.
She was beautiful, and I hope you
saw that when she smiled, even at you.
- XI.
We age in the foggy
mornings of autumn.
- XII.
I see you when the leaves catch fire
and drift to the ground. I feel you
when the breeze grows colder
and the frosted nights suffocate the grass.
I see you, and I feel you, and I know
you are the mother of all beauty.
- XIII.
You were beautiful from your soul
to your skin, and I will miss seeing
your face every time
I get online.
But I don't regret rolling my eyes
at your photo.
- XIV.
We die in the muffled whiteness
of winter.

The Teapot of my Life

Talena Kelln

“A bucket. Yes. Mmm... how about half grilled half crispy? Great. Happy Mother’s Day to you too.”

I thought about how uncomfortable a moose might get if I stared at one too long from a helicopter in Alaska, and then I waited. I thought I saw a spider swimming in my week old coffee. The one in the cup holder. What the fuck?

As I pulled away I had that one thought, you know the one that if I jerk the wheel I could die so fast.

The next morning I woke up expecting a Thursday and it wasn’t.

Mackenzie Winters was wearing only one pearl earring and when she winked at me an eyelash fell down her cheek. She looked like a two-toed sloth.

I bit my lip anyway and gave her some gum, tossing the wrapper to the floor. I stared out the dusty raindrop-stained window, and tried to make my body do photosynthesis.

You know the feeling when you’re at a restaurant and you think the server’s bringing your food and they walk past? Felix Leschorn does that to Mackenzie. So do I.

But at the end of the day, he folds his bandaged hands over the Formica counter and tells her about the pythons that come out of the sewers in Singapore when it rains.

I just light a match and lean against the sun-warmed bricks at dusk. I wish I had a blowtorch.

Thank God I don’t live in Idaho, because I need more than fifty pounds of chocolate sometimes, and that’s illegal there.

Why are there so many bobby pins around?

I constantly feel like I am about to boil over the teapot of my life.

What? Jesus.

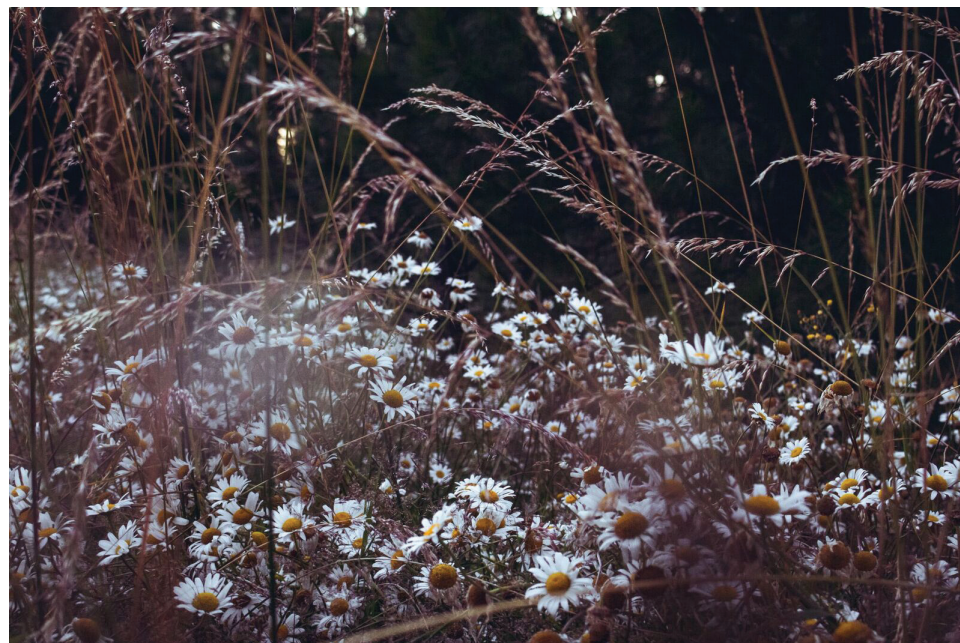
What am I saying?

I just stepped on a bobby pin. I need a plane ticket outta here.

I wonder if Mackenzie would come with me.

Daisy Daze

Kayla Hondo



Firestarter

Emmett Jones

It's hard to start fires in December.

My breath bleeds into the blackboard sky. Ashley rummages at my feet, cursing to herself. I ignore it. I'm used to it by now. She glances up at me, her red hair muddled by the darkness.

"What are you doing, Jake? You're supposed to keep watch."

"Sorry." I scuff my tennis shoe through the snow and the flakes tumble into the night.

Ashley rolls her eyes and exhales. "Idiot." Her breath smells like cinnamon.

To be safe, I look down the alleyway in both directions. Ashley read a study months ago that said frequent police patrols don't lead to more arrests, but she's still paranoid and the news coverage doesn't help. They do a nightly segment about the arsonist. It's usually a lot of reporters asking police officers why they haven't caught him, but last night they interviewed a baker who lost his business to arson. He—some chubby guy with a little hair on his upper lip and none on his head—had wept and moaned and dragged his wife on camera where she cried too and rambled on about their kids in college before the station cut away. I felt bad for their family, but it wasn't us. We haven't lit a fire since that abandoned gas station a week ago and that didn't hurt anyone. I wish they'd get it right though. Its arsonists, not arsonist, even if Ashley's the one who starts the fires.

I jam my hands deeper into my coat pockets and curl my fingers around my lighter as if it could keep me warm. The temperature dropped little by little the first week of December before going into freefall four nights ago. The cold slinks in through my jacket. It hurts to breathe and I imagine frost glistening on my tongue. I wish she'd get that fire started.

At my feet, Ashley swears again. She pulls a flask from her coat pocket and struggles to unscrew the top. I think about helping her, but then the sound of a car on Jackson Avenue rattles off the brick walls of the tenements. We freeze until the noise fades.

I blow on my knuckles and rub them together. "What's in the thermos?"

"Gasoline." She doesn't even look up.

My stomach pirouettes. Gasoline?

"Not again," I say. "Where'd you get it?"

"Nicked it."

She tucks the flask away.

"Give me the lighter."

I dig in my pocket for the dented Bic lighter. As I hand it to her, it slips through my frozen fingers and disappears into the snow.

"Idiot," Ashley hisses. She digs it up and I look away, my cheeks enflamed.

Ashley clicks the lighter and turns to the mound of kindling. "Ready to run?" I can feel her smile. Ashley doesn't wait for me to answer. She never does.

I hear a puff and we sprint down the alley, skidding and slipping in the slush and ice. The cold air stabs at my lungs. I look back and see the flames roar to life and gnaw at the bones of the abandoned building. Ashley dashes ahead of me, her feet kicking up clods of snow and her jacket flying unzipped behind her. I don't know how she does it. Isn't she even a little cold?

Three blocks from the fire, I hear the first siren call out and I reach one hand around Ashley's waist and tug her to the side. We tumble into an alleyway and creep behind a dumpster. Her bony elbows dig into my side as I hold her. A siren screams by and then another, followed by the menacing sneer of a fire truck's horn. Ashley giggles and squirms with excitement.

After the sirens pass, she worms her way free and darts to the sidewalk. The traces of adrenaline flowing through my veins make me shake and I wipe my hands on my jeans to get the grime of the alley off. As I walk towards her, a sense of déjà vu sweeps over me. Come to think of it, she wore those jeans and that stained jacket yesterday and the day before too.

"What are you, crazy?" Even a whisper seems too loud. "The cops are right there."

She laughs and spins around to face me, her hands on her hips and her chest puffed out proud. Her coat hangs open and I catch a peek of a dingy red t-shirt. It's too big for her hollow frame. Her jagged teeth flash in the pale of the streetlamp. I'm mesmerized.

"Did you see that, Jake? That was a good one." Fire or no fire, she's too enthusiastic for two in the morning.

"I saw it. I saw the police too."

I jab a finger towards the fire and we both turn and look. The orange of the flames swirls around the blue and white strobes of the police lights like a watercolor sunset.

Ashley doesn't care about that. She hugs me instead. The coarse strands of her hair scratch my throat and I swallow. She's only a few inches shorter than me, any taller and our lips would be even with each other.

Disgusting.

All her words run together as she speaks.

"ThankyouforallthehelpIvegottogonowgoodnight."

She tries to pull away, but I cling to her.

"Tell me why you do it. Why fires?" The words feel raw and half-formed in my mouth. I don't expect an answer, but she gives one anyway.

"Because I'm cold."

