

THE INDIGO

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2019

Department of Language and Literature



John the Evangelist (Master Copy) Ciara Fountain

THE INDIGO
2019

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY

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Editor's Note

I wish that I could say "I write this sitting in the kitchen sink," as Dodie Smith does in her opening to *I Capture the Castle*. In fact, it would be a fitting tribute to this edition with its myriad genres and works. Indeed, it might contain "everything except the kitchen sink." It has been such a joy to edit this edition of *The Indigo*. Linking together the variety herein can best be described by the word "reflection." This reflection can be found in the minutiae of the personal and impersonal, of faith and grace, humor, drama, and more all represented in this edition. I have been blessed to edit *The Indigo* twice — both at our lowest and now at our best. I wrote in this journal two years ago that who we are is defined by "how we press forward in the face of adversity." As I consider the creative works between the covers of this year's edition, I cannot help but reflect upon that time two years ago, and our incredible recovery; I cannot help but admire the way in which we pressed forward. As you read this edition of *The Indigo* I hope that you, like me, will reflect upon this as well — upon the growth of faith and love and the hope that we can see around us and throughout this edition.

Sincerely,

Ian Pittman, Editor-in-Chief

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to those who have contributed to this edition of *The Indigo*. Time and again the Carey community produces some of the finest works of poetry and prose to fill this journal. We continue to be amazed and grateful for the quality of the work submitted. The *Indigo* staff would also like to offer special thanks and gratitude to Dr. Ed Ford for his willingness and expertise as he continues to supply the finest artistic support, providing both design suggestions and final layout. This certainly would not have been possible without you. Last, but certainly not least, we would like to offer our thanks to the Department of Language and Literature, particularly Mrs. Dolores O'Mary, our administrative assistant, and Dr. Tom Richardson, our department chair. This publication would not have happened without the support, creativity, and willingness of William Carey University. It is our hope and prayer that the reader enjoys this edition of *The Indigo* as much as we have.

Sincerely,

The Indigo Editors

Ian Pittman, Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Marsha Newman, Faculty Sponsor

Stephanie Arnold, Assistant Editor

J. Edward Malone, Assistant Editor

Deborah Nevill, Assistant Editor

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Church Window
Ed Ford

GOD THINKS I'M FUNNY

by Jeanna Graves

When I ran across the list of writing ideas suggested by Natalie Goldberg, in *Writing Down the Bones*, and saw the suggestion "The Closest You Ever Felt to God," I actually rolled my eyes. Having attended two different Christian universities during my educational journey, one Methodist and one Baptist, I've suffered through my fair share of tear-filled, spit-gulping freshmen, doing their best to read aloud their tortured testimonies. To keep from dying of embarrassment, I'd cower in my desk and think about my grocery list, or design a three-bedroom house in my mind, anything to keep from hearing what sounded like trite clichés and zealot-like fervor. There was a time when someone would say "Bless you" or "I'll be praying for you," and I'd be embarrassed for myself and them.

My Southern Missionary Baptist Mamaw did the best she could to save me. She invited me to her church and even allowed me to borrow dresses from her closet. According to her, God lived mostly in

church, her church, and you had to wear a dress to meet Him. God did not appreciate anything that hung above the knee or was too low cut. God's house had a dress code and felt restrictive.

God and his rules were not necessarily the issue. I was just uncomfortable around people who knew Him. They were often judgmental fanatics that wielded their Christianity like spoiled rich kids. "I have something you can't have. You are not good enough for this."

I felt guilty to go as a child if I did not have enough money to put into the offering bowl as it made its way from pew to pew. The preacher always hollered and pounded the pulpit. He was so angry and according to the preacher, so was God. We had failed Him. I felt inadequate and selfish. I didn't want to hurt Him or make Him mad. He was so beautiful in the picture that hung above the sanctuary entrance. A mixture of Gregg Allman and the singer Meatloaf circa 1979, I thought he was so good looking. I also noticed that He did not look as angry as the preacher made Him sound. There were complexities that went too far over my head.

When I did attend Bethel Missionary Baptist with Mamaw, some Sundays after service, the ladies of the church would have lunch for the congregation. I especially liked going when they had lunch because the preacher didn't seem so angry on those days. My Great Aunt Massie brought me a piece of vanilla cake. It was just a boxed vanilla cake mix soaked in sweetened condensed milk, but it tasted divine. It was still warm from the recreation hall oven.

Great Aunt Massie's voice was high, like a little girl's voice and her hair was pure white and fluffy.

I asked her, "How do you know that

God is real? That He knows who you are?"

She giggled, a sweet tinkling that sounded like the wind chimes on her porch. "He's everywhere girl. He's in that cake you're eating. He's in your Uncle Elmer's hands when he holds mine, and he is in this church. If He is in you, He is everywhere you want Him to be."

At the time, I could not see him anywhere and hoped that I didn't eat Him.

Years passed. Periodically I'd pray for things, but did not take Christianity seriously. I was busy living, partying and doing just about everything that He'd oppose anyway, so we rarely spoke. I don't think I consciously missed Him. Much like by biological father, our relationship had become "out of sight, out of mind." We had no hard feelings, but no real feelings either, unless you count guilt.

Jump ahead to my thirties and my attitude about a lot of things changed. I liked myself better. I was comfortable in my own skin and felt happier than I ever had, or at least I thought so. I had spent my adult life working in public relations and office management. I enjoyed my work and was excited about new skills that I'd pick up along the way. From photography to digital design, costume construction to Chinese cooking, I felt grounded and useful. That is when I noticed a weird sense of dread and worry.

In the middle of my happy little world, a crack began. I would cry sometimes at night. They were the horrible self-pitying tears of the weak. I felt lost, and put upon. Angry at God for not reaching in and fixing it, I expected him to dole out justice to those who I thought deserved it. Smite that mean witch! I'm angry! Fix this! I was calling out to a stranger. Phoning in a favor from someone I had lost contact with years before. No

wonder He wouldn't do anything for me. He had forgotten the sound of my voice.

One night I couldn't stand myself one moment longer. I knew that I was having a panic attack because I felt like someone had just scared me. My heart beat fast. My senses became hyper sensitive. I knew that if I couldn't get control of myself, I'd have to call and bother somebody, my sister, my mother, one of my closest friends. It would scare them because I'd start crying and blubbering. They would instantly think somebody had died. I was going to force myself to sleep. I took two Benedryls and a Xanax and sat on the edge of the bed.

My sister had bought me a grey and silver Bible years before. I reached over for it, just to have something to do with my hands. I flipped through it. In Psalms, I read, "Do not sit on your couch and cry." I read it again. "Do not sit on your couch and cry." I laughed out loud. In Psalm 4, I read, "Hear me when I call, O god of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer."

For a second, I was scared I had overdosed. This is what a nervous breakdown must feel like. Later in Psalms, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."

Was God really speaking to me? For the first time in my life, it seemed so real and felt so logical. He is not a magician. He is real and present and alive.

