

ICONOCLAST

DAEMEN COLLEGE



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ICONOCLAST

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title and Author Page Numbers

Non-fiction

“The Rogerian Model of Argument in the Civil Rights Movement”
by Rebecca Chilelli 6

Fiction

“The Heretic of Cooke County” by Gary Reddin8
“Storm Warning” by Jordan Hunt19
“Mother Meth” by Mark Antony Rossi 21

Poem List

“Tree” by Corey Maher23
“No Man’s Land” by Josh Smith 24
“Open Windows” by Clayton Fitcher 24
“I Met You in the Brickhouse” by Hannah Miller 27
“Reservation and Preservation” by Carolyn Grant 28
“My Angel” by Annamarie Tedesco29
“A Wild Figure Motioning” by Devon Balwit30
“Black Rose” by John Raleigh 31
“Proof Poem” by Rachel Robles Saeger32
“My Favorite Bruises are Under Blue Skies” by Kelly Ferreira 33
“A Simple Sunday Morning” by Marissa V Battaglia34
“Saturday Nights” by Ricardo Luciano 35

The lyrics expressed on every song inspire us to be better,
to believe in the impossible and to reach beyond our eyes can see.

Ode Poems

Ode to the Teacup” by Marissa V Battaglia.....	36
“Ode to my Pencil” by Karin Nilsson	38
“Ode to Breakfast” by Isaiah Utley	40
“Ode to My Hair” by Kyonna Stevens	41
“An Ode to My Glasses” by Anna Nicolia	43
“An Ode to Music” by Geraldo Polanco	44

Cover Art

Rose Welch
“Los Angeles Lights”

Geraldo Polanco

Ode to Music

What is there to live for if everything we do is full of silence,

the dreadful silence that rings in our ears,

it would just be a reminder of how lonely we are.

To music we owe friendships, love and sadness,

one common song can make long lasting relationships,

And just as effortless makes us depressed and gloomy.

To music we owe tears of joy as well as desperation,

because one beat its able to touch our souls

and transform sadness into joy.

It is subtle yet strong really powerful

as if it wasn't from this world

something so perfect has to be god's doing.

Music is everywhere from orchestras and bands

to every clap, stamp, pop heard on a day.

It comes from within starting with a heartbeat

and extends to outside where we dance to the rhythm of the wind.

It unites us all in an unbreakable bond,

since we are all born musicians,

from the first to the last breath we take,

it might not give us the power to move mountains,

Non- Fiction

Rebecca Chilelli

The Rogerian Model of Argument in the Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement pushed for equal rights for African Americans in the United States. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was a leader of this movement. He advocated for peaceful protests to gain support for the movement. The city of Birmingham, Alabama was reluctant to pass desegregation legislation. In early April, 1963, King and other African American leaders led many “sit-ins and pickets, known as the Birmingham Campaign, aimed at bringing an end to municipal segregation ordinances in Birmingham” (Bass). Because of his organization of and participation in these rallies, King was arrested and taken to Birmingham Jail. On April 12, 1963, in response to King’s actions, eight white Alabama clergymen released a “Public Statement by Eight Alabama Clergymen” condemning the protests and made accusations against King. The clergymen called the demonstrations “unwise and untimely” (Carpenter et al 400). They felt that King’s protests would set back the progress that Birmingham was trying to make in the Civil Rights Movement. They also felt that the protests were causing unnecessary chaos in Alabama and people should only try to negotiate with the government for their rights.

While he sat in prison on April 16, 1963, King wrote his “Letter From Birmingham Jail” in response to the accusations made against him. In the letter, King addressed the clergymen’s concerns about his organization of protests and defended the Civil Rights Movement. King used the Rogerian Model of Argument in the letter. The Rogerian model allows the writer or speaker to connect with his or her audience by finding common ground on which each party’s views are based. In the “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Martin Luther King uses the Rogerian model of Argument to find common ground with his audience in order to prove that his protests were in support of a just cause. King, a reverend, uses Biblical references to connect with the clergymen on a personal level. He also shows his audience that he understands their position and that they should work together to solve the race issues in Alabama. Additionally, King makes logical appeals to show that equal rights for African Americans should be an obvious policy of the United States.

King’s choice of using the Rogerian Model of Argument in the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” is important because it shows that he is willing to understand the white clergymen’s views of the Civil Rights Move-

ment. If he had used another model of argument, like the Classical Model or the Toulmin Model of Argument, King may have come across too aggressive for his audience. Although they are different models of argument, both the Classical and Toulmin models focus on refuting claims that dispute the speaker's specific claim. The Classical model includes an introduction to the claim with a thesis statement, appeals to the audience and a refutation before the conclusion (White and Billings 88). The refutation is important in this model because it shows how the speaker's claim is correct compared to an opposing claim. The Toulmin model also begins with a claim with data to support it. Then, it uses a warrant and backing to support the warrant (White and Billings 118-119). The qualifier is used to show that, even though the claim may not be true in every circumstance, in the specific context, it is true (White and Billings 121). The Toulmin model ends with the rebuttal. The rebuttal disproves conflicting statements to show that the claim is true. It needs to disqualify the opposing statements in order to prove that it is true.

The Rogerian Model of Argument begins with finding the "shared problem" (White and Billings 136) between the speaker and the audience. This shows that the speaker understands the viewpoint of the audience. Then, the Rogerian model shows in what ways the speaker and audience disagree and ways they agree. Finally, the speaker gives different options for ways that the issues can be solved (White and Billings 137). The Rogerian model is based on common ground and seeing the issues from the audience's opposing views. King's methods of protest were not violent or used to cause harm to the community. King uses this model because it reflects his ideas of peaceful protests and civil disobedience. If he had used a manifesto like the Black panthers, for example, it would not have had the same impact on his audience. His peaceful ideals conflict with the Black Panther Party's ideals. The Black Panthers believed that violence could be used to obtain equal rights. They used manifestos to outline their goals, which demanded the changes that they wanted to happen. Their manifestos placed blame on the government and all white people for the injustices in America ("Black Power"). If he had used the Classical or Toulmin models in a manifesto, he would have come off as antagonistic or as if he was challenging the clergymen's point of view. King does not try to place blame on others for the injustices in Alabama. He is refuting the claims the clergymen made against him, but he is also showing how they could all work together to solve the problems of inequality in Birmingham.

King begins his letter with, "My Dear Fellow Clergymen" (145). King's audience is the eight white clergymen that said his protests were harmful and unnecessary for the white and African American communities.