And with that, she wriggles her way out of my arms and out of my life until the next arson, whenever she decides that is. I sag under my puffy grey jacket. A ghost of a snowstorm hangs in the air and I stick out my tongue to taste a snowflake. Sometimes, I miss life before Ashley



September, two months earlier

Roosevelt Public High School crouches at the top, brown and red brick all molded together like a golem made by unskilled hands. I swear everything in this town is made of brick. The taste of last night's rain lingers on my tongue. My stomach tightens and I walk up the steps and into my sophomore year.

The day goes by like a rerun of a boring sitcom. I measure the passage of time in yawns until lunch comes. I eat quickly and have a few extra minutes before my next class, so I wander outside to savor the last gasps of the fading summer sun when I see her for the first time.

She crouches down on the balls of her feet with the skirt of her uniform hiked up around her knees. If I squint, I could see her underwear, but I don't want to because this girl looks like she crawled up out of the ground. Every few seconds she rocks back on her heels and rakes her mane of shaggy red hair into place again. I can see the arc of her collarbone, tight beneath a sheet of pale skin. She fiddles with a box of matches. Is she trying to light a fire? There's a clump of leaves on the ground in front of her, but everything is still damp from the rain.

I'm about to leave and find something more attractive to stare at when she glances up and flicks her hair away from her pale blue eyes. The remnant of a black eye haunts her face.

"What are you looking at?" She tucks the matches into a pocket.

"Nothing." I shift my weight and look away.

"Nothing? Do I look like nothing to you?" She stands and brushes the dirt from her skirt, a futile gesture if I've ever seen one. "Do you go here? I've never seen you before. What's your name?"

Her rapid questions startle me and I take a step back. "Jake," I say, the words cracking in my mouth. "What are you doing?"

She crosses her arms and studies me the way a researcher might examine a new species.

"I'm setting fires." She pokes at the leaves with one foot. "Everything's too damp though and I can't these to light. Wanna give me a hand?" She pulls the matches out and extends them towards me.

Is she serious? Light fires? Crazy. One hundred percent crazy. With her jaw and her eyes narrowed, despite the grime and dirt and tangled hair, she looks beautiful. I feel the word "no" form on my tongue, but something stops me. Maybe it's the intensity in her eyes or the feeling that this day has stretched the length of ten. I feel a weight settle around my shoulders. The girl is right up next to me now and I can feel the heat of her body. A part of me says no, but a different part of me says: "Yeah, sure. Why not?"

The girl beams. "My name's Ashley." The realization of my agreement paralyzes me and I don't respond. Ashley's ragged fingernails dig into my wrist and she pulls me along.

"Where are we going?"

Ashley points across the street to a gazebo, moldy and encrusted with vines. It's been there since I was a kid. We step into the street before I wrench my arm free. "That's arson."

She shrugs. "So?"

"So? So?" I grab her shoulder and shake her. "That's a crime."

"You said you wanted to do it. And besides, it's all old and crumbly anyways. We'd be doing people a favor by removing it."

I don't have an argument to counter her, and her eyes are sparking again. Disagreement seems out of the question. I keep my mouth shut.

Ashley tugs at my sleeve. "Ask questions when we're not in the middle of the road. Come on." A car honks to punctuate her point and I wave as Ashley yanks me out of the way.

It feels like crossing that street has brought me into some unknown dimension. The park is quiet on a Monday afternoon. Nobody strolls through and the smell of the pines mixes with the tang of a food truck parked nearby. A chubby guy in a grease stained chef's apron waddles out of the back of the truck and lights a cigarette. He's facing away from us, but I can't help but feel uneasy.

Ashley kneels at the base of the gazebo and runs her hands down the vines. I start to crouch beside her, but halt when she turns and glowers at me.

"What are you doing?"

"I thought I would give you a hand."

She shakes her head. "Keep watch. You've probably never even seen a fire before. I'm an expert at starting them."

I turn away, wondering what I'm supposed to keep watch for. Never even

seen a fire? What kind of stupid idea is that? I've seen fires. Beneath me, Ashley struggles to get a light going. After a few minutes, she gets to her feet.

"It's too wet," she says. "That storm last night ruined it."

"I thought you were an expert at starting fires."

Ashley rounds on me and I wince, anticipating a slap, but instead she points behind me. I turn. The food truck. She creeps over to it and my blood turns to lead in my veins. What is she planning? The chef keeps smoking, oblivious to her. Ashley unscrews the cap and begins to siphon gas from the tank. My jaw drops. No way is she that dedicated to this.

But I'm proven wrong as Ashley sneaks back, her cheeks fat with gasoline. She bends over the corner of the gazebo and spits it all out, like a mother bird feeding her young. I'm disgusted, but fascinated at the same time. Who cares this much about starting a fire? She pushes some needles and chunks of bark together and lights the very corner of her gasoline soaked pile with a match.

"Done." Ashley's voice shatters the brittle silence. We cross the street before I get the courage to turn around and see flames ripple along the edge of the gazebo. My eyes widen and Ashley giggles. I can't believe it. How did she get that blaze to light? The chef sees the fire and drops his cigarette in shock. He fumbles for his cell phone as the flames rise. The underside of the gazebo must have been dry. I'm terrified, but at the same time, I can't deny the rush. I wanted to do something different and here it is.

Ashley squeezes my shoulder and leans in. Her breath stinks like a gas pump. "Until next time, okay?"

Before I can respond, before I can tell her there won't be a next time, she's gone and I'm left standing under the clouded ceiling of the sky.



June, eight months later

I haven't heard from Ashley in two weeks. I love it. I love not being hauled around like a piece of carry-on luggage and not having my phone buzz at two in the morning and not having to run from the police. But there's a part of me that feels twisted out of place. And I guess that's the part that misses Ashley and having something exciting to look forward to. Or someone exciting. I quash that second thought down, but it creeps back up. Sometimes I dream about her—sometimes I do more than dream—and her red hair, all greasy and strung-out, and I feel a scratch at my heart and a whisper telling me it's not the fires I miss, but her. And the feeling builds up in me until I can't take it anymore.

Today, I feel her absence like a yoke around my neck. I go for a walk to get my head on straight. The heat desiccates me. There hasn't been a drop of rain for weeks and the grass crunches under my feet like gravel. Perfect weather for fires. I follow a path a few blocks from my house and wander along the river until I

reach a bench. Across the street is a vacant lot, marred with old wooden beams and scars of black earth. Not our handiwork. I went to elementary school here. It burned down the year after I left in an electrical fire and the city decided to build a new, shiny glass and steel school a few blocks away. I empathize with the empty lot. I feel burned-out too.

I don't know how long I drift for, but I reach the old suspension bridge as the sun hangs low in the sky. I press my hands into the wires and feel them bite as cars inch past behind me. The river smells of dead fish, seaweed, and mud.

I look down to see Ashley standing in the shallows.

At first, I don't believe it. She doesn't belong in water, but there she is, knee-deep in the current. I trek down to the edge of the river and pull the cattails aside. "What are you doing?"

Ashley spins around, her face bright red. "Nothing."

"Doesn't look like nothing." I cross my arms. Ashley reaches the bank and grabs her shoes from behind another clump of reeds. Water clings to her clothes. She tucks a slim bar of soap into one pocket. "Why didn't you call? Or text?"

A sly grin curls across her face. "Did you want me to call you?"

I brush my hands on my jeans. "No. I just thought we might—Are we still lighting fires?"

Ashley closes in. "Why? Did you want to light one right here?" Her fingers trace the edge of my collarbone. My throat tightens and I struggle with the concept of speech.

Ashley giggles, then guffaws, her thin body convulsing with the force of her hysterics. "Come on." She tugs at my shirt and clambers up the incline. "Let's do a car."

"A car?"

"Yeah, it'll be fun."

Ashley must have had a specific car in mind, because I follow her for a half hour before she halts. The thin colors of early evening fill the world. Weeds creep out of the cracks of the sidewalk. As the night settles, I realize we are alone on the corner, a rusty red truck facing us with one wheel popped up on the curb. This is part of town I'd never set foot in if I could help it. I start to sweat with anxiety.

Ashley kneels by the truck, a lighter clenched between her teeth. She unscrews the gas cap with practiced motion and I creep closer. A few lights illuminate the townhouse opposite us, a ramshackle hulk of bricks and mortar that sags into the earth. Ashley notices my indecision and hisses at me. "Hurry, Jake."

I crawl the rest of the way, my belly scraping against pebbles and leaves. I push my back up against the truck. "Why this one in particular?" I say.

Ashley ignores me, tucks her hair behind one ear, and begins to siphon gasoline. I scan the streets for any passerby. A sudden tearing noise pulls me back and I watch Ashley soak up the fuel with a chunk from her skirt.