He will not grab me from the ledge of a cliff or keep me from dying in whatever way I am going to die. But He will be there to claim the soul I gave Him that night. Why not? I wasn't doing anything with it at the time anyway. I still get sad, angry or weak. The only difference is that I am not alone. He has told me that "my enemies will be ashamed and greatly troubled" and although I realize that doesn't literally mean that they'll get the justice I think they deserve, I feel better and it makes me laugh to think that God's on my side.

I didn't quit listening to heavy metal music. I still laugh too loud and gossip sometimes. I can still be mean and I get mad too easy and too quickly. But don't come looking for my soul, because I don't own it anymore. Don't come looking for a deep loneliness or dissatisfaction with my spiritual life. I don't have that anymore either. When working on a file in Microsoft Word, if the power goes off, the current file will reappear when the power resumes. An alert tells the user that the file you were working on has been "recovered." Kinda like me I think. I'm still me, just a saved version of me.



MISSISSIPPI ZEPHYR

by Richard Boada

A stag bolts into stillness.
His legs humming in the memory

of flight; antler points long
enough to reach stratospheres.

Furious rain tongues his coat.
He snorts and sloshes velocity.

How did this creature arrive
in this city - marching on Yazoo Clay

like Sherman – brown hoofs
slugging mud? I have been waiting

all along for him to prick at
my garden like a ghost

who ravages the daisies.
A city deer, now. His bewilderment

metastasizing in growing fits
like a choking man gasping for breath.

I lean against the porch rail
of my duplex to regain my strength

from the sickness of his estrangement.
Rain mellows into soft flame-like licks,

flat clouds look waterless.
There's a zephyr closing in

on the city. We hear its cringing
engine fans. My ghost has come home.

After Dürer Sharon Howard



PERSISTENT WIND

By Chloe Wicker

The days slip by and I grow into contentment.
Joy has found me and I am trying to be faithful.
Nothing brings as sweet a taste to life as gratitude.
Even difficulty brings reasons to be grateful.

But the wind blows alone in the peace of my heart,
Incorrigible and persistent in its questioning.
Silent, long, unanswerable:
who?

But the wind asks, regardless of my fear,
It asks, relentlessly, until my mind swims.
Carrying the chant of the owls,
Never stopping—I must listen.

Still, I tremble in the face of my desires
Even though nothing good will be withheld.
Perhaps, I fear a complete, inarguable silence,
Silence sweeter than a lover's embrace.

I do not think that it is my fate.
If I am wrong, could I bear it?
I want to be worthy of silence,
But my heart craves a name.

Beyond the wind lies understanding,
Lies peace and encouragement and love.
The wind still whistles its question,
And I wait, for name or silence.

My heart stands alone before the wind, pondering
The tireless and ceaseless questioning.
Quiet, unsure, my answer:
I don't know.

UNTITLED

by Julie Jackson

Once again
Here it is
An empty space where I feel someone should be

Empty spaces between my fingers as I walk from place to place
An empty space beside me wherever I sit
An empty seat in my car as I drive home and back
A phone screen empty of messages just checking in

Even in my mind
That space he recently occupied
Is empty again

I hate it
Something should be there
But

And it's always the worst when I'm trying to fall asleep
Every once in a while there are nights when I can't help but wonder
What it would be like for someone else to be there
Beside me and holding me
As we drift off to sleep together

But I look over my shoulder and



Comfortable
Ashley Randazzo

COUSIN AMY'S PEARL

By Allison Chestnut

Cousin Amy's next door neighbor,
known throughout the 'hood as one
crazy messed up dude, climbed in
a bedroom window, to take with fear

and blade what modesty denied
his hands and mouth. After carving breasts
and throat, he took her virtue piecemeal
to his house, and left her butchered

carcass on the lawn. Her brother John,
and I went through her house, to find
an earring's mate, its match all
Amy wore to meet the coroner.

We raked the thick shag pile;
we traced how violence moved
splintered shreds of wooden
chair; a sticky residue on palms and

pants. Our hands felt for what we
could not see. A smell of copper,
rose from tub congealing blood.
Such silent work, for us: a single fly

disturbed the peace, its buzzing wings
percussed on window panes, an
insect guard til we gave up the hunt.

Amy's mother, angry, grieved,
focused on that missing pearl,
would not forgive our shameful
empty-handedness

SILENCE

by Deborah Nevill

There is a small brook
that glitters in the lamplight
surrounded by benches
and an outdated bridge
They mindfully walk around
pausing at each bench
deciding where they should sit
to complete their thoughts

The churches are empty
other than pages and pages
of hopeless emotions
They look at the outside
of ornate cathedrals
and quickly peer in
through the clouded windows
before running back home

Wordless murals are read to bystanders
They quietly peer into the presenter's eyes
attempting to find a glimmer of fiction
to help their conscience

Birds are voiceless
but fly freely high above
until they are caught
and someone makes them sing
but clips their wings



The Critique
Clark Welch



Rooster
Ed Ford

A DRESSING DOWN

by Deanna Graves

Food is taken very seriously in our family. Mostly women, we judge each other on cooking rather than wealth or education. You can buy an education, cooking is an art. Yearly events include Easter, Independence Day and Mother's Day but at no other time are you judged as harshly than Thanksgiving and Christmas. Tradition among the Rainey clan is that dressing is to be served at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The rules are that it is to be prepared in the southern style, chicken broth, celery, sage, and chicken; not raisins, cranberries, or God forbid, oysters. You should make enough for 24-30 people, bring it warmed through and accompany it with your homemade gravy, if needed. If you need gravy, the dressing is too dry.

Mamaw's dressing was and always will be the perfect pan dressing. Moist in the middle with a light brown crust. She used the perfect amount of sage, cornmeal to chicken ratio and made her broth

from scratch. Her dressing was much like her, soft on the inside and strong on the outside. Mamaw was easy going, kind and happy. "Every day above ground is a good day" she would giggle and say. Her dressing tasted like home. She was perfection and so then was her dressing.

Aunt Aline's, however, was bland, tasteless and dry. It tasted like it had been thrown together and half-heartedly prepared. Her dressing had to have gravy just so you could swallow it. The gravy always seemed bitter and it left a bad taste in your mouth, just like Aline. She had let life beat her down. Bad things happen in life and she seemed to hold a grudge. She never had anything to offer a conversation and when she did speak it was rudeness that poured forth.

My aunt Myrtle is a relative new comer to the family clan. She was my Uncle Gerald's second wife and at sixty-five fancied herself a cool, young aunt. Her family is Cajun and she is very proud of that fact. She likes to shake things up and brings oyster dressing to the table. You guessed it, briny, salty, soured and rancid once it has been on the table for a while you can't stand to be around it any longer. "Laissez las bons temps rouler" girl.

