



AaR
F&M
alumni
arts review

Doorway

VOLUME TWO | SPRING 2013



On the Cover

Passage Through Time—
Lonaconing Silk Mill

TOM MUSANTE '80

The *Alumni Arts Review* is supported by
Franklin & Marshall's Office of the Provost
Alumni Relations
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The Philadelphia Alumni Writers House



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Editor's Note | SANDS HALL

At the tap on my door I looked up.

"Is this a good time, Professor?"

"Of course, Mark." I cleared some books off a chair, aware he looked flushed, distracted. I asked him what was up.

"The thing is—" He ran a hand through his hair. "The thing is, I'm trying to get started on my story, you know? All these ideas keep coming at me. And I don't know how to start. How do you know it's the *right* one? How do you know that it will *work*?"

It was a desperate question, asked desperately, and we both knew—because Mark is a smart and articulate young man—that the question had ballooned out to include not just his short story, due in a week's time, but life itself.

My heart thudded, churning life and life's decisions through my veins. Behind me, on my computer screen, floated a lovely photograph of a doorway, submitted by an F&M alum for inclusion in an arts review that two years before had been only an idea, talked about over coffee. Even the office in which I sat, and the beloved job I hold, seemed outrageously impossible: a Californian born and bred, I hold a B.A. and an M.F.A. in drama; yet there I was: editor of said arts review and professor of English at a liberal arts college in Pennsylvania.

"You don't know if it's the right story, Mark," I said. "You just start."

He stared. "You—start."

"You choose something—obviously you want it to seem like a good idea, you want to like it—and you start. Maybe it turns out to be a great story. Since it's your first one it probably won't be—" (Mark was the kind of student who could grin at this). "But you practice with this one, and then another..."

He nodded. I turned to my computer, gesturing to the doorway glowing from its screen. "You choose. You walk on through. You write a sentence and you scratch it out and you write another. You practice

the things we've talked about this semester. If writing continues to enthrall you, maybe it becomes a career. You may even eventually write a successful novel. Or the endeavor may draw you elsewhere. But you have to start. And then, as Frost says, *way leads on to way*."

His face was thoughtful, even calm. As he thanked me and departed, I wondered at the twists and turns of my own life that would lead to conversations such as these, which I view as almost sacred.

The F&M alums whose work you'll find in Volume Two of the *Alumni Arts Review* majored in psychology and drama. American studies. Art history and German, business, music, and biology. Perusing their bios, you'll find a contributor who majored in classic languages and found her way to dance. A chemistry major unfolded to a practice in dentistry, followed by a career as a photographer. Several who majored in history headed into law. Biology led to ophthalmology (and great-grandfathering). Psychology to painting. A business degree led to a career as professor of literacy and culture. One alum took her philosophy major and headed toward banking and photography; another took hers and became a school counselor, mother, and writer.

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Not unsurprisingly, many of our contributors majored in English. Yet, while many went on to publish, edit, and educate, others launched very different lives out of those semesters spent in Keiper Hall studying literature: executive coach and mediator, attorney/activist, organizational behaviorist, real estate developer and philanthropist, compliance analyst. One veered toward sacred music, another to choreography and the creation of a dance company. Three of them created lives in the fine rather than literary arts; their work hangs in galleries worldwide.

When students come to me saying they'd like to major in drama or environment or creative writing but their parents would prefer something "useful, like business," I spread my hands wide. How many of us wind up where we think we're headed? How do we know "the right thing?" We don't. We head through a doorway that looks promising, as well as fun—and keep walking.

I hope you enjoy as much as I do the myriad doorways in this issue.

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Wheatland | PAUL H. RIPPLE '43



Wheatland

Lancaster, Penn.

That Door

JOSEPH MACKIN '88

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Rain wool smell
Winter
—What door, she asked
No question mark
(She was that tired)
Only:
What door

I answered
(had to answer)
By going through

School: Georgia, 1951

DAVID NOBLE '52

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The dust lies heavy in the Georgia heat, the
summer breeze so weak it needs our feet
to stir it from the hard baked clay,

small eddies that swirl a short distance
and settle back to earth, and to our ankles.
The ground, lone tree, and schoolhouse

merge against the wavering sky. The
shade beneath the tree is bright, not at all
like real shade. Everywhere is hot, some places hotter.

We head up wooden stairs grooved by winter shoes,
smoothed by summer feet, bleached by
demon sun, to the door of the “temporary

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classroom,” where the pot-bellied stove
stands on its sheet metal apron.
Empty and quiet, it fills the room

with the essence of heat. Skinny bottoms and
bare feet mirroring our empty stomachs, we scrooch
about. Our desks, still not fastened to the splintery

floor, stir and scrape. Back and forth, ever restless.
Heat penetrates, sapping energy. Ninety degrees,
ninety degrees and rising. Well, sit and learn, brother. Learn!

And with learning, let understanding come.



Through These Doors | WILLIAM SCAFF '57

Looking Back

BARBARA NARTIC PEACOCK '74

You're in your new dorm room, bags waiting to be unpacked, bed to be made. Turning to go, you bump your pillow off its perch on the chair. You dive to catch it, but end up tripping over your area rug instead, the shaggy, brown horror Mom insisted you bring. Good thing it's still in its plastic cover. The floor looks a little dusty. College, a brave new world, is finally yours. You're finally on your own.

Where to start? But isn't that what it's all about, learning to set priorities? Sure, you saw Franklin & Marshall's campus during your initial visit, took the tour with your parents last fall. You sort of remember bits and pieces of places. But it's out there right now, outside your window, adventure, adulthood. Who cares about unpacking?

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That pillow, though, and the rug. You pick up the pillow and rub it against you, just in case there is any real dirt. Then you place it on top an equally new bedspread draped over the bed, where it can't fall off. The rug. Maybe Mom was right, bare feet on this floor in the morning? You roll the loose end back onto to the rest of it. A quick glance confirms there's nothing else to trip over or fall onto the floor. As a final concession to your absent roommate and her family, you tug the larger suitcase into the closet. This will give them room to maneuver.

Outside at last, the early September sun warms you; September days tend to be that way, evidently even here in Lancaster. Shading your eyes with your hand, you check out the possibilities. Given the brightness

of the sun, you opt for the shady side, and you find a large open space filled with students. Two guys throw a football back and forth. You duck as the ball comes hurtling your direction and land in the middle of a Frisbee toss. A black lab leaps up and grabs the disc in his mouth. His owner yodels, “Paddlefoot!” with the desired result. The lab lopes to her. Leaning forward, she takes the Frisbee from his mouth, tucks it under her arm, and scratches his ears fondly. He pants and grins up at her. You smile and tell her, “Good catch,” all the while thinking of Captain and Sammie. Will they miss you as much as you miss them? Several bubbles drift your way, lovely iridescent globes. Puffed cheeks, puckered lips, a wire ring, more bubbles—and a lanky guy with longish hair. You linger, hoping he’ll notice you, but he’s so intent on what he’s doing you might as well be a telephone pole. So much for that.

You walk on, but it’s not long before you pause. Maybe you should have tried harder, started a conversation. After all, you don’t know anyone here. As if to mock your sudden burst of shyness, snatches of sounds float around you. *Baby Bio is a safer bet. I had to drop Astronomy last year. Too much math. Oh, no, you don’t have him for an adviser again? I hope to make my Med school choices by December. How about you?* Bits and pieces of words, bits and pieces of lives that may or may not cross yours again during the next four years.

Ahead of you, parents tell their son they hope he has a good semester. Other students stroll the quad with their parents. Parents. Your own good-byes had been short and sweet. As soon as they carried your stuff up to your room and saw you safely in, they hugged you and left. Mom was stiff as a board; she didn’t want to get emotional. Dad, on the other hand, had given you a real bear hug. And that was that. But they had a long drive home.

It hits you, then, that first twinge of homesickness, something between an ache and a yearning.

You focus on the bicycles parked around a building with Tudor-style

architecture. You chose not to bring your bike. The campus hadn't seemed that large. It might be nice to have it after all. Maybe going to fetch it would be a way to go home sooner than planned.

A solid body jars against yours. Mumbling, "Sorry," you pay more attention to where you're going. Ahead is a neo-Classical building with white columns flanked by two evergreen trees. The library! You remember it from your first visit. Picking up your pace, you enter the cool foyer. Books, the love of your life.

Looking around, you find that bust of Benjamin Franklin, the benefactor after whom the original college was named, the one whose first classes met in a brewery. Old Ben. You'd read his autobiography in high school. He was quite a character. Ben stares serenely back. He's seen his share of students over the years. You're just one more.

With a quirky smile, you wish him well and proceed to the main lobby. The two students manning the desk are busy talking to each other. "What ghost?" the female asks. "I've never seen anything."

"A ghost," you find yourself echoing. This time, they notice you.

"You haven't heard about it?" asks the young man.

"No." You dig your hands into your pockets. "Whose is it?"

"Oh, just some poor grind who killed himself in the stacks on the third floor. Maybe you'd like to check it out some night."

"Yeah, right," the girl interrupts, "like there's anything to see."

"Thanks," you say, and with a little effort, find the stairs to the stacks. On the third landing, the door swings open. You hesitate before entering, but then draw courage—it's still daylight. Ghosts prefer darkness, don't they? Shelves of tightly stacked books crowd around you. Your shoes make a soft noise on the floor. From what you can see, you are the only one here, including, or rather excluding, the ghost.

The girl was right. Nothing here.

The great adventure over, the rumbles in your stomach remind you that you think you know where your dining hall is, but you ask

someone just to make sure. She tells you to follow her. This time you strike up a conversation. Your companion is a sophomore, brimming with interesting information. “This isn’t great,” she says as you move your trays through the cafeteria line, “but it’s better than last year. The food got so bad, people rioted in protest. The peanut butter sandwiches made the best missiles.” She points. “See that stuff stuck on the ceiling? That’s what’s left of them.”

Over dinner, you chat. You tell her your dorm, and she tells you hers. You’ve managed to get to know at least one person. Parting at last, you make your way back and unlock your door. No sign of anyone. Unsure whether you are relieved or lonely, you begin to unpack in earnest. At least you get to claim the bed next to the window. It will be nice to look out and see the stars. There’s enough window ledge to host a plant or two. They will give the place a homey touch.