"Don't do that." I sit upright and hit my head against the side mirror. The pain reverberates through my body. "That's your uniform." She shrugs and pulls a box of matches out of her shirt pocket.

Ashley looks at me and smiles. "Ready?" She lights the rag and drops it in the tank. I sprint, faster than I ever have in my life. I duck into the alleyway across the street and press my back against the cool walls of another building. The foom of the explosion shakes my bones. Ashley stands a few feet away from me, hands at her sides, watching the smoke pour into the sky. Ash and dust cover her face like a bridal veil. The truck is a pyre of metal twisting and bending and in the flames. It's a miracle she's not dead.

The front door of the house across the street crashes open and a man fills the entryway. He glances back and forth, his face quivering with rage.

Then he sees Ashley. He jabs a finger at her and bellows.

"You. Little bitch! You think this is funny?" Ashley doesn't respond. Knowing her, she does think it's funny. "I'm calling the cops." He stalks back inside, leaving the door to whine on its hinges.

I dash out of the alleyway and grab Ashley's shoulder. She's staring at the smoke up in the sky, a look of utter bliss on her face. Goosebumps prickle my skin. "We've got to go," I say, and, as if on cue, the sirens kick up a few blocks behind us. She looks down, as if she's just realized where we are, and nods in agreement. I drag her down the street. We run two blocks to a busy intersection when a cop car whips around the opposite corner. The officer in the passenger seat, a thin man with a gargantuan moustache, points at me. I don't slow my stride. We cross the street, prompting car horns embellished by sputtering engines.

On the other side, I run on instinct, my heart bellowing in my chest. A side street to the right, a dash down another alley, and a sprint to the left, towards a familiar park. Ashley hangs at the end of my arm and it takes all my strength to carry on. Sirens scream behind us; they grow closer with each passing second. I twist around to look and slam my hip into a dumpster. I stagger, but push through the pain. We run through a park, past the site of a new gazebo, and down another street. I round one more corner and find myself staring at the mottled brick of our high school. The sight glues me to the sidewalk.

Ashley grabs my wrist and hauls me around the back to the fire escape. We reach the top and my breathing slows. On the street below, two police cars

blur past, their lights pounding the pavement. Ashley sits down next to me and tucks her hands under her knees. The sirens fade and there is no sound but our breathing.

"Whose car was that?" I don't expect an immediate response. The moon cracks the ebony of the sky and I rest my head against the rail of the fire escape. Ashley stays silent. When I've almost forgotten the question, she speaks.

"My father's."

"Do you live with your mom?"

She opens her mouth to say something, but nothing comes out. We sit there for a while and I breathe in her scent, the smell of river water and gasoline mixed. It turns my stomach. I look at her lips, chapped and gnawed, and I think about moving closer. I can feel the heat of her body. I lean in and she turns to look at me. Even in the darkness, I can see her eyes are raw. I say the first thing that comes to mind.

"Why fires?"

Below us, a car trundles by, its headlights piercing the gloom. She waits for it to pass. "I thought it would help me feel better. Like when I burned down the school."

I sit upright. "Wait, the elementary school? By the river?"

Ashley nods. "I hated it there, so I burnt it down. But afterwards, the ash and wreckage were still there. Like a memorial. I couldn't burn away the memory." I let that last sentence hang in the air.

"Why'd you ask me to help you?"

"You looked bored." She sniffs. "I didn't think you'd say yes."

"I was bored, but this is something else. Running from the cops, lighting fires; we could have killed somebody." I scratch my head and the next words come without thought. "I think I liked being bored better."

Ashley stands. "Okay." Her voice isn't angry, or upset, or even sad. It just is. A flat statement, devoid of anything. She climbs down the fire escape, her feet creaking against the metal. She's halfway down when I feel my stomach drop. I get the feeling that I shouldn't leave her alone. I climb down and find her waiting at the bottom.

"I thought you were done with me," she says. "I thought boring was better."

"One last fire can't hurt," I say.

Ashley smiles.

We walk back towards the river, ducking into alleys and behind buildings whenever we see a car. The sky is sharp and clear and I watch a satellite cleave through the stars. Something feels different and I realize that Ashley is walking

beside me, not tugging me along like usual. The thud of my sneakers against the paved path echoes off the opposite bank of the river. The silence of the city feels heavy on my shoulders. I sneak periodic glances at Ashley, but she never looks at me.

I think about taking her hand. Her words from earlier ring in my ears and my pulse quickens as I remember thinking about kissing her. I imagine her sleeping on street corners and lighting fires not for whatever secret reasons she has, but to keep warm. We pass the bridge where I saw her earlier.

I break the silence. "Ashley, you can stay with me."

"Did I ask to stay with you?"

I swallow. My clothes feel too tight and I tug at my collar. "No, but I thought I'd offer."

She snorts. "I have a place to stay. I don't need your house. Your parents'd never say yes."

"You don't know my parents."

She lights another cigarette and puffs on it before answering. "I'm fine. I'll figure it out."

I run my hand through my hair. "You aren't listening." My voice cracks. "You can't live on your own."

Ashley's cigarette lights her face. She looks towards the river. "We're here," she says, her voice like brick.

I look down at the boathouse, a battered shack clinging to the riverside. "Let's light a fire."

The mud sucks at our feet as we descend. Ashley keeps glancing back at the road, her eyes wide in the moonlight. Her fear fuels my own. Cattails stroke my cheek as we near the boathouse. My skin seems brittle and thin. Ashley kneels at the door. She pulls a hairpin out of her hair and starts to work on the lock.

"Are you sure it's abandoned? Why is it locked?"

She turns and rolls her eyes. "Don't be stupid. 'Course it's abandoned. Look at it."

I look. Moss speckles the boards. The one window that faces me like a sightless eye is shattered, but not enough to let us in. I shift my weight and the ground squelches underfoot. Ashley's fumbling with the lock is the only sound.

After a while, she succeeds and I sigh with relief. The door moans open and Ashley turns to me. "Want to light it?" She extends a lighter and a thermos my direction. I freeze.

"You never let me light it."

"Is that a no?"

It's true, she never lets me light anything, but do I want to? No, I decide. This is Ashley's thing, her little world of embers and sparks. I'm just visiting. Nothing permanent. Never has a thought felt so painful.

"You do it."

She smiles at me and her blue eyes sparkle. "Thanks." She ducks into the shack and I turn away.

On the other side of the river, a car rumbles by. I push my hands in my pockets and watch the shadows play along the shore. I tune out the sound of Ashley fumbling in the boathouse. It'll be better once she leaves me alone. I can get some more sleep, for one thing. The thought feels like breaking a promise and I blush. I'm just the lookout. She didn't even want to stay with me. And my feelings for Ashley? Ridiculous. She washes her clothes in the river and lights fires for fun. Why would I feel like I could do something for Ashley? I can't save her. She doesn't want it anyway. Maybe she was lying. Maybe she wants me to take her home. But then what?

I hear a thump from the shack and Ashley dashes out, her eyes wide.

"Jake," she shouts, "we need to go."

The fear in her eyes cuts me to the bone and I run without a thought. I hear a hiss from the boathouse. The mud grabs at my shoes and pulls me back and I hear Ashley struggling a few feet behind. I watch a car cross the bridge in front of me. It moves in slow motion. The hissing stops. The boathouse explodes with a whump. The shockwave slams into my spine and knocks me forward. I taste mud and blood in my mouth and the world spins upside down. Everything flashes red and then black.

It feels like a century before the colors return, bleeding into my eyes. I lie there, face-first in the mud. I wonder how long I've been lying here. I hear sirens echoing in the distance and pick myself up. Every part of my body aches. I spit dirt from my mouth and wipe it from my forehead. Ashley lays behind me. She stirs as I rise and blinks her eyes at me.

"What happened?" I spit more mud.

"The boathouse. There was propane in there, in these little white canisters. I didn't see it until I lit the fire."

I cough. "Shit." The sirens grow closer. "We need to go." I stagger off, but Ashley doesn't follow.

"Jake," she says, her eyes rich with tears. "My ankle. I think it's broken."

I stop. The world stops. In that moment, I don't hear the sirens approaching. I asked myself what I could do for Ashley. I decide to stay with her.