The dressing closest to my Mamaw's perfection is my sister Jeanna's. The ratio of chicken to cornbread is 3:1 and moist,

almost juicy in the center. The crust is a burlap and tan, a large dose of soft-boiled eggs and the aroma remind me of a mountain cabin in fall. No one's dressing is allowed to out shine Mamaw's, however, Jeanna's would feed an army. She makes her own broth and infuses it with fresh herbs and real butter, she manually peels the chicken meat off the bone so that she can make sure bones do not end up in the pan. Jeanna is the kind of person you want around. She is good people.

My sentimental favorite is my Granny Graves. She grew up dirt poor as a sharecropper's daughter and married a sharecropper, my grandfather, Buck. Granny Graves made dressing using the entire chicken. The neck, feet, bones and skin all combined to make the broth and then ended up in the dressing. She had always been taught to make it that way, nothing goes to waste, so her pan would come out of the oven with dark bones sticking out of the cornbread where the marrow had burned. Her dressing looked awful but was hearty and tasty. You just had to be careful for the bones. Granny Graves was an awesome woman who loved to laugh and appreciated everything and everyone in her life. She was unexpectedly joyous for someone who raked and scraped to get by her entire life. I would give a king's ransom to taste it again.



ELWOOD'S HAIKU SUITE

LEG'S TENSE, FUR STANDS STRAIGHT
UNSUSPECTING BIRDS TOUCH DOWN
CORGI ON THE HUNT

I POUR HIM A BOWL
HE CHEWS ENERGETICALLY
WHERE DID THE FOOD GO?

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I WANT TO GO THERE AS WELL
CORGIS LOVE CAR RIDES

BY NICHOLAS HENRY

Breaker Wave Shore Kimberly DeLorenze



GOLD SCARS

by Allison Chestnut

I do not bring to you whole love
like loaves of bread hot from
the oven where they baked, that
your hands might raise and break
it into sacrament.

My love speaks words you will not
hear. Its tongue's seneschal rebukes
your wordy lavishness. Let love be
love's only sound. Such silence
is no sin.

As fine bone china chipped by careless
hands awaits an artisan's repairs, my
love seeks new usefulness, when broken
pieces fused and whole again show
scars of gold.



Photo Ed Ford

PRAYERS

by Dr. Scott Hummel

Dear Heavenly Father,

The names Camille and Katrina are forever seared into our collective memories. The names Fredrick, Elaina, Ivan, recall destruction, suffering, and grief. The names Hugo, Andrew, and Rita forced evacuations knocked out power, and left many homeless. Even now the names Harvey and Irma fill us with anxiety and dread. But, there is a name above all names a name that inspires service to strangers and generosity to neighbors; a name that gives hope in the face of loss and the strength to rebuild; a name that brings out the best in us when the worst is all around us; a name above all names that can calm the wind and bring peace in the midst of the storm.

I pray this in your all powerful name,
Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father,

During this Christmas season we are making our lists of all the things we want, but this year I pray that you don't give us what we want. As Jesus wanted the cup of suffering to pass from Him, but prayed your will be done, so we pray for your will, not just for our wants. While we want to be full and satisfied, instead we pray that we will hunger and thirst after righteousness. We want mercy for ourselves and justice for others, but instead I pray that we live justly and show mercy to others. We want to be strong, but I pray that in our weaknesses you will be strong. We want to avoid conflict, but I pray we will fight for the needy and against injustice. We want comfort and ease, but I pray that our problems and trials produce character.

Dear Heavenly Father and Almighty Creator,

Your Mississippi canvas is a masterpiece with her sparkling gulf, tall pines, blooming azaleas, and red bluffs. Your beautiful Mississippi has been made even more beautiful by her creative artists and musicians. As our Great Composer, the sounds of your singing birds, rushing rivers, cracking thunder, and whistling wind have inspired great musicians from King David to Mississippi jazz and country. As our Master Chef, you don't just sustain us, you delight us with the rich flavors and sweet aromas. Through and beyond our senses, may we feel your presence, see your glory, taste your abundance, and hear the prophetic voice of our artists.

Amen.

DEMENTIA

by Megan Jordan

Her hazel eyes, they shine with love and joy
Her radiance is equal to the sun
Her heart's just big enough for this tomboy
Her tenderness can never be outdone

Baking cake on Sunday afternoon
Or cookies in the evening just because
She never failed to let us lick the spoon
And rarely ever did she fuss

But Nature has played on us a dirty trick
Erasing the memories that we made
Backwards the clock begins to tick
Memories, they slowly start to fade

In my heart our memories are prized
But in your eyes I am unrecognized



Yellow Sunflower Jonathan Sims

BOTTLE TREE

by Garry Breland

I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a bottle tree;

A tree that patiently bides its time
Until someone finishes a bottle of wine;

A tree that bares its arms in prayer
That someone will place a bottle there;

A tree that neither buds nor blooms
But turns a garden into a peaceful room;

Upon whose bottles raindrops dance
And sunbeams sparkle when they have a
chance

Poems are made by fools like me
But people with soul make bottle trees.



Green Bottles with Flowers Jonathan Sims

GOD GETS AN A

by Jimmy McCay

I never thought while in college majoring in business in the late 1960's and early 1970's that a door would open that afforded me the opportunity to teach school, especially at the college level. I had prepared myself for the business world and thought I had the knowledge to achieve lofty goals.

It was in the fall of 1971 that I received a call from Dr. Joseph Ernest, Jr., academic vice president of William Carey College, inquiring as to my interest in teaching. I had graduated from Millsaps College in Jackson, MS, a Methodist school and bitter rival with Carey on the basketball court. I was not only a lifetime Methodist, but a Methodist preacher's kid. This Baptist seemed desperate as school was to start on the next Monday, and this was the Friday before. God has a sense of humor, and I was offered the job.

The college was on the semester system, and teachers taught five different classes each semester. The business department consisted of an accounting

teacher, a secretarial office teacher, and myself. Dr. Ernest handed me five books and gave me a pat on the back. I did not fit the erroneous stereotype image I had of a college professor. I was not an avid reader; I enjoyed the outdoors, participated in sports, and was a B student. I knew that Academia had high standards, and expertise in one's field was essential. I studied more in one semester than I thought was humanly possible. I knew that grades were very important to students, and some were quite anxious to find out their grades. One particular incident brought a little humor to the grading experience.

The fall semester started classes a few weeks after Labor Day, got out for the holidays a week before Christmas, and returned in January till fall exams at the end of the month. A religion teacher always gave an exam on the Old Testament right before the Christmas break. The questions seemed exceptionally difficult to this one particular student. He was so frustrated he handed in his paper with the following inscriptions; "GOD only knows the answers to these questions – Merry Christmas!" The teacher returned his test in January with this inscription; "God gets an A; you get an F – Happy New Year!"

Star Maker Dailynn Pipkins



Everyone with arms raised
and children who sing along with fervor
because that's what the adults do
as the adults hold them up as examples
on how to act with a Christ-like love
They read their words from screens
and close their eyes to emote
while peeking occasionally
to remember the words
They repeat the same bridge seventeen times
in hope to build up a sense of belonging
in every repetition

Do any of us really feel anything
or is it just a desperate attempt to find meaning?