Anna Nicolia

An Ode to My Glasses

Ray Bans, O, Ray Bans

My sweet, sensational second pair of eyes

Not only are you fashionable,

You give me the gift of sight.

Clairvoyance, perhaps.

Without you, O, Ray Bans,

The world would be a blur.

Distance would be unfathomable

The many wonders of creation would evade me.

What would I do without you, beautiful glasses?

Would I go stumbling around Earth?

Without you, I would be unable to see the twinkling glimpse into the future,

Unable to view the horizon, unable to view the natural world itself.

Viewing the universe as a flat, monotone structure.

Without you, I would cease to exist

In the glittering world as I know it today.

You provide me the magic I need to function

Your wand, your frames, your lenses, control me.

O, Ray Bans

You provide me one fifth of my senses

You fill my heart with hope.

Modern, chic, anti-reflective

My peers don't know I got you,

O, expensive Ray Bans,

With a delightful discount from my health insurance.

Without you, would I succumb to depend solely on my contacts?

Insurance does not discount them like they discount youA

dry-eyed, itchy existence.

Ray Bans, O, miraculous Ray Bans

Every morning,

Waking up without you

Is obscure, hazy misery---

Until I tuck you behind my ears;

Sight.

The sassiness in your sway'
Is fiercer than a model walking down the runway

The hot comb rakes

You

Into sizzling lines

You bring me back to my roots literally
Combing you sometimes feels like a brillo pad
Washing the dishes

I dye you all different colors
To match the style
You are a queen to my castle
The one that holds down the fort
Without you I wouldn't be Me!

He establishes a connection between him and his audience to start the process of finding common ground. From the beginning, he shows that he has the same religious and moral beliefs as his audience. King makes a special effort to appeal to his clergy audience so they will understand his argument, which he does by making Biblical allusions. King says that the laws that prevent African Americans from having equal rights are against the laws that God made. He says "A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law" (King 149). Because the laws enforcing segregation are immoral, they are unjust. Segregation laws were not like the laws created by God. King appeals to the religious beliefs of his audience. He shows that he believes in the word of God and what God would want. By doing this, King shows the clergymen that their shared beliefs should allow them to agree that the laws that limit the rights of African Americans are unjust.

In the "Public Statement by Eight Alabama Clergymen," King is accused of taking extreme measures in his protests. They said that King incited "hatred and violence" (Carpenter et al. 401). But, this was not the way that King worked to gain equality or the intention of his protests. In response to this, he says "Was not Jesus an extremist for love: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you' " (King 152). King shows that his protests were not out of hate for his oppressors, but for the love of his people. Using love, and not violence, is what King's protests were based on. This Biblical reference connects King's actions with the actions of Jesus. Both King, a reverend, and his clergy audience could relate to and believe in Jesus's teachings. Jesus did not use hate to spread his message. King did not use violence or incite hate between African Americans and white people and the government. The clergymen can appreciate that King would turn to his faith to help the African Americans in the United States gain equal rights.

Part of King's argument can be seen as non-Rogerian because of the way he starts to condemn the church. He says "I have been so greatly disappointed with the white church and its leadership. Of course, there are some notable exceptions. [...] But despite these notable exceptions, I must reiterate that I have been disappointed with the church" (King 153). Although he does point out a few exceptions to the church's acceptance of segregation, he groups the rest of the members of white churches together as the problem. He even says that leaders of churches are telling their parishioners to just comply with segregation laws so they do not get in

trouble (King 154). King's audience that expands from the eight specific clergymen may have been offended by his accusation. This could cause the negative effect of the clergymen refusing to support King's position. This passage is un-Rogerian because it moves away from discussing the points of common ground between speaker and audience.

For the rest of his letter, King stays with the Rogerian Model of Argument. Although King slips in an un-Rogerian element to his letter, his overall Rogerian message makes up for it by sending the message of working together to reach a common goal. He shows his audience that their concerns are valid, but that they can work together to make sure their fears are not realized. His claim says that both sides agree change needs to happen and they need to find a safe way to do it. In agreeing with the clergymen, King says "It is unfortunate that demonstrations are taking place in Birmingham, but it is even more unfortunate that the city's white power structure left the Negro community with no alternative" (146). He acknowledges his and the clergymen's opinion that the need for protests is unfortunate, but also suggests the need to start changes in society so the protests are no longer needed. Another Rogerian element to King's argument is that he shows the limits of the clergymen's solutions. The clergymen want King to obey all laws until new laws can be passed that outlaw segregation. But King knows that this is unlikely to happen quickly, so he says that laws that are unjust should not be followed (King 148-149). King tells the clergymen that their temporary solution to the protests in Birmingham would create more hardships in the long run. If it takes a long time for legislation to be passed, the problem of segregation will get worse and continue to be accepted.

Although King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail" is a Rogerian argument, he does use Aristotelian appeals to provide evidence as to why his audience should support his position. King appeals to logic to prove that it should be a given fact that African Americans deserve equal rights. He says "In your statement you assert that our actions, even though peaceful, must be condemned because they precipitate violence. But is this a logical assertion? Isn't this like condemning a robbed man because his possession of money precipitated the evil act of robbery?" (King 151). Criticizing King's protests is like reprimanding a victim of a crime for somehow enticing the criminal to commit that crime. King is saying that African Americans were only protesting because they were denied their rights. Condemning King's protests is unjust because it is not his, or any other African American's, fault that they

Kyonna Stevens

Ode to my Hair

From the thick texture of the roots
To the spiral curl pattern at the tips
I cherish you

You keep me warm during the wicked winters
You protect me from the scorching summers
You treat me right you give me confidence to be strong

The length of you isn't long but when I sew on more
I feel like I belong

Dealing with you is sometimes a battle scene I was forced to rehearse
What's wrong with you? Why can't you act right? I'm done with the struggle
I'm too tired to fight.

Nobody seems to be ever satisfied with their own hair
Always wishing that it was thicker,

Straighter

Thinner

Longer

Waiver

Darker

Shorter

Lighter

However, hair I cherish you
You have taken me through many phases in my life
During the dark stormy times, to the endless sleepless nights,

You are beautiful
The wind rustles through you as the sun brings joy

Isaiah Utley

Ode to Breakfast

Oh beautiful breakfast, how underappreciated are thee?

Many things I've done,

Many places I've been,

Many experiences I've had,

but none would be possible without you.

And oh, beautiful breakfast,

how flexible you are!

From your beautiful, fluffy, circular form they call "pancakes"

to the exceptional solid and liquid combination named "cereal"

and even the surprising, greasy food called "pizza".

Whatever shape you take,

you give me energy for the day, and thus,

life.

I don't know what I'd do without you.

Well, actually I do.

I would die.

And thus, breakfast,

that is why I appreciate thee.

How could one not?

Without you, the Earth would be bare,

the human race, gone.

Therefore,

I appreciate you entirely because,

you are the reason I am alive.

are not allowed equal rights. It is common sense for people to fight for the rights that are withheld from them, but allowed for others. Instead of saying that King's protests are wrong, they should be saying that people who support segregation and inequality for African Americans are wrong.

King also makes another logical appeal that is connected with an ethical appeal. He discusses the reaction of police forces to his protests and what impact that has on the Civil Rights Movement. He says "It is true that the police have exercised a degree of discipline in handling the demonstrators [...] But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation" (King 156). King appeals to logic by asking why the police, who are supposed to keep order, must break up peaceful protests when all it does is help encourage the inequality faced by African Americans. King then adds, "Over the past few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. I have tried to make clear that it is wrong to use immoral means" (156). King only uses peaceful protests and does not support any violent, or immoral, forms of protest. This ethical appeal makes a plea to the audience's morals because it shows that people who behave morally should not be treated as if they have behaved immorally. King and his fellow protesters did not commit any violent or immoral acts, but they are being treated as though they had. The protesters were trying to protect the rights of their families and the police are also supposed to protect those rights.

King wrote the "Letter From Birmingham Jail" to address accusations from the "Public Statement by Eight Alabama Clergymen" that his methods of protest were harmful, and not helpful, to the African American and Alabama communities. King uses the Rogerian Model of Argument to form a connection with his clergy audience. He uses Biblical allusions and Aristotelian appeals to find common ground with the clergymen so they would understand his position and be open to aiding his efforts in the Civil Rights Movement. King's approach to his letter shows that he wanted to work with the clergymen and others in order to give African Americans the rights that they were deprived of for so long. The reason King was such an influential member of the Civil Rights Movement is that he never stopped trying to include all people in the fight for equal rights. In his letter, King makes it clear that he wants to work with the clergymen to create equality in the United States for African Americans and white people. In responding to their statement, King shows that he cares about working with the people that oppose him to change America for the better. He hopes for equality for all and cooperation from others to make a more accepting world.

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Compressed carbon

My dearest pencil

Without you, I wouldn't be whole

Karin Nilsson

Ode to my Pencil

Without you, I wouldn't be whole

My dearest pencil

Compressed carbon

Wrapped in wood

With you, you are an extension of my body

You help me reach heights I never thought possible

You become an extra appendage

Hard to live without you

The days where battle after battle rages inside of me

The demons trying to steal my essence

You were there to fight them off

A weapon in my hand

When there is nothing but the empty abyss

You help fill it with life and joy

The words that fly off like migratory birds

Suddenly become trapped in a cage of pictures

All of the feelings I couldn't explain

You illustrate my life

One picture at a time

Bringing comfort and understanding

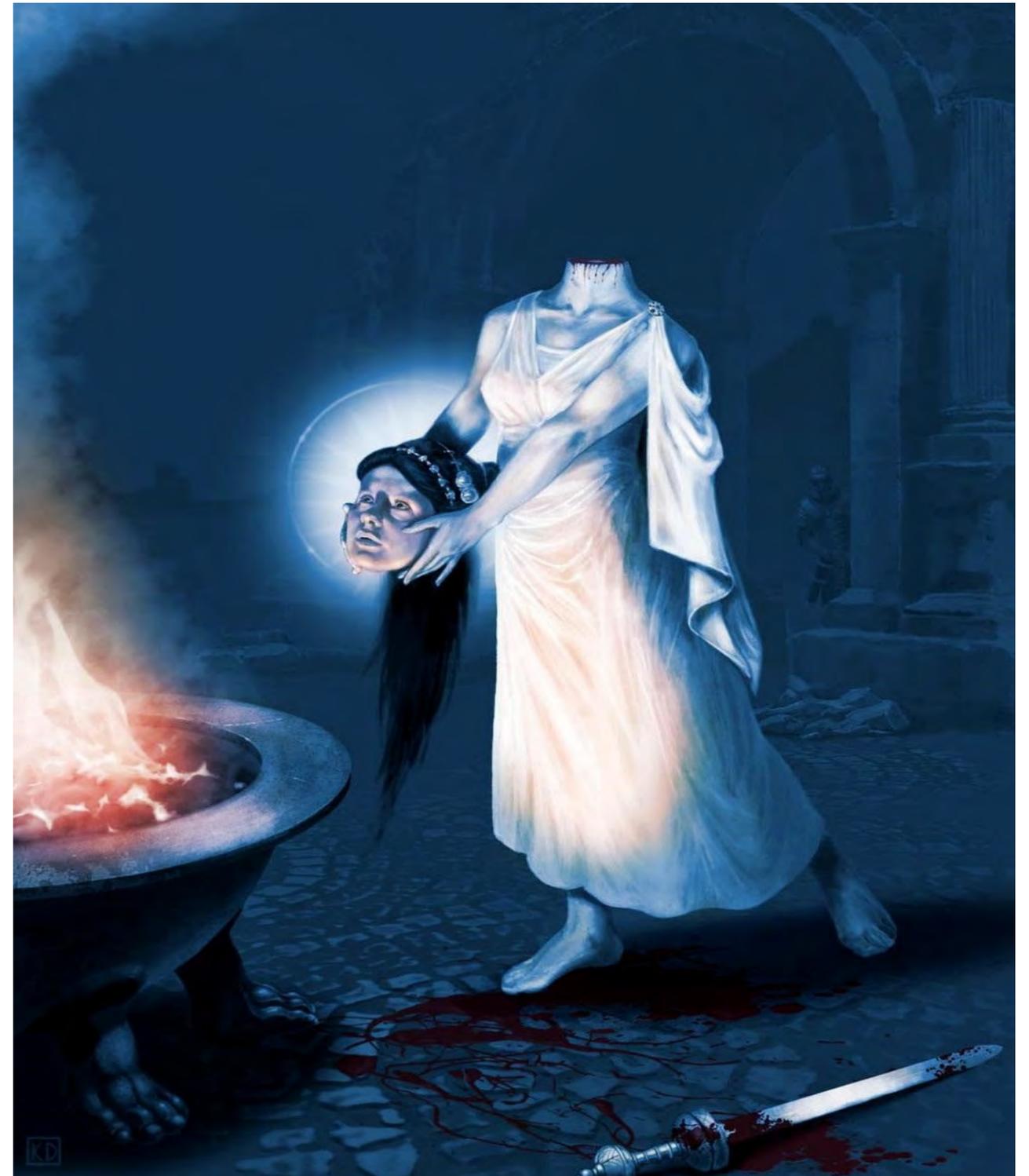
You are an instrument

Composing the music that moves me

From happiness to sadness

From anger to fear

Wrapped in wood



The Legend of Valerie (St Valerie of Limoge, 4th century martyr) By Kenneth Doyle

Fiction

Gary Reddin

The Heretic Of Cooke County

The day I met Mike Arnold is an interesting story. It's not the one I'm here to tell, but I suppose you need a little backstory to understand what caused him to lay me out in the grass of the park on this Saturday evening. It started a month ago, shortly after my parents had a near fatal brush with death on HWY 9. A semi totaled the car in front of them, killing everyone inside. My parents were fine, physically, but they quickly developed a case of *Sudden Onset Spiritual Revelation*. In their minds, it must have been a sign from God that they weren't killed. I guess God didn't care too much for the folks in the other car.

Which is how, at the age of 17, having seen the inside of a church once for a wedding and once for a funeral, I found myself amidst the congregation of the First Baptist Church of Gainesville. So there I sat, in my tattered jeans and my grungy shirt, in Sunday school. I didn't know much about Church, but I knew I didn't want to be there. So I rebelled against my new lot in life through blasphemous rants and just generally touting my lack of belief. It's not that I was an atheist, I'd never really thought about it before to be honest. I just needed an outlet. Pretty soon I noticed that one person in particular was taking everything I said as a personal affront. So yeah, it's not like I didn't see this coming.

Which brings us back to me looking up into Mike Arnold's face from the ground. Mike is an Ogre. Twelve feet tall with muscles like a Mexican Wrestler and the punch to match. I brought my hand up and felt my cheek getting puffy, like one of those birds that swells up its chest and dances around when it's horny. Mercifully, something about seeing me on the ground nursing a split lip and a swollen cheek must have checked off a box in his tiny little brain, because he didn't hit me again. Sadly, my natural sarcastic impulses took over. I stood up with a wry smile.

"Nice to see you, Mike," I said, or maybe it was, "Hey Mike, how are you?"

Honestly the details are a little fuzzy. As it turns out, he doesn't respond super well to sarcasm. His second jab caught me in the stomach and I deflated like a balloon.

"Not so funny when you can't breathe, huh?"

I had to hand it to the ogre, if there is one way to shut me up it's to punch me in the gut.

in order to make them feel needed.

They must know, when they are broken

they are still loved, for broken glass

is nothing but a wonderful memory.

Ode Poems

Marissa V Battaglia

Ode to the Teacup

Whether scorching or frozen,
this beautifully crafted piece of art
is a home for my tea to rest

Poured ever so slightly
using perfect precision
the tea is sprinkled out
similar to a trickling waterfall

This cup gives my hands a break.
Without this masterpiece
I would use my soft hands to hold
the boiling beverage

This graceful glass saves my hands
from a painful process,
or rather saved from the brittle icicle feeling
of a glacial cup of tea

Dainty and delicate
with the tiniest touch
the cup is shattered

For teacups are parallel to people.
Individuals with their own purpose,
using the precious moments they have when they're at their best,
together and stable,
to help those in need.

Both holding the most important thing they know,

“Listen shithead, I’m tired of you ruining my Sundays.”

“You know, I’m not super happy about it either,” I replied, trying to catch my breath. He pulled me up by my shirt collar so I was looking him in the face.

“Look man,” I said, trying my best not to get punched again, “if I had a choice I’d spend Sunday morning sleeping in, but my parents are making me go to your church, I can’t, exactly, just stop.”

“Well, I guess I’ll just have to beat the devil out of you.”

When I got home my mom put an ice pack on my face and waited for the swelling to go down. I twisted off a story about getting too close to a goose at the park. Which she was buying, until my dad came in and informed her that he’d just spoken to Jack Arnold. Apparently some kids had seen his boy and Jack’s boy fighting in the park. I tried to smooth the situation over by pretending that Mike Arnold actually did resemble a goose. They weren’t buying it. Nor did they care that it was a one sided fight. So I was banished to my room to wait out my punishment. An hour passed, then two, soon the sun had set and I started to get nervous.

I tried distracting myself with video games. I was stuck on a mission where I kept dying over and over again in the same run down, suburban neighborhood. It felt a little too on the nose, so I turned it off and put a Vandals album on, cranking up the volume as loud as I dared. Around 8pm I heard the landline going off in the living room. No one calls the landline but robots and perverts, so no one ever answers it. This time though, the ring cut off midway through its second rattle and I heard my mother’s voice.

“Hello, Brother Thomas,” she said, before trailing off as she moved from the living room to their bedroom. About 20 minutes later there was a knock on my door.

“Come in,” I said over the music. I perked up a little when I saw my mom, the harsher punishments were typically meted out by my dad.

“Casey, can you turn that down a bit?” she asked. “Thanks, so I just got off the phone with Brother Thomas, from the church, and he has helped your father and I realize that punishing you for your fight with Mike wouldn’t be righteous.”

She’s only recently started talking like this, saying things like *that wouldn’t be righteous* or *have a blessed day*. I didn’t respond. I was well trained in suppressing any sarcastic remarks around my parents, a skill I had been employing more and more lately. I just nodded to show I was listening.

“Right,” she continued “So, Brother Thomas suggested God Power classes.”

“Extra church?”

“Don’t think of it as extra church, think of it as focused worship.”

That didn’t really make me feel any better about the idea. Individual bible study with a mentor from my Sunday school class. I shuddered at the thought. I tried negotiation. I offered up my free time, my weekends, even my video games. Every suggestion was met with the same canned reply.

“Those things won’t heal your spirit.”

Sunday school goes down in a small annex at the back of the church. Recliners, couches, and a few bean-bags all lined up in a sort of semi-circle. The awkward religiously themed posters on the walls a mirage of racial diversity. The seats are filled with white faces in perfectly pressed slacks and modest dresses. I looked around the room at the other kids and tried to guess which one would end up being my God Power tutor.

I doubted it would be Mike, who hadn’t acknowledged me since I sat down, just as well I figure. Next to him was the youth pastor. He’d told me his name on my first day, but it didn’t stick. He’s older. Thirty-four or thirty-five maybe, with a pedophile mustache, receding hairline, and a ponytail. I just call him Brother Stranger Danger. If there is a God, I pray he doesn’t stick me with him. On his right, taking up a whole couch to themselves, was a set of triplets I knew of by reputation as ‘The O’doyles.’ Red-haired and freckle faced. Like if the Weasley’s had been Baptists instead of Wizards. When you are the only Triplets in small town Texas there aren’t a lot of people who *don’t* recognize you.

Then there was the only other one I knew by name, Sara. She had let me read along in her bible a couple of times because I never brought my own. She was cute, in that sort of innocent kind of way. I wouldn’t mind her as a mentor.

Beyond that there was a guy who looked a little bit like a young John Belushi. Proving my long standing theory that every group of five or more people needs a John Belushi look-a-like. Then at the far end of the room was a mousy looking girl who always wore the same jean dresses and kept her hair in a bun like she was practicing a to be a librarian. Trying to pick which one might end up being my mentor felt like playing a psychological game of Russian roulette, where Sara was the bullet that could put me out of my misery and everyone else was an empty chamber. I employed the age old tactic of eeny, meeny, miney, mo and landed on the

Ricardo Luciano

SATURDAY NIGHTS

Let’s give our vision a rest
Turn off the lights
Our fingers become sight
Guide me
To remove all constraints
And be our natural selves
Your curves
So intense
Yet subtle to the touch
Despite pitch blackness
The moonlight
Can’t hide the caramel skin
I’ve grown accustomed to
My fingers will roam
Your brown canvas
Soft to the touch
I look into your eyes
And say, “I love you”
Without saying a word

Marissa V Battaglia

A Simple Sunday Morning

The rain falls down ever so slightly
Lays in bed and glares out the window
No point in going outside.

Strolls to the kitchen, pours coffee
Addicted to the need to feel awake
Drinking because it's routine.

The mornings seem to be average
Nothing seems to change
Unless the morning is changed

The rain falls down ever so slightly
To stand up, walk outside, feel the rain
Nothing can beat the drops of water

Strolls to the kitchen, pours water
The rain made her feel awake
Took the time to feel alive again

The morning no longer average
Everything seems to change
A simple morning turned extraordinary

second O'Doyle brother.

“Strike one,” I thought.

I started again from the other side of the room and landed on Mike

“Strike two.”

I went again and started from the middle. This time I landed on the librarian-in-training.

“And strike three.”

Sitting in the pews between my parents I surveyed the gathered sheep. I'm not being sarcastic, they called themselves that, I just ran with it. The front few rows seemed to be the realm of the old folks. They did their best to get up each time a prayer was said or a hymn was sung, but they didn't always make it. The next row back seemed reserved entirely for the O'Doyles. They were packed in so tight they were nearly in each other's laps. The parents, then the triplets, a set of twin sisters and a younger boy. The younger families seemed to occupy most of the back rows. My parents, Mike's brood, and a few newlyweds clutching babies to their chests looking frazzled. Sara's family sat in the very back. I risked looking back at her twice, but each time she had her nose buried in a bible. My dad elbowed me gently in the ribs and nodded toward the front.

When the last hymns were sung and the last hands were shaken, we loaded up in my dad's Range Rover and made the pilgrimage to that most holy of spaces, the Pizza Hut down on 12th street. I busied myself with my sacred traditions by heading to the jukebox and playing the one good album they had. *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. Bruce Springsteen's crowning achievement. You know, everyone always praises *Born in the USA* and *Greetings from Asbury Park*, but *Darkness on the Edge of town* is really prime Springsteen. Not to mention how utterly badass he looks on that album cover.

“So, any idea who my God Power mentor is going to be?”

My Dad took a sip of his Diet Pepsi and pretended not to hear me.

“Someone will have to volunteer for it,” Mom said. From the sound of her voice I could tell no one had stepped up yet. The waitress dropped off our order just as “*The Promised Land*” hit the bridge. I won-

dered if she liked Springsteen. I wondered if she was single. I wondered if she liked serving pizza to people like us all day. I wondered if she had a promised land, I wondered if I did, too.

When the doorbell rang I was waiting on the couch. I had spent the last few hours locked in my room contemplating existential quandaries like *how can I get out of this* and *what the hell is a God Power class, really?* I looked across the room at my Mom who, until now, had been engrossed in the nightly news.

“Oh! I guess that’s your ride,” she said before turning back to the TV. I drug my feet across the living room floor, my converse scuffing on the laminate, and opened the door with my most impressive lack of enthusiasm yet.

“Hi, can I help you?”

I didn’t recognize the girl standing in front of me. Her face was mostly obscured by a pair of dark aviator sunglasses.

“I’m here to talk to you about our lord and savior Jesus Christ.”

“What?”

She pushed the glasses up on to her head and I recognized her face.

“Oh, you’re, uh...from the church.”

“Jess,” she said, holding out a slender hand of sharp black nails.

“Right,” I said, shaking it “you sit toward the end. I didn’t recognize you at first with your hair down.” In fact, I still wasn’t sure it was the same girl. From foot to head she had combat boots, a slightly too short skirt, and a low cut V-neck. She dropped her glasses back over her eyes.

“Say good bye, little boy blue,” she said walking back toward the black Honda she had left idling in the street.

I shouted a quick good-bye to my mom and jogged out to the waiting car. When I opened the door my ears were assaulted by the screams of The Damned. I hopped in and she peeled away before I had a chance to buckle in. I soon realized that she had a very loose interpretation of speed limits.

“Welcome to the Black Dahlia,” she said over the music.

the proof of our own infinity,
and the skin-walls of our own hollow bodies.

And the scourging of resurrection will never end.
Purifiers hate the number two,
but the number two makes purifiers – signifiers,
and since two signifiers want only to signify,
they are continuous projections of
purifiers who build their own mapped architecture.

Kelly Ferreira

My Favorite Bruises Are Under Blue Skies
a sonnet for a lover.

There is something about your tired eyes
That draws me in and makes me question you.
I wonder if the bruises do disguise
That you feel day is best when it’s dark blue.

Late in the night I know that I can seek
Your love and comfort, though you’re far away.
Oftentimes I felt as though I was meek,
But I can reach you all hours each day.

I wake in fear and know you’re just a call.
I can feel your warmth as if you’re right there.
The nightmares come and make me cold and small,
But your voice has compassion that it spares.

I am never afraid of the night now –
Because strength you’ve given, and shown me how.

Rachel Robles Saeger

Proof Poem

for Federico García Lorca

To take the wrong road
is to arrive at tautology.
and to arrive at tautology
is to get down on the ground,
and build their mapped architecture

To take the wrong road
is to arrive at an audience;
a silent, smiling audience that sits-
as an opened jewel box –ready,
to be filled with their mapped architecture.

But if tautology takes the wrong road,
then it might meet the testimony of its own dictum,
and since testimony and dictum
share the same lexical origin,
we will have to get down on the ground
and build their mapped architecture.

I saw two empty rooms,
with walls made of skin.
Their contents were execrated by purifiers.
And I saw two women weeping
into each other's eyes-
spherical symbols,
and fathomless signifiers.

But two has never been a number-
because it's only usurped undulation,
It's only speech squandered by secrecy;

So, she named her car after a famous murder victim. Reassuring.

“I...didn't take you for a fan of The Damned.”

“You didn't take me for much of anything, you didn't even know my name.”

So, she'd caught on.

“Well, in my defense, you don't really give off much of a personality at church.”

“I don't need to with you around.”

“What's that supposed to mean?”

“It means everyone thinks you're a dick.”

She blew through a red-light onto the highway and soon we were headed in the direction of the church. I was silent for a while. ‘Everyone’ must have included Sara and that had hurt me a little. I didn't want to come off as the kind of person that cared about that sort of thing though.

“What did you mean back there, when you called me little boy blue?”

The slightest of smiles spread across her face, like she had just thought of the cruelest joke.

We were driving past one of a dozen different mini-malls. The shops were all closed but, as usual, a group of cars was parked in a circle in the lot. The cool kids. That was all they did in this town. Hang out in mini-mall parking lots and drink low-point beer until the cops showed up. She whipped the steering wheel and we took a sharp left into one of the parking lots where they were gathered.

“What the hell!” I shouted.

She floored the accelerator toward the gathered mass of shocked teens. We were going to hit them. I closed my eyes and braced. My body jerked forward as she slammed on the brakes but the belt caught me. I opened my eyes to see that we had stopped just a few feet short of the group.

The driver's side door crashed open and she flew out like a wraith, gliding straight toward a handsome looking guy in a cowboy hat who had his arms thrown around the waist of a short brunette girl. As soon as she saw her coming the girl broke free and found her way to a car on the other side of the group. Jess started screaming at the guy but I couldn't make out what she was saying from inside the car. I got out sheepishly and took a few steps forward. I could make out some of her words now. They were, let's say, colorful.

“Jess, calm down,” I said meekly as I approached them. The handsome cowboy wasn't saying any

thing. He looked petrified. He glanced around at the other kids in the circle but they had all backed away a distance and were watching in muted silence.

“Stay out of this!”

I wanted to. I really did.

“Hey man, call off your bitch,” he had sensed in me a weakness, and diverted his terror in my direction. There was a collective gasp from the circle as the handsome cowboy’s head snapped backwards. In that moment, she should have been saint-like, but all I saw was an angry little girl choking back tears. The world could have ended right there and I might have never known her as anything more. But the silence broke and the sound came roaring back into the circle like an angry god.

We had turn tail and ran as quickly as possible, her peeling out of the parking lot, me holding on for my life trying to get the door closed. Now we were safe. Or at least as safe as we could be with her driving. Main Street was empty. The town was empty. My head was full.

“What was that?”

“Just striking a blow for the matriarchy,” she said, all traces of that angry little girl now gone, back behind the mask. She pulled off her sunglasses and tossed them in the back seat.

“Christ you look tense, here,” she reached across my legs and into the glovebox pulling out a pack of cigarettes.

“There’s a lighter in my purse, down in the floorboard, can you grab it?” I found the leather handle and reached inside gingerly. Thankfully, the lighter was the first thing my fingers found. I tossed it over to her and she put her knees up on the wheel to steer as she lit up a couple cigarettes.

“Smoke?”

“Sure.” I didn’t, but it was clear that I was going to be shot by a cowboy or killed in a fiery car crash before I died of lung cancer, so screw it. I watched the embers burn at the tip of the carcinogen filled paper tube for a moment before I brought the filter to my lips. The first intake was smoke and ash and death. I could taste the fire on my tongue, in my throat. I coughed and choked and flicked the still lit butt out the cracked window as she laughed at me.

“Not much of a smoker, huh?”

John Raleigh

Black Rose

Am I Obsessed?

Deep in the captivating fertile forest in the Dominican is where you can find this rose.

Under a Habana tree the flower is nestled,

Surrounded by nothing but grass and dirt.

She was watered with blood of rebellion.

Not yet blossomed, she grows in beauty.

Her sharp looks and intimidating personality are her thorns.

Scared of being hurt and left alone.

Her thorns are her only protection,

My only obstacle.

But within her pedals a golden hazelnut glow.

Her eyes capture you as you are lost in deep submission and bliss.

Her dark black pedals as black as the Raven’s feather,

But as the sun shines over her, she gives off a radiant ecstasy, that bring everyone in

These onyx pedals smooth and gentle as her personality deep inside.

What beauty and time went in to making this delicate botanical being.

How can I go on without being with her?

I do not wish to pluck her from the place of her growth that gave her such beauty and elegance,
But how I wish to be that Habana tree to protect her and be there to shield her from all of nature’s wrath.

I will be the very dirt that surrounds her to give her that support.

To give her encouragement, to be there for her and to protect her roots.

Those roots that started such a rose.

Mysterious and cold, yet loving and exciting.

She keeps you questioning your every move.

She is my nicotine.

What beauty holds in such a rare black rose.

I am lucky just to have met her.

Devon Balwit

A Wild Figure Motioning

“... he saw Jesus move from tree to tree in the back of his mind, a wild ragged figure motioning him to turn around and come off into the dark where he was not sure of his footing, where he might be walking on the water and not know it and then suddenly know it and drown.”

(Wise Blood, Flannery O'Connor)

the mysteries sing to us naked
we want them with our whole being
but know they dare us
to leave familiar skins
draped over a chair
and risk meeting day
stripped somewhere
with no public self

we straddle sills
keeping one foot on worn boards
letting one dangle
leaning out to catch what melody we can
storing them away to fortify us
as we chew food with no taste
then muck out stalls

every night
we await gravel
against glass
spent
before the sun ever rises

“My first and last time,” I said, still choking.

She shook her head.

“You have a terminal case of poseur syndrome.”

She made liberal use of the brake pedal as we pulled into the church parking lot. The sun had set now, but a dim glow was coming from inside the church as we approached the unlocked annex door.

“It’s a little spooky in here,” I said, as she led me down the hallway.

“Are you scared of the church, or me?”

We walked passed the Sunday school room. She pulled out a ring of keys and opened the door to the main church.

“They gave you access to the whole church for this?”

She shook her head in the sort of way that told me I was being an idiot.

“My dad’s the preacher.”

We went through another door into a tiny office. She busied herself rummaging through a desk while I glanced around the room. There were several bookshelves filled with bibles and other Christian books. A framed newspaper clipping on the wall read *Jacob Thomas: voted best pastor 2009*.

“Holy crap this is your dad’s office, why are we in here?!”

“We are here,” she said, pulling a bottle of amber colored liquid out of a drawer and holding it up for me to see “for this!”

“And that is?”

“Scotch.”

I started to protest but she had taken me by the hand now, and something about the warmth of her hand filled my head with a ringing so loud I couldn’t concentrate on anything but the feel of her skin against mine.

She led me back through the dark hallways and into the cavernous chapel. At the head of the room, behind the pulpit, was a wooden door. She had already started sipping from the bottle as she searched for another key on her ring.

“Just give me a second...there!” She swung the door open and we filed in.

“Hang on,” I felt her fumbling around beside me in the dark.

“And Jess said, let there be light!”

And behold, there was light.

We were standing at the edge of some steps that led down into something like an oversized bathtub. On one side of the small room there was a great window that looked out at the pews in the chapel and on the other was a set of brass faucets.

“What is this?”

“Baptismal pool,” she said handing me the bottle of scotch as she bounded down the stairs and turned on the faucets. Water started pouring into the pool.

“What are you doing?”

She had kicked off her boots and seconds later thrown her shirt and skirt to the side so that she was standing at the bottom in nothing but underwear.

“Going for a swim, are you coming or what?”

I looked from the scotch in my hand, to the half-naked girl in front of me. I took a deep drink from the bottle and felt my throat catch fire for the second time tonight. I dropped my pants and my shirt in a pile at the tops of the stairs. The pool was already up to her waist as I jumped in. I sunk beneath the water and let myself sit at the bottom for a few minutes before surfacing.

“And I now pronounced you bathed in the blood of the lamb!”

“Amen!” I said, laughing. She floated on her back to the edge of the pool and hung there starrng at the ceiling. I treaded water near the faucet and looked out into the empty chapel. Something tugged at my leg. Her head came out of the water below me and she threw her arms around my neck, dragging me under. I opened my eyes and saw her looking at me, her face strangely distorted. She moved in close. I wasn’t sure how much longer I could hold my breath. Then I felt her. Her arms around me, my arms around her, her lips on mine. We lingered there under the water, embracing for longer than we should have, sustained by each other’s breath, before we finally surfaced. She kicked her way over to the steps without saying anything and I followed her. She sat down, the water rising to just below her breasts.

“What are you doing here, Casey?”

“I’m supposed to be having a God Power class.”

Annamarie Tedesco

My Angel

Eyes closed while the medicine traveled your veins.

A week of starvation, breathing heavy, short.

You decided it was time.

No more hugs, kisses, phone calls.

That cold, dull, hospice room now my enemy.

Your last words to me poured my soul with

Joy, as you held my shaking hand.

You’ll still be with me, you assured that day.

The tears poured down my cheek so quickly, like

A car sliding its wet tires into a tree.

I wasn’t ready.

The room was silent, we all stood still, staring at

You with your breathless mouth wide open.

You became the angel, you so much admired.

You’ve shown yourself in many forms lately, happy

And healthy.

You’re a dream

A penny

A picture in the clouds.

Knowing you’re around, I begin to be ok.

Carolyn Grant

Reservation and Preservation

It's a wildfire of feelings exploding in my mind,
Burningblazingscorching
The door of my mind into ash.
There's a dangerous Fear
behind the door,
Threatening to rampage
And attack myself, my friend,
So I stifle the fire, choke it out and
Smother the flames.
I extinguish it, and
I keep on smiling
That facade that everyone knows,
The one where people think
There's nothing but happiness,
So if I show the slightest crack in my wall
It stops them short.
So I stow away my love, I hide my grief,
I stash my anger and my frustrations
Behind a lock and key,
And I keep smiling, smiling, smiling.
I feel two-dimensional, a simple
Caricature of a human being.
With a blank, bright smile,
With questions, questions,
But I can't find answers anywhere.
So I throw my costume back on
Each morning
And I keep smiling, smiling, smiling.

“And you aren't?”

“I can't say, but it's definitely been a religious experience.”

I stared down at my own feet. That was corny. So very corny. I'm not very good at this sort of thing. Sincere human interaction, that is. She pulled her phone from her pile of clothes and put on some music I didn't recognize. Her eyes were closed and she was humming along to the song.

“What are you doing here?” I turned the question on her. “I know this was a volunteer gig. Why waste your time on me?”

She kept her eyes closed. Thinking. When she finally spoke up she turned and looked right into me. Fiercely, terrifyingly intimate.

“Because you looked lost. That first day at church, hell, every time I've seen you. I can relate to lost. I *am* lost. I saw you and thought to myself, 'he and I should get lost together.' You didn't have to come with me. You saw how messed up I really am pretty quickly. You could have said no, walked home, could have told me to fuck off. But you didn't, why?”

Now it was my turn to think. And I thought. And I thought. And I could still taste her on my tongue. And I could still feel the alcohol singing inside me. And I could still feel the bruise from Mike's punch. And I could still remember my life before all this, before my parents found God. Time passed slowly, and then quickly, and then slowly, and then not at all. We could have sat there not speaking for five minutes or five hours. I didn't know.

“Do you believe in God?” I asked.

She had the Scotch in her hands. I realized it was almost empty now. She had been slowly sipping on it the whole time we had been sitting there. She drained the last of it and closed her eyes again.

“I stopped believing in God the same time that I stopped believing in Santa Clause.”

“When was that?”

“When I realized my father was both of them.”

There I was. Little boy blue blowing my horn every Sunday. Bragging about my lack of faith to a room full of believers. While all the while she sat in silence, shadowed beneath her father's religion. I was in a passion play and she was burning at the stake.

“Jesus Christ.”

“That’s what they tell me,” she said, flinging the empty scotch bottle across the room where it shattered against the side of the pool. I watched the broken glass sink below the water.

“Hey, that guy you punched earlier, who was he?”

“My ex.”

“Oh,” I said, “before or after you punched him?”

“Both.”

She reached over and ran a soft hand across my bruised cheek. I caught a hint of sadness in her eyes. The same angry girl that had lashed out against a boy in that mini-mall parking lot. There was an answer there, and a question. Maybe it was the alcohol, maybe it was a place for me to ride out the storm. Or maybe it was the international sign of lost souls, from one heretic to another.

“You hit that guy pretty hard.”

“Yeah,” she said, smiling, “I did.”

Hannah Miller

I Met You in the Brickhouse

I met you in the brick house,

When the grass was high and our time fell short.

When strung beads and honey bees were enough,

To make me love that brick house.

I met you in the brick house,

Where the sun would shine and our s’mores would roast.

Where pasta on the picnic bench and flowers in our hair were enough,

To make me love that brick house.

I met you in the brick house.

I followed you to the blue house,

When we lit sparklers and found comfort beneath the stars.

When swing sets and barefoot adventures were enough,

To help me love the blue house too.

I followed you to the blue house,

Where our hearts found music and souls learned to sing.

Where eating small pieces of candy and brainstorming big ideas were enough,

To help me love the blue house too.

I followed you to the blue house.

I wept with you to the wood house,

When flames taunted you and smoke took your breath away.
When everything felt harder but our friendship was enough,
To learn to love the wood house too.

I wept with you to the wood house,
Where we made music out of cups and dinner with them too.
Where whiteboard markers and imagination were enough,
To learn to love the wood house too.

I wept with you to the wood house.

I skipped with you to the white house,
When we lived off cocoa runs and ivory keys.
When trips to the playground and Sauder's subs were enough,
To make me love the white house most.

I skipped with you to the white house,
Where the water was clear and the ground littered with chalk.
Where guitar strings and watercolor paints were enough,
To make me love the white house most.

I skipped with you to the white house.

I can't come with you to the new house,
When you move closer to family and make new friends.
When you discover what's been waiting for you is enough,
To make me happy for you and your new house.

I can't come with you to the new house,

Jordan Hunt

Storm Warning

To be the daughter of a divided home and broken hearts is to wake up to the sound of words being said that can never be taken back. You press your ear to your bedroom door every evening and listen to the meanings behind the words, the pain being felt, and the anger projecting all the noise.

Not that it has always been this way, you haven't always listened to the conversations. But the older you get, the more you long for. You want to know why the words are being said, you need to know why to feel okay. To feel like you aren't the reason. You walk into the living room, and you see your mother's sad blue eyes and halfhearted smile. You see your father outside in the backyard taking his third smoke of the evening. You know they are fighting again.

You wake up to the sound of your bedroom door opening to the room you share with your sister; your brother walks in and crawls into your bed and snuggles up to you. You feel the wave of relief consume you. You are relieved that you are all in the same room, safe from the storm that is brutally happening outside the bedroom door.

You are woken by the storm again, and ignore it like you have been for the last 18 years, (not really 18, but some days it feels like it has been going on for your entire life) and you resort back to your room and grab a book off your shelf. You decide to pick your favorite world to escape to, Hogwarts. You read all about Harry's first year as a wizard and think about walking into that world and never looking back.

You hear another heated conversation going on in the living room, so you go to the room where your brother and sister are. He is 11 and she is 14, and you do your best to distract them from what's going on in the next room. They are old enough to know the hurt and old enough to understand why. But you still feel the need to protect them. You ask them if they want to go play catch or walk the dog. They agree to do so, so you go

outside for a while and let the cool autumn wind carry away all the pain.

You then return for dinner, and witness something that is so foreign that you have almost forgotten it existed. You walk into the kitchen and see the happy couple you remember from your childhood. You watch them laugh and hold hands, and watch as your dad kisses your mother on the forehead. You think that it has been awhile since you've seen that and you have missed it so much. You finally feel happy and whole and content enough to go to bed with a smile on your face.

You wake up the next morning, and look around the room. The room is not your room, or at least it's not the one from the dream the night before. It is a new room that you have molded and crafted to feel safe and secure. You are no longer in your home with your family, but a home to start and create a family of your own. When you think of what family means to you, you don't think of the storms that lingered for the three years before the divorce was final. You learn that nobody is perfect, and some people, no matter how hard it hurts, just aren't meant to be together. You learn from their mistakes, you become stronger and wiser. So, you decide to move on from the hurt. You accept your parents for who they are and love them and all of their flaws.. You move on and become who you are meant to be. You start your life, and only think of the happy moments, the smiles, the laughs and the forehead kisses.

Where you will touch hearts and change lives.

Where the things you will learn and experience will be enough,

To make me happy for you and your new house.

I got to see the brick house,

The blue house,

The wood house,

The white house.

I can't come with you to your new house.

I hope you like your new house.

Take care in the new house.

** Dedicated to my dear friend Maggie, wherever she may roam*

Josh Smith

No Man’s Land

Gonna point my light at the city skyline,
desert roads will take me there.
Horizon’s bleeding drops of daytime,
highway’s built with extra patience.

Stay forever, in the midnight station.
Sing the sorrow, like those who came before.
Praise the devil, with sin and your frustrations.
Paint the mirror black to match the water.

Gonna point my light at the city skyline,
desert birds won’t lead the way.
Following the buzzing grapevine,
gonna get me home, gonna get me free.

Clayton Pitcher

Open Windows

why
not
rotate
pillows
of
sides
colder

cheekbones
need
sharpening

Mark Antony Rossi

Mother Meth

I joined a volunteer project and was asked to remove furniture from an abandoned home. But I didn’t expect tales of occupants made for a messy cable movie. A mother of four strung out on meth having sex parties to pay for her habit while children played with toys in the other room.

Nudity and neglect ruled the night filled with players higher than the Chinese trade deficit. Pizza stains and pot resin soaked the white plush carpet. Beer and backwash painted walls like an idiotic art project. The groans and grunts of grinding were masked by music machines pumping the latest club hit.

Two days passed and her children stopped playing and started begging anyone in the house for food. The oldest, 6, opened a cabinet and passed out crackers to his siblings. One of the four had diabetes and slowly slipped into a coma while slumped in a corner presumably asleep.

The police entered the premises with guns drawn. They found half-starved kids happy to see daylight. One near death barely had a heartbeat. Their mother was passed out in a pool of vomit. The stench stained the air like a full unflushed toilet from 1999.

It’s hard to know what goes through the mind of a mother enslaved to meth. It’s hard not to judge her when so many children have been impacted by her decisions. All I could do is say a prayer for her recovery. If only she loved her children more than she hated herself.



Along Came a Spider (Miss Muffet rendering) By Kenneth Doyle

Corey Maher

Tree

By green leaves
And long branches

I'm shrouded from the heat
In the shade of your existence

From the barren frost
To the sweltering heat

Poetry

Stepping out on the balcony
I'm regularly greeted

Waving in the wind
With nothing else to say

Persisting in circular motion

As the seasons change

You've seen it all

Infancy

Maturity

Adulthood

Life

Death

Rebirth