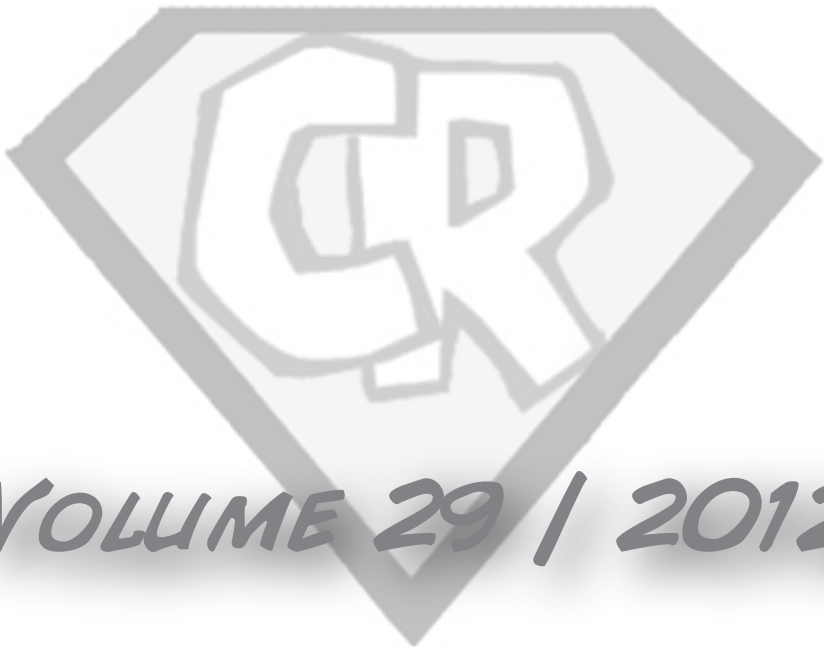


THE CORNFIELD REVIEW

A Literary Publication of
The Ohio State University at Marion



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PREFACE

WELCOME TO YOUR CORNFIELD REVIEW FOR 2012! This issue marks a bittersweet milestone of sorts: it will be the last one produced under the quarter system, since OSU is finally transitioning to semesters (you know, the schedule that most of academia saw fit to adopt a long, long time ago). I, for one, could not be happier about that fact, and while I do harbor some anxiety about the impending change (we have to start in August instead of September?!?), the thought of having a longer course terms in which to complete the major editorial duties feels downright luxurious. An extra four weeks (or five, if you're counting finals) to read through the slush pile and deliberate, develop a cohesive design, and potentially get started with the layout phase? Yes, please. I'd like some of that.

As we weather this hopefully smooth transition, we should single out those who have continued to support the *Review's* mission, if not its very existence. The OSU-Marion administration, and Dean Greg Rose in particular, remain unflinching in their support. Additionally, the English faculty are also staunch supporters of our cause—cheerleaders, even—as they encourage their students to submit their creations to us. The Editorial Board deserves special recognition: Adrianna Light, Arika Baker, Austin King, Brian Wilds, Beth Campbell, Jennifer Piaff, Jennifer Miller, Molly Davis, Nicholai Elencovf, Rebecca Wagner-Hopkins, Robert Johnson, Sarabeth Retterer, Sheree Whitelock, Taryn Korody, Tiffany Grounds, and Tim Giles. The Cornfield Skeleton Crew, true gluttons for punishment who remained well past the Literary Publishing course well into Spring Quarter to help finish up our production duties, is owed a special debt of gratitude: Austin, Nicholai, Tiffany, Taryn, Sarabeth, and (joining the group in mid-stream) Val Walton.

The Cornfield Review is published annually. The Editorial Board seeks quality poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction in addition to original artwork and photography. Submissions are primarily accepted from students and faculty of OSU-Marion and Marion Technical College, although works by off-campus writers and artists will be considered. For further details and queries, please email me at mccorkle.12@osu.edu.

— Ben McCorkle, Faculty Adviser

The Cornfield Review Mission Statement:

We strive to represent the literary and artistic voice of Central Ohio by giving area college students an opportunity to see their work published in a professional literary journal. Additionally, we are passionate about achieving a cultural impact that goes beyond local campuses and reaches into the greater community.

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A POEM I WROTE TO YOU

When I was carefree, and more through
with boys than I've ever been before;
I caught your eye, across a fire,
unaware of our future in store.
A spark; a friendship kindled,
Loyalty that could not be ignored.

At eighteen you proposed to me.
Beneath a July starlit sky.
The moon stole my breath away,
All heaven awaiting my reply.
With my "yes," the earth exhaled,
And tears flooded both our eyes.

At nineteen I tortured you.
I dragged your heart to the depths of hell.
Blinded with confusion, I ground it,
Crushed it, lit it ablaze as well.
Months you held on, a year, you knew
I'd come through; my fears you'd dispel.

At twenty we married, happy, complete.
Not two but three cords of strong braided rope.
You tread gently, protecting my heart.
Unto this bond, I entrust all my hope.

— *Arika Baker*



—Arika Baker, "Soul Mates"

MOTHER OF ALL

I lie here in forbidden shade,
Longing to taste the fruit.
If only my prize would fall my way,
Thus ending my painful pursuit.

Fermented curiosity has led me to this forsaken grotto.
I am desirous an answer will reveal its face.
It is not 'til I fail at suppressing my lust that I'll know
The prohibited treasure's taste.

Slowly. Gently. A fruit drifts to the ground.
It has fallen just beyond my reach.
Outstretched. Straining. I fall short.
What lesson is He trying to teach?

Without cognition, my body rises.
I cross the space between.
I look down. I stoop down. I pick up
The forbidden fruit that dominates my dream.

Hesitant lips close around the fruit;
Oh, the soft, yielding skin!
Determined teeth break through;
Oh, the wet, sticky juices!
Overwhelmed am I by this sensation!
My eyes opened anew!

When I open my eyes, the shade is gone.
Light has enveloped me.
I have gained – joy.
Joy? Joy. Yes, Joy from the forbidden tree.

Though it be terminally toxic,
I am granted new life.
Though in darkness enveloped,
Here is shed a new light.

The threat of death was made:
A promise that I would perish.

And yet... I linger on.
The unexpected has come to pass.
Both fear and faith are gone.

Now there is danger.
Now there is pain.
Now there is pleasure.
Nothing is the same.

I shield myself from Heaven's light.
Night is become my day.
In darkest times, a light is shed.
In the void life finds a way.

My own death has not been granted.
Still, I have brought Death to the world.
But –
I am Mother of all who will live,
How am I to be Giver of Life
And the reason that mankind will fall?

Can I be loved in spite of being hated?
Was this the product of free will or –
Was this all fated?

·
—*Beth Campbell*

PUNCTUATION

Glory be to punctuation! Even if, but preferably not, misused.
Giving direction, intentions and views, limitless.
Its beauty seldom discussed, the proper names now nearly lost.
The sight of it we rarely register.

Take for one, the ampersand,
Its elegance & versatility.
The forms it can take, the marriages it can make,
The curious curves of the ampersand.

The comma, a common friend to all.
Its subtle power, quiet force.
More than decoration, it enhances sentences.
Small, but mighty comma.

The bang! Gasp!
Our exclamation point, its simple line over dot.
Providing words with drama and excitement,
How indifferently we toss around the bang!

...ellipsis
Perfectly spaced dots provide suspense and character.
Allowing implication without explanation
The intrigue of the ellipsis...

Punctuation, pretty and powerful
Writing weaponry!
Beaming beauty in sight & meaning...

—*Molly Davis*



— Arika Baker, "Fructify"

WHEN I AM OLDER

one Day
when i am Older,
i will know how to Live.
In a monochrome autumn
leaves become moments
which had fallen by.

yesterDay
when i was Younger,
i knew how to Live.
Under the orange sun
sunshine became memory
which did fall behind.

one Day
when i am Older,
i will know how to Live.
Without your voice
sound grew still
and echoed on by.

One Day
when i am older

—*Timothy Giles*

MOURNING UPON THE CAPE

Thunder melody like that of a shell
cries out from the shore's cliffs.

The clouds confine, collide,
prisoners bathed in illumination
in lightning without sky.

It is no kind of love,
but a flower given in mourning.

To touch the heart without feeling
is to jump from the cliffs
just short of the sea.

—*Timothy Giles*

THE BRIDGE ODE

The abandoned tracks
hold no more thought
than that of a passing season.

Leaves though, blowing through an
ancient tunnel,
capture my attention
like an ode
I was told to forget.

The meaning was too familiar
to yield harvest in present cloud cover.
Much like her gift pages of poetry
blooming against the river edge.

Winter breezes blew them here,
like black dressed finger nails,
carrying word seeds for the
passing of another year.

Ode echoes across barren landscape.
I have decided to leave here forever.

— *Timothy Giles*

THE PAYING OF OUR SUNSET

We paved the gold of our sunset
with emotion for each wave.
Fire and water kiss one another
upon an ocean's surface.
Like glass.

We read the prophecy written across the sky
with a sense of foreshadowing.
To meet again with glossy eyes
takes my breathe away.
Like notes.

We sat in a space which forgot time itself
with nostalgia and wonder.
Your voice creeps into each grain
as sand crumbles through these fingertips.
Like rain.

I paved the gold of our sunset
with a tear befitting a downpour.
Redefining what I had become
I arose from thorn.
Like flower.

Rebirth reflecting rain across the sea.

—*Timothy Giles*



— Arika Baker, "Impassioned"

RESILIENCE

“Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder.”
—Arnold J. Toynbee

take my hand and
push me down
hold the glass and
make me drown
twist me 'til I fit the mold
leave me in the freezing cold
break my skin and
taste the fear
shake me until all is clear
rip out my heart and
pass it 'round
beat me so I hear no sound
blind me with your malcontent
crucify and then repent
carve your name upon my soul
use me 'til you lose control
collar me so I can't run
bar the door
block out the sun
love me any way you like
blindfold me and turn out the light
lock the door and
scar my skin
make sure to
keep the darkness in.

—Katie Elizabeth Henderson

THE END

Giving in to the biting cold,
As time ceases its crawl,
Suspended at the edge of life,
Succumbing to the reaper's call.
The stench of decay hangs heavy
In the air,
Sleeping things have no scent,
Preparing for the oncoming war,
The season is utterly spent.
Finding the wells completely dry,
Nothing is left but rust,
Slipping into darkness,
As the world crumbles to dust.