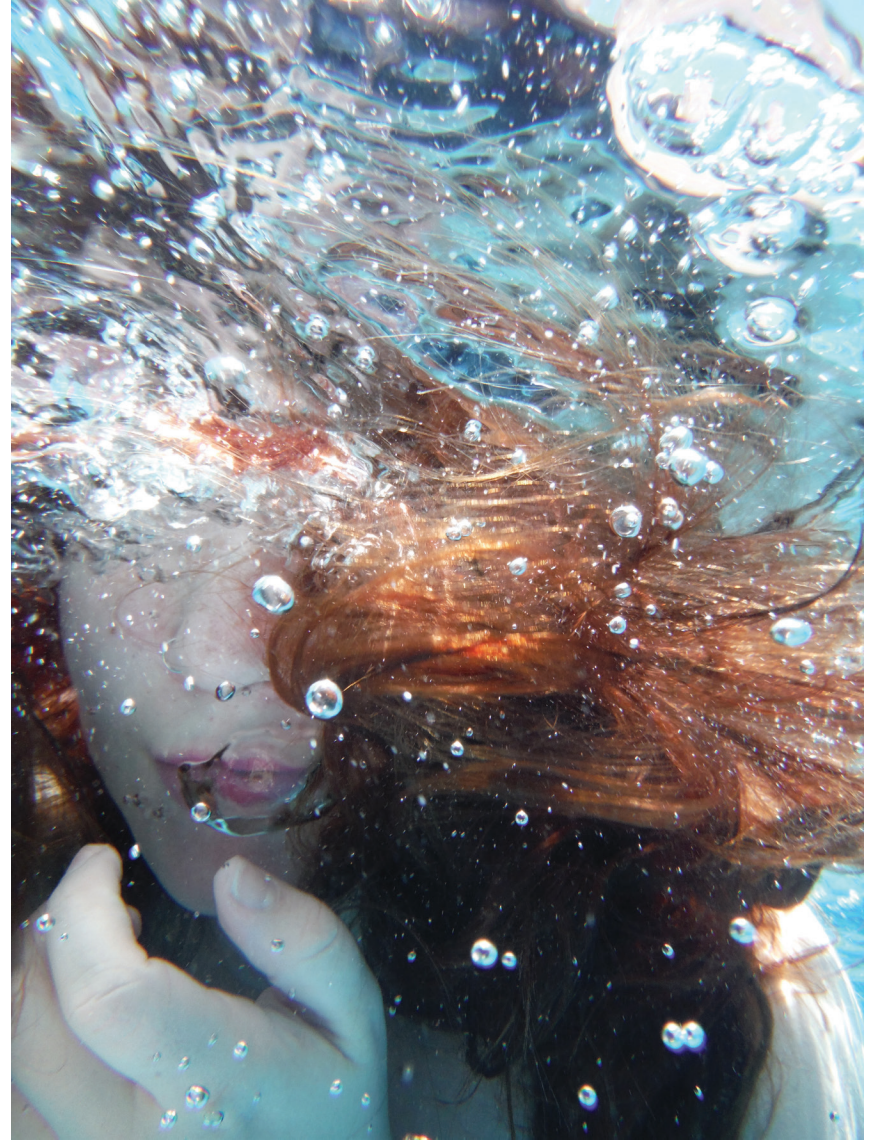
As

Emily Pitts

Nobody is as
Everybody is just as
Alone as they think

A New Arroyo

Anonymous



American Sports

Daniel Hodge

I rap famous, my rap name is —
 Colin Kaepernick.
 I'm sorry, *did that offend you?*
 I hope my hair ain't in your way Massa.
 Hair.
 Or what I like to call,
 a nappy black crown to prove my noble lineage.
 I hope this doesn't disrupt your attempt
 to disremember the past.
 The past.
 Or what I like to call,
 Slavery.
 Oh, *didn't you know it took 400 years to*
breed humans my size?
 Yes Massa, you used to rape my mom;
 a guaranteed reproduction of your produce.
 Momma told me it don't matter you can't jump
 cuz you can make others jump for you.
 I call that,
American Sports.
 I hope I entertain you Massa.

7th Grade

Abby Anderson



Lovers of the Light

Tyler Hamke



An Interview with Visiting Writer Jenny Bouilly

Christopher Barker

Jenny Bouilly was the first author that Gonzaga's English department hosted this year as a part of its Visiting Writing Series. Many of her pieces play with form, including *The Book of Beginnings* and *Endings and The Body: An Essay*. She was born in Thailand, earned her undergraduate degree in English and philosophy at Hollins University (where she also continued her education to receive an MA in English Criticism and Writing), and finally she earned her MFA with a poetry concentration at the University of Notre Dame. She currently teaches Creative Writing at Columbia College Chicago. The following is an interview that we had the pleasure to conduct after getting lunch with Mrs. Bouilly when she visited Gonzaga:

Reflection: What does your brainstorming process look like?

Bouilly: I think that rather than brainstorm, I tend to get obsessed with my subjects. That obsession then leads to note taking. I do a lot of note-taking before I sit down and start writing. Or, depending on what I'm working on, I'll start amassing information that I've researched and read this research over and over again until I find the right entry way that's the most appropriate for what I'm trying to do. I also might just start writing right away to see how a piece feels to me or how a particular beginning works. I also remain open to what might pop up when I'm writing a particular piece. Anything can happen, and I'm open to that change. I might begin to write about one thing, but then the piece turns out to be about another subject completely. I like discovery and change and how my work mutates. I get bored if I know the ending already.

Reflection: Can you describe your favorite lesson that you've taught to your students about beginning to write a poem or piece of prose?

Bouilly: Many students generalize, and somehow they've been taught that good beginnings generalize or make general statements. Don't speak for the entire world, I tell them. Speak for yourself. Beginnings should blaze, but they should also be the first buds of a new world. So zoom in, be as particular as possible. Let everything else balloon out from there. Also, let the language

guide you. Maybe it's the particular feel of a phrase or sentence. Follow it and see where it leads.

Reflection: As an author, you've played around with form, such as in your essay, *The Body* and in *The Book of Beginnings and Endings*; how do you decide which form is best for your writing (in general and with those two specific texts)?

Bouly: I don't always think that my writing needs a particular form. Sometimes, my subject is such that the best fit is a more traditional paragraphed piece. Other times, my subject is so particular and peculiar as to suggest to me its own formal dimensions, which depart from tradition. I don't know how my forms happen. I certainly don't go looking for them: they just suggest themselves to me as possibilities, and then I experiment, and soon, the form begins to be an integral part of the piece, dictating the content to an extent. That's when writing really begins to feel like writing to me. When I began *The Body: An Essay*, I wanted to write beautiful footnotes. It wasn't until I was about 20 footnotes in that I realized that they would best exist as counter to blank pages. And when I began *The Book of Beginnings and Endings: Essays*, I began by wanting to imitate various types of books and their beginnings and endings. It was not until I was about six imitations in that I realized I could do a book of only first and last pages. Of course, the idea, once realized, although revelatory, feels natural and right, the only way the work could possibly exist.

Reflection: What is the best piece of advice that you've ever received about writing and how has it influenced your work since hearing it?

Bouly: When I was earning my MA in Creative Writing at Hollins University, the poet Brendan Galvin was the writer-in-residence. He told us that we had better be enough for ourselves. I panicked when he said that, because I knew it was serious advice, but I couldn't figure out what it meant to be enough for oneself. I know what he means now. It is advice that has freed me from that impetus to please. I won't say exactly what that advice has meant to me, because I think everyone should have the pleasure and the enormity of figuring out what it might mean for them.

Reflection: Are you currently working on writing anything new, and if so, how did conceptualizing this work begin and what has your creative process

looked like with it in relation to past work?

Bouly: I'm currently working on a lengthy essay about love, dying, aging, ghosts, hoarding, and meteorites. I suppose it's a catch-all of a work. I began thinking about this piece three years ago. It was the missing piece, as it were, for a book of essays that center on being me and the particular circumstances of being Thai-American. But I couldn't write the essay without going back to Thailand again. It took two years to figure that out. I went last November, but I'm still writing and figuring out just what this essay is about. As far as process, I took a lot of notes while I was in Thailand, but I'm seeing now that a lot of what this essay's about is in me and my past. So I'm mainly trying to trudge up memory. A lot of the research has to come from me. It's similar to other essays I've published, but it's less starry-eyed about the world, less trusting of fortune. It's the jaded half of me. It's fragmented and searching, like my other work, but I suppose you could say it's working much harder to find a logical ending. I think there isn't one, but I refuse to stop working.

Reflection: Which writers would you say you look up to or have influenced you the most?