They whisper quietly to each other
passing change through the pew
so the children can have the honor
of handing over the offering
They beg for first-timers
to make themselves known
as they crouch down lower
to not be noticed
They serve coffee to reach a modern crowd
and complain in whispers
about all the new carpet stains

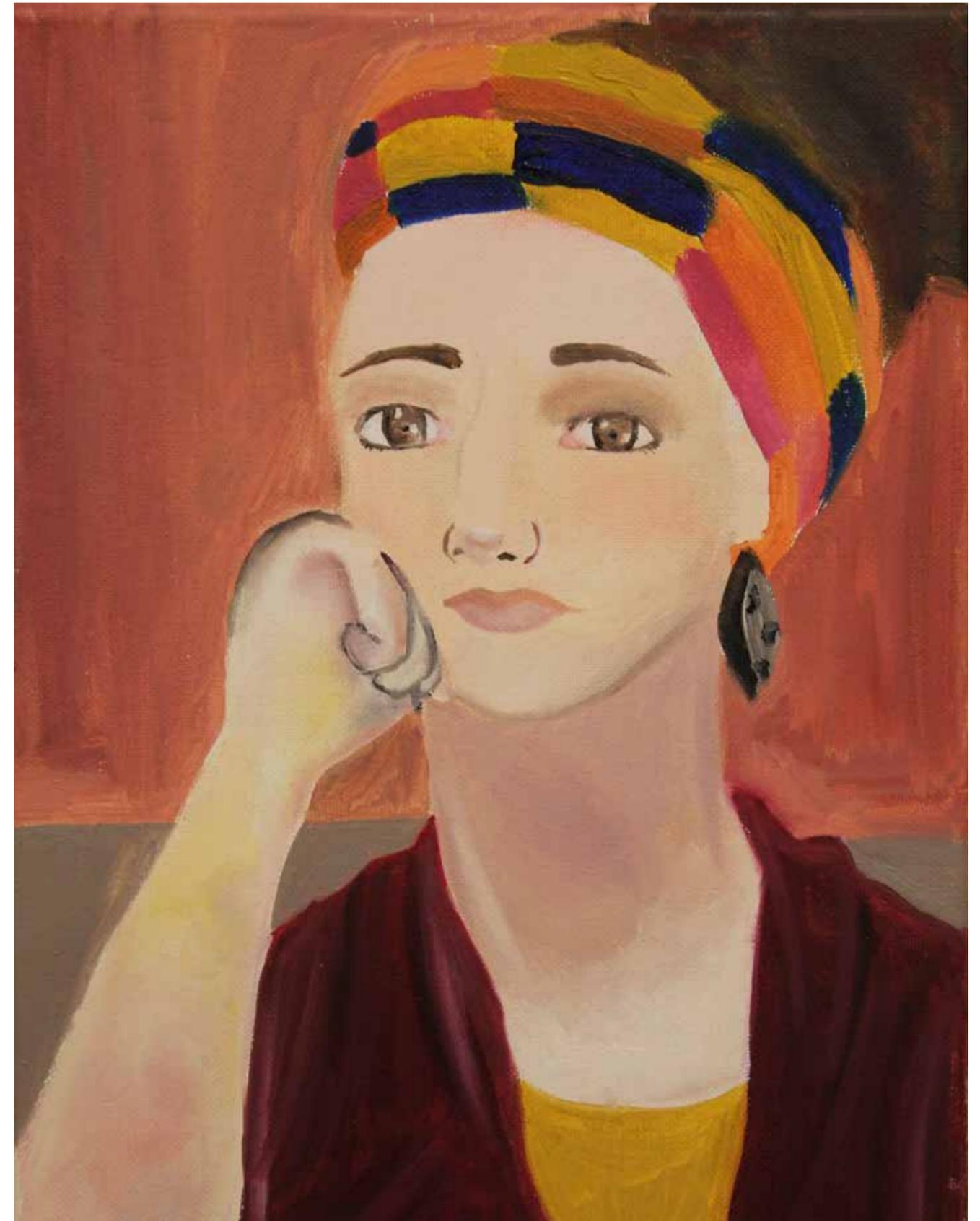
Do we really feel anything?
or is it a desperate attempt to find meaning?

He tells a joke
that is followed by an obligatory chuckle
The message is rated
on the quality of the alliteration
in the three bullet points
that will continue for the next six weeks
Pens raised ready
for the next important line
to note it forever
and never looked upon again

There is no meaning
and we are alone

MUNDANE

by Deborah Nevill



Thoughtful Girl Briana Bradley

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

by Jestine Milsap

For wisdom is a defense, and money is a defense: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

*Mindful thoughts are influenced
Lifestyle is vanity*

And the purpose was created by the one and only creator of the universe.

*The statement of human kind
"I am only human"*

Allows wondering of desires and vexation towards the Spirit.

*The cultural of laughter at battle in this time
Suffering becoming jolly
Humankind becoming folly
In the sight and hearing between fools and greatness.*

*Actions of a hero
A man or woman thoughtful act
The tears of the broken*

Have a connection with the wisdom at heart.

Lack of joy, lack of happiness, lack of accomplishments,

Causing human beings to curse their purpose and perish from the lack of knowledge.

Ecclesiastes 7:12



Fairy Lights
Jonathan Sims

DID ICARUS LAUGH?

by Allison Chestnut

Did Icarus laugh in bright delight, until the zenith of his flight demurred to jealous gravity, his feathered falling waxed to melted mirth? No higher he had overflown, though many others farther fell.

Did knowing he was first to fly, solace and then satisfy his destined aqueous impact into myth? Did women clothed in supplicance, scrub then sweep the detritus of one more man's experiment's demise?

A woman's feet are earthly things and bear their burdens bare soles on the ground. Stripped of robe-clad softer parts, she binds to Adam's bone. No need for stolen feathers, she soars as one with swan and dove from earth to God.

Feathers Jonathan Sims



NOSTALGIA

by Deborah Nevill

mud clumped on her bicycle
laughter as it spun off the wheels
onto her naked brown back

UNDERGROUND

by Deborah Nevill

More than anything
I want to remember
the scent of your leather jacket
at 2am in the hotel lobby
as we ate corner-store candy

I want so badly to separate
who you were and who you became
but you were always capable
of the sins you committed



Obscure (Light)
Lindsey Jones

WEARY BONES

by Chloe Wicker

My bones cry out for mercy
As I break them yet again
Always remodeling, improving:
I leave no time for healing.

My heart begs for tenderness
As I cage its beating frailty.
Love cannot penetrate steel
(But neither can heartache).

My muscles weakly strain
As I push them farther still,
Never stopping long enough
To be wounded or be saved.

My mind demands surrender
As I erect another wall.
See these lovely windows
Of diamond impenetrable?

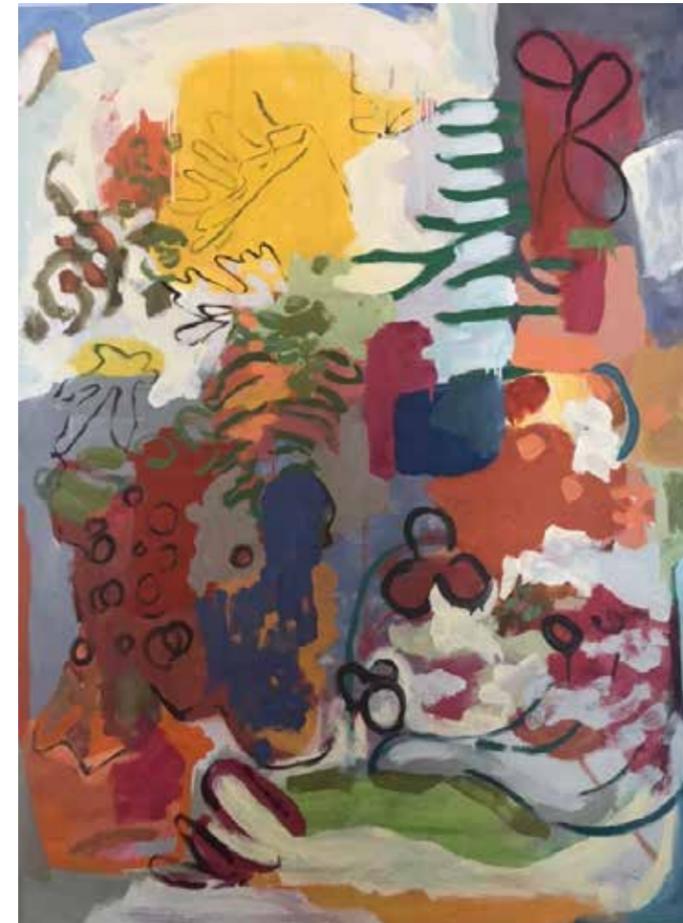
My soul craves resolution
As I reject before rejection.
Too strong, too loud, too intense,
Somehow always far too much.

My being collapses in shame
As I languish in muddled identity.
Being both closed and transparent:
I just want to close my eyes.

ELEMENTALS

by Taylor Riels

Nothing so gentle as a wayward breeze—
Petals and leaves dance through the skies.
Swirling tempest consumes all things with ease,
Roaring and howling like angered sirens' cries.
Softly she flows, granting all the world life—
Beautiful and pure, those bright crystal waves.
She rages and churns, leading all to strife;
Crashing and flooding with treacherous rage.
Dancing bright flame, brave against the darkness,
Is the beacon of light guiding your path.
But without control, raging and reckless,
The blaze sears all, such with anger and wrath.
Waxing and waning—stark duplicity—
This power of God: its own entity.



Greenhouse
Chatham Kemp

UNTITLED

by Ariel Jones

Your eyes promise me a beautiful soul,
This beauty I have never seen before
I am the first one to see it unroll,
This purity in you is evermore.

Should you ever leave this world without me,
All my love would have nowhere else to go.
So my destruction is what is to be,
My only prayer is time will be slow.

Oh time, how you endlessly play your games
Your promise of sweet was never complete.
Time is not your true name, as you proclaim.
Your name is thief; thievery is deceit.
Time will fail, unbeatable is our love,
And nothing else, shall ever rise above.

OFFERTORIUM PIE JESU

by Allison Chestnut

The Word became Flesh and Dwelt for a while Among Us-
St. Augustine Retreat Center, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

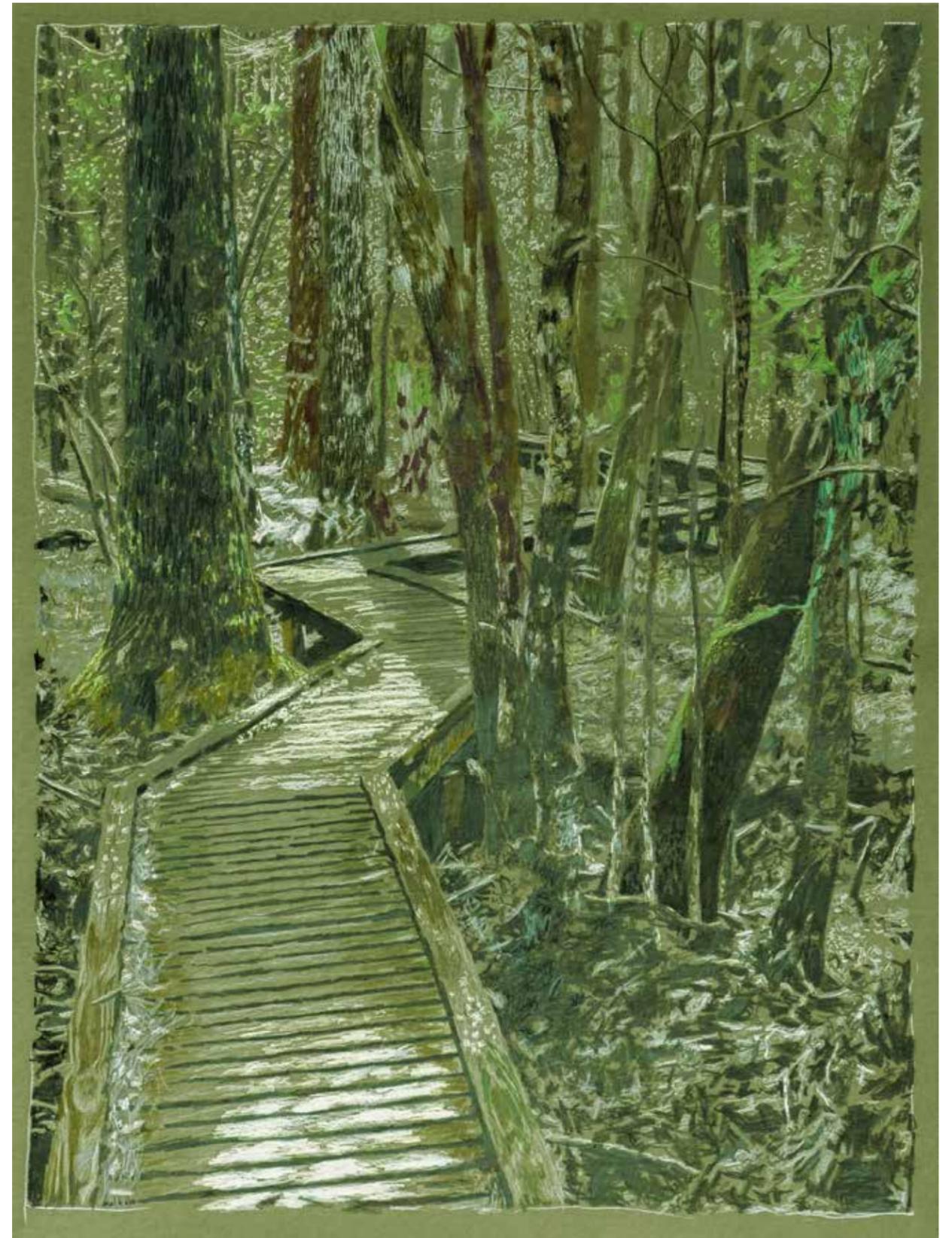
By rows of pines, like grayed Rapunzels
(far too old to care if errant Charmings
break remaining magic spells)
I park my car and with one lock
separate myself from leaking roof,
and rotting floors, and ailments doctors
cannot seem to name. excellent

Cloistered from the world
is my sole cell. Alone, but for a wooden man
immobile on a wooden cross too large for
Christ in life to carry very far, I vigil for the
mockingbird whose aural incense calls
again the newly resurrected dawn. Christ
finds Himself crucified again.
He sees not me.

What is the godlikeness in me that
strains for the God of Him? This thing that I
cannot name, cannot place, except for the
ache when wresting with ideas against which
better sophists scribble code that whole schools
cipher separately?

What is this thing I cannot name, cannot place
except as a god-knowing?

I am flesh becoming word.



Forest Boardwalk Ed Ford

DUALITY

by Kimberly DeLorenze

House dark
Streetlight through blinds
I sift through the drawer
For a pen

Leave a note on the table
Grab my bags
Click the door
Drive away from us

To find me again

God Module Greg Dearman



ONWARD

by Chloe Wicker

Thoughts flit through my head.
Dusty slides on an old projector
Click from one to the next,
Switching without my consent.

Ideas bombard relentlessly,
Waves pelting me in the face
Rapidly, too closely together
My lungs are forgetting to breathe.

Moving above the quicksand
Weighed down by sundry choices
Allowing no chance to hit pause.
Step softly, but always run fast.

Two paths, one path, no path:
The way is twisted and lonely.
Fog emerging from emptiness
Offers nothing but blindness.

*Conquer one battle, oh warrior.
Stay steady in stride—never hasty.
Slides and waves flying faster,
Yet footsteps falling more firmly.*

*Rise, rise! The quicksand retreats.
The dense fog disperses, so onward!
Let feet move in trust and in faith,
The path, though twisting, is there.*

Endless motion thrusts me forward
Body strives to keep up with the soul.
Running faster with nothing before me
Save my hand extended and ready

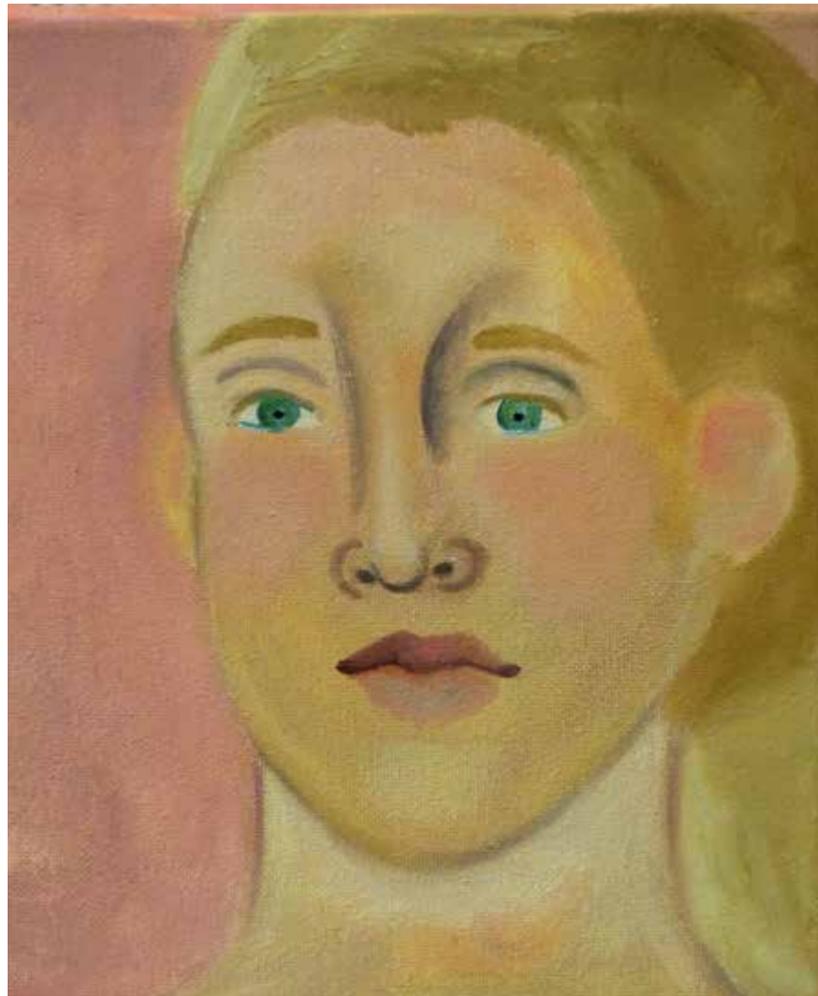
Reaching out to push every door
Awaiting the opening of one
Ever new doors appear in my vision:
Holding firm or opening decisively.

Let the slides and waves cease their shifting
Long enough for me to see through.
Give me time to breathe and rest my legs:
Hope tells me, Be patient, warrior.

*Persistence will be your guide
Knock, and the door will be opened.*

Deep Sea Fiend John-Paul Pierce





Jessie Briana Bradly

IMAGINARY INTIMACY

by Allison Chestnut

Frost had his lover's tiff with
The world. I have my own
Dispute. Moving out of step
As one without a drum, or as
Soloist without a stage, I play
To empty table, house, and bed.
Let me sing beside others bathed
In harmony. Let me feel sound
The way water kisses unclothed
Skin, its liquid motion feather
Parts I never knew had sense.
Let me no longer be the other but
As us, with intimacy more durable
Than vibrating overtones

BOOKS OF WISDOM

by Jared Best

This has come to be:
Illiteracy takes its hold -
Books of wisdom are left unsold.
If the truth hurts, don't look.
Close the pages of that open book.
Can't you see?
We're blind by choice.
Just so we can hear our voice.
Avid readers of right and wrong
Have gone amiss for far too long.
And all for the sake of conformity.

LOVE, YOURS TRULY

by Michelle Thompson

Look carefully and you will see.
One love that never set me free,
Vicious was your love in my life,
Ending it with a sharpened knife,
You stole my heart from me that day,
On a silver tray it does lay,
Unboxed and bleeding right in there,
Ripped out without a single care,
Still you think you are in love,
That kept me to you like a glove,
Resewing up my empty chest,
Unable to find peace and rest,
Longing for someone to save me,
Yearning for someone less beastly.

Neptune (Master Copy) Ciara Fountain





Lost Battleship Ed Ford

FOUND HIM!

by Michael Madaris

I had the great pleasure of travelling a long distance with some much-beloved relatives once. There were also a couple of sisters who were friends of my aunt's, who was the organizer of this particular trip. Our trip involved a fair amount of air travel, which I thought was pretty cool, and ended up in an absolutely beautiful location.

It was on into our time at that location that I realized that the ladies were looking for their brother.

A few decades before this particular trip, most people in this country had never heard of this particular place.

But that changed suddenly. Events that occurred there on a particular day in that place would soon shape the course of our country as well as of a number of other countries. But thinking about significant world events is easy when one does so at the satellite-view big picture level. It's much more difficult when the impact of those events is experienced up close at a very personal level.

The ladies who were looking for their brother on our trip had heard of the place back then. Their beloved brother lived there. More

precisely, he was stationed there, as an enlisted man in the United States Navy. In fact, a majority of the U.S. Pacific Fleet was headquartered there.

This particular guy was a sailor whose duties were below-deck on a famous battleship.

More precisely, a battleship that was about to become famous, without even leaving the dock.

In fact, that ship is still located there in the harbor next to the pier where it was docked, but it has not been useable in decades. That's where the ladies were looking for their brother.

More precisely, for their brother's name.

On a memorial that stands astride the sunken remains of the battleship.

And tragically, that memorial stands over the final resting place of the ladies' brother and a large number of his shipmates, who did not survive the attack—and the sinking of the U.S.S. Arizona—on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. Some 2300 men did not survive that attack.

So, while most of our travel party was standing on the Memorial, looking at the outline of the Arizona (the water's fairly shallow and was crystal clear when we were there) and the oil that was still slowly seeping out of the sunken ship despite the attack having been a few decades earlier, the two sisters were carefully examining the list of names of the men who lost their lives on December 7, 1941. The names are engraved there inside the memorial.

Suddenly, one of the sisters exclaimed "Found him!"

Even a clueless jr. high guy like me caught the deep emotion in the exclamation. She was pointing at the name. The two sisters simply stared at

their brother's name for quite a while, ran their fingers back and forth over it, chased some memories from days gone by, and wiped away tears.

My aunt explained to me that they had found their brother's name. The rest of our group walked away and quietly looked at the ship's outline and out at the beautiful harbor again.

A few days ago was December 7. I spent a fair amount of time on that day, as I often do, remembering two very sweet ladies from west Alabama who "found" their brother, by finding his name etched in stone on a monument standing in Pearl Harbor over the remains of a battle ship that contains his remains and the remains of a large number of other young men who served their country by taking an oath, putting on a uniform, and getting on a ship. Just over 2,300 people died that day in that place. Millions more would die in the next few years. But those two sweet ladies were not thinking at the geo-political level on that day.

They were just remembering a beloved, long-lost brother.

Also on December 7, I think of one of my favorite Bible promises that says, "They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." Haste the day, Lord! But until then, thank you for men and women who don uniforms and climb aboard ships, planes, tanks, jeeps, etc. and move toward danger. And I pray for wisdom for those in positions of high authority that they would be wise in their deployment of the men and women of our armed forces. One day, there won't be any more sisters looking for their lost brother's name on a war memorial. I can't wait!



Jekyll Island Gull George Chaix

SHALL I NOW LAMENT THE SINGER OF SUMMER?

by GARRY BRELAND

Shall now I lament the singer of summer
 Nightingale in full-throated ease
 Who 'mid shadows green, without number
 Flung happily his song upon the breeze?

And I wonder might it prove to be
 The raven at the chamber door
 With an unhappy poet brought to his knees
 At the mournful cry of Nevermore.

Perhaps across the ocean tide
 With wings that herald mariner's loss
 Under sun from which no one can hide
 Sinks the God-forsaken albatross.

Good chance on he who flung his soul
 The damnable die at last may fall
 Despite his joy midst gloom and cold
 Yon aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small.

Few would sorrow over the swan
 That on poor Leda prompted sighs
 Feathered glory beneath her trembling palms
 Wings, webs, and bill, on her nape and thighs.

Or the blackbird singing in the night, take
 These broken wings and learn to fly
 Might, with four and twenty, have been baked
 In the king's own blackbird pie.

But God save us if it should ever be
 That twice-sent dove who brought the sprig
 Of fresh green leaves from an olive tree
 Releasing Noah and creatures from an arken brig.

Birds of a feather may flock together
 But it always makes me groan
 That so many have to die in pairs
 So two birds can be killed with one stone.

With acknowledgements (or apologies) to John Keats, E. A. Poe, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Hardy, W. B. Yeats, Paul McCartney, Mother Goose, and the Book of Genesis. And to Ms. Rikki McMillan who helped us learn poetry in high school.

102918
 by Kierra Dowdy

I find beauty in destruction
 while many find it in forms of perfection

 not the unraveling holes of your sweater
 the anger of the weather
 not the crack within the glass
 the scar of the soldier's past
 not a chain car collision
 the collected pain kept behind her vision
 not the aged and flaked nail polish
 the stories her tears tell of the devilish



After the Party Dailynn Pipkins

102518
 by Kierra Dowdy

you won. once again.
 you're fierce, frightening, and caged for the best.

but you were never meant to stay confined far from the wheel.

you bent the bars and claimed the throne. a triumph to end rest.

but you won't keep silence, for you have a stance of steel.

I always fear you, but when I'm you I'm fearless
 once again, I'll let you free

but this time, it will be we.

NOT AN AGE FOR SAVING

by Richard Boada

A man directs his eyes their way
but keeps head still, transfixed
in conversation. "They're assassins.
And there go the investigators. They eat
breakfast at Walker's every Tuesday."
His dark skin signals restlessness. Goose pimples
salute hot January sun. Ribs, ship beams
under construction, rise visible through white
sleeveless cotton tee. His heavy work jeans
bunch and squint around the ankles. We enter
the cigarette shop and his organs
relax. He breathes, buys a copy of the paper. We play
the national lottery on the counter. The copper bell
on the door pings. He clutches
my forearm, the coin stutters on the ticket
like flat chalk on sidewalks. Gray shavings spill
on the floor. He whispers that we could smuggle
ourselves out of the country with the winnings.
It's an old habit. I remind him there's no need.

We're not refugees. We carry American passports

Naranja Tessa Rose



Haiku

WITHOUT

A CAVERN NOW HUSH'D
STILL IN WANT OF FILLING LIFE,
A DAY WITHOUT JOY

BY PEYTON MANSFIELD

WARMTH

AMBER LIGHT SCATTERS,
THE ONLY WARMTH IN CRISP NIGHT
ROMANCE IN HER EYES

BY PEYTON MANSFIELD

HOMELAND

WALKING AROUND AFRICA
WITH THE WILDLIFE OF A DREAM
I MISS THE HOMELAND

BY BENTON LEWIS

IN LIGHT OF AUTUMN

SKY OF ORANGE AND RED.
THE LEAVES MIRROR IT, THUSLY,
FOR THE SUN MUST REST

BY KARISS HAYMES

MIMICRY

SHINING SUNFLOWERS
MIMIC THE BRIGHT RISING SUN
FROM MORNING TO NIGH

BY KAYLEE MAZERES

LEAVES ORANGE AND YELLOW
BEAUTIFUL FIERY AUTUMN
MOUNTAIN BURN WITH COLOR

BY ANONYMOUS

SPRINGTIME

LIGHT FILLS THE GARDEN
THE FRESH SNOW BEGINS TO CRY
A NEW LIFE IS SOON

A SECRET WAITING
COLORS BLOOM ONLY IN PATIENCE
SPRING MEEKLY CALLS OUT

BY SAVANNAH CROSBY

NATURAL DISASTER

AN OCEAN IN RAGE
TAKES OVER THE SANDCASTLES
THEY HAVE NO MERCY

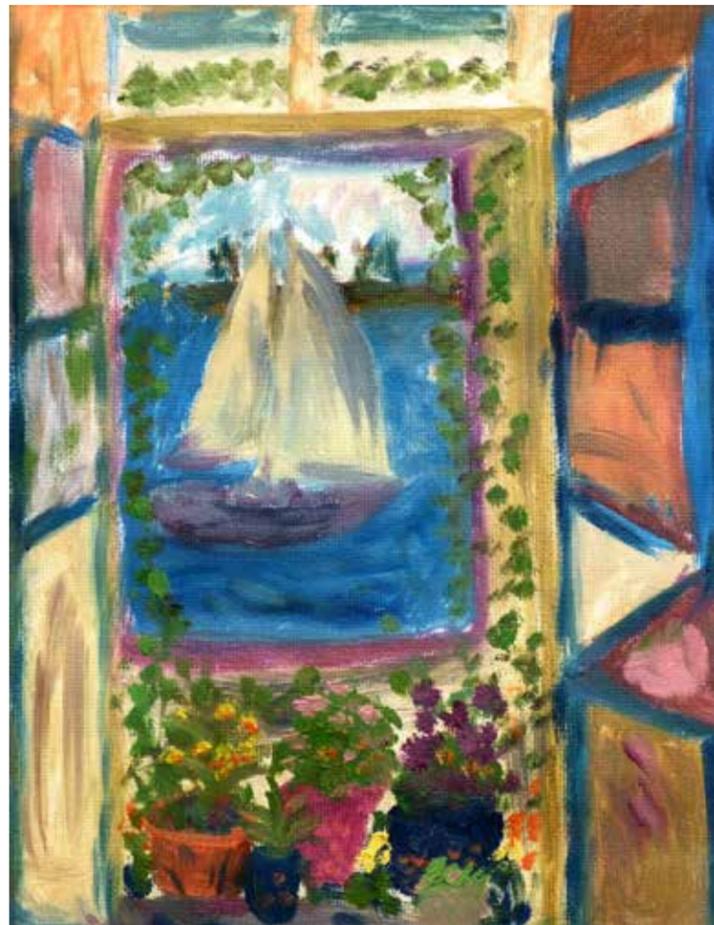
THE PULL OF A WAVE
THE GRAINS CANNOT WITHSTAND IT
SO THEY FALL, LEVELLED.

BY KARISS HAYMES

Rhythms in Gray Jessie Parker



Toward Matisse Bill Westling



TRUTH

CRYSTALLINE WATERS
CRACKING, SPILLING COLORED WORDS
LET THE TRUTH COME FORTH

BY LOGAN DAY

HELP

I'M TRYING TO WRITE A POEM
BUT IT'S JUST NOT WORKING
I NEED HELP PLEASE

BY ZOE JOHNSON

ONE

MY HEAD HURTS TO THINK
THAT YOU WILL BE THINKING AT
THIS MOMENT OF ONE

BY MARIO ALVARADO

SAND IN BETWEEN TOES
SALTY WAVES CRASHING TO SHORE
STORM CLOUDS ROLLING IN

BY ASHTON SKELTON



Ciphers Read Diket

FORGIVEN

A MAN ON THE CROSS
ETERNAL WEIGHT OF OUR SIN
WE ARE FORGIVEN

BY KENDALL THERIOT

EMBRACE

DECEMBER SUNSHINE,
WARM SHELTER IN COLD RAINFALL,
A GOOD FRIEND'S EMBRACE

BY PEYTON MANSFIELD

BLOSSOM

FOR HE IS RAINING
IN HER DESERTED GARDEN
HER THOUGHTS NOW BLOSSOM

BY DAILYNN PIPKINS

DRIP DRIP

SUN'S HEAT BRIGHTLY BLASTS
FROZEN SNACK DRIPS TOWARDS EARTH
SALT WATER DRIPS FROM EYES

BY CORBIN BROWN

DELIGHT

THE ICE IS MELTING
AS THE SUN RAYS BEAM DOWNWARD
WATER DOWN DELIGHT

BY RAYAH SPINKS

CLEANSING

GENTLE WATER WAVES
FALLING INTO CHILDREN'S SOULS
AS A CLEANSING BATH.

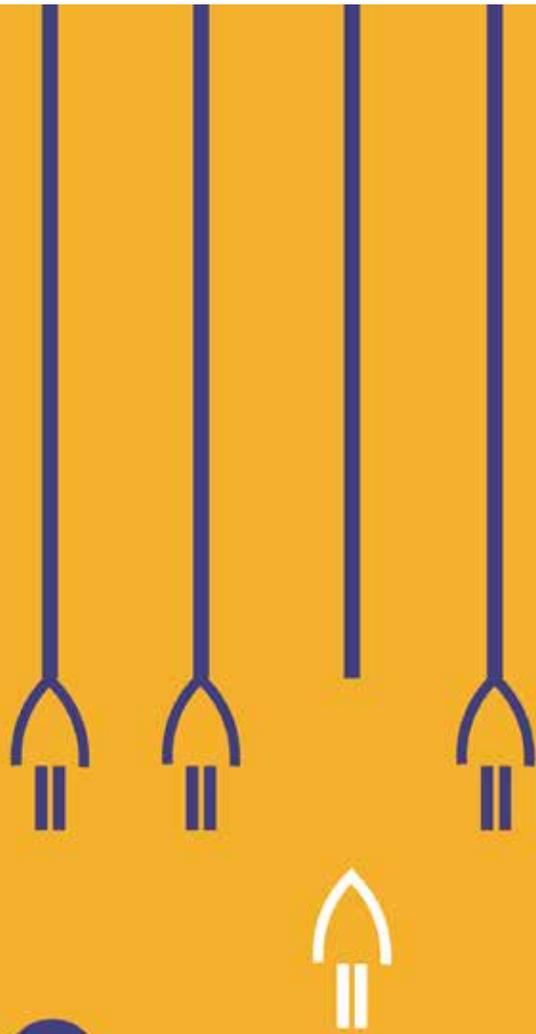
BY CLAUDETH GONZALEZ

THE VEIL OF WARMNESS
EMBRACE THE OPEN WATER
CALMLY AND QUIETLY

BY SABRINA GOETZEN



Jekyll Island Gull Egret George Chaix



UNPLUG

WITH A GOOD BOOK.



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