Finally snuggling into bed, you look back over the day. You met one person, found your way around. Despite your new acquaintance’s complaints, the food wasn’t half bad. You yawn and hunker down under the crisp sheets. Thank goodness, the mattress isn’t lumpy. And thanks, Mom, for all the new bedding. With just a little effort, you glimpse some distant stars. Today has been a good day. Tomorrow, perhaps even better. You give one last, long drawn-out yawn before falling asleep, content in the knowledge you’ve found the right place for you.



Blue | PUBUDU WARIYAPOLA '94



Walk to Summer | DENISE KING GILLINGHAM '80

Lost Chords

ROBERT ROTH '50

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*I know not what I was playing,
Or what I was dreaming then;
But I struck one chord of music,
Like the sound of a great Amen.*

Words: Adelaide Procter, 1858

Musical setting: Arthur Sullivan, 1877

As leaders of a group of American pilgrims at an English church music festival, my wife and I found ourselves and our charges in Peterborough Cathedral, where a distinguished art historian of our acquaintance was lecturing on some of the unique architectural features of the building. She called attention to the organ, and then to me, an organist. "I've arranged for you to demonstrate the organ for your group," she said. "The verger will lead you to the console in the organ gallery."

In England, “one does not say nay” to someone of her professional stature. I found myself following the verger through the vast nave on what seemed like a death march toward the choir, thinking, (1) Why hadn’t she given me a little advance warning? (2) What the hell was I going to play—I had no music with me. (3) Could I get through a significant organ piece from memory? (4) I didn’t know this particular instrument, and there was no time to get acquainted with it. (5) I wasn’t carrying my special organ shoes or glasses. (6) Was it possible, with no rehearsal, to succeed in demonstrating the majesty of this instrument for the expectant throng? Or would they just have to listen to an embarrassing series of fumbles and bumbles?

Up the narrow stairway I went to the console (gallows?). As I looked down from my perch on the organ bench, I took a deep breath, wondering just what sounds my unprepared fingers were going to bring forth from this mighty instrument, with its four keyboards, pedal board, and close to 100 stop knobs, each controlling a portion of what must be thousands of pipes.

When I saw the numbered combination pistons below each keyboard, a possible way out of my dilemma dawned on me. I quickly tested them and found that they were set up as they very often are on a large instrument so that No.1 brings on a very quiet combination, and No. 2, and each successive piston, brings on gradually more ranks of pipes, resulting in a gradual crescendo of sound, from pianissimo to fortissimo.

It seemed a lifetime since I’d left the group, and they were no doubt wondering if I’d gotten lost among the soaring Romanesque arches. So I pushed the first piston and began playing a totally unplanned sequence of notes in an unplanned rhythmic pattern. It didn’t sound all that bad, and I wondered if I might make something bigger out of it. At this point, I abandoned all thoughts of compositional rules and improvisatory guidelines, and lost myself in the sounds I was creating, introducing more fingers and notes, gradually building up the sound

of the organ, as I pushed one button after the other and, with the help of my feet for the low notes, moved from one tonality to another. By this time I was literally “winging it.” The sounds increased in intensity and my spirit soared.

After I reached “full organ” (“organic orgasm?”)—the moment everyone waits for—I began to slowly taper off, gradually touching each button in reverse order, decreasing the sound to a celestial whisper which faded into the natural reverberation of the building. Sliding off the bench and making my way down that tiny stairway, I wondered what on earth I had just played. Had it made any musical sense at all?

When I rejoined my group in the west end of the nave, keeping my eyes cast down, one of them sidled up beside me and asked in an admiring tone, “Who wrote that piece you played? Is it English?” But no one had thought to record it; and, as the poet wrote in “A Lost Chord,” it had “trembled away into silence.” It will only surface again—perhaps, if I’m lucky—in Heaven, like the “Grand Amen.”



Infinite Substance of Life: Thalasa | RICHARD KANTER '89

Signs

FLOYD SKLOOT '69

The river swells with melted mountain snow.
Soon driftwood spinning in the current's grip
begins to gather like a ghostly grove
high on the island's dwindling shore. Winter
has not let go of the nights, but the trees
are in leaf near the western bank and great
blue heron hunt the shallows. No soft breeze,
no long days of cloudless skies or a late
afternoon hint of summer on its way.
Just a feeling of mildness in the air,
and some heavy rain, and not every day.
To the north there may be less space where
that tugboat passes underneath the bridge.
South in this light the river looks like sludge.

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Cartagena Gas Stop
Transamazon Road Rally

JIM YESCALIS '68

Call Me If Something Cool Happens

GREG NOVEMBER '02

Anson only visits once, today, and with him he brings that melted bag of lozenges that's been in his bookbag for, probably, the whole stinking year. When he shows up, I'm in the cramped basement that smells like old dirt, covered to my neck in paint—latex, don't worry—so excuse me if I don't right away go all, “Hi Anson, good to see you.”

“Mar,” he says, “what are you doing with that wrench?”

“Don't be such a prude,” I say.

Anson tells me I'm not using that word correctly. He looks at all the yard tools slung up on hooks like starved medieval prisoners, at the canvases stacked in piles on the floor. The tools are Joel's, though he hasn't done any yard work in months. The basement is lit by one bare bulb hanging from a wire.

“What is this place?” he says.

“It's the basement. Don't look so frightened.”

“I'm not frightened.”

“Then why are you huddled over there by the stairs. Come in. Have a seat.”

Anson comes away from the stairs and tosses his bag of lozenges on the workbench where I've lined up some tools. He hops onto one of Joel's barstools, the ones he keeps down here lined up against the wall. Anson doesn't know the stools spin so when he hops up, trying to look all casual, he spins a bit and tries to grip the wall for balance. His hand

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finds the prongs of a metal hoe and he yelps.

What I do is etch another paint streak with the wrench, only this time it tears through the canvas, creating a mouth through which I stick the entire wrench and then let go. It clanks on the floor, making such a racket I up and laugh right there. Behind me, I hear Anson suck a lozenge around in his mouth. “You haven’t missed much in school this week,” he says. “We had a physics test, but I’m sure you can make it up.”

“I’m not concerned much about physics. Physics is something I understand pretty clearly. Gravity and so forth. It’s all right there for you to see, plain as anything.”

“Mrs. Jennings asked me how you were today. She came up to my desk while we were taking the test.”

“What did she say?”

“She asked how you were.”

“You can tell Mrs. Jennings I think her teaching style leaves much to be desired.”

“I told her I thought you were fine. She seemed concerned.”

“That class is so stupid.”

“Are you fine, Mar?”

“What do you think?”

“Why are you down here?”

“Why do you think? I’m painting. Don’t you like this nifty easel?”

“Sure. It’s just, Mar, you don’t have any brushes.”

“What do I need with brushes? You think the only way a person can paint is with brushes? That’s Mrs. Jennings-style thinking. It’s why you won’t ever get in my pants, Anson.”

Anson turns red, his face just like one of those lozenges; it’s so easy to embarrass him. “Come on,” I say. “If you take it out I’ll do something to it.”

“Shut up.”

“Do it,” I say, turning full on to face him on that barstool that has

suddenly stopped spinning. “Take it out, show me, and I’ll do what you want me to do.”

“I don’t want you to do anything, Mar. I just came here because my mom made me. If it were up to me, I wouldn’t care how long you spent in this basement, using his tools as paintbrushes.”

“He’s got a name. He’s not my dad but he still has a name, Anson. You can say it.”

“I know his name.”

“Well, Anson, are you going to do it, or not?”

“Joel.”

“I mean are you going to take out your pecker or not?”

Anson shifts back and forth on the stool. He doesn’t say anything more.

“Fine,” I say. “If all you’re going to do is sit there, saying Joel, Joel, Joel, then I’m going to get painting again.”

Turning my back on Anson I take a flathead from the toolbox and dip it in mauve. I found the paints in a box next to all the stacked canvases. They’re my mom’s and she left them behind when she took off, which was already a few months ago. She’ll have to come back for them at some point, but I don’t think she’ll mind me using a few. And Joel doesn’t come down here hardly at all (like I said, he doesn’t do much yard work these days) so I doubt he even knows about the canvasses and paint. One thing I couldn’t find was paintbrushes (I guess my mom took those with her for some reason) so I did what she always told me: make the best. I say, if Joel’s not using his tools for yard work, why can’t I use them to paint?

With Anson watching I dab at the canvas, around where the wrench-mouth is, taking pains to not puncture the material again but on the seventh or eighth dab I can’t help myself and stab right through it, this time going in all the way to my elbow. “I’ve almost got you,” I say. “Just hold my hand, lady, and I’ll pull you free.”

Behind me Anson sucks away at his lozenges. It's such a gross habit.

"Anson," I say. "Help me pull this lady from the shark's mouth."

Anson doesn't answer. I take my arm out from the canvas and place the mauve-tipped screwdriver on the workbench next to the tools and Anson's lozenges.

"Anson," I say.

"What is it?"

"Anson, don't you want to kiss me?"

Anson turns all red again. "Whatever," he says. "You're the one who's always talking about sex and stuff. If you ask me, I think it's you that wants to get at me. Not the other way around."

"So, what if that's the case?"

"What?"

"What if it is me that wants to get at you? Wouldn't you do it?"

"Shut up, Mar. I'm only here because my mom told me to come here."

"Don't talk to me about your stupid mom. We all have stupid moms that do stupid things. It's nothing new, you know."

"My mom's not stupid."

"Come on, Anson. Don't be a bore, talking about your stupid mom all the time."

"My mom's not stupid, Mar."

"Fine, whatever you say. You wouldn't do it, for me?"

"Do what?"

"You know. What if I was dying, if I told you that that's why I'm down here in the basement, painting with a set of old tools; that's why I've missed a week of school. It's got nothing to do with anything except this blood disorder, which I've had all my life you should know, but in the past few months it's started to act up and I can't take it anymore. That's why I act the way I do. And I just found out it's gotten worse, that I'll probably die before I'm even 18. What if I told you all that, and I told you also that you're the only person at school who doesn't make

me want to scream or throw up or both, and maybe if we got it on, it would be like icing, like just the perfect way to end my miserable life, a short life, spent with some hideous blood disease that makes it so I'll never grow up and have any sort of real relationship."

Anson watches me and for a moment stops sucking that melting pebble in his mouth.

"Is that true?" he says.

"Answer me first."

"OK, sure. If you were dying and wanted me to have sex with you, I guess I would do it."

"Ha! I knew it," I say. "You're so horny you'd have sex with a dying person."

"Jesus, Mar. What is wrong with you?"

"Oh, don't be so dramatic. We'll probably end up having sex someday. It could even be later this week. Just don't look so eager. It's not very sexy."

"I don't look eager. I was feeling sad for you. That's what I was feeling. Sad. That stupid story you told about the blood disease. I don't even think it's true. Everyone knows why you haven't been in school, anyway."

"No one at school knows a thing."

"Yes they do Mar. I wasn't going to say anything about it, on account of being your friend and all. Your only friend, I'll point out. But everyone knows it's because you had a mental breakdown. That your mom left for no reason and now you're living with that guy who mows everyone's lawn."

"He's a landscaper, Anson."

"Whatever he is."

Anson sits there on that stool, sucking away at a lozenge and looking so stupid, so I swipe at the bag and it goes flying. Lozenges scatter across the floor, skittering under the workbench and into dark corners, as Anson watches me with his face all scrunched. He bends to collect his spilled suckers, or at least the ones he can see, so I bend down next to him and plant my lips against his. I have to extend my neck on account

of us not being the same height, and also because of the fact we're both bent near the floor. As expected, his lips are tacky and taste like artificial cherry and like a certain cough medicine my mom used to give me, when she was still around. Both our eyes are wide open and we stare at each other. Anson's fat tongue hits my bottom front teeth. It's like that for a moment, our mouths mashed together, and then I can't help myself so I laugh. Anson stands up, leaving his spilled lozenges where they are, and licks his lips. "I have to go, now, Mar."

"That's fine," I say, licking the cherry taste from my lips. "Call me if something cool happens."

Anson looks like he wants to say something else but he doesn't. Our kiss—my first and probably his also—is a moth that flutters around the basement, taps against the dusty half-window before expiring right there on the sill.

"I'm sorry about what I said," Anson finally says.

"I don't even remember what you said."

"Will you be back in school soon?"

"Maybe. Tomorrow is looking like a possibility."

"Tomorrow is Saturday."

"Monday, then. If all goes well I'll be there Monday."

"If all what goes well?"

"I told you already. My blood disease."

"You don't have a blood disease. You just made all that up to goof me."

"Tell it to my sick blood, Anson. Tell my crummy blood that it's just fine and dandy. Here, I'll help you out."

Biting the tip of my index finger I bring forth a tiny red globe. I hold out my hand to Anson and he screws his face up. His Chuck Taylors make a rubbery sound on the concrete floor, in the middle of all those spilled lozenges. After a moment of holding my hand out to him I stick my finger in my mouth and suck it.

"Are we in love?" I say around my finger.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, now that we’ve kissed. Do you think it means we’re in love?”

“I don’t know. Do you?”

“I think so. I’ve only ever seen people kiss on TV, and usually it means they’re in love.”

“You never saw Joel and your mom kiss?”

“I don’t want to talk about them, Anson.”

“My parents kiss all the freaking time.”

“I said I don’t want to talk about it, Anson.”

“Fine. I’m sorry. Jeez.”

“Good. Let’s say I love you, then. Together. On three.”

Anson looks uncertain, but he counts along with me. “One, two, three.”

Then we say it, together: “I love you.”

When he’s gone I’m again alone in the basement with the ripped, painted canvas and all those hideous tools slung up on the walls, Anson’s lozenges scattered across the basement floor. I hear him say goodbye to Joel upstairs and then the front door close. Joel’s voice comes through the floorboards like a motor not quite starting all the way. I know he’ll be down here soon to check on me. For the time being, though, I have some privacy. I take needle-nose pliers from the toolbox, open them slightly, and begin to trace paths in the paint. My love is a moth come alive again.

Haiku

C.H. COLEMAN '87

when I am quite old
I shall wear my mother's smile
and hide discontent

Paris

KEVIN BROWN '12

The first time I saw Rodin's garden
A man had a heart attack and called
Out to me near The Gates of Hell, but I
Did not speak enough French to help him.
His wife did. That said, I prefer
To think of Paris not in terms of
Eiffel Tower shower curtains from Wal-Mart
Or our vast assemblage of literary nostalgia.
I enjoyed most sitting at a café
Near a curb of Boulevard Saint-Germain
And contending with the bitterness
Of what was plain, of my café express.
Not the underside, not the lights.
Just Paris—nothing to write home about.

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Hallelujah One More Time

PAUL KAMM '82

See how the birds still sing when you're down
And the moon still dances in the sky
See how tomorrow comes and turns you around
To sing hallelujah one more time

And when you think that you have broken everything you can
And crossed every line
See how you're still getting one more chance
To sing hallelujah one more time

When this bridge doesn't seem quite long enough
And the water's deep and wide
And the fight that you're in is just too rough
To sing hallelujah one more time

Come down, come down to the water now
Come lay your hand in mine
We'll laugh and cry, and make a joyful sound
And sing hallelujah one more time

broken everything you can
I'll be here later when you call
Just to tell you that you're mine
To pick you up again when you fall
And sing hallelujah one more time

See how the colors are all there for you
And how the music finds the rhyme
See how our wounds will be healing soon
If we sing hallelujah one more time

See how the birds still sing when we're down
And the sun is dancing in the sky
See how tomorrow comes and turns you around
To sing hallelujah one more time

Come down, come down to the water now
Come lay your hand in mine
We'll laugh and sing, and make a joyful sound
And sing hallelujah one more time

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Crevice | ISHANI AGGARWAL '08

Chiclets

BRUCE KILSTEIN '86

Memories are strange doorways. You might think that the past is a static thing—an unchanging place you can visit to relive your experiences. You'd be wrong. Every time you step through the door you wind up someplace unexpected.

Some parts of memories do remain fixed. There is a basic skeleton but it's frail: translucent bones seen through an X-ray. "Uncle Phil" was not an uncle. But he joined our family on Sundays. I don't think I ever saw him outside my grandparents' apartment—until the end. He always sat in the same yellow slipcovered chair in the corner, a box of peppermint Chiclets visible through the breast pocket of his gauzy short-sleeved shirt.

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In my memory it's always summer. It's always hot, always Sunday. Dad would fetch me and my sister from Sunday school and drive us to my grandparents'. The hallways of their building smelled of a hundred years of frying onions. The door opened, my grandmother ushered us immediately to the lunch table. Chicken soup and bagels could not wait and there's dinner to prepare, so hurry up. How was school? Don't talk with your mouth full. Eat. You look thin. The scene sealed in my mind like the plastic covered furniture: everyone in position. Phil in his corner, my grandfather working on his second beer of the morning and the *TV Guide* crossword. Baseball on the TV. In a thousand years an archeologist could uncover the apartment, find everything perfectly preserved.

My grandmother never sat. She'd clear the lunch table and start dinner. My dad lay on the floor and watched the game. And as the other regulars started to file in, I'd pester Phil, asking a string of unanswerable questions until he gave me some Chiclets. There was Uncle Al, who had a facial tic and a Purple Heart that he'd told me he won in a poker game (I knew better) and a wife he'd brought back from the War who mysteriously disappeared (no one would tell me what happened to Aunt Claire). Uncle Cain came by to argue about the Phillies with Dad. Kitty and Joe Camel from down the hall put in a cameo appearance like Fred and Ethyl Mertz. Twin aunts, Sandy and Naomi, arrived separately. They hadn't spoken in years, another story I wasn't allowed to know.

In the interval between meals, the women would step over Dad and head to the kitchen to watch the flavors slowly roast out of the brisket. When the TV would go staticky and my grandfather slapped it and fiddled with the rabbit ears to no avail, Phil would take an almanac from the side table and quiz us on random facts. We'd take turns trying to name the seven longest rivers of South America or the vice presidents, Adams through Polk. The arguments that broke out over the answers were entertaining—the almanac couldn't possibly be correct.

Mid-afternoon I'd go outside and play Wiffle Ball against my dad. Uncle Al, limping from whatever led to his Purple Heart, couldn't play, but he shouted instructions and talked about ball players from "his day" I'd never heard of. Phil stayed inside. Apparently, my grandfather hadn't moved since breakfast, and after the game I'd nap next to him on the sofa, my sweat sticking me to the plastic. There was always an after-dinner poker game. Phil's spot at the card table was in front of a large mirror. For twenty-five years everyone could see his cards.

I don't know where Phil lived or how he attached himself to—or was absorbed by—my family. It happened well before I was born. Later, after everyone from Phil's generation was long gone, I pried some information from my mother: Phil had been a co-worker of my grandfather's at a

drycleaner's. The story went that he had no family, my grandparents took him in, and he became an "uncle." In someone else's memories, he took my father to baseball games when he was young. Phil was a gentle man.

Mostly I travel through the doors of memory to these good times—filtered clean of other seasons or other events, like my parents' divorce (which was why Dad brought us there each week) or my grandmother's sudden death on the same sofa.

Or the day that Uncle Phil had no Chiclets. Instead, when I climbed onto his lap to check his pocket for gum, there was a pack of Juicy Fruit.

From that day on, no more Chiclets. Juicy Fruit every Sunday.

I didn't think about it then. Only later did it occur to me: something must have triggered such a break from routine. What happened in this man's predictable life to cause a permanent change from peppermint? For the first time I realized that Uncle Phil existed beyond my frozen frame of reference. He lived somewhere. Bought gum somewhere. Traveled somehow to my grandparents' place.

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Twenty years later, I'm serving my surgical residency in a hospital in Philadelphia, when Uncle Phil checks in. Stomach cancer. By then, everyone from those Sunday dinners was gone except Uncle Al. Nearly blind, Phil was living in a nursing home. I peeked into the O.R. during his surgery. The surgeon just looked up and shook his head.

Post op, I visited Phil between seeing my own patients, and tuned the radio to the baseball game. We chatted about the team, times at my grandparents', poker, the third longest river in Africa. I thought it was the Congo, he said Zambezi; we didn't have an almanac.

I wanted to ask the question: Why the change in brands of gum? I knew I had little time to find out. The answer might have satisfied my curiosity—maybe even provided insight into Phil's life. Maybe there was great story behind the event. New memories.

But what if there was no reason? What if one day the store ran out of Chiclets and he bought a pack of Juicy Fruit and liked it better? Or worse, what if he just didn't remember, or had no idea what I was talking about? The possibility made me sad. If he didn't know, then the mystery would die and my neatly preserved, slipcovered memory would become unsealed. The past would change. The doorway would lead to a different place.

The day of Phil's funeral the rain came down in sheets. I accompanied my dad and his brother Martin. Uncle Al, too frail to wade through the flooding cemetery, waited in the car. As we trudged to the soggy gravesite, we were surprised to find another family huddled under a tree. An old man stared sadly at the dripping casket and the open grave filling with water while a younger couple held an umbrella over him.

"Who are you?" we asked them.

"Who are you?" they answered.

They were Phil's brother, Meyer, and the family he'd adopted in much the same way that Phil adopted us. Neither family had known anything about the other.

I felt the water seep into my socks and listened to the rabbi's final prayer. I wished I'd brought a pack of gum. I can imagine both families thinking I was crazy, tossing Chiclets into Phil's grave. All that time in the hospital I'd debated asking him, weighing the pros and cons until, procrastinating, it was too late. But deep down, I knew I never really wanted to find out. I felt better knowing that Phil died with some secret and, probably, I was the only one who'd even noticed.

We all have different memories, different realities, different changing pasts. In the end these doorways are what make us individuals. No one else can step through them.



Ana Droscoski

Overlook | ANA DROSCOSKI '95

Aftermaths

CONSTANCE RENFROW '12

—or rather, a front door in Roxbury
propped open by encyclopedias.
A front door X'd yellow

the stamp of an old woman's shock
too much like diabetic
shock and a taped-up name on a chapel door.

In borrowed boots and gardening gloves
we fill contractors' bags with drywall
and seawater, wedding albums.
"You're so strong," we say
to a face that can't hold a gaze.
"To have stayed."
"So strong," we say, stepping out on sand,
toward garbage piled in the road.
Her home stripped away, mulled over, marked.
Discarded on the front walk

just as eight weeks before
someone—sister, aunt, brother-in-law?—
built boxes in your place.

On the bottom shelf of the dining room bookcase
a matching set of Evelyn Waugh
and seven days' growth of mold.
"They were my husband's," the woman says.
"Can't I keep them?"
She asks permission of us, of me,
of the man with the writing on his hat.
The way that I never asked—for a photo,
a flannel button-down, the copy of *The Clan of the Cave Bear*
you borrowed from the library at school.

But books submerged
never dry. The row sticks like concrete
and strains of country music.
You need a crowbar and two pairs of shoulders
to pry a paperback loose.

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"We could try to save them."
A pause. In her hands a glass of wine
ready to flood the hardwood.
"It's fine." And we, disaster volunteers,
drag her husband's books
to the front door. It's fine. Paper slabs. Fine.
A neighborhood in garbage bags.

Overhear the crackling of plastic,
see the slack-eyed face in the frame

and try not to think. Of prom photos and cowboy boots.
Discard piles: how tall were yours?

If I could salvage it all from the curb—



Never Forgotten | G. MICHAEL BROWN '71

My Lost Eric

DAVID WEINSTOCK '74

Dear Aimee,

You are my favorite relative that I have never met, and somehow you knew to ask about my middle name. It's got a much better story than my first name, although I don't use it much. Who does anymore? Even the President has traded in "Hussein" for an ordinary American "H."

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I was given my middle name in honor of a college friend of my parents, Eric Rasmussen. Eric is my only un-Jewish name. My brother is Robert Bruce, so I guess I'm lucky not to have been named Angus. To be sure, David has drifted, ethnically, in recent years. According to the New York Times, it is now the second most popular name given to Asian boys born in New York City, just behind Kevin. Put that in your pot and melt it.

And speaking of relatives who've never met, you never met my late father, but much later he married your late and equally unmet grandmother, which is how I became approximately your step-uncle-once-removed-in-law. But before all that, he was married to my mother. After the war, my parents studied at Rutgers. One day my father broke out in measles and was thrown into quarantine, in the college infirmary,

with 50 others. The only entertainments were poker and conversation. Dad made friends with Eric Rasmussen. Afterward Eric began to visit my parents in their off-campus apartment.

Eric was an avid aesthete, hungry for stimulation. Fortunately, New York wasn't far away. Weekends he would raid Manhattan for as much as culture as could be crammed into two days: movie after movie, plays and musicals, ballet, museums, galleries and restaurants.

Following these binges, on Monday nights, Eric would be invited to my parent's apartment for dinner. My mother made spaghetti. Eric supplied bread, wine, and the entertainment: a complete recap of his latest culture-crawl. He'd sing, dance, put on a phonograph record, show art postcards, and review the menus.

Eric picked up languages easily; he spoke a dozen. Hungarian, my father told me with admiration, Eric learned by simply watching movies in an émigré theater in New Brunswick. With his languages he soon became a valuable cataloger in the university library.

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Now, Aimee, although I know that you read more and know more than most people your age, writing words like "the war" and "cataloger" reminds me how long it has been since all these things happened. Let me explain.

"The war" means the Second World War, the war where Tom Hanks died. Poker was a card game played by men with measles. Measles is a nearly extinct disease against which I'm sure you have been vaccinated. A phonograph was a kind of CD player. It could only be used when plugged in, at home. Nobody had a phonograph in his car, or in his skateboard helmet.

An émigré, not to be confused with a refugee, was a cranky old European who actually loved Europe and would still be there if the Communists hadn't chased him all the way to South Jersey. A refugee is also a European, only more sad than cranky, chased out of Europe by the Nazis but having absolutely no desire to go back.

What is a cataloger? A cataloger is a functionary formerly found in every library. As each new book arrived it had to be analyzed according to rules of Talmudic complexity to determine what it contained so its catalog cards could be written. Then one day, in a moment of surprising clarity, someone conceived the idea of performing all this work before the book was published and including it in the book, and suddenly catalogers were no more.

To Eric's natural gifts add a cultivated eccentricity, and it was easy for him to present himself as a European gentleman, someone who'd definitely not been raised in small-town New Jersey. He spoke with a faint English accent, and used Britishisms like "flat" for "apartment" and "advert" for "commercial." What's more, and for all I know it was true, he claimed to have inherited a Swedish baronetcy, and styled himself Harald Baron von Anckerstroem. His noble line, he said, descended directly from a regicide, the killer of King Gustav III, whose assassination is described in Verdi's opera *Il Ballo in Maschera*.

In my mothers' photograph album I find a picture of Eric and me on the brick front steps of our little white house. I can't have been more than four years old. Eric—sometimes my parents referred to him as my "Uncle Eric"—is holding me on his lap. We are both squinting in the sun, but otherwise it is a fine picture, steadier and more carefully composed than a snapshot, which implies my father held the camera. Eric is slim and well dressed, and smoking a long white cigarette. Another photo shows him at a party, also smoking in the highly theatrical manner, like Noel Coward. He has apparently just said something outrageous to a pretty young woman, whose mouth is over-wide with laughter.

When Eric's mother died, she left a small inheritance. It was not enough to live well in America, but more than enough for North Africa, where Eric had been stationed during the war. He quit the library and moved to Tangiers, where he could play at Brit or baronet or anything else he wished to be.

I know little about his life in Morocco. One year, he gave us an airmail subscription to the Tangiers Journal, a weekly newspaper. Each week it arrived wrapped in a brown paper sleeve, franked with exotic stamps I could save, and fragrant with something I could not identify: a brown spiciness, like cinnamon tea.

Did I read the Tangiers Journal? I must at least have tried; I sampled every book and periodical my parents brought into the house, although most of them were way above me then, and many are still. Forty years later, it still happens that I pick up some old book and open to the first page, only to realize I have been there before. But no, I don't remember a scrap of Tangerine news from those days.

Eric visited occasionally. One of those times, I remember he brought three gifts: a packet of sesame seed candies wrapped in cellophane; a severely modern-looking magazine called *Kultur*, and a paperweight of clear Lucite encasing a single seahorse. The seahorse paperweight was for my little brother, who gave it in turn to his first-grade teacher. My mother, also a teacher, was able to retrieve it, and told Bobby not to give away his things.

Before another visit, when I was 14, my mother told me that Eric was a homosexual, and that he was returning to the States to work with a certain psychoanalyst in New York City, perhaps with the hope of “curing” him of being gay. And here is a curious thing about the past that I certainly don't have to explain to a 21st-century child like yourself: homosexuality, unlike measles, is not a disease. You can't catch it from anyone else, and no psychoanalyst can cure you of it. Actually, the list of what psychoanalysts can cure has gotten rather short, and I hear they have mostly given up trying.

My mother, on what evidence I do not know—or perhaps she was joking—also told me that Eric with all his languages had worked in Tangiers as a procurer for foreign tourists, helping them find whatever they wanted to buy: hashish, girls, boys, et cetera.

But would my mother really have said such things to me? Impossible. I was barely older than you are now, and not half as precocious, but surely I've confused her remark with something I read in a novel by Paul Bowles or William Burroughs. Or if she actually did say "whatever they wanted," she meant only a taxi tour, a camel saddle suitable for conversion to a footstool, a hammered brass serving platter the size of a whole roast lamb, and sesame seed candies wrapped in cellophane.

What I do know is that Eric wrote a book about his houseboy, Hamadi. I saw the manuscript in his suitcase. Neatly typed on bright white paper, it was illustrated with dozens of black-and-white photographs of a darkly beautiful boy in all his moods and seasons—indoors and out, in a fez and bareheaded, in a shirt and bare-chested, smiling broadly, and squinting in the North African sun.

I wouldn't have thought much about Eric except that my middle name kept reminding me, so 20 years later, wondering who he was and what if anything he had to do with me, I decided to find him for myself. I tracked down a Rutgers librarian, who gave me his address. She also told me he'd had been in and out of the hospital with severe emphysema. I wrote and told him that my parents were separated, reasoning that they probably hadn't told him, since they'd barely been able to tell me. I also said my father lived in Australia, and that I was in Boston writing advertising. I asked what he'd been up to all these years.

His reply was long and beautifully penned, in black ink and an italic hand with British spelling, on crested stationery appropriate to his rank. He described a garden party with Queen Juliana, and his travels. All this was perfectly in character. But he also mentioned his wife and children, which in light of my mother's revelation confused me.

I might have pursued the friendship with my middle namesake, but my father died unexpectedly, and I met the woman who would be my wife, married, and moved, and then the chance seemed to be lost, so I

never wrote him back. Aimee, I think that was a mistake. Sometimes the most distant relations, the honorary uncles and never-met step-niece penpals and legendary regicides, can be the most important people in your life.

Someday I will take up the search again. I hope at least to find an obituary in a microfilmed Times or a footnote in Burke's Peerage. Perhaps I will even travel to Tangiers, where I will find Eric's wife, if she was not imaginary. Or I will place an advert in the Tangiers Journal and track down the beloved Hamadi. And one way or another, I'll ferret out the heir to his baronetcy, real or invented. Surely, Aimee, he did not die without making plans for passing on his bloodstained and operatic title!

Perhaps it even belongs to me, by right of my middle name. Perhaps, at this very moment, it is quietly waiting to be claimed, with a palace ceremony and a handshake from the King.

But until then, the grandest title I hold is,
Your Step-Uncle-Once-Removed-In-Law,
David Eric



Porta al verde | LUKE OEDING '03

Private Life

DEBORAH SLATER '71

Deborah Slater, a choreographer, majored in English and Modern Poetry. Of her dance-theater work she writes: “I structure stories, folklore, history, science and contemporary culture into concentric circles that have points of connection between them. How can we hold two different points of view on a subject at the same time? To what extent does the act of perceiving reflect or distort reality? As my friend writer Julie Hébert wrote, we are all an ‘ocean of memory, mistakes and dreams.’”

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The Why: “I make work to try and understand difficult life experiences, like the death of a parent, a near-fatal accident, the unspoken language of relationships, or an impending environmental crisis. I am a storyteller, a translator, an everyman trying to ‘get’ life’s inexplicable moments. It is my hope that the particular kaleidoscope I use on a given idea offers others insights into challenging experiences that they may not have found, but can use.”

The How: “My work is in the formalizing of informal gesture, the physicalization of psychological states. It is in the deliberately timed turn of a head, the repeated motion of an arm reaching out and drawing back, the clenching of the ribs, the restraint of a stylized step—first one character and then the next. Body language highlights and underscores dramatic themes, establishing the dreamlike environment of a dance or a play, preparing the audience for something other than traditional reality. They are explorations of what separates and brings us together—as individuals and as a culture.”

“I can’t say there’s any one choreographic way I work,” she says. “It depends on the project, and it depends on which hat you are referencing that day (choreographer/director/writer etc). I work with trained dancers, but I also work with actors, and that’s a whole other experience. We build dances from the process we do together—stories we tell, or stories we are given to tell, and out of that we create gesture and movement and we begin to assemble the pieces and notice how and when they resonate.”

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The photograph below, by Pak Han, is of Slater’s production *Private Life*.





17 13 6 32



Code | WILFRED BRUNNER '70

Assistance

MITCHELL SOMMERS '80

It is morning in Edinburgh.
I'm in my flat.
It's 6:45 a.m.
The sun's been up since 3:30 a.m.
What's up with that?
Is this the land of the midnight fucking sun?
I have to pee.
I get out of bed.
The bathroom door is closed.
The bathroom door has a doorknob.
As most doors do.
Unless it's one of those doors with levers.
It is not one of those doors with levers.
Both sides are knobbed.
That sounds unimportant.
That is important.
Stay with me.

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Backstory: I had just started a two-week writing workshop in Edinburgh. To say I wanted to leave Pennsylvania behind and immerse myself in the richness of the Royal Mile, green countryside, and the homelands of Robert Louis Stevenson and J.K. Rowling would be a writerly sentence I'd edit the hell out. But I did want to be here. In Lancaster, I'm a lawyer who wants to write. But for two weeks, I was a writer with a law practice in Pennsylvania. I had no hearings, no judges, no clients. Just me, my laptop, and Scotland.

The bathroom's outside doorknob had been loose
since the day I arrived.

The first time I used it fell off in my hand.

I tried to put it back on the door.

It fell off again.

I tried again.

It fell off again.

I asked Oskar to fix it.

Oskar lives across the hall.

Oskar is from Latvia.

Oskar fixes things in all the flats in this building.

Oskar lives with his girlfriend Ilona.

I haven't seen Ilona yet.

Oskar previously showed me how to flush the toilet.

Pump it.

Let go.

Let go gently.

It's flushed.

I had to ask him how to do it twice.

I said I am a stupid American.

I ask him to fix the doorknob.

He says he will fix it.

This is foreshadowing.

Stupid American.

Let's unpack that phrase, all the baggage it carries. Break it apart.

I am definitely an American, and I am definitely stupid. Stupid not in how to write a sentence, or draft a legal pleading, but stupid in other ways. The survival ways. The how to handle a crisis when it involves physicality, or dexterity, or even just basic patience. Client's former spouse

is threatening to take kids to a country in the EU where former spouse is a citizen, and client is not? Sure, let me at that one. That's a crisis, a real one, but it falls into that sweet spot of crises that I own, that I can make mine, that I can beat down or caress as necessary.

Basic Premise:

Tuesday went by.

Oskar did not fix the doorknob.

Wednesday passed.

Oskar did not fix the doorknob.

Sometimes the doorknob worked.

Some days it did not.

Oskar will fix it.

I cannot be bothered with this.

I am here to write.

This is more foreshadowing.

This may, in fact, be a bit too much foreshadowing

But this is nonfiction.

I am stuck with the foreshadowing that is already in place.

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Possible themes: It is hard to know where being merely incompetent with things physical merges with the outright fear that goes along with trying to do them. Maybe it's the fear that produces the inability, or maybe, as I suspect, it's the other way around. I don't know. What I do know is that I can live a life that doesn't require the things I'm not good at. This is not second grade. It is not choosing teams at whatever sport they are playing in gym class and it's come down to you and the kid who has some sort of palsy-like something and you pray you at least get picked before him, and it's even up you'll lose that bet. A friend once told me, "It's a good thing you're a damn good lawyer because otherwise you'd fucking starve." He was kidding precisely because he

wasn't kidding. But I know that frailty, and I plan for it. I hire people to do stuff. I paid someone to put my IKEA furniture together because I damn well could.

Back to the Scene:

This is Edinburgh.

It is old.

Doors are heavy.

Lights for the room you want to enter are on the outside wall.

The door closes.

I pee in the dark.

I'm a guy.

I pee in the dark.

I never turn on the light.

Don't forget that.

The door closes.

I forget that.

I am done peeing.

The door is closed.

I reach for the doorknob

The doorknob comes off.

I stare into my right hand.

I cannot see the doorknob.

It is dark.

I did not turn on the light.

I forgot that.

It is dark.

Shit, it's dark.

I try to push the inside doorknob onto something.

I don't know what I'm doing.

Clink.

Clink is the outside doorknob.
The outside doorknob is on the floor.
It is on the outside floor.
Remember Second Grade?
Remember Second Grade.

Other possible themes: Some things that routinely cause fear in others don't produce any fear in me. That's not because I'm anyone's kind of brave. It's just a consequence of what I do. Let's take cops. The average person sees flashing lights coming up hard on them, and their reaction is fear. It may hold large blotches of anger, too, but fear is the primer paint. Even if you've done nothing worse than speed, even if you're not hiding a bong and a Glock under the driver's seat, fear is the first by-product of a police stop.

I don't feel that fear, not even when I've been pulled over. And it isn't just because I know my rights better than the average commuter. I know cops. I started out my legal career as an assistant public defender in Suburban Philadelphia. It is a job that forces you to lose all fear of law enforcement. More than that, it requires you to attack law enforcement, to expose the lacunae in their recollections, to occasionally call them liars. Fear inhibits the acquisition of that skill set.

Unfortunately, the world is made up of all flavors of fear.

I'm in a dark bathroom with a heavy door and only one doorknob.
I do not have my cell phone.
Of course I do not have my cell phone.
Who takes their cell phone to the bathroom?
I do.
More times than you want to know.
I did not take it to the bathroom today.
I am trapped in the bathroom.

I am trapped in a bathroom in a flat in Edinburgh

I am trapped in a bathroom in a flat in Edinburgh at 6:45 in the morning and it is dark and I do not have a cell phone and Oskar and Ilona are fast asleep across the hall.

I think to myself, how do I get out of here. What the fuck am I, McGyver?

I think to myself, did I actually just think, What the fuck am I, McGyver?

I may as well look.

I may as well look since I've already brought up McGyver.

Backstory of a more character-based nature: My parents were epic panickers. I still remember driving in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. I was nine or ten. My mother had to go to the bathroom. Right there, right then. She started chanting, "I have to go, I have to go, I'm diabetic, I have to go." We'd pass one exit, then another, because my father wanted to get wherever it was we were going and he wanted to get there then. But the panic was spreading to him. I didn't have to guess about my mother's panic, because her fear spilled out like a volcano with an unusual ability to target the flow of its lava. My father's panic had a few steps to go before reaching its peak. But the first step on the journey was a hand to the head. He'd start rubbing his forehead, harder and harder as if he could just pull the panic out of his brain and throw it out on the roadside. It would only be a few minutes before they were screaming at each other, my mother needing a bathroom, and my father looking for one, both with them shouting to the other. A panicky pas-de-deux.

I find a comb.

I jam the comb between door and doorpost.

I know it won't do anything.

I do it anyway.
It does nothing.
Little comb teeth rub against door hardware.
It changes nothing.
Did I mention there are no windows?
I didn't mention it has no windows.
Ten minutes ago I didn't care that it had no windows
I start pounding on the door.
I don't know what that will do.
I do it anyway.
I want to scream.
I hold off screaming.
I still have some choice whether I scream or not.
I still have some choice.

One of my very first clients when I was an assistant public defender in suburban Philadelphia was a guy I'll call Dominic. It was 1984 and Dominic was a Vietnam vet suffering from all manner of mental illnesses. He was in jail having been kicked out of a VA hospital after bashing a security guard with a statue of the Virgin Mary. I first met Dominic in lock-up. He was wearing handcuffs, an orange jumpsuit, and sported about 0.2% body fat. The door was locked behind us, and there were no doorknobs or levers or anything at all on the inside, but all I had to do is to bang the door once and a constable would open it. I had nothing to fear.

Except I did. I watched Dominic strain against the handcuffs, his wrists testing the metal as he raged. Raged against the security guard. Raged against the cops who dragged him from his hospital bed. Raged against whatever he had tried to leave in Vietnam that had followed him back to suburban Philadelphia.

I hadn't yet developed my skill set. I showed fear. I stared at those

wrists, that metal. I became absolutely convinced he was going to snap those handcuffs as if they were made of pretzel material and choke me. I thought I'd just tap lightly on the door, "Oh, Constable? Constable? Kind Sir Mister Constable Sir? We have a small problem here? No, nothing yet, but please, please, could you get me out of here before I pee myself? Thank you."

I didn't, of course. Partly because I knew it was irrational, but mostly because the constable was, after all, right there.

I pound.

I pound more.

I hope pounding will be enough.

I don't want to have to scream.

Oskar is across the hall.

Oskar will hear.

I stop pounding.

I look around the room.

I lean on a metal and glass rack

It gives way.

I think, that's good, I can play McGyver again.

I am thinking about McGyver unironically now.

I try to pry something long and straight from the rack.

I can't separate anything from anything.

I try to shove the entire rack between the door and door jamb.

It does nothing.

I knew that.

I knew that and I did it anyway.

I am a stupid American.

I am a stupid, screaming American.

Did I mention that I am screaming?

I am screaming.

No, I am not a stupid screaming American.

I am a stupid, screaming baby.

I am filled with fear.

Oskar, help.

Oskar, help.

Oskar, help.

In the early 1990s, when I was still married, I used to take my wife to a neurologist at Temple University in Philadelphia. The hospital, like the campus, is located in North Philly. My father would say, "Aren't you scared to be North Philly? He would never say, "Aren't you afraid to be a white guy in North Philly?" And I would say "no" both to what he said, and what he didn't say, and I meant it. Except for the day we came out of the hospital, got in my old Toyota, drove about three blocks and the engine started heating up. We parked. I put the hood up. I looked underneath. I had no idea what I was looking for, but I felt I had to look at something, even though that was persuading neither my wife nor myself.

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I was at the intersection of fears. A busted car in a bad neighborhood. I had no pleadings to file, no words to write. And no cell phone, this being the early '90s and while cell phones existed, they were not in every pocket.

I stood in front of the car with its hood up, both engine and driver exposed to the world as unable to function. As I was doing that, an African-American man approached us carrying one of those brick like cell phones. "Here," he said, "Do you need to call Triple A? This isn't a neighborhood to be stuck in after dark."

I have not screamed for a minute or two.

I say to myself I will size up the situation.

I'm trapped in my bathroom.

That about sizes it up.
I start pounding again.
My right hand hits a towel hook
The towel hook hits my right hand.
It hurts.
I don't care.
Pain is the least important problem I have.
I think I should write REDRUM in blood.
Really, I do.
I need to stop thinking in pop culture clichés.
Then I stop thinking in cultural clichés.
I give in.
I let fear win.
I pound.
I scream.
I beg for Oskar.
I hear Oskar's door open.
I hear Oskar.
More importantly, Oskar hears me.
He opens the front door.
He tells me to find the doorknob on my side.
He tells me to look for the little metal piece.
I tell him it's dark.
I tell him I will look.
I grope. I grasp. I hunt like a blind man shopping for carpet.
Knob.
Metal thing.
Both there.
I fumble on my side.
He fumbles on his.

He opens the door.

I thank him.

I thank him.

I thank him.

He sees me bleeding.

He asks me if I want a plaster, and I have no idea that means bandage;
I think he's talking about the damage I did to the wall and the towel rack.

I thank him again.

I turn on the light.

I see the broken rack, and blood everywhere.

I like the blood. It's a badge. I don't clean up the blood.

A few minutes later, Oskar comes by again, this time with his girlfriend, Ilona. She has impossibly big, kind eyes, fair skin, and just slightly too much protruding hip bones visible above her low cut jeans. She asks me again if I want a plaster, and this time I've figured out what it means, since she's carrying gauze and bandages. She takes my right hand, with all the nurturing I can handle and then some, and after I assure her I washed it, puts the gauze on the puncture wound, then anchors it with four tiny bandages. She asks if she can get me anything. So does Oskar. They have already given me plasters and freedom, so there's not much else I need. They leave me to my bathroom, with that door and every door in the flat propped open.

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I clean up the blood.

I don't clean it up right away.

I don't clean all of it up.

I leave some of it behind.

I am not the best cleaner in the world, but that's not why I leave some of it behind.

Necessary shift in character consciousness or, epiphany if you like:

Do I look at unfamiliar bathrooms a little more carefully, sizing up light fixtures and windows and door thicknesses? Yes, but that's not the kind of subtle yet important character revelation on which to end a creative non-fiction essay. But what am I to do here? I already knew my little fear-based weaknesses before this happened. If I know them with a bit more clarity, that's not really knowing all that much. The stubbornly unbending bottom line is that my father waded onto Utah Beach on D-Day when he was 22. I got stuck in a bathroom in the UK for 40 minutes when I was 53. Even if I had PTSD, I'd be too embarrassed to tell you anyway.

Unless it's the telling itself. Unless it's the fact that telling this story is the catalyst to talk about my fears, my weaknesses. Every story I've told here, every bullet pointed staccato sentence about getting stuck in the bathroom, every more conventionally written backstory placed interstitially between the staccato sections, I've told before. But I've told them as anecdotal islands, not as a connected, thematic narrative. And now I've connected them. I've connected my fears, however loosely, and bundled them together and put them all in one place.

I don't know if that has intrinsic value. I think it does. I hope it does. I hope it has more value than merely knowing to check a bathroom for knobs, lights and windows. I hope it has value that I can draw on someday when I fail badly at something, or when I'm sitting in a doctor's office as I'm about to be told test results. But I won't know until those things happen.

Someday a door will close behind me again.

Someday I'll again be trapped in darkness, scared and alone.

Someday I'll cry out for help. Again.



Kalaripayattu Fighter | EKTA MALKAN '10

On the Other Side

KELLY SCHENKE '95

| 68 |

I finally stripped the sheets
after hours of clutching her pillowcase to my face

Walked into her closet
Held each coat, inhaling her
leopard skin, wool, brown suede
fake fur, sleek, black leather

Ran my fingers
over her books, her scattered papers,
lay face up in the middle of her blue rug

Rose from the floor
Stepped from the room I knew
would be empty when I returned

...

Today I am walking in woods
Colorless, patient, wanting
Only my breath and the singular
moan of a bird
Rice paper leaves that have hung
On all winter
And so many trees storm-split
White bone exposed
The smooth, gray bark
like ancient elephants
I lean in and run my fingers
along their hard, animal wood

| 69 |

She left in the rain
black hat, bags slung over a shoulder,
I watched her car for three blocks
of green lights
“Green means go,” I whispered
to the porch light, the house number

I break through brush
and find the creek bed
and beyond
a steep, heaving hill
A splash
and I’m out and climbing.



Our Daily History: Its waking
light on One Especial

FRANCES WOLF '96

Seder Songs

JORDAN HOMER '11

| 71 |

It's an hour before sundown and the matzoh balls are gone. All that remains are chunks of matzoh-meal that bob and float to the surface of the water in the pot. My mom pokes at the burbling cement muck. "What did you do to them?"

"I plead the fifth."

"Seriously, what did you do?"

I'm wielding a chef's knife and mincing garlic, and don't respond. Blame the fumes, or maybe that Lady Gaga is playing on the radio—again. Mom's still staring at the doughy carnage. "Can you stop waving that knife around?"

"Sorry." The knife clatters and spins when I drop it on the cutting board. I twirl around the marble counter, my King of the Kitchen apron—a floury, sugar caked, half-ball gown—swirling up about my waist.

“What do we do now?”

“Blame Gema?” I say. “She’s always been the matzoh ball lady.”

Gema, who always said I was her favorite, never minded making them—we always left the matzoh balls in her hands. Literally.

I pick up the knife and hover over an unwitting strawberry, “You don’t think anyone will care if the strawberries have a hint of garlic in them do you?” Without waiting for a reply, I start slicing berries and rhubarb for the kugel. Using a wooden spoon, Mom prods again at the contents of the pot. Matzoh balls, before they transform into light, fluffy morsels of kosher-for-Passover heaven, are grainy and pasty and slimy. If ours ever hit the light and fluffy stage, they appear to have surpassed it: they’ve completely exploded.

Spring has slipped into our garage, the forsythia have burst, their yellow fireworks launching out from under the deck, and Passover has invited itself for dinner, along with 20 others, only half of them Jewish. Mom and I have been cooking all day; I’ve just slid the kugel into the bottom oven, the turkey and the brisket are in the top; I’ve pulled the bones out of the pullet for the chicken soup—all we need are the matzoh balls.

Alzheimer’s took bits and pieces of Gema’s memory like sand sliding out of a sifter, leaving only the biggest stones in her possession. My sweet-toothed younger brothers didn’t mind. She’d walk to the cabinet, pull out the box of Oreos, and place one in each of their palms and my own, proclaiming, “It’s time for dessert.” Wade and Harrison, grinning cookie-crumble smiles, would return to their movie and I to my book, waiting for the inevitable. Five minutes later Gema was up again, “It’s time for dessert...”

But she could still peel potatoes. She could still chop celery. She could still make matzoh balls.

There’s an unwritten rule about grandmothers, specifically those who take you to your first Disney movie, buy you a Dalmatian stuffed animal,

and listen to you sing “Be Our Guest” eighty million times on the car ride home—they make the best matzoh balls. Mom’s can’t compare, nor can an older sister’s, and whatever you do, never let a dad near the matzoh meal. You’ll end up with mini matzoh cannonballs that sink to the bottom of your bowl—and your stomach.

When, famished, we finally conclude the story of our forefather’s plight in Egypt, and have the opportunity to eat, Mom and I serve the soup hoping no one will notice what’s missing. But the moment Harrison gets his plate he pokes at the chicken. “Weren’t you and Jords making matzoh balls?”

Mom blinks at him. I smile and shrug. Then we open the door, welcoming the prophets Elijah and Miriam to our table; we hope the wind will blow in Gema as well.

After Dad finishes the seder service and everyone’s eating pants are stretched, we traipse out to the front deck and sing a discordant “Chad Gadya” to the heavens. Since both my brothers and my father are irreparably tone deaf, they shout more than sing: *Then came the cow that drank the water, that quenched the fire, that burned the stick, that beat the dog, that bit the cat, that ate the kid my father bought for two zuzzim.*

Chad gadya, Chad gadya.

This year, in addition to singing to Pop Pop, we sing to Gema.

We’ve left the matzoh-mush on the stove.

Alchemy

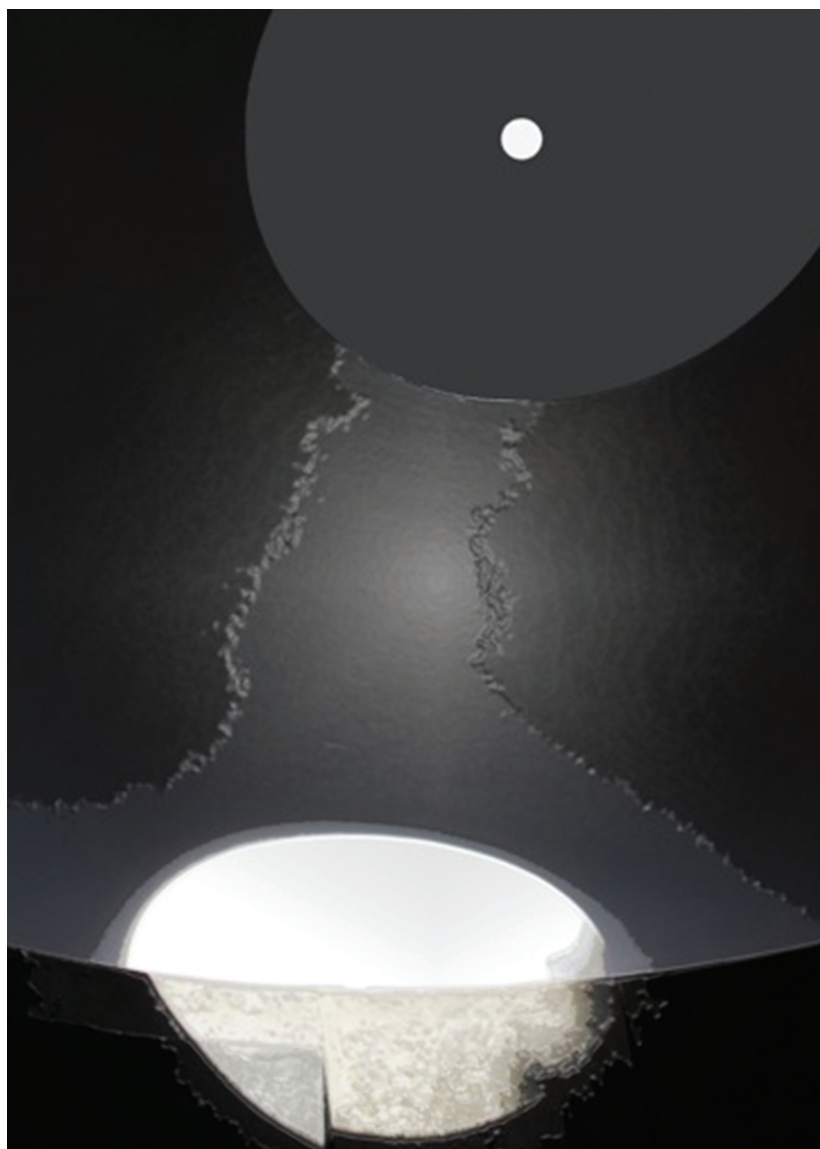
MARC STRAUS '65

| 74 |

Stone turns to buttermilk, pipe-
cleaners to dreams, necromancers
and pythons to aristocrats
and ballerinas. Here Platinum

shrinks lung cancer. Taxol,
from tree bark, withers
an ovarian metastasis into nothingness
and Prednisone, cures lymphoma.

What is this then, if not alchemy,
potions and witch's brews,
toxins turned to gold, barbed wire
into silvery south sea pearls.



Night Vision | RICHARD DRAKE '68

Bus Ride

JAMES DAMICO '91

shudders along
Mexican countryside,
kicks up dust, picks
up mariachi men,
frayed ends of
trousers grazing
shineless shoes.

| 76 |

A woman
matching the
melancholy of her
holy cards asks
me to purchase the
Prayer of San Miguel:
Printed words wage
war against
wickedness, but
no flip-side
image portrays this army
leader in action.

Instead, he stands
hands at rest,
swordless, eyes cast
down and away:
in battle only
against loneliness,
the specter
of isolation.

Bus chokes back
into gear.
I clutch my
card the
entire ride.

Three Towers | BEVERLY RYAN '73



Nails are a Distinguishing Feature in the Primate Order

ANTHONY HERMAN '07

| 78 |

You pick your cuticles at the movies,
perfect freckled fingers snapping back,
and I worry about finding gel nails
in the popcorn. Underneath, keratin
like animal hooves. A quick that engulfs.
You munch pretzel bites loudly and drink
coke until your eyes water.

Admiring your well-manicured nails,
scraping over your knuckles with my thumb
during previews, I trace your fingers with my own,
swooping through valleys,
cresting at peaks. A hard hold during the
scary parts. A closing and an opening.

Your wrist bone juts, blue veins
like deep wells, parallel hand lines.
When something hurts, you touch it.
When something startles, hands to mouth.
When I lean my shoulder slightly, your
fingers enwrap my own.

In The Creation of Adam, God barely touches him.
The first man seems reluctant to reciprocate.
But you, you hold my hand steady for two hours
until we are both white-knuckled.



Blue Valley | WILLIAM LEVIN '87

The Shadows of the Past

CHRISTINE VALZOVANO '11

Our home has no doors, only cavernous entryways that end in darkness. Of course, we have the necessary front and back doors to keep exterior evil at bay, but as for the evil within our home...well, that is another matter entirely.

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Our home is not odd for its lack of doors; that is the practice in this savage country, so the natives can spy, undetected, on their English rulers. Our three wards, the children I never longed for, wander in and out of my room, asking me inane questions about snow and trains and the Queen.

In my weaker moments, I acknowledge an attachment to them, but I fear the shadow that lurks in the doorways, the shadow that threatens and cannot be dispelled with paraffin lamps. I fear it will swallow these children whole, these innocent children who would have been better off in the sooty air of London with their superior grandmother, than here, in this wild country with their cold aunt.

Victor insists that taking in his irresponsible brother's children is the right course of action, and my dear husband must always do the right thing. Is it possible to adore and hate a man all at once?

As he emerges through the darkened doorway I spill the otherwise

untouched cup of tea that rests in my hands. If it were not so much effort for a man I see every day, I would smile. He kisses my lips but, as always, he does not try to embrace me. Instead, he pulls away, heaves a great sigh and says, "It is supposed to be quite hot today."

I laugh without any joy.

He smiles sadly. "I shall open a window for you."

I sit up in my bed and begin to work my fingers through my tangled hair. "And I shall close it as soon as you leave for Lucknow."

He pauses at the window and speaks to it: "The children are having a lesson with Mr. Tenor today. They should love for you to hear them sing."

From the corner of my eye, I glance at the doorway, so the shadow that lurks there might not sense that I know its intent. It will wait benignly so that I underestimate it. Then, it will strike and break my heart afresh.

"Basilia." Victor is facing me now and his voice is tender. "What happened in England wasn't your fault."

"What happened in England?"

Even from my bed, I can see that his lips are quivering. "Nothing, my dear," he says quickly. "Nothing."

Our three wards have the same auburn hair as Victor, although his is now flecked with gray. The youngest, Isabella, is Victor's pet, so he indulges her boisterous behavior, allowing her to caper about the house with a wooden sword and duel imaginary pirates. The eldest, Ivy, is a vain creature but affectionate, rather like a Cocker Spaniel. And then there is Ingram, the darling boy, who shyly offers to read to me every day, though he is not yet seven. He stumbles over the words and I help him until I remember the encroaching darkness. Then I plead a headache and ring for his ayah, who takes him back to the nursery.

When Victor returns from Lucknow, I am in the parlor, glaring at the termites that gnaw at the piano as Ivy begs me to get dressed.

“It is not proper,” she whispers. “For a lady to wander around the house in her nightgown.”

As a servant gives Victor the post in the foyer, I order her to leave. He must not notice, for he is too busy griping about the East India Company and its oppressive actions towards the natives. He prattles on to his Irish wolfhound about hypocrisy and injustice as he wanders in and out of rooms, the darkened doorways posing no threat to him. I watch the children greet him brightly in the foyer. He gives a pat on the head to Ingram, and a kiss to Ivy and Isabella, or Izzy as he has taken to calling her. It is a stupid pet name, but perhaps that is his design. Only the other day he told me that the natives have a strange practice of giving their children insulting names to ward off demons. Demons, I ask you.

Victor enters the parlor. He is smiling like an idiot, something he only does when he is threatened. “You’ll never guess who I have a letter from,” he sings, waving a violet envelope with a gold seal.

“Then there is no point in my trying.”

“My mother,” he says as he settles into the chair across from the sofa. “This promises to be enjoyable.”

When he meets my gaze, I tear my eyes away, feeling embarrassed. “If one finds a tooth extraction enjoyable,” I say, watching the piano’s legs begin to splinter beneath the termites’ little teeth.

Victor gives me that same moronic grin as he opens the envelope with a knife. He clears his throat. “She talks about London,” he mutters. “The Season... Oh, my.”

“What is it?” I ask, far more engrossed in the termites’ progress.

“I’ve never realized how much my mother uses the word ‘dreadful’.”

He meets my eye and laughs, and I know from their brightness what he is trying to do: he wants me to laugh with him, as I did before we came to this wretched land. I want to laugh with him, but I dread the consequences of such unabashed joy. How will the darkened doorway punish me for such reckless behavior?

Victor frowns and returns to his mother’s dreadful talk of dreadful

London. He swears. “She is visiting,” he says between his teeth, glaring down at the offending letter. “And at the rate it takes post to get here, she should be here—”

“*Sabib*,” says a voice in the doorway as Victor’s native manservant Ishvara appears from nowhere. “An English lady claiming to be your mother is asking for you.”

“How dreadful,” I say. When Victor laughs, I manage a smile.

Lady Henrietta, the Dowager Countess of Stanhope, arrives in a flurry of luggage, starched skirts, and complaints. “It is dreadfully hot here!” she declares before Victor can even greet her. “How do you stand it?” When she stumbles upon Ingram and Izzy wrestling in the garden as Ivy shrieks and sobs, she hisses, “They’re positively wild! It is a good thing they are dressed the way they are, or I would have mistaken them for savages.”

The servants, particularly the children’s ayahs, are not fond of her. She is not fond of them either.

“They are dreadful heathens, Victor,” she says after a week. “How do you let them near you?”

“Believe it or not,” Victor says tiredly, “They are people.”

By far, Lady Henrietta’s favorite thing to complain about is me. “She does nothing of use, Victor!” she cries, just outside my bedroom. “She has no sense of propriety! She should be doing charitable works or hosting parties, but she just wanders about the house in her nightgown, moping and cowering—”

“Mother!” Victor snarls. “That will do!”

Though she is a vile woman, I must confess that she is right. It is not proper for the wife of an earl to spend the whole of each day in her dressing gown, but there seems no point in going through the elaborate process of putting on all those layers of clothing, lacing up my stays, piling my hair on top of my head, and putting on my jewelry just to

undo all of that work several hours later. So, I either wander about the property in my dressing gown or remain in bed all day. I never cared for propriety.

And yet, I often wonder about the prudence of such an opinion. Other ladies care a great deal for propriety, and the shadows that lurk in doorways do not seem to trouble them.

“What are you so afraid of?” asks a voice from the doorway, and I scream. When I turn, however, it is only Lady Henrietta.

“You could have the decency to knock,” I say, falling back against the pillows of my bed.

“There are no doors in this dreadful country.” She crosses my bedroom with the loud swishing and crunching of skirts. “But you didn’t answer my question.”

“I am not afraid,” I say, jutting my chin out.

When she giggles, my skin crawls as if a snake has just brushed against my bare flesh. Lady Henrietta asks, showing two rows of tiny yellow teeth, “Are you afraid of Irene?”

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The shadow finally crawls from the darkness of the doorway. And, there she is, the mirror version of my younger self, except for her eyes. Her eyes are Victor’s fierce blue ones. Her white frock is splattered with blood and her hands are completely crimson. Her eyes are vacant, but a ghost of a smile hovers on her face as she peers down at her hands.

“Mama,” she says in her confused manner as she lifts her head to look at me. “Why are you shrieking in that way? Is it because Henry has made such a mess?” Lady Henrietta’s malicious eyes are on me, a smirk playing across her lips, as Irene continues, “I told him it was only a game, but he insisted on dribbling his foulness across the freshly cleaned carpets.” She gives me a stern look remarkably similar to Lady Henrietta’s. “I don’t think we should have him over to play anymore.”

A scream tears from my body. “Why would you bring her here?”

Lady Henrietta smiles. “So, you have gone mad.”

“Why would you bring Irene here?” I shriek, digging my nails into the bedclothes. The bloodied child blinks at me.

Lady Henrietta sneers. “You know I wouldn’t go near that monster. Your father and my son dealt with her in the appropriate manner, so I will leave her where she is now, thank you very much.”

Nonetheless, there she is, right before me, looking the same as the day she murdered that stable boy. Shouldn’t a mother know that her child is a monster? I should have known from her tantrums, her fascination with gore and her long spells of scheming silence. But no woman would ever call her child a monster.

“I told Victor marrying you was a mistake.” Lady Henrietta is patting her thin gray hair before the mirror, as Irene twirls about the room, bloodstained skirts swirling out around her. “There was never anything noble or proper about you. Perhaps, your mother was decently born, but your father was a criminal at best, and you always said exactly what you pleased. A proper lady would have never found herself mother to a monster, descending into madness...”

Through my terror, Lady Henrietta’s words penetrate, and an old epiphany surfaces afresh. Propriety. Conventionality. It is true that I have never been conventional and I have always been cynical. Other ladies are proper and certainly empty-headed, but they are happy, aren’t they? Maybe they suffer heartbreak like mine, but they remember their children as virtuous little things, not...monsters.

Lady Henrietta is right. Irene’s monstrosity is my fault. Had I been proper, she might have been normal. It is too late now.

Lady Henrietta opens her mouth to say something more, but I cut her off. “Out.”

She simpers. “One should never leave a madwoman unattended.”

I tear my no doubt wild eyes from my pirouetting daughter to glare at Lady Henrietta. “Are you sure about that piece of advice, Henrietta?” I ask in a guttural voice, gripping the bedclothes. “Or, wouldn’t it be

more suitable to say that one should never be alone with a madwoman?" Irene begins to giggle and I consider laughing, as well, but I can find nothing funny. Instead, I bare my teeth. "Madwomen can be quite fierce."

Before I have finished, Lady Henrietta is halfway down the corridor, screaming for Ishvara.

"Mad?" Irene repeats, turning her large eyes upon me. "Are you mad, Mama?"

I nod. "I believe I am."

She smiles. "Then you are like me."

I sigh and look down at my yellow hands. For a moment, I am taken aback; these are an invalid's hands, surely not mine.

"Yes," I say miserably. "I am like you."

Irene does not leave then, nor does she leave when Ishvara marches into the room and I assure him that all is well. What's more, she does not leave when Victor returns from Lucknow; she remains, waiting and wandering in her blood-spattered frock, dancing at the corner of my eye. Occasionally, she comes directly into view. It occurs to me with a violent force that she will never leave.

"Are you well?" Victor whispers, tarrying in the doorway. His hands tremble.

At the sound of his voice Irene gives a cry of delight and skips to him. For one mad moment, I think that he sees her, but he does not. Instead, he looks at me, worry plastered all over his face as he perspires in his dark frock coat.

I frown. "Where is Irene?"

He gives a choke. It is a long time before he speaks, his eyes wandering his black boots. "Your father said that..."

"I know what my father said," I say, feeling headily in control of myself. "When we found the dead boy, Papa said that he would do to Irene what should have been done at the first sign of her madness." My voice shakes now. "What did he mean by that?"

“I think you know,” Irene sings, her voice echoing in my skull until I’m certain that I will go deaf from the sound.

She is prancing just to the left of Victor. He looks where I am looking, too, and though I’m sure he doesn’t see her, his eyes light up with horror.

“I don’t know,” he croaks, tears filling his eyes as he balls his hands into fists. “I don’t know what happened to her.”

And I feel a small amount of triumph when I see that now he, too, feels the threat of the shadowy doorways.

No Horizon | RICHARD BIDGOOD '76



Herbsttag

RAINER MARIA RILKE (1875–1926)

Herr: es ist Zeit. Der Sommer war sehr groß.
Leg deinen Schatten auf die Sonnenuhren,
und auf den Fluren laß die Winde los.

Befiehl den letzten Früchten voll zu sein,
gib ihnen noch zwei südlichere Tage,
dränge sie zur Vollendung hin und jage
die letzte Süße in den schweren Wein.

Wer jetzt kein Haus hat, baut sich keines mehr,
Wer jetzt allein ist, wird es lange bleiben,
wird wachen, lesen, lange Briefe schreiben,
und wird in den Alleen hin und her
unruhig wandern, wenn die Blätter treiben.

(1902)

Autumn Day

TRANSLATED BY MICHAEL RITTERSON '62

Lord: it is time. The summer was immense.
Lay down your shadow on the sundials' faces,
and over meadows now unleash your winds.

Command that laggard fruits be full in time,
grant them just two more days of southern warming,
urge them to ripe fullness now, instilling
the final sweetness into heady wine.

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Who has no house now shall not build him one.
Who is alone now shall be long alone,
shall watch late, reading, writing endless letters,
and shall roam up and down the avenues
a restless wanderer in the driving leaves.



Black Satin/Yellow Cab | JOHN SHIRE '66

The Hottest Date I've Ever Had

MARK MILLER '74

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The weekend arrived, romance was in the air, and after a hard several days at work, I was so in the mood for love. I was looking good, feeling good, had a wallet filled with cash, and was ready, willing and able to do anything my hot, beautiful date desired. Life was filled with sweet potential.

There was just one tiny problem. I didn't have a hot, beautiful date. I didn't have a date, period. I was the sequel to *Sleepless in Seattle*—*Dateless in Los Angeles*.

While being dateless on the weekend is not an unusual state of affairs for a single person in a big city, I just didn't feel like surrendering to the standard carryout food and video option. I wanted to be among other humans. I wanted to have some fun. And not with my male friends, commiserating about how hard it is to meet someone. Oh, sure, there

were my platonic female friends, but I wanted romance. There were bars and parties and dances, but I'm not a bars and parties and dances kind of guy. There were escort services, but I wanted to be with someone who wanted to be with me, not someone who was being paid to be with me. Unless, of course, it was Salma Hayak, but I'm guessing she wouldn't be interested, at least according to her restraining order.

That's when the solution occurred to me. And it was one that, strangely enough, I'd never considered before. It was this: I would ask out someone I knew was available, that I knew really well, was good looking, healthy, who had a wonderful personality, shared all my interests, was romantic and passionate, and was really fun to be with. That's right, my plan was to ask out the only one I knew who fit those qualifications and was available—I planned to ask myself out on a date.

I realize there are many of you out there who are already judging me. Maybe you're lucky enough to be married, in a committed relationship, dating. Or maybe you're even