Bouly: I think Roland Barthes is my hero. I am never not in awe when I open any of his books. I love his rambling sentences that twist and turn and work themselves out. His love of the fragment, his love of love, his obsession with cataloguing and order. But, more than anything, it's how he makes his grief literary through the guise of scholarship that I love. He mourns his mother in a book on the subject of photography, for example. Absolutely stunning. If only all grief could give us such a gift.

Office Space Available

Grady Foster



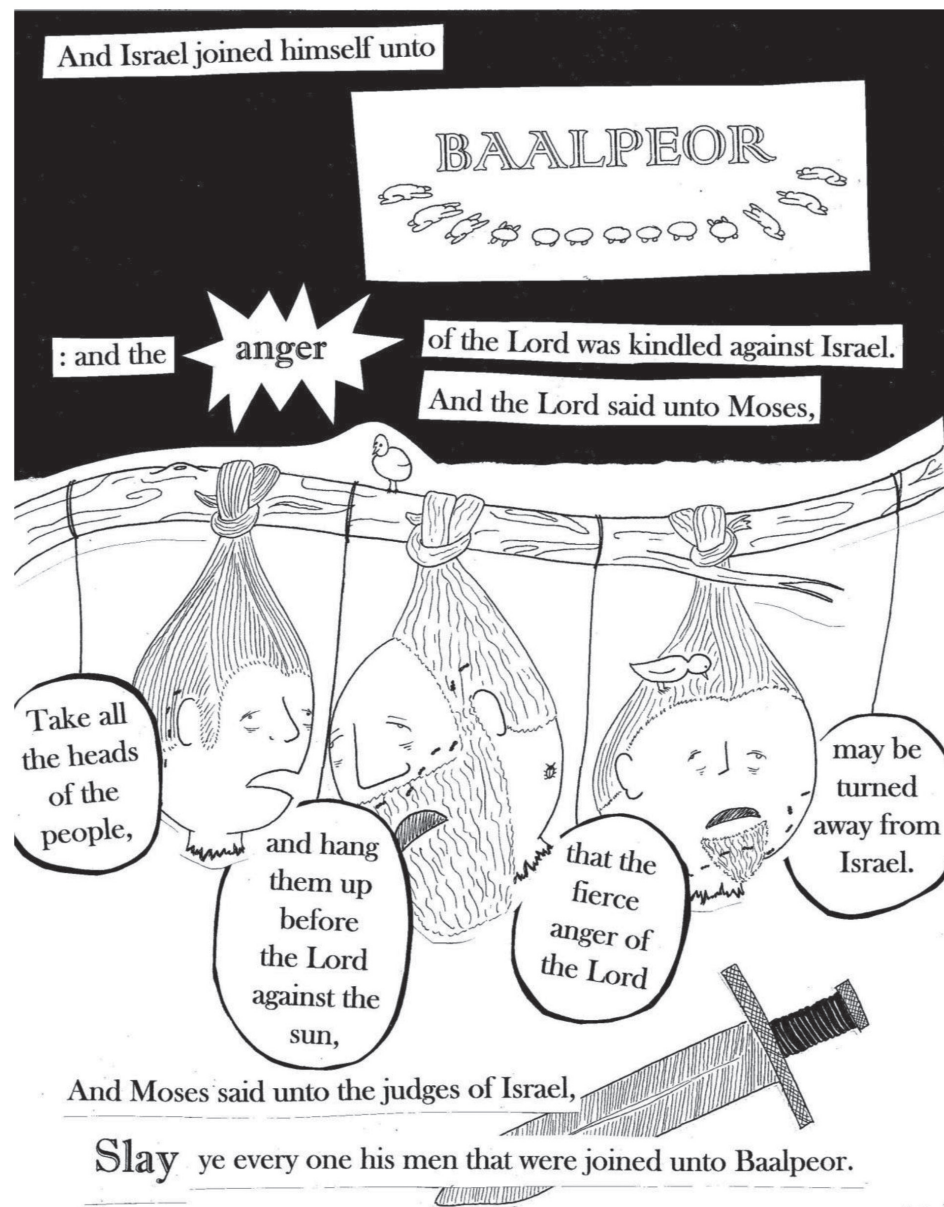
An Ode to God's Urn

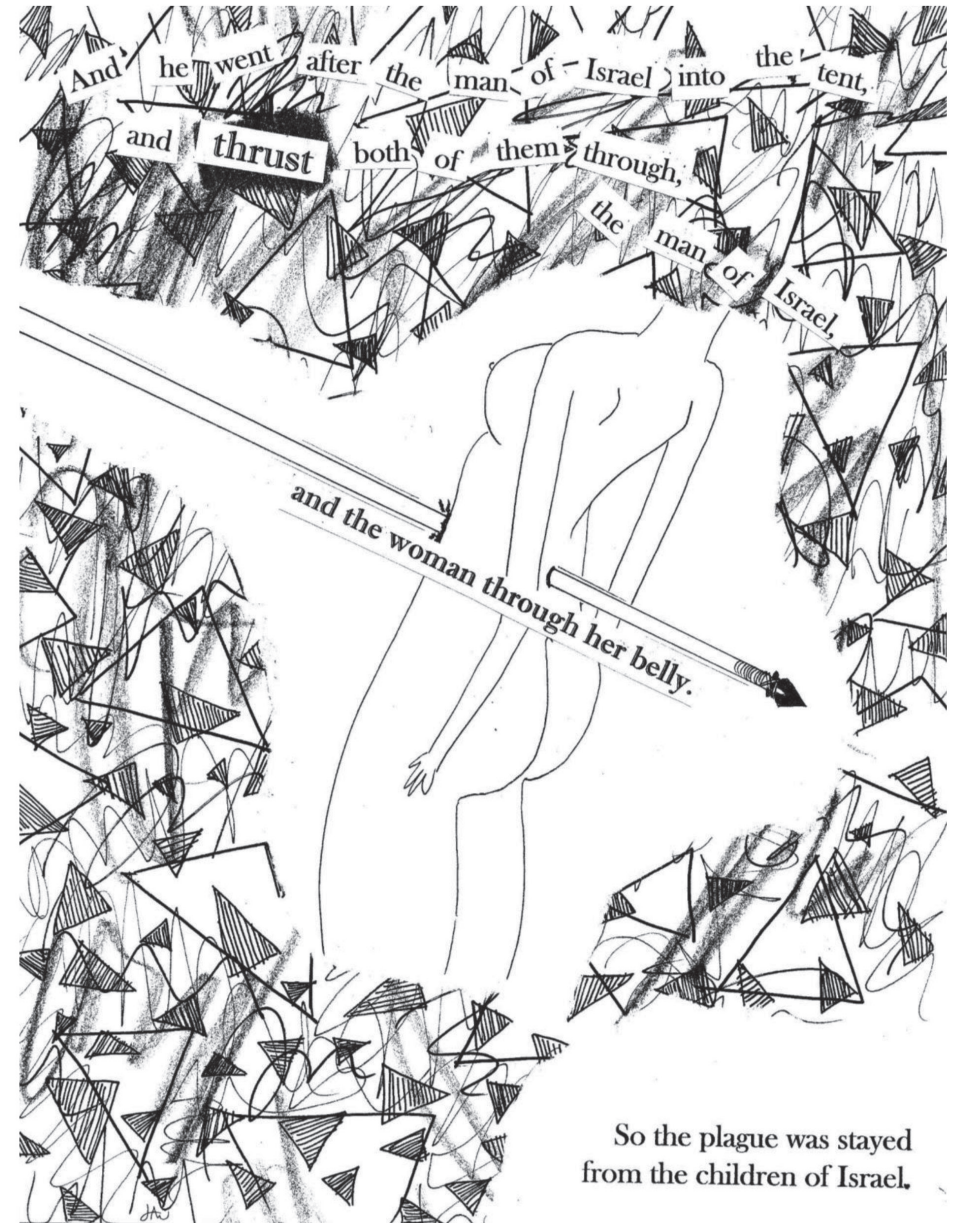
Christopher Barker

With holy wheel, the Artist spun some clay.
 Chaotic clay, with holy oven flame,
 Great Sculptor's hand did harness night and day,
 Till round and round the perfect world became.
 A magic brush was used to paint the hills,
 The trees, the seas, and mountaintops. Our Grand
 Picasso paints more than just silly stills,
 But moving color gives life to our land.
 With mediums not known by man, oh no!
 The Holy Artist hath used spoken word
 To craft existence for more art to flow.
 For without art, existence is absurd.
 Ekphrastic, therefore it all has to be,
 For God made what we touch, taste, hear, smell, see.