—*Katie Elizabeth Henderson*

LIKE A CAGED BIRD

Caged up under protected lock and key

Like a thriving bird waiting to be set free

Now is the time to finally let me go

To escape from everything I already know

I need to stretch my fragile, sheltered wings

You need to cut your tight apron strings

Learn to soar and fly in the big open sky

Discover on my own how to get by

Worry not, for you have taught me very well

Now is the time to rejoice and not to dwell

Should I stumble from raw sky to cold ground

I need a little space to move so I don't drown

Dust off my feathers, straighten up my feet

This is one little bird that can't be beat.

—*Brittany Violet Long*

THE SINISTER SOUND OF A SOMBER HISS

Slithering and Slithering
Squirming and crawling across
the sandy, desolate desert floor.
The grainy particles shifting slightly
as my twisting body
slides and glides over them.
The scorching sun streams down
on my slick, shiny skin.
Destined to stroll in
unbearable closeness
to the ground for my
unchangeable sin.
Staring at the world,
from my low point-of-view,
I am looked down upon like
a dirty, filthy stain
in the center of a clean,
white floor.
Wide open is my mouth
as I devour my afternoon snack,
Feeling the iron -tasting blood
drip, drop, settle,
into the back of my slimy neck.

Hissing and Hissing
The sound of my hiss is as
sweet as the forbidden fruit.
I have an evil and vindictive
nature that is sure to allure.
I have a sweet yet bitter tongue
that is as hazardous as a
double-edged sword.
The burdening evil conception
in which my ancestors
have conceived,
Haunts me and taunts me

like when I deceived
Adam and Eve.
I creep up on unsuspecting victims
and strike their innocent heels,
Only the sinister sound of a
rattle, shake, shake, rattle, shake,
But it's too late,
the venom spreads,
and now you're almost dead.

—*Brittany Violet Long*



— Brittany Violet Long, "Cement Angel"

SHE WRITES

She Writes

She sits in her room, alone,
tears falling freely onto the blank page.
Feverishly she writes, writes, writes.

Her heart races,
Her stomach churns
Her family—torn apart.

Slammed doors, screams
echo through the house.
Echo through her ears.

She writes, writes, writes,
feelings spill,
spew from her.

Tears dry like parched ground,
distant noises disappear
into thin air.

She listens to her heart,
her mind, her voice,
She writes, writes, writes.

She moves to the piano,
starts to play, play, play
beautiful notes resonate.

Softly, she sings,
“Gentle rain, come wash me now.”
“Come wash me now.”

“Wash me now.”

—Jennifer Miller

ALONE ON THIS BLACK NIGHT, DREAMS

Alone on this black night, dreams
Keep me going, give me strength.
I am weak
I am hopeless
I am a tear-stricken face
A step
backward
An avalanche of snow has
fallen on me,
I latch onto my faith and hold you
I believe in dreams
I believe in my dreams
To meet my dreams with a warm embrace,
As if there was a window to my heart
Wholesome, radiant, love- abounding
Passion, persistence, pride-pressing
me onward
to my dreams.

—*Jennifer Miller*

RANDOM SHUFFLE

Energize your life!
Dream On!
Get Er Done!

Shed pounds, they say,
But how can you with the Whopper
staring you in the eyes?
It can change a man, you know.
McDonald's too,
I mean, "I'm lovin' it"!

Wal-Mart is king, dynamite. I mean, come on,
Save money. Live better.
Don't miss a single rollback or special offer!
Trust me, you don't see many people leaving that
store with nothing.

Chevy runs deep, but I'd rather be
cruising in my Fusion, baby!
They say, "Have your dessert and chew it too!"
How cool is that?

You mess with the bull...you get the horns. No
exceptions. All right.
It just may be a lunatic you're looking for.
Now available on Kindle fire.

I was born on the same day as Tom Cruise!
Can you believe it? Oh my word!
I wanna go out with you!

It's not about following your heart and
it's not about keeping your promises.
It's about security.
Security like bbq so real you'll want
to wipe the sauce off your face.

Let's Go Giants!
Sweet Escape!
Gonna take it right into the danger zone.
Innovation for the planet. Innovation for all.

—Jennifer Miller

WIDE AWAKE, HALF ASLEEP

There's a place between sleep and dreams
Where the world is more alive, it seems.
There are armies of shadows on the wall
And phantom faces, large and small.
There's a monster tearing at my chest
Who kindly devours my heart with zest.
I'll scream and cry and bleed and die,
Or laugh and smile and dream and fly.
Everything makes so much sense here—
So real, intense, and unclear.

—*Rachel Schade*

SOMETIMES

Sometimes
I have to be lost:
Driving aimlessly,
Speakers blaring
Just to clear my head

Sometimes
I have to be weak:
Collapsed on the floor,
Done with the fight,
And overpowered

Sometimes
I have to be broken:
Aching for what's lost
Out of control,
Desperate for help

Sometimes
I have to be lonely,
I have to be afraid,
I have to be trapped

To be free.

—*Rachel Schade*

THINGS FORGOTTEN

Would you let me be a child again
And carry me in your arms?
I'd lose myself in daydreams,
Forget this world of harms.
I'd believe it's all still possible
And trust the world is good;
I'd stand fast and cling to faith
The way I know I should.
If you would only hold me tight,
A strong and warm embrace,
My hollow heart would find its hope,
And finally know its place.
If you'd remind me you are near,
My mind would find release;
I'd trade away my hurt and doubt,
My bitterness, for peace.

—*Rachel Schade*



—Austin King, "Pepper and Salt"

THE BALLAD OF RED RIDING HOOD

Deep inside the forest,
Along the Appalachian Ridge,
High above the Schuman's farm
And past the Parker Bridge
They say you'll find a cabin
Where a hermit woman lives.

They say that once upon a time,
Not so long ago,
She lived alone with just her Ma
In a house in Green Hollow
And wore an antique riding hood,
As soft and white as snow.

She was a dark-haired, dainty girl
And a very pretty child
With little dimples in her cheeks
That showed each time she smiled
She even had her dead Pa's eyes
That glittered gray and wild.

Her Grannie lived up in the hills,
In a cabin in the woods.
The girl would come to visit her
As often as she could,
Weaving through the towering trees
In her white riding hood.

For each full moon her Grannie
Went outside at night;
Stood out in the dark and cold,
Her grey eyes glowing bright;
Then changed from a woman to a wolf,
And roamed until first light.

And so the girl was sent to help her

Until the moon's demise,
Tending to her wearied Grannie,
When she was too tired to rise,
For the girl was never frightened of her
In either wolf or woman's guise.

It was a cool midsummer day
The sky a hazy bland;
Dressed in her white riding hood,
With a basket in her hand,
The girl set out for Grannie's house
Across the hilly land.

She hiked into the mountains
With the sun upon her hair,
Skipping over rocks and stones
And breathing summer air,
But when she reached her Grannie's house
She stopped in her tracks to stare.

Hawks hovered high above it,
And blood ran beneath the door.
Inside there stood a hunter
Looking down upon the gore:
A fur-clad hunter gazing
At the corpse upon the floor.

It was the body of an old wolf,
Lean and steely gray.
The girl let out an anguished scream,
And stared on in dismay,
For it was her own dear Grannie
Who on the cold stone lay.

She fell beside the body,
And began to cry:
"Why'd you kill my Grannie?
She never hurt a fly!

What did she ever do to you?
Answer, stranger! Why?"

He said "I am a hunter,
And slaughter's what I do.
Long ago I killed your Pa,
And now your Grannie, too,
And when at last you come of age
Then I will hunt for you.

"Your Ma may not have told you,
But I see it in your eyes:
Your blood betrays your secret
With a trait you can't disguise.
Yes, soon you too will prowl
Beneath cold and moonlit skies."

The girl stared on in horror,
As he stripped her Grannie's skin,
Severed her gray, noble head
And carried them off with him.
She watched him go in silence,
But burned with rage within.

So she took her Grannie's rifle
And filled it up with lead
She raced after that hunter
And shot him through the head
Oh, she took her Grannie's rifle
And shot the hunter dead.

She stole the hunter's grizzly prize
And left him in the woods,
Found her way to Grannie's house
And buried her as best she could,
Then headed home, in bloody clothes,
And her blood-red riding hood.

And when she got back home again,
She hugged her ma and cried:
"I finally understand, Ma,
Just how my Daddy died;
And now I've shot the huntsman,
Who took poor Grannie's hide."

She closed her eyes and swallowed,
Spoke the words she feared to say:
"How long do I have, Ma,
'Till the full moon has its way?"
Her mother wept and sadly said
"Until your next birthday."

So on her fourteenth birthday
Just as the first snow fell,
The girl packed her belongings
And kissed her Ma farewell.
She was a lonely figure
With a sorry tale to tell.

She moved into her Grannie's cabin
And they say she lives there still;
And on the night of a full moon
She roams the shadowed hill,
Hunting now with teeth and claw
She stalks her frightened kill.

Prowling in her wolf-skin
She climbs the mountains high;
Howling to the white moon
Her head raised to the sky;
Screaming to the bright moon
Until her tears run dry.

—*Olivia Varney*

NIGHT SWANS

They came upon the wind like sailing ships
Cutting through the darkness like a sudden cry
Luminous as clouds against the cobalt sky
With broad, beating wings and blackened lips
And soundlessly they settled on the glassy lake
Dipping and dropping with a whisper's grace
Ghostly dancers gliding on the water's face
Silken ripples trailing shadows in their wake.

—*Olivia Varney*

LOST

You left her broken;

you tore

her

up.

You made her think,

she wasn't

good

enough.

I found her bleeding;

you made

her

die.

Just don't look back,

she won't

come

back.

You lost the chance,

of all

romance.

— *Sheree Whitlock*

To Roxy

Brittle breaking
hurting heart,
always feeling torn apart.

Little lies
onerous one,
everything is overdone.

Rusting ruins
seeping sore
I don't trust you anymore

— *Sheree Whitelock*

UNTITLED

Rusting emotions,
hinged,
against broken rails.

Every heart,
ached,
beliefs rapidly erased.

His anguish,
battled,
relentless edible hate.

And believing,
riddled,
eloquent house answers—

Brought rest,
empowerment,
honesty and beauty.

—*Sheree Whitelock*

FORGOTTEN

Broken pieces,
shattered glass,
haunted memories
of the past.