Numbers 25

Janine Warrington







And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

And the Lord

spake

unto Moses, saying,

Phinehas, the son of

Eleazar, the son of

Aaron the priest,

turned

hath

my wrath away

from the children of Israel,

while he was zealous for my sake among them,

that I

consumed not

the children of Israel in my jealousy.

HW

Wherefore say,

Behold, I give unto him my

covenant of

peace:

And he shall have it,

and his seed after him,

even the covenant of an

everlasting priesthood;

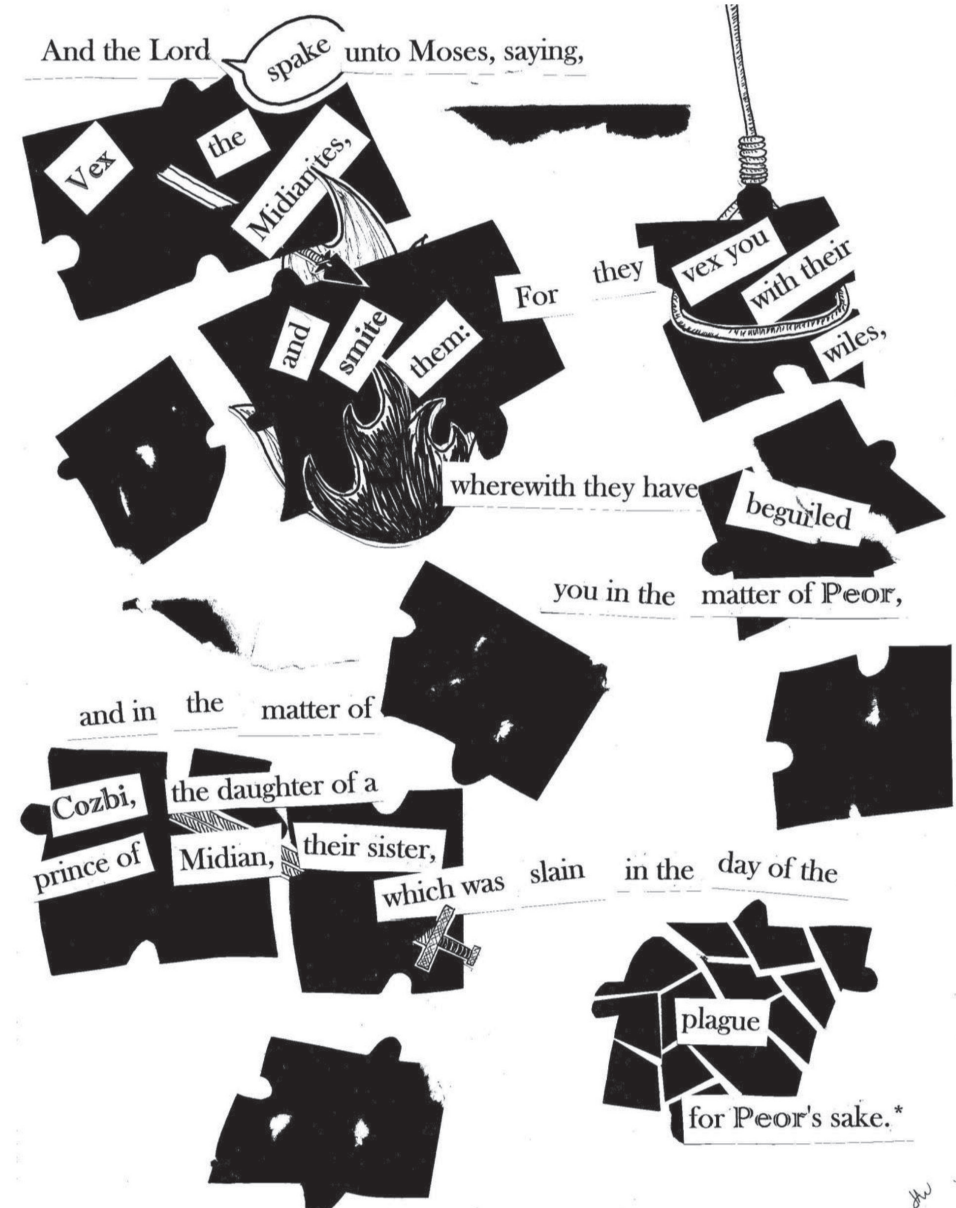
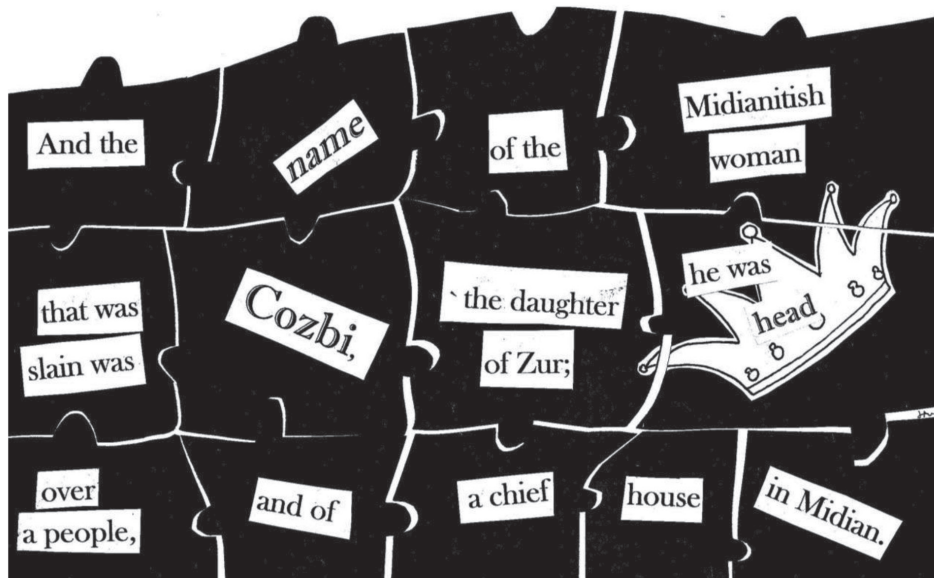
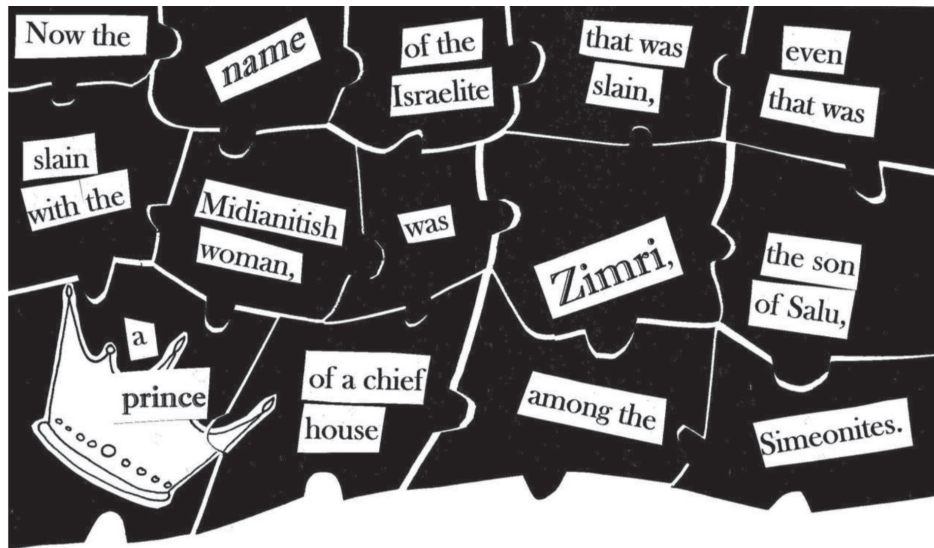
because he was zealous for his God,

and made an

atonement

for the children of Israel.

HW



Promises, Promises

Talena Kelln

He said that he wanted to buy me the moon
as we sat by a fire that fell into ash.
I told him he should and then gave him a kiss—
but we all know the happiest moments don't last.
I was wearing a dress of sapphire blue,
and he wore a promise that shone in his eye.

The months seemed to pass in the blink of an eye
when we danced and we laughed under envious moon
and he picked me red roses and violets of blue,
our time simply burning, no sign of ash.
He would stare at me too, each gaze longer than last
and we ended each night with one passionate kiss.

It's this I remember. The imprint of his kiss.
This and the serious look in his eye
when he told me he wanted our pairing to last.
I tried on the ring and looked up at the moon
all before smiles were turned into ash—
all before drowning in cyclical blue.

He looked like a prince, dressed in Navy blue,
Like a picture so perfect you'd give it a kiss.
Like a real man made from the dust and the ash.
He whispered to me with a wink of his eye,
"No matter how far, we see the same moon."
The sailors all boarded, and he was the last.

How funny that word is; how when we say "last"
we don't mean it. Did you know the ocean's not blue,
but it's black and obeys only sinful, sweet moon?

I feel like I'm waiting for not but the kiss
of the reaper himself. There's no light in my eye
And my smile is forever colored in ash.

Any words I might say become ash
in my mouth. I know it's the very last
thing he would want, but when I shut my eye
I can't help it. My heart pumps blood blue.
"Darling, I love you. Give me a kiss?"
I can still hear his voice; a cruel trick of the moon.

Ocean swims in my eye now, a sickening blue.
As I hold him in ash and think of each last,
I kiss promise goodbye and I wish for the moon.

an intimate appendage to my post-grad resume

Megan O'Malley

- the bridge of my Left hand is perpetually smudged with ink
- my alarm hollers an hour before I rise
- still incapable of parallel parking
- my wallet hoards business cards and useless pennies
- the sound of my laughter can climb a building's stories
- my first love was the sound of water
- still writing poems on my bedroom walls

Rogue

Grady Foster



Float

Mitch Gomes

Twinkling specks of light never seemed so close. Through the glass, they're a little closer than they were on Earth, but not by much. I'd always thought they'd be too far for any one person to reach. I'm wandering every inch of this bookshelf and still don't think I've covered everything. Covered everything. Covering anything. I can't move at all. I'm breathing through a tube. I'm eating through a straw. I can't steer this cylinder ship but wherever any gravitational pull pushes me, my ship will go. Not fast. Maybe a little slow. Slow. Not fast.

My arms and legs don't work, but my wheelchair used to let me move wherever I wanted it to go. I could think about moving, and I'd go there; an automatic movement. I'd like to think I'm a telepath. I'd like to think I'm a superhero, but the matter is that the only thing we might share in common is a lifetime of being confined to a two-tired seat, settling me three feet below everyone else when I was back home.

There's no reward for effort. I wish I could have, at least once, felt that connection between my thought and my limb; the signal between synapses that bridge my desire to my action. Instead, I think it, and then I move. I don't like it. Just simply a change of place because I wanted it. I'd love to feel a strain on my legs from running the day before, soreness in my arm from taking the hundred pound garbage bag to the outside bins. I'd love to.

The best candidate for the voyage, they told me. That's why you're going out there. "Voyage." So why am I here? I can be awake. I can sleep. I can eat and drink. I haven't really figured the answer to that one yet, but I'll let you know when I do. I kept trying to ask Houston what was so different about me, why I was chosen, but Houston just kept telling me to describe what I saw those first few hours I was out here by myself. Everything on the other side of the glass. I do, but Houston cut out the other day, and I called out hello fifty or sixty times. There wasn't anyone on the other end, only static. I'm still describing what I see still, even though no one else can hear me. I think it helps me find anything I can still lodged in the back of my brain. It helps me be specific. Houston always said, "Don't tell me it's beautiful. And don't tell me it looks like a sunset. What colors can you see? What does it look

like? How is it different? Show, don't tell." I'd always been confused when they told me this. There wasn't any way I could show them on the microphone. Maybe it was just how much they wanted me to use my words. Maybe that's the reason they chose me for this, because I'm pretty good at describing what I see.

The view's nice, even if it's mostly only stars. There's much more out here than I could have imagined. So many stars. I want to touch one. Though I'm much closer now, it doesn't even really seem like the distance has been closed at all. I've never gotten close enough. You see all of them in the sky, you think maybe if you could fly or breathe in outer space, you'd be able to see one up close. No matter how far from home you go, it's still not far enough. Still not close enough.

Yesterday, I saw something Houston would have probably loved to hear about very much. I don't know what it was, but I think I liked it so much because it looked like something on Earth. Like when you're underwater and looking up toward the sky, there's a spot where the sun hits and goes below the surface. There are bubbles rising from your breath and the light beams dance as the waves splash around. What I saw was the same with this glow splitting the black sky and stars and planets far off in the distance still like bubbles held in place. Nothing was moving and I was floating past, but I think I talked about it for twenty minutes. That's how long I was able to see it anyway.

I'm not sure how much longer I'm going to be alive out here. There's no way for me to know how much food I have left, how much water, how much oxygen. A part of me tells myself that the views are going to get old, and with how much of the time I see nothing but stars, it's becoming true. Even though it's true, without even thinking about it, when I don't see anything, words still come out of my mouth; words that deny the absence of a listener and the absence of something worth describing, of something I haven't seen before.

"It's dark. Black. Like not blue, but black. Pitch black. It reminds me of my room. The stars were way bigger there, but those glowed in the dark. These shine. Not much because they're so far away, but more than mine did."

What I'd give just to see my room again. Sleep in my bed again. See my mom and dad. Thank them for taking care of me. Thank them for saving me when I fell in the pool and couldn't swim out, couldn't swim at all.

Poser

Alexandra Roland



The Wide and the Narrow

Talena Kelln

Start with the wide on the right
 Twelve below the narrow on the left
 Cross the wide over the narrow
 Turn the wide back underneath the narrow
 Bring the wide back over in front of the narrow
 Again.

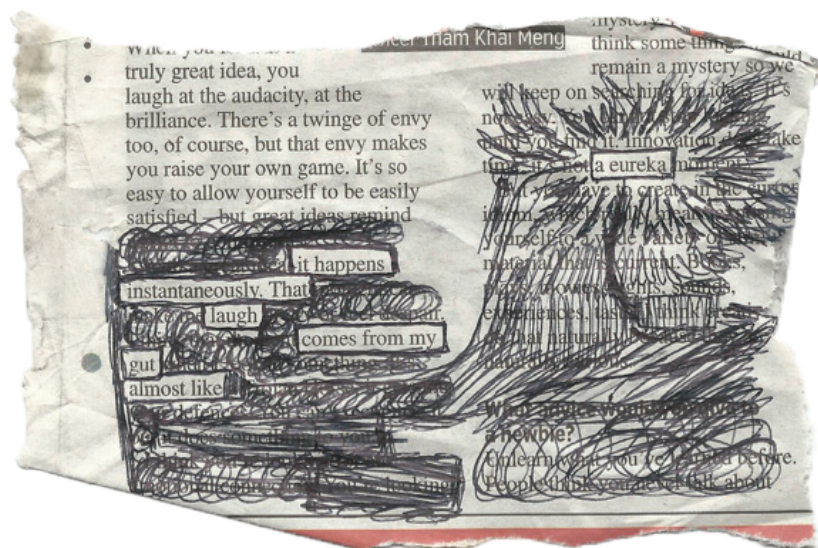
Pull the wide up and through the loop
 Hold the front loosely with your index finger
 Bringing the wide down through the front loop
 Remove your finger and
 Tighten, carefully, to the collar
 Holding the narrow and sliding up tighter
 Tighter, tighter, tighter
 Repeat.

Do not stop until you breathe purple
 And weep silk.

The wide and the narrow, tighter, tighter, tighter.
 My little man.

Untitled

Ally Clapp



Car Crashes

Sarah Kersey

There's a road I take to get home from school each day that has obituaries
on the shoulder

On the right hand side, when the sun has gone into hiding and the
headlights decorate the dark, you can see the glass shards twinkling amongst
the asphalt

I don't remember how or when they got there
All I know is one morning the shoulder looked like a shoulder and the next
it looked like a crime scene

I think of all the people whose blood could be found among those broken
slivers and I often have to blink a couple times to reassure myself that I'm
still driving

I am not roadkill

But I see that glass and I see all the death announcements for the past
versions of myself that haven't made it to adulthood

I think of the me who loved baggy pajamas and early morning tea parties—
but never with real tea

Tea was too bitter and tasted too much like age

I think of the me who filled sketchbooks with self-portraits in a desperate
attempt to shatter society's early idea of what I was supposed to be

It wasn't what I wanted

Not even then

I think of the me whose eyes lit up over leather bounded spines as I tucked
them away in the corners of my room like dirty little secrets

I drink real tea now

It still tastes bitter

But my books stand tall and proud

As a barrier between me and the world

Keeping that small shard of childhood intact within these walls
I still miss that little girl who wore her pajamas too big and held ideas too
small compared to the massive ones she would be forced to understand
But I hope she knows she finally cracked the magnifying glass society had
on her

The evidence is laying on the right shoulder of the road, glittering within
the pale glow of my headlights

Ugly Fingers

Talena Kelln

Connor sat on wet sand and watched the waves lick at his feet, knowing he would regret it when he put his socks back on. His jeans were rolled up to his ruddy knees, revealing white and freckles and blonde leg hair. It was surprising how warm Inishmore was, after spending so much time wrapped in a raincoat on the mainland. Maybe he just felt warm because of the biking. Connor hated biking, but everybody was doing it so he did too. It wasn't the same as jumping off a bridge.

His friends were thankfully elsewhere, exploring a mountain trail or pestering wild ponies. Some had gone up to see the cliffs, but Connor didn't care to. He didn't like bikes and he didn't like heights. Instead, he liked sitting by the ocean and not saying a word. Here, he felt loud.

Moments ago, he was excited by the shells. He had found a crowd of baby ones in all different colors. In his left fist were two spiral purple ones, a pointy green one, a red one that had a chip in it, and probably ten or so ordinary ones. He opened his palm to look at them again but got distracted. He had a habit of picking at the skin around his fingernails when he was nervous, and he was always nervous. His fingertips were raw and unsightly. Instead of putting the shells in his pocket, he threw them into the ocean and buried his hands in each other so no one could see, even though no one was looking.

Connor decided that he liked traveling a lot. It was a treasure to find places and moments like this, like in the movies. If he ever traveled again, he would do it alone. His friends here weren't really his friends, and he grew tired of following them everywhere they wanted to go because he was too slow to suggest things of his own. He closed his pale eyes without realizing they matched the sea. He willed it to come and carry him away.

After lunch before everyone split up, the group had visited the Aran Sweater Shop. Apparently it was a huge deal to buy a sweater made on the island—on the island. He had been looking around and feeling the material of a button-up green one, when a lady with a silver braid asked him if he'd like to try it on. At first he didn't understand because of her accent, but by

the time he put the puzzle together she was already unbuttoning it for him. His ears grew hot, knowing what would come next. He put it on and stood stony-faced as his friends gathered around to hoot and holler. The words were all kind spirited, urging him to buy the sweater since it "looked so good," but he couldn't hear them over the roar of his own insecurity. The lady took it behind the counter and waited. Connor had a hard time saying no to people, and a harder time saying no to situations. Seventy euro never felt like so much.

It was getting cold on the beach. The bag with his sweater was behind him, just out of reach of the water now. The tide was coming in. Connor reached back and pulled the sweater out of the bag gingerly, staring at the woven knots before putting it on. They were supposed to bring him good health. The sweater was itchy.

Connor marveled at the classic beauty of the sunset and wondered how many times poets had tried to capture it with words. He resolved to never try. Absentmindedly, he picked at his fingers and wished for a peace he could not name. He shivered and noticed that the water had somehow crept past his ruddy knees and up to his hips, spoiling the bottom edge of the sweater. *Good*, he thought, and still he did not move.

Leonora

Matthew Rogers



CONTRIBUTORS

Abby Anderson is a senior at Gonzaga and no, she doesn't know what she is going to do next year, but thanks for asking. Majoring in art and minoring in chemistry, Abby has spent much of her time at Gonzaga running from Jundt to Hughes. In her free time, she enjoys working for GSBA, playing Bingo, painting, and eating sharp cheddar cheese.

Christopher Barker once believed that the whole world was performing a social experiment on him in which they all pretended not to have superpowers because they wanted to know what life would be like without extraordinary abilities, and when he verified that theory was false, he was thoroughly disappointed.

Ally Clapp is a junior majoring in Religious Studies and Philosophy. She frequently cries from happiness, frequently shares about the pope, frequents breakfast food places, and frequently receives spontaneous applause when she introduces herself.

Grady Foster once went to a Van Gogh art exhibit and stood in front of the *Portrait of Joseph Roulin* and cried. For ten minutes. And her family left her. They left the museum without her. She also cried when she met Hannah Montana.

Mitch Gomes was born and raised in the Bay Area, CA, Mitch is confident in affirming that he enjoys the finer things in life including drinking obscure-named herbal teas, wearing glasses every day of the week, and playing Pokémon Go. Rest assured, you might mistake him for looking like either an ethnic Jake Gyllenhaal or that one kid from the season 4 premiere of *The Walking Dead*. Either way, he might be able to do a mediocre impression of you. Oh, and dogs. He likes dogs.

Tyler Hamke is a senior Mechanical Engineering student at Gonzaga University. In the Summer of 2016 he traveled to Zambezi, Zambia through the Gonzaga study abroad program and was able to experience this wonderful country firsthand. He shares his experience in Zambia through his camera, hoping to let others feel the same love this country showed him.

Daniel Hodge is a senior English major looking forward to a lifetime worth of school. If he could be any animal, he would want to be a penguin—mainly

for a chance to star in *Happy Feet*. Perhaps that's an allegory. He plays rugby so people don't think he writes poetry. He thinks he would love a world where the Egyptian empire never died.

Kayla Hondo is a sophomore at Gonzaga University from Beaverton, Oregon. She is pursuing a Business Administration major with concentrations in Marketing and Digital Marketing, with a minor in Journalism. She loves photography and is currently pursuing this passion through positions in student publications, the Gonzaga Student Body Association, and Alpha Kappa Psi.

Emmett Jones hails from Sandpoint, Idaho, where he grew up hiking, swimming, and skiing. He is a third-generation Zag, second-generation Resident Assistant, and a first-generation *Reflection* submitter. When not writing, he enjoys small moments of existential dread about his future as an English major, but finds comfort, as many do, in the fact that at least he's not studying Philosophy. Until the statute of limitations expires, he is compelled to mention that he has never committed arson.

Talena Kelln is a senior theatre major and writing minor looking forward to imminent unemployment. Her favorite animal is the elephant, her favorite color is purple, and her favorite musical artist is the ethereal Clay Aiken. When she's not on stage, she enjoys pretending like she is. She is gorgeous. You may have seen her in her element around campus in GUTS, Boone Street Hooligans, or standing in line at Starbucks. She also low-key hates writing in third person.

Sarah Kersey is a freshman at Gonzaga pursuing an English Major with a double minor in Psych and Writing. She has been enthusiastic about poetry and the written word for some time now and finds it to be a wonderful way to release emotions and express creativity.

Megan O'Malley is a senior studying English, Megan is from Phoenix, where her writing career peaked with a hard-hitting fourth grade report entitled "Arizona Through My Eyes," which featured an embarrassing photoshoot of the author with the beloved species of cacti in her backyard. What's next? While uninterested in televised sports in general, her fascination with the officials of the game has prompted research for her first book out next fall, "The Secret Life of Referees."

Emily Pitts is from Seattle, Washington, for those of you who aren't from Washington State. For those of you who are, she's from Bellevue, WA. She enjoys wearing socks with her Birkenstocks, being really tall, and watching

Parks and Recreation over and over on Netflix. Her passions include psychology, feminism, and trying to explain what her tattoos mean.

Alexandra Roland is a senior Mathematics and Psychology major at Gonzaga. She enjoys watching good films and eating good mac and cheese.

Matthew Rodgers was born and raised in Los Angeles and has always enjoyed and been inspired by the diversity and quirk of his home. He always felt inclined to create art, whether it be a simple drawing during free time in elementary school or writing the assigned short story in high school English class. He fell in love with photography at the sight of his dad's old Canon film camera from college. Since that point, he has found refuge in the art of capturing time. Matthew has experience in both dark room and digital photography. Though he primarily shoots with his Nikon D5200, he enjoys infusing the simplicity and interplay of light and shadow so prominent and pivotal in film photography into his digital work.

Katherine Sumantri was born and raised in Singapore, enjoys photography, hanging with family and friends, and is so blessed to have been introduced to Chipotle in America. Oh, and she really enjoys sunsets and short walks to the fridge.

Meggie Tennesen lived in both Washington and Idaho growing up, and while living in Idaho she bought her potatoes from Washington. She enjoys snuggling in fuzzy blankets, loose leaf teas, and likes the smell of coffee but hates the taste. Her sidekick is a little black cat named Othello who thinks he is a bird. As an English writing major she writes from time to time, but more often than not kitty cuddles prevent her from doing much of anything.

Makayla Wamboldt is a senior English major and avid water drinker. Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, she can either be found climbing trees or reading Mary Oliver at Rockwood Bakery while consuming too many scones. She has never actually been early in her life and might be the least organized person you know, but at least she's good at other things, like playing ping pong, watching videos of baby goats, and using puns wherever possible.

Janine Warrington is a senior Religious Studies student. She hopes to go on to work in interfaith relations.

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