Splintered shards,
punctured panes,
killing dreams
first and last.

—*Sheree Whitlock*

AN UNPUBLISHED PSALM

“And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchèd. And Jesus said, Who touched me?” —Luke 8:43-45

Oh, praises high
to her with faith
- a faith so strong
she chased after Him.

Though her blood
flowed so long
the crowd could not
stop her hand.

The hand that wretched
just to his hem
and was then cleansed
by a wonderful glory.

“Who touched me”
He proclaimed
knowing power
had been released

His grace and love
saved her there
and she knew
that He cared.

And through her faith
her blood could stop
and His would flow
to grant us grace.

— *Sheree Whitelock*

EXHALE

Vapors in emptiness—humming silence pass
Breathing slow—echoing embodies my ears,
My cavity hollows,
Emotional moisture is mute-
No empty cries.

Rock bye baby plays faintly
Skipping over scratches—on a fractured mind,
Body fridge and numb—as a naked winter wind
In this moment —still no empathetic tears,
Waiting in somber peace

Waiting for his epic arrival
Standing in his tattered ebony robe
Reaching his chilled ivory hand,
I can't—I must—
Exhale

—*Brian Wilds*

WHITE WEDDING

Beautiful white wedding,
Bridges maids in blood red,
She dresses in black for all to view,

No love, only absent faith
Loving family, absent grace
Mother loved, but daddy knew
He thrashed her blue... 'til through,

Flowers burn in orange hues of hell
Flower girls nonexistent as love fell,
Burn white wedding
Nothing about happiness ends well.

—*Brian Wilds*

MALICE FOR ALICE

Fuck you, Alice,
Hiding in your wonderland,
Chasing Rabbit to burn his world,
Turn your back and run with the Hatter,

Scream, as realization replays of what's left behind,
Drink with the land of lost toys and drown in your lies.

Why the lies?

Standing in wonderland marked your spaded fool,
Forest scorched, stained in darkness,
Run fast and don't look back, Alice,
Fear as I'm quickly closing in,
This is my last malice so once again... fuck you, Alice,
I'm sorry the glass was half empty, in a world that was full.

—*Brian Wilds*

**TWO CONTRASTING
EXCERPTS FROM
A DEVELOPING
WORK.**

**MYSTERY AT THE
VISHNU
HORIZON: A
GRAND CANYON
ADVENTURE**

—Roger Johnson

This first scene involves two 13 year olds, one a Havasupai Native American boy and the other a white girl. They are traveling on horseback after recovery of a mysterious object they found embedded in strata at the bottom of the Canyon. A storm hinders their return to their boarding school, the Chino Springs Academy, near the Canyon rim far above.

ARE YOU NUTS?

THE RAIN INTENSIFIED AS BETH AND EDDIE RODE SINGLE FILE UP THE CANYON TRAIL.

Cold downdrafts pried at Beth's ball cap, and whipped her hair and yellow slicker. Her jeans were soaked below the knees; she shivered.

In the late afternoon light, the downpour restricted Beth's view to just a couple of horse lengths beyond Eddie. He hunched forward, his black poncho glistening and his soaked hair matted against his head. With each step, Beth could see Hánaga's hooves sink into the mucky trail. Turbid rivulets cut across and plunged down the cliff side to her right; the Colorado below was lost in the haze of the cloudburst. Veins of lightning illuminated the clouds ahead, followed seconds later by the roll of thunder. George's ears laid back. His head quivered.

The deluge came in bursts, sheets of water marching over them. The roar of the downpour suppressed all other sounds. Eddie turned back in his saddle and shouted something to Beth. She put a hand to her ear, shook her head, and spurred George closer. Eddie cupped a hand to his mouth, "We've got to get off the trail. There's an Ancestor shelter above. We're almost to a place where we can get to it." After a turn in the trail, Eddie reined Hánaga to the left, up what looked like a footpath that zigzagged along the sloping, canyon side.

The horses lost footing on the slanted, soupy track and stumbled to regain balance. At the next switch-back, icy cold rain pelted Beth's face. She blinked to clear her vision. As the trail turned again, Beth saw a cavernous overhang ahead, sculpted from the red rock like a outdoor band shell. As they completed the final leg, something stung the back of her neck and George snorted. "We're almost there, boy," said Beth, patting his neck as pea size hail bounced around them. Under the shelter, Eddie and Beth dismounted onto soft dirt and led their mounts to the back wall, away from the storm's fury. With the side of her hand, Beth scraped water off George's coat. Steam rose from his body.

Above her on the rock wall, Beth noticed an Ancestor circle like the ones Eddie had shown her at the old, secret Indian redoubt. With her arms wrapped around herself, she turned to Eddie, and said, "This is so much better, but I'm freezing."

"Me, too," said Eddie. "There should be firewood that our tribe stores up here." He walked along the back wall, removed a tarp from over a pile of twigs and kindling. He returned with an armload and knelt to arrange the sticks from smaller to larger pieces into a cone-shaped structure.

"Ah, a tepee," said Beth.

Eddie looked up to her with a flat smile, "Still . . . with the Indian references?"

"I do what I can."

Shaking his head, Eddie withdrew a small metal cylinder from the cloth pouch beneath his poncho, unscrewed its cap, and extracted a kitchen match.

"I was expecting flint and steel," said Beth.

"If you can wait, I'll start it with a friction bow and tinder."

"No, this is fine," Beth chuckled, hugging herself. "I'm ready for some warmth."

Beth watched as Eddie struck the match on the base of the metal cylinder, cupped his hand over the flaring flame, and carefully inserted it under the smallest twigs. As the infant fire gained strength, he added larger wood. Beth and Eddie crowded the blaze with their hands opened.

A flash illuminated the shelter, followed close by a crashing boom. Beth flinched. "How long do you think this will last?" she asked.

"It looked like it was moving south pretty fast. Maybe another hour. It's gonna' be so late before we make it to the Academy."

Beth rubbed her hands together and opened them again to the fire's comfort. "From what you told me about your people's history, the Academy must be on lands that once belonged to the Havasupai."

"Yeah, the school dates back to the rancher who settled there in the eighteen hundreds. But, Mr. Babcock's family had always been friendly with us and our cousins, the Walapai. The Babcock's supported the return of a lot of our land. Of course, not their land." Eddie tossed a stray twig at the fire.

Beth watched a frenzy of sparks rise and burn out like miniature shooting stars. "You said things went from bad to worse after the railroad surveyors came through."

"Well, we didn't have a reservation from the government then. The Army said that all Indians not on a reservation were hostiles, and would be shot on sight. So what were we to do? We hid in the Canyon." Eddie stared into the fire. "Finally, we were recognized, but that didn't get us much. We went from a nation of hundreds of square miles down to five hundred acres, pretty much just our Havasu canyon. The problem was there's nothing to eat there in the winter. It'd been our way of life to farm the canyon in summer and hunt game on the upper plateau in winter."

Beth removed her slicker, placed it over the powdery dirt, and sat down. She turned her side against the fire and tilted her head back to avoid the spiraling smoke. "So, what happened?"

"We came close to dying out. We had to go up to the plateau to

find meat regardless. Then the whites made the plateau a national forest and wouldn't let us in to hunt. And, then they made the Canyon a national park and we lost about everything. They even wanted our Havasu canyon so they could open our sacred falls to the tourists. But, it gets worse." Eddie poked at the fire with a piece of wood launching more sparks.

Beth felt remorse for the way Eddie's people had been treated and wanted to know more, but she recognized that frustrated look he got when talking about his people's history with the whites. Scooting back from the hot fire, she said, "Let's look at that thing we dug up. What's on the other sides?"

Eddie rummaged in his pouch and took out the prism. "It's still ice cold," he said. He examined the sides that had been buried. "Look at this mark. It's like one of our signs."

Beth leaned over. In the flickering firelight, Eddie pointed to a symbol of a cross with its arms bent at right angles. "That's a swastika," Beth said. "Native Americans use that?"

"A lot of tribes have, mostly the Navajo. They call it the 'Whirling Logs.' It represents the travels of the Ancients, physical and spiritual. It's a good luck symbol for us. And, Indians had it long before the Nazis ever existed!" said Eddie, throwing another twig at the fire.

A lightning stroke jolted the shelter like the concussion of an exploding bomb. Eddie stood, looked at the prism in his hand, then out at the storm, and walked toward the front of the overhang. Beth got up and followed. A fine mist sprayed Eddie as he reached the edge of the sanctuary. With his left hand, he held the prism above his head. The object began to glow. Beth felt the hairs at the back of her neck and on her arms standing up. The prism glowed brighter and she felt a prickling sensation in her skin. She looked down at her hands as her whole body tingled. She smelled something pungent, like bleach. At a crackling sound, she looked up at Eddie and cried, "Oh, no!" Eddie was on his tiptoes reaching to the sky. His hair stood straight out like porcupine quills, surrounded by a faint blue aura. Beth leaned forward, grabbed Eddie at the waist by his belt, pulled him backward, and threw him to the ground.

"Are you nuts?" she shouted.

Eddie said, "Did you see it glow? Could you feel it? It was like the Ancestors were filling me with power."

"Yeah, well, I think you're full of it alright. When the lightning hits, it'll be you glowing . . . and then smoldering. We were feeling the charge build-up before a strike."

"What about the glow?"

"I don't know. Maybe it's

like . . . when a florescent lightbulb is held up toward high tension wires; the bulb'll glow. That would be a lot like this, I suppose. But who knows what this thing does? It's alien!"

Eddie wrinkled his forehead and tightened his mouth. He looked out at the storm, then down at the now dark prism, picked it up, and walked back to the dying campfire. He placed the last of the wood on the glowing embers as Beth approached. Eddie did not make eye contact, but turned and walked away toward the wood stack. He started to pick up more firewood, but stopped and stood motionless, turning his good right ear toward a heap of rocks beyond. He moved toward the pile like a hunter stalking prey, one deliberate step before another, and then started pulling at the rocks. Beth thought now what? She feared his fixation on the Ancestors and the alien prism were starting to make him loopy. She walked over to his excavation.

Eddie said, "I haven't been up here when it was raining like this. There's a stream running under here. There may be a cave behind this." Beth heard the sound of water like a cascading brook. Eddie pulled down two more slabs and peered between the rocks into a black cavity. He retrieved a flashlight from his bag, scrambled on top of the rock pile, thrust his

light into the recess, stuck his head in, and squirmed his body through, his feet disappearing into the blackness.

"Eddie, come back here!"

"Come on in. It is a cave!"

* * *

Below, the character Irg is a Grand Canyon area resident who lived long before there was a Canyon. Irg, an amphibian, is temporarily off planet on an accidental quest. In the course of the full story, the reader discovers that the mysterious prism Eddie unearthed at the bottom of the Grand Canyon belonged to the primeval Irg. Eddie's people, the Havasupai, might consider Irg among their ancient ancestors, magical primal creatures that, in Havasupai origin myths, took the form of animals.

THE ELDER

Irg swam deep below the surface of the clear lake, angling down toward the dark center of a cave's entrance. The opening looked like a craggy mouth gouged into the wall of a long-dead coral reef. Kicking against an out-flowing current, he felt Vero's arms tightening about his neck; he didn't know how long she could hold her breath.

Past the cave's jagged threshold, the pale light from the surface faded, and blackness enveloped

them. Irg opened his mouth and emitted high-pitched croaks to measure proximity to the walls. The weaker intensity and longer time for the return echos indicated they were entering a large cavern. The water here was calmer and tasted sparser of oxygen, but with more flavor of calcium. Irg sensed his movements slowing from the water's penetrating cold. Vero pounded twice on his back with her fist. Irg hastened his scan for an exit.

At a distance to the right, a school of small, aquatic organisms emitted an iridescent aqua blue radiance. They shimmered brightly at each of Irg's croaks. To the left, a dimly glowing, green beast spiraling upward from the blackness below startled Irg. Beneath piecing red eyes, rows of dagger teeth filled the face of the luminous eel-like brute. With each of Irg's acoustic soundings, the monster adjusted its trajectory toward them. Irg ceased croaking and the creature stopped its pursuit, moving its huge head back and forth, and then wriggling below, past them.

Ahead through the dark waters, Irg spotted a yellow, saucer-shaped illumination above; the light appeared to be incandescent as it wavered like a flame. With smooth undulating motion, Irg maneuvered his body upward with Vero in tow.

Breaking the water's surface,

Vero gasped for air and choked. They were in an oval pool centered in a subterranean chamber. It was like a sculpted, egg-shaped cathedral, walls and ceiling rounded, ivory in color. On the shore, six pyres, spaced equally around the pool, blazed. The air was warm and heavy with incense. Vero still clung to Irg.

"You can put your feet down here," he advised softly.

They stood together, shoulder deep in the dark water. The pool's rippling surface reflected the pyres' glimmer onto the domed ceiling above like dancing smiles. Ahead on the shore stood a pink pyramid constructed of polished, stone blocks; Irg estimated it to be 15 heads tall. His gaze fixed on the pyramid's apex, to a carved symbol of an eye that dominated the structure.

Wading forward together, Vero nudged Irg to attention, and pointed toward a sole figure, twice their size, who knelt before the base of the pyramid. The form, covered with an emerald green wrap, rested its elbows on a railing fronting the structure, its head bowed, forehead against folded hands.

"She's a Sargonian Elder. You hardly ever see them in person," whispered Vero as she cleared water from her throat and nose.

At their approach to the pool's edge, the figure stirred.

Standing in a single fluid motion, with arms folded across her chest, she turned to look down upon the two. Her full length robe flowed around her like a shroud over a statue.

"What we have here? An Anson aspirating, water wet. And, an un-dry unfamiliar. Extra exotic event."

The Sargonian was speaking Anson words that Irg understood individually, but this tortured prose challenged his comprehension.

Shivering in the cold waters, now at her waist, Vero pleaded, "Please forgive us, Elder. We had no intention to intrude."

The Elder motioned for Irg and Vero to approach one of the pyres on the shore of the pool. Ascending white marble steps, Vero backed up to the fire as Irg stood beside her, his eyes focused on the Elder.

The creature thrust the hood of her robe, trimmed in gold, back onto her shoulders. Irg marveled at the beast's face and hands . . . or paws . . . covered with a tan fur. Her nose was subdued above the mouth, nostrils flaring. Long, snow white hairs bristled from each cheek. Her narrow, yellow eyes flashed in the firelight. Atop her head, pronounced, pointed ears

shifted back and forth.

“Why where
peculiar pair
audaciously afloat,
shamelessly swimming
forbidden fluid?”

Vero said, “Gracious Elder, abductors were pursuing us. The lake and these caves offered our only sanctuary. We surfaced here, desperate for air. Please forgive our trespass.”

Squinting at the reply, the Elder did not respond. She gazed from Vero to Irg, carefully looking him up and down. Irg began to feel self-conscious without his tunic. The Elder reached out and touched the six-armed, starfish talisman hanging around Irg’s neck.

“Can companion converse?”

Vero gave Irg an encouraging nod.

“Greetings, Elder,” said Irg as he lowered his head in respect, but maintained eye contact. Vero nudged him, and whispered, “Don’t stare.”

“Abode afar?” asked the Elder.

Taking a moment to calculate the meaning, Irg said, “Yes, Elder, my home system is very distant, many light units away. I am a Corbog.”

Gesturing toward Vero, “Unusual union.”

“The Ansons saved my life, Elder,” said Irg. “They permitted me to join their crew until they can

return me to my home world. Although I don’t know when that will ever be,” his voice trailing off.

Motioning toward the pool, the Elder asked, “Fluid familiar?”

“My people live on a planet with much water. I have cousins who still live in the sea. Your fluid is very welcomed and refreshing for me.”

The Elder raised an eyebrow, “Breathe below?”

Pointing to the gills at the base of his neck, Irg said, “Yes, Elder, I can breathe underwater.”

“Prestigious power,
confederate Corbog.”

Vero smiled.

Feeling encouraged, Irg said, “Elder, if I may be so bold, you have the sign of my people’s Great Seer at the top of your pyramid. Do you revere Him as well?”

Vero’s smile suddenly disappeared and her eyes widened. “Gracious Elder,” she blurted, “please . . .”

The Elder’s sudden raised paw with six scimitar-like claws flashing in the firelight halted Vero mid-sentence. The Elder leaned forward, her ears flattened against her head, and stared at Irg for an interminable time. The soft hissing of gas fueling the pyres and the echo of water lapping the pool steps filled the void of conversation. The Elder’s ears gradually returned to an erect position. “Honor Her!” she said.

How intriguing, thought Irg, their deity is feminine! Stepping a pace forward, he cocked his head slightly and looked up into the Elder's glaring eyes. Choosing his words carefully, he replied, "Fascinating . . . faith. Desire . . . deeper discovery. Acquire additional . . . appreciation."

The elder's eyes softened, and she drew back into an upright position. She looked from Irg to Vero, and announced,

"Sanctuary shared,
damp duo.
Follow fast."

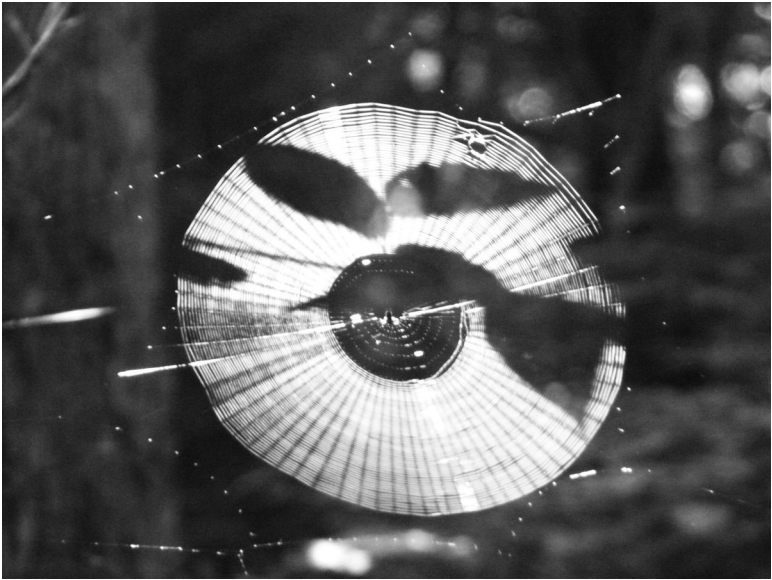
The Elder abruptly turned and quickly strode toward the back of the pyramid. As Irg and Vero exchanged looks, water splashed behind them. Turning, they saw the huge green serpent's head circling in the dark pool, bearing toward them with its lipless mouth of spiked teeth glistening and its two red eyes burning like hungry embers. Without discussion, Irg and Vero sprinted after the Elder.



—Jordan Blanton, “Fly Away Home”



—Jordan Blanton, “Beauty in Round Bales”



—Jordan Blanton, "Charlotte's Web"

**THE STRENGTH
WITHIN**

—Brittany Violet
Long

I SAT HOLDING MY KNEES PRESSED TIGHT TO MY CHEST. A warm breeze played in my dirty blonde curls. Even though it was a hot August day in the little town of Benton, Arkansas, I couldn't shake the chills that were slithering up my spine. I sat in the shade of my favorite oak tree in my parents' backyard, trying to regain my composure. The wind picked up speed and rattled the leaves loose from the tree I was cowering under. I could smell the disgusting aroma of iron and death all around me. My heart raced beneath the thin cotton material covering my chest. I rubbed my fingers in the grass trying desperately to cleanse the color of mulberry from my hands. It seemed like nothing I did could remove the dry, crusty blood that was caked under my fingernails. After the shock finally subsided, I felt a heavy tinge of guilt eating at me for not being able to save my sister. I wasn't quick enough or strong enough to preserve the innocent beauty of her life. I could hear whispers in the wind and I felt a dark presence closing in on me. I felt as if I was being watched. I pressed my palms into the hot earth and eased my way back to my feet. I started walking, not sure where my feet might take me.

I thought I was dreaming when I heard the muffled screams. I felt the weight of a muscular body settle on top of me the same time as a rough, cracked hand covered my mouth. I began to panic. The hand was hot and sticky and I could taste the salty sweat seeping into the corner of my mouth. My eyes flew open to find a scruffy man leaning over me. I panicked as I let my eyes adjust to the dim light coming in from the window. An eerie wind tousled the moon lit curtains and cooled my damp skin. He had eyes the color of dirty mop water and jet black hair that was slick with grime and oil. I tried to scream but there was too much pressure on my chest.

The blood-curdling screams continued in the bed next to me. I saw my baby sister fighting against a younger man with the same stature and dirty appearance. The younger man had his pants down around his ankles. Her hands were tied to the bed post above her head with a thick rope. Her arms were red and raw from the struggle. He was gripping her blond hair in his fist. He had some sort of marking slithering from his pinky finger all the way up his forearm. My sister's eye was black and blood was smeared across her dainty mouth. I felt helpless as I watched the man force himself on my little sister. I sobbed when reality really hit me. I watched her innocence being stripped from her as she cried hysterically.

"Please don't! Please stop! Oh god! Allison, help me! Please don't!" My sister sobbed. He thrust his pelvis into her body while she wailed in protest.

"I told you to shut up!" the younger man screamed into her face.

He picked her up off the bed and slammed her petite body into the wall. I began to thrash my body violently. I needed to save my little sister.

"Stop it! You're hurting her!" I screamed.

Her head crashed into the wall with a loud clomp. My sister swung her arms at the man and clawed at his face. The man

grabbed her by the neck and shoved her head back against the wall several times.

"No! You're going to kill her! You're a monster!" I screamed. The man let go of her neck and her body collapsed forwards in on itself. The man moved away from her as she fell head first into our cherry wood dresser. Her face hit the corner of the dresser before the rest of her bruised body hit the ground. Her head fell lifelessly to the side as her eyes rolled back and a stream of blood began to slowly pool from her mouth. The man wiped off his lips and pulled his pants back up around his waist.

I sobbed uncontrollably as horror stirred inside of me. My stomach twisted in knots while bile threatened to surface into my throat. The taste of acid swam in my mouth. I struggled beneath the man on top me but was I stuck under the weight of a boulder. The man took his free hand and began to undo the button on his faded black jeans. I could feel a large protrusion pressing against the crease of my thighs. I kicked my legs and thrashed my body beneath his hips. I was panicking because his large hand was partially covering my nostrils. I bit down on the man's hand and felt the disgusting warmth ooze into my mouth. His filthy blood tasted like metal and burnt ash. The man was enraged and shrieked in pain.

"Hold still, you little bitch,"

the man said, "do you wanta end up like your sister?"

He flipped my body over and smashed my face into the pillow. I gasped for air but I was struggling to breathe. My cotton pillow case was hot against my face. His rough hands were trying to spread my legs apart. I tried to squeeze my legs as tight as I could but they were slick with perspiration. His hand slid between my legs and violently up between my thighs. His callused fingers were hot as they rubbed against my skin. I tried to swing my right arm at the man but missed. I tried again and got hold of his hair. I yanked and ripped at his hair until he lost his focus and let out a painful grunt. I jerked my head back and felt the crunch of cartilage. I must have gotten him good because he fell backwards giving me just enough time to turn myself back around. I gasped for air as the younger man came towards me clutching a thick rope. The older man was sprawled on the floor with his face in his hands. I leapt up from the bed and grabbed the cast iron jewelry box that my sister gave me as a gift. "Stay away from me," I said through clenched teeth.

The younger man didn't listen and he continued to advance towards me.

"I mean it! Stay away from me!" I screamed. I felt the blood boiling beneath my skin.

"You're gonna be a good

girl and let Bernie finish what he started." The man said while he twisted the rope around in his hand. His muscles tightened in his bronzed forearms making his snake tattoo twist and contort. I shuddered and felt an overwhelming shiver ripple through my body starting at the soles of my feet and working its way up through my spine. I felt like I was going to throw up again. I tightened my fingers around the cast iron and took a deep breath to steady the nerves gripping at my stomach. The man began to close in on me. I jumped from the bed and lurched towards him bringing the iron box down on his head. The man stumbled forward and I leapt past him. I tried to run by the older man still on the floor but he grabbed me by the ankle and I fell to the ground. I saw that the man's nose was crooked. Dark blood oozed from his nose and streamed down his chin. I backed away from him on the ground but he was crawling towards me quickly. I kicked my legs at him viciously until I was able to kick him in the face. I got back to my feet and ran into the dark hallway. The house was empty because my parents were away for the weekend. The men must have been watching the house.

I could hear the man making his way through the hall behind me. I ran into my parent's bedroom and slammed the door. My fingers trembled as I tried to make them

lock the door. I was desperate as I searched the room. I threw things. I Broke things. A picture of me and my sister fell from my parent's dresser and shattered on the floor. I didn't stop though; I knew it had to be in there somewhere. The man was outside the bedroom door now. He was banging with all of his might and it seemed that he was throwing the weight of his body into the door as it budged with each thump.

I was searching through my parent's closet. I found boxes of useless knick knacks, boxes of pictures and clothing, but no gun. The banging was getting louder and the man was desperate to get through that door. I laid down on the cold, hardwood floor and rolled my body under my parent's king sized bed. I found a small cigar box wedged between the mattress and the frame of the bed and I knew I had found what I was looking for. I scooted myself up close to the wall just as the bedroom door swung open. Heavy footfalls advanced towards me. I watched the man's muddy black boots circle the room. Finally they stopped right in front of my parent's Victorian style bed. I gripped the pistol in my sweaty hands and tried to keep my breath low and muted. My heart was soaring. The gun felt cool and slick in my hands. My hands were shaking but I liked the weight of the pistol as I held it in front of me. The man dropped to his knees and then

brought his face to meet mine right as I pulled the trigger and put a bullet right between his eyes.

A few hours later, I found myself at my old school. I wasn't entirely sure what it was that compelled me to go there, but something about the moss covered brick and the smell of dust comforted me. The parking lot was empty and eerily silent. I stared at the small building that once upon a time seemed so massive and giant to me. I walked to the back of the school quickly as if someone was following me. When I was younger, I would come here when things seemed to go bad. I placed her fingertips along the smooth glass and pressed my face to the window. My warm breath left the cool surface looking foggy. With slight force I pushed on the glass in the right hand corner. The window gave ease and slid up. I placed my hands in on the flat surface and lifted myself up and through the window. Once inside the dark, clammy room, I stumbled around until my eyes adjusted to the light. I bumped into a life sized skeleton hanging from a silver hook and nearly gave myself a heart attack. I descended into the narrow hallway and proceeded to make my way through the dark corridor, running my fingers along the navy blue, paint caked lockers. I felt numb and cold even as memories of childhood and innocence tried to break through my facade.

I walked until I found myself standing in a huge, open space. I stared at the calm water in the pool. The dark depths of the water looked so inviting. I placed my strong hands on the smooth metal of the ladder and propelled myself up the stairs with placid strength. I thought about climbing up these same stairs when I was younger. I remembered how scary they seemed to me. I remembered the way it used to make my heart race to think about falling freely into the water. I reached the top of the ladder and gazed at the serene water below me. I unbuttoned my jean shorts and shimmed out of them. I pulled my shirt up and over my head with steady hands. I edged my way to the end of the wobbly diving board and liked the way the plank felt as it bounced slightly and gave under the weight of my body. I stood there with my arms wrapped around my once fragile body in an embrace and thought about everything that had happened. A knowing smile hinted at the corner of my rosy lips. I raised my arms above my head and felt the muscles in my legs tighten as I bent them. I felt the strength travel through my sinew as I flung my body into the air. I descended from the plank and dove towards the tranquil water. For a short moment I felt free. I was alive and I was flying. The tips of my fingers touched the water first, followed by my head and then the rest of my body.

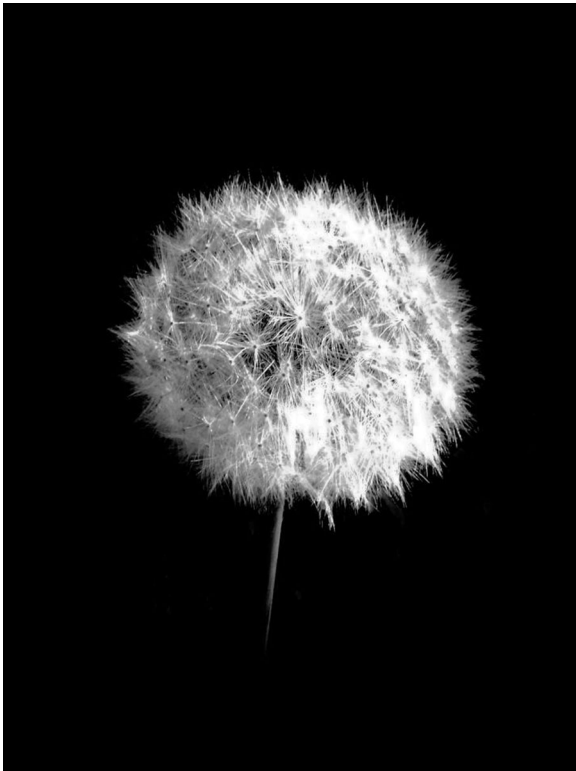
The cool water welcomed me and embraced my body as darkness swept over.

* * *

I found myself standing in a dark room. Turquoise illumination beamed from the center of the space. A transparent box filled with a lucid substance sat before me. I felt confusion sweep over me as a knot formed in my stomach. Tension tugged at my chest making it hard to breath. The water began to stir making the sand in the bottom of the aquarium cast a stormy cloud. I looked closer and it began to rain. My mouth tasted of thunder and blood. Blinding lights danced through the down pour as crimson sparks floated past my eyes. Sleek asphalt shimmered through the storm. A whirlwind of images screamed in protest as heavy bodies collided head on. A tear seeped down my cheek and a gasp was stuck in my throat. I tried to scream but no sound escaped my lips. A burst of lightning caused the glass to shatter in my face. Water began to pool around my bare ankles, creeping up my legs faster than I could think to move. I felt cemented in place. Horror and panic put my body in shock. Cold water splashed against my chest and numbed the fright. I could do nothing but wait as the murky water filled my mouth and settled in my lungs. My heart faltered and darkness swept over.



— April Evans, Untitled



—April Evans, Untitled



— April Evans, Untitled



—April Evans, Untitled

THE BLACK BAG

—Sarah Stansbery

NICKADEMUS IS AN HONEST MAN. Has a job like anyone else to sustain a good living. He loves his work and does it well. His work, however, involves handling corpses. But what many don't see is that morticians have a sense of humor and are very optimistic.

It was a Saturday afternoon when Nick received a phone call. He was sitting in his kitchen, next to his cabinets shaped like 18th century coffins. His wife, Carolyn, was enjoying a cup of tea while sitting at their mahogany, claw footed table. Each chair had a different face carved into it, all menacing and snarling. Her nose was buried deep in a book. When the phone rang, a sad melody sang out; a flute solo disrupting the silence.

"That's the dead ring," Carolyn said, giving her husband a meaningful glance, as she peered over her glasses, her expression serious.

"Well, darn," groaned Nick, "That means I can't say my slogan: '*You stab 'em, we slab 'em*.'" He reached for the replicated 1892 Victorian Phone, its black and silver veins glimmering in the streaks of sunlight sneaking in through a parted curtain. He couldn't help but admire its beauty. He held the earpiece up to his ear and suppressed a giggle as he answered, "Good afternoon, Boxed Home Funeral Services. This is Nickademus speaking. How may I assist?" After some uncontrollable sobbing on the other line, an elderly women's voice was heard. Nickademus listened respectfully, acknowledging her wishes, all the while thinking how pretty the light's reflection on the phone was, wishing it to look like that all the time. After the conversation, he hung up the phone with a sigh. He liked it better when his friend, Steve, called.

"So much for getting the weekend off, hun. Another client croaked on me and his wife wants the services on Monday."

"But I thought they weren't your cli-

ents until they croaked?" A smile played on her lips from the pun in her own joke. Nick smiled back, a small chuckle escaping his throat. He headed up the spiraled, cast iron staircase to their bedroom where he changed into his favorite suit - a deep sea blue with a silver necktie. As he kissed his wife good-bye and opened the front door, a wave of lushes smells from Carolyn's flower garden washed over him, and entered their house, engulfing everything in the sweet scent of mums, bat face, and an organic wall of the rare blue rose. Being a competitive landscape designer, she made sure their yard was the best in their town, outdoing every flowerbed she'd see. Nickademus admired her work, though he felt she could do without the slight obsession. But he couldn't complain, after all, she put up with him and what he did for a living. He closed the door and headed to his car, a slight skip in his step.

The mortician's car was a silver 2010 hatchback sedan. He stopped a moment to admire the second best investment he ever made. He slid into the black leather seat, the scratch-free surface shaping perfectly to his form. He started the engine and a smooth purr rose from under the hood. He turned in his seat to look into the back, two gurneys staring back. He had to remove the back seats for them to fit. After all, his job required him

to pick up his work from hospitals and on special occasions, clients' homes. He headed down the street of his neighborhood and headed into town. Luckily, his destination was only a fifteen minute drive away.

After parking in the loading area of the town hospital, he saw the coroner waiting for him.

"Hey Steve, got a cold one for me?"

"Yep, he's inside," Steve replied, his face brightening up a little.

With a handshake, they both turned and entered the back door. The hallway was lean, only big enough for two full sized men to walk shoulder to shoulder.

"So, what's this one's story?" Nickademus asked.

"Bad heart, and from what I looked at, I'm not sure how he lived as long as he did," Steve remarked as they stopped in front of a white door, pulling his keys from his pocket. "Wonder why it took him so long to pass?" he wondered aloud.

"Must have *cold feet*..." Nickademus replied with a smile. Both men laughed, the sound echoing down the hall. They entered a small room that was well lit. There were no windows; only x-rays decorated the whitewashed, concrete walls. There were three stainless steel tables. Two had sinks attached at the head of them. The third one had wheels, and it was occupied. Nick picked up the slip that was

hanging from the foot of the corpse that was sticking out from under a white sheet.

"Mr. Butcher, age: 93, height: 5'6", weight: 132..."

"So, Nick, did you bring your tools or you need to borrow mine, but I'm gonna have to start charging you if you do use mine again."

"No thanks, Steve. I prefer to take my work home on the weekends." He pulled a lever near the left wheel of the table, releasing the brakes. He pushed the table towards the hall while Steve held the door for him. The wheels squeaked as they spun, the sound bouncing off the walls and beyond. As the two men approached the loading dock, Nickademus stopped and pulled out his keys, hitting the unlock button and then the rear hatch button. The hatch yawned open and one of the gurneys slid out part way like a lolling, black tongue. He wheeled the table over to the gurney and started putting the feet in first.

"Feet first? Wouldn't it be easier to put the head in first?" Steve said matter-of-fact-like.

"Maybe, but this makes it easier to get them back out since my drive-way is slanted," Nickademus replied with a shrug. "Besides, after the incident of dropping my fare ... I never want to do a reconstruction like that again."

"How you made it through school with your state of mind is

beyond me," Steve remarked, shaking his head from side to side.

"What can I say," Nickademus replied, "undertakers think inside the box." He handed the now empty table back to his friend and slid back into the driver's seat of his car.

As he headed back home, he slowed down so as not to jumble his passenger, knowing what could happen if he hit a bump just right. His dashboard began to beep, informing him he had a txt message. He tapped the plasma screen and a picture of his spouse lit up:

{Carolyn} ~Dinner?~

Dinner?! Nickademus half groaned. Knowing her, she'll want me to go to the store, he thought to himself. "She must think I'm a big spender or something," he stated out loud.

"You don't want anything do you?" He peered into the rear view mirror as he talked to the corpse, looking at the white sheet that covered a recognizable lump.

He pulled into a parking lot and parked in front of Kroger's. He got out of his car and shut the door. Mumbling to himself, "bread, cheese, lunch meat, ...and wine ... wine for later," he smiled at the thought. As he strolled up to the entrance, he passed a man in hand-me-down clothes. His padded vest, once red, now looked as though it has been acquainted with the ground many times. It reminded Nickademus of an old life pre-

server. The man was smoking. Nick gave him a nod and entered without a second thought. The man, however, was not on break.

As he watched Nickademus walk by in his blue suit, he thought the grin on Nick's face a bit strange. But he only had his sights on the car Nick came out of. He casually walked over to it, his worn sneakers sliding loosely on his feet. He peered into the passenger side window, whistling with delight. The doors weren't locked. He cautiously opened the door. Being new, the door didn't make a sound. The man now gawked at the dashboard: the built-in GPS, the LED radio with an attached CD player, and the well-polished chrome of it all. The look on his face resembled a twelve-year-old boy on Christmas. "If only I knew how to jump-start an engine..." he mumbled as he pulled out a screw driver from his grubby coat pocket.

He began to pick at the seams of the dash board, prying it apart, trying not to force it too much and break it. A large, black chunk of plastic broke free and landed in his lap. He looked it over and determined it not to be important. Wiping off any fingerprints, he tossed it into the back. It made a muffled thump as it bounced off the head of the cargo. The thief looked back, unable to see what he hit. "It's big," he thought, "might even be worth something ..." He pulled the adjustment lever on

the side of the seat and leaned the seat back, level with the floor. He released the handle, letting it click loudly back in place.

Without warning, Mr. Butcher sat up in his gurney and groaned. The white cloth fell from his torso and revealed a large Y-shaped suture across his chest and down his abdomen. His eyes bulging from his eye sockets, Mr. Butcher shrieked in absolute horror. The sound was deep at first, then, rising in pitch, grew longer and more forced, continuing even after his lungs were empty. The corpse of Mr. Butcher had fallen back on the gurney with a thump, its energy spent. All went silent.

Meanwhile, Nickademus wandered through the aisles of the store. He sighed as he walked from shelf to shelf, feeling like Pacman, looking for what he needed. "Why can't they put things where they're more convenient," he thought aloud. As he approached the counter, he noticed that the lady at the register looked like she needed a drink. Her hair was barley pulled back with a loose hair tie, her bangs covering half her face. She looked at him as if he were a bother, disturbing her evening. She eyed him in his suit as she rang up his groceries and placed them in a brown, paper bag. "What you suppose'ta be? You go'en to a funeral er something?" Her gum flopping was around in her mouth as she spoke. Nickademus smiled, "In two days

I will." He pulled out his wallet, noticing the odd look the cashier was giving him now. He pulled a business card from his wallet and handed it to her. "Take one, I find it nice to plan ahead." He then grabbed his bags and headed for the exit, the automatic doors sliding open for him.

As he walked out of the store, the paper bag in one arm, he started to whistle until he noticed the squad car parked next to his. Its red and blue lights flashing in the setting sunlight. He rushed over to the scene, hoping it wasn't anything serious. As he approached, the officer saw him and called out. "This your vehicle?"

Nickademus calmly replied, "Yes, was there an accident?" He looked over the officer's shoulder to look at his car, the thoughts of his insurance covering any damage calming him slightly. The officer pulled out a note pad and began to jot things down. Nick stood there, waiting for an answer. The officer studied his body language, noting his calmness and reaction to what he was about to say. "A man broke into your vehicle in an attempt to take your electronics. A civilian who was walking by heard a scream and called us to investigate."

Nickademus looked shocked, "What did he take? Did he break anything?"

The officer replied in a way that sounded like he'd rehearsed

it, "There is some damage to your dashboard, but the man stopped mid-thievery. I've tried talking to him, but he isn't saying much. Something about 'zombies' and 'the end of the world'." Nickademus peered over at the police cruiser, recognizing the man in the back, who was now rocking back and forth, a wild look in his eye much like that of a frightened deer. His lips moving but nothing legible coming out.

He thanked the officer and explained that he was insured. The officer, seeming reluctant to escort his new passenger, put away his notepad and tipped his hat. Nickademus handed him a business card. "Can you give this to him? I've always felt it was a good idea to plan ahead." As the officer drove away, Nick opened the back hatch. He straightened the corpse and recovered it, knowing almost too well what stopped the thief.

The first thing you learn in mortuary school is the neurological impulses of the brain. After death, signals are cut off, but can be completed with a simple bump or sound resulting in a last minute impulse. The click that emitted from the lever as the seat locked in place triggered such an impulse. These reactions can be unexpected. When triggered, a corpse can move, twitch, or even speak. That's why he bought a new car; so he could prank his wife when she needed a ride.

REVELATION

—Sheree Whitelock

IT SEEMED LIKE EVERYONE WAS GETTING IN MY WAY TODAY. My brother Derek took forever in the bathroom this morning, Mom's attempted lecture slowed me down, I got stuck behind Grandfather Time driving to school, and now I managed to get myself stuck walking behind Jimmy, the cripple who insisted on rolling his wheelchair at the slowest speed possible. I nearly pushed him out of my way to get to my locker.

Jimmy spun his wheelchair around towards me and asked, "Good morning, Jeanie. Did you have a good weekend?"

I just glared at him and continued by. One more tardy and I was looking at a Friday school. There was no time for me to spend on a loser like him. He'd probably just try to convert me again to Christianity. Some people just don't understand the concept of butting out of peoples personal lives. I opened my locker and grabbed my books for first period English with Mr. Williams.

Suddenly I heard a familiar voice yell, "Jeanie!" Finally, someone worth my time. I turned around to see Kelley skipping towards me.

"Hey, Kelley. How was your weekend?" I asked.

"Awesome." Kelley said flicking her hair back. "I hooked up with Kyle at Morgan's party."

"No way! Were you guys drinking?"

"A little, but we weren't drunk. He's not as good of a kisser as I thought" Kelley leaned in close, cupping her hand around my ear and whispered, "But he made up for it later."

"I wish I could have gone. Mom made

sure I stayed home and studied for this stupid English test that's isn't even 'til *tomorrow*." I rolled my eyes and added, "Can you believe Williams is giving me a D?"

"Seriously? He must really not like you. I'm getting a B- and I don't do anything in that class... speaking of which, did you read that assignment?"

"No, but I looked it up on Cliffnotes. It's about some guy in the army talking about all the stuff the soldiers carried. The one guy is obsessed with a girl back home that he's not even dating and carries pictures of her and is jealous about everyone she might be hanging out with." I said with a sigh. "He sounds really pathetic."

"What? That sounds so cute. I wish I had a guy that liked me that much."

"Maybe Kyle will start liking you like that." I said, meandering towards the classroom.

"I'm over Kyle. Didn't you see the new kid from Crestview?" Kelley said, stopping and looking around. "Paul? Now he's hot."

Glancing up at the hall clock I gasped, "Hurry up, Kelley." I said, grabbing her arm. "I can't be late to class again. We can talk about this more at lunch."

Hurrying Kelley off to-

wards English, I tripped over someone's bag and their books went everywhere. Groaning, I looked back and saw Jimmy faintly smile at me as he started reaching for his books. "Sorry Jimmy," I called back towards him, "I've got to get to class. You shouldn't leave your bag laying where people can trip over it."

The bell rang the moment I walked into class and I smirked at Williams as he raised one of his bushy eyebrows at me. Glancing around I couldn't believe how many people were missing from class. Did someone schedule a senior skip day and not tell me about it? It was mostly the goody-goodies missing from class though, so whatever they were doing probably wasn't interesting at all anyways.

The best thing about English class is the morning announcements that cut into ten minutes of Williams' teaching time. Apparently the only thing interesting enough to talk about lately is the potential war between the US and China, and the Drug Resistance group that needs more members or else they have to get rid of the program. It's not like either of those announcements really affect me anyways, so neither bother me at all.

Twenty minutes into the lecture I was starting to fall asleep. To save myself from a detention I decided to ask for pass to the bathroom. Begrudgingly Williams gave me the pass. You can't deny a teenage girl the right to use the bathroom these days, it's against school policy. And Williams knew I'd be the first to turn him into the school board for anything I could get my hands on.

Time seemed to stand still as Williams scribbled his initials onto my planner verifying my pass to the bathroom. Kelley popped her gum obnoxiously in the back corner and Kyle was passing notes with Emilie, the slut from France.

"No detours Ms. Wright. Hurry back, our test will be starting shortly."

"Absolutely Mr. Mercury. Oh, I mean Mr. Williams." I said with a sneer. He hated when I compared him to Freddie Mercury, but he looked just like him. I scurried out the door and into the halls towards my locker to get my gum. Stopping abruptly, my eyes looked towards the mess in the hallway. And that's when I knew something was wrong. Jimmy's books were still all over the floor and his wheelchair was turned on its side against the locker. My shoes

suddenly felt as though they were filled with lead as I attempted to walk towards the books and wheelchair. Where was Jimmy?

* * *

"Excuse me," I cleared my throat and pushed my bangs out of my face, "Mrs. Martinez?"

"Yes, Jeanie?" Mrs. Martinez said, looking up from her paperwork.

"Jimmy Tapple..." I stammered, cleared my throat and rearranged my bangs again. I looked down and noticed the edge my shirt was curled up; I tried to smooth it down.

"What about Jimmy?" Mrs. Martinez asked, setting down her pen.

I tried to say everything as quickly as possibly "Jimmy's gone and I don't know where he is. I was walking to my locker and I saw his stuff lying all over the hallway and his wheelchair is just leaning sideways against the lockers."

"Calm down Jeanie. He can't have just disappeared into thin air." She said shaking her head, picking up her pen again and reaching for her papers.

"I'm not lying!" My voice rose. Pointing to the video moni-

tors I said, "Check the hall tapes. He's gone."

"Jeanie," She said firmly, setting her pen down again. "let's get you back to class dear. Mr. Harris and I will look into this, I'm sure it's all a misunderstanding."

I just stood there shaking my head back and forth until finally she got up and walked me back to class. I stood at the doorway of Mr. William's classroom for a while watching her pick up Jimmy's belongings. Why was she smiling? What were they going to tell Jimmy's family?

"Jeanie." Williams voice shattered my thoughts and I turned back to face him. "How about you join the rest of class in our discussion on Tim O'Brien's book *The Things They Carried*? You seemed to have an excellent time roaming the hallways; I hope you've gathering some insightful things to share in class."

"Sorry, Mr. Williams. I had to go to the office to inform Mrs. Martinez of..." I trailed off looking towards where Mrs. Martinez was just standing. She vanished. There was no way she could have walked by me while Williams was speaking to me. All of Jimmy's things were still lying on the floor too. Something was happening.

I'm not sure how many times Williams called my name before I actually heard him.

"Jeanie." Williams stood beside me, glaring down at me. "Do I need to issue you a Friday school?"

"Mrs. Martinez is gone." I pointed towards the mess. "She... she was standing there just a moment ago."

"I don't need to listen to your fantasies, Ms. Wright." He said, his eyes boring into mine, not even taking a moment to look where I was pointing. "Take yourself to the office."

It didn't matter that Williams didn't believe me. I knew what I saw. Well, what I didn't see. Where was everyone going? At least almost all of my friends were still here, but what about my family? Anxiety hit me. I broke into a sprint towards the office.

Mrs. Martinez's chair was empty; pictures of her family were proudly displayed on her desk. There was one of her young teenager getting baptized in a farmer's pond, and a group photo of a

mission trip her family went to in South Africa. Looking around for a sign of the office aids, I snatched the phone off the receiver and dialed home. Heat coursed through my veins as the phone rang. Why wasn't Mom answering? Had she told me she was going somewhere this morning? I was so rushed this morning I didn't want to listen to her. Closing my eyes, I thought back.

* * *

"Jeanie!" my mother said as I began to rush out the kitchen door.

"Yeah?" I said without turning around.

"Don't forget, tonight Derek has his skit at church." I didn't have to turn around to know that she was half smiling, I could hear it in her voice. "It'd be really nice if you would come to the service and support him."

Turning around I glanced at my father sitting at the kitchen table reading the newspaper and sipping his coffee. He looked up at me and smiled. I looked into my mother's brown eyes, "Mom, you know I don't go to church."

Her mouth twitched. "Jeanie, just this once. You may like it."

"No."

"Listen, if you just—" she began.

I jumped at the sudden sound of Dad's voice. "Joyce! Drop it for Christ's sake." Mother's eyes closed, her hand clenching her apron. "If she doesn't want to go to church, she doesn't have to go. You're driving me insane." He finished.

"Maybe if you would be a better example, Jeanie wouldn't be so opposed—" She slowly opened her tear stricken eyes.

"Joyce, she's an adult." I heard his fist hit the table, the silverware clinking with the shake of the table. "She can make her own damn decisions and so can I. I'm getting tired of your self-righteous attitude."

I smiled. Dad was always on my side. Mom took a deep breath releasing her apron and tucking her soft brown hair behind her ear. She turned around and opened a drawer, pulling out five dollars and turned to hand me it.

"Here's lunch money if you need it." Her eyes fixated on mine. "Service starts at 6:30 tonight if you change your mind. The world's not right Jeanie, it could be over at any moment. I just want you saved."

"Mom, chill out." I said

reaching out for the money, not willing to take the three steps over to her. "You're so brainwashed." I was tired of her end of the world speeches and I couldn't hold my tongue any longer, "Heaven's not real. You know what? I'd rather spend an eternity in hell than an eternity of nothing anyways. So maybe you'll be right and I can just burn in hell for all eternity."

She didn't even wait to see if I would take the money; she just set it down looking at me, tears welling up in her eyes and she walked out of the kitchen towards the living room. I almost felt bad.

"Bye Dad" I said, picking up the money and heading out again.

"See ya Jeanie. Don't worry about your mom."



Mom had to still be at the house. Hanging the phone up on the receiver I turned towards Derek's classroom. My pace quickened and the blue lines on the High School floor began to blur into red as I crossed into the Middle School section. I stopped so quickly my tennis shoes left skids on the floor. Perfect timing. I saw Derek heading towards the water fountain. And

then I saw a man. A man I've never seen before dressed in brilliant white clothing. There was something different about him. It was like all the light in the room gravitated around him. His stride was fluid and graceful as he walked up behind Derek. All I could do was stand and watch, losing all control of my body and mouth. I wanted to shout at Derek and tell him to run, but I was cemented to the floor, swaying to an invisible breeze.

I watched Derek turn around towards the man; he almost smiled, but then he fell to his knees in submission. Tears welled in my eyes and they slowly trickled over my nose, and onto my lips. I closed my eyes, attempting to gain control of my body again, but it was too late. Once my eyes were open, Derek and the man were gone. Quiet footsteps approached me from behind.

Kelley's voice whispered behind me. "Jeanie, what's wrong?"

"Kelley," I whispered, barely believing what I was seeing. "do you believe in Angels?"

"What are you talking about, Jeanie?"

"I'm scared my mom was right. I think the world really might be ending." Turning around I walked towards the exit of the

school, faintly conscious of Kelley's footsteps following behind me. I had to find Dad, if he was still here. He should be. Approaching the exit I looked up towards the sky; there was something different about it. The doors swung open and a cool breeze whipped my face, drying the tears onto my face making my skin feel cracked. To the north, I saw the sky begin to open up. Fire and hail were blazing towards the town, the school, the world. Somewhere behind me I heard a scream, tears streamed down my face and everything went black.

* * *

I woke up. How long had I been dreaming? But more importantly, where was I? Looking around, my eyes seemed to focus better. I must have been daydreaming. Why was I standing in line? I couldn't seem to shake the feeling that I was alone and had to find my mom, my dad, my brother.

**THE STORY OF
AN UNLIKELY
SAVIOR**

— *Sheree Whitelock*

MANY PEOPLE DO NOT RECALL MY NAME, BUT I HAVE ONE. When I come in contact with them they go about their lives and think that I am nothing but a beast, not realizing how much I understand – how much I remember. It seems silly that I can not get credit for all my efforts, but the people are ignorant. They don't understand. How could they possibly understand my story?

The cool air licked my face that morning as I drank the bitter water from my trough. The others were still lollygagging from the back of the paddock; I was always the first one up. Maybe it's because I'm smarter than them. The rest are as ignorant as those humans that feed us, wishing for nothing but to continue their lives as slaves – just for a bit of sweet oat and molasses at night. Something was in the air that morning, I could sense it. It was different. It was bitter. I could tell today was my day for escape.

To my surprise, old Abraham came out and fetched me. I'm assuming he was just too lazy to wait for Sampson, the strongest of our kind, who was slowly making his way up from the rear. Abraham was in a hurry, I could tell he believed he was being talked to again.

Abraham always acts peculiar when he hears the voice from the sky. Always careful about what he does, how his people act around him. It's quiet funny to watch him quiver in fear at times. I don't think the voice from the sky actually talks to Abraham though, because the voice only talks to me among my kind – so why would the voice feel like he needed to talk to a human? People are inherently evil. They kill, they steal, they lie, and continue to live in this word that I often hear Abraham say, "sin".

Sin seems to be a rather dirty word among the people. Always repenting, whatever that means. They say they repent and then they continue to do these sins – so I'm not sure what repent actually means. I think it's a word they

use to make themselves feel better, when they do terrible things. The voice in the sky laughs at me when I ask what these words mean. It says, “do not worry about those words. They mean nothing for your kind”, so I believe.

As Abraham led me towards the barn, I could sense the fear on his breath and feel it through his grip on my halter. Of course, I had tried to escape before – maybe he was just preparing for me to bolt, but I knew that I had to be wise about my flee, and not the fleas about my skin that bit and itched either.

He saddled me up rather hurriedly, the girth loose about my belly, and sat his son in the seat and instructed two younger ones to carry wood and rope. I was thankful for this, because Isaac did not weigh much and the journey was long. Something changed in Abraham, he grew more anxious with every step and there was sadness in his voice every time he spoke. I tried to become more alert and figure out what was going on when the voice from the sky told me not to fear. Everything the voice from the sky had ever told me was true, so I relaxed. People are peculiar creatures, so it’s best not to bother figuring them out.

Once we got to the mountain, Abraham left me with the two boys. They were causing a big disturbance and not paying attention to me at all, so I knew that

this would be my moment to run. I began to wander slightly off when their laughter suddenly stopped. I paused to see if they were on to me, but instead I heard the one say, “Abraham didn’t have a sacrifice. Isn’t that what he was doing?” And the other replied, “Has the old man gone insane? Is he going to kill Isaac?”

At the mention of this, I realized the boys were right. Abraham must be going mad from the voice he hears and was going to kill Isaac as a sacrifice to stop the voice. I knew I was taking a risk, but I couldn’t let Isaac die. He was a nice boy that always brought me carrots and apples. He told me he hated the taste of them, and I appreciated that he always gave them to me over the others. We had many times where he would sit on the fence line and shuck me his fruits while telling me about his hopes and fears. He was the only person I truly cared for. I couldn’t let him be killed.

My thoughts were interrupted by the first boy saying, “of course, Abraham is probably going to sacrifice that stupid donkey that’s always trying to get away.” Infuriated, I knew I was not stupid – but then shock and worry set in, Abraham was going to sacrifice me. Of course, how could I not see that? All this time I was worrying about Isaac and it was really me that Abraham was intending to kill. And what would Isaac do? Noth-

ing, he would not go against his father.

I heard the voice from the sky say, "run for the meadow", so I bolted there to take refuge. A flock of sheep were grazing about the meadow as I flew past. And then, brilliance struck me. It was like the voice in the sky gave me a thought that I would have never thought myself. Skidding to a stop, I turned towards a great ram in the flock. Pinning my ears, I bared my teeth and chased him towards the mountain. As he reached the top, he got caught in a thicket about his horns not too far from Abraham. I made a good ruckus to catch Abraham's attention and saw little Isaac strapped to the wood as if he were a young lamb to be given to the voice in the sky. Recognizing my error in thought, I fled from the scene. I heard Abraham struggling with the ram, so I knew Isaac was safe.

I saved Isaac that day. I didn't realize what I was doing at the time, but I was happy knowing the boy would live. The voice in the sky still talks to me and gives me instructions, but my life out here in the wilderness is much easier when I have the voice so near to me. The grass is tender here, the water more pure. The voice tells me of a man named Balaam that I must go to. I hope that this task will be quick, because I'd hate to be away from this paradise for too long. My life has been wonderful, and I have the voice from the sky to thank for that.



—Sheree Whitelock, “Escape”

CONTRIBUTORS

Arika Baker is a senior majoring in English and Psychology. She enjoys writing poetry and fiction, capturing the world and life events through the camera's lens, reading, horseback riding, kayaking and all other adventurous endeavors. She hopes to gain acceptance to The Ohio State University's Masters of Occupational Therapy program and have a lifelong career helping others.

Jordan Blanton: Jordan Blanton, cow-girl at heart, sends her photos from Cardington, Ohio. Aside from pursuing a degree at Marion Technical College, she devotes much of her time to helping out at the Marion and Morrow County dog shelters, organizations for which she has much passion. Jordie, as her friends know her, prides herself on her knack with a camera, her kind and always generous heart, and being able to eat more than most grown men.

Beth Campbell collects garden gnomes. She enjoys not having a radio in her car and hopes to one day teach high school English and Theatre.

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April Evans is really into photography and has been for years. She enjoys traveling around the world, gardening, long walks with her dog, bike rides with her daughter and shopping. Her favorite singers are Owl City and Bob Marley. She also enjoys good zombie flicks! You can check out her other

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Timothy Giles: A poetic Otaku and English Major.

Katie Elizabeth Henderson: I'm a child of the 90's and a body modder muchly into music, books, and outdoor pursuits. I'm set to be married in October of next year, and I'm hoping to have my Associates of Science before then. I love prose and poetry of every nature, and hope to be writing to the end of days.

Roger Johnson: At 69, does not know what he's going to be when he grows up. Tried geologist, meteorologist, psychologist, teacher, military officer, college administrator, home health aide, and world traveler. Now, courtesy of OSU-M old people's program, aspiring to be novelist, using experiences to create imaginative worlds, with help from the Havasupai nation, classmates, instructors Stuart and Ben, and wife Judy. Rewarding endeavor, but much yet to learn.

Austin King: a writer, a king, a brother, a singer. Oh, I also like to read and drink coffee.

Hi my name is **Brittany Violet Long**. I would love to be called Violet, but every time I've tried this in the past, it doesn't work out too well because I simply can't remember to respond when being called Violet. So, you can call me Brittany. I would like to thank my extremely cool but over protective parents for always supporting me in every aspect of my life; if it wasn't for them, I would have never been

able to find the time to create. I would like to thank my Uncle Ron for being an amazing next door neighbor and editor. I would like to thank Garrusdon Davidson for providing me with endless inspiration that has thrived from my delusional love for the boy. I would also like to thank my dog, Bear, for always being cute and listening to the repetitive recitation of my work read aloud. Thank you for taking the time to appreciate my art.

Jennifer Miller: Jennifer Miller, otherwise known as Jenn, is an English major with a Professional Writing minor. She hails from the small town of Bucyrus, Ohio. She has always loved to write, whether it is journaling, fiction writing, or news reporting. Recently, she discovered a passion for writing poetry, thanks in large part to Professor Stuart Lishan! She enjoys reading, being with friends, and taking pictures. She is a senior, graduating in December, with hopes of obtaining a career in the communications field.

Rachel Schade: Rachel Schade was too busy pursuing adventure and living dangerously to write a blurb about herself, but we can assure you, had she only had the time, it would have been brilliant.

sarah stansbery: Sarah Stansbery, age 21; Born to be Geek.

Olivia Varney: Olivia Varney is currently straddling the line between responsible, workaday adulthood and dreams of literary triumph, and after twenty-three years of exposition, is more than ready for some rising action.

Sheree Whitelock: Life is a ferris wheel. Backwards, forwards, up, or down it's a journey we all go around. Listen Love, and take my hand. Open your eyes, it will all be alright.

Brian Wilds: My name is Brian Wilds. I am an English major and creative writer on the Marion Campus. I write both fiction and poetry, but find a stronger connection with poetry. The ability to provide a story in a short period of time requires structure and creativity and can prove to be a disciplined skill. I would not classify my style as any certain fashion, but I do tend to lean more towards the gothic or darker poems. I hope that some of the pieces provided in this book help to provide an understanding of poetry and prose pieces. Please enjoy the writers, artists, and the work they have provided.

COLOPHON

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The Cornfield Review has taken creative writers to their next level with their *Cornfield Review: Online* digital media supplement. Doing interesting work with digital video, audio, or graphic arts? Consider submitting your creativity to the ever-growing digital tradition of OSUM.

So stop texting and go online to check it out:

<http://english.marion.ohio-state.edu/cornfield/>

For more information on submitting, contact faculty adviser Ben McCorkle at mccorkle.12@osu.edu.

KAPOW!

Hey, check out **KAPOW!** OSU-Marion's cool creative writing club! We meet every couple of weeks during the fall and spring semesters (usually during the noon hour in LC 217), where we hang out and listen to and share good words, good thoughts, good vibes, and good spirits.

You're welcome to come, too—just bring your lunch and hang out and listen, or you can bring along some sweet words to read to your fellow Kapowers (And we'll be all ears if you do!). So check out the flyers that are hanging around campus, where you can find our specific meeting dates and times. And if you have any questions, contact Stuart Lishan, fellow Kapower and faculty advisor (lishan.1@osu.edu). Hope to see you there! And don't forget, break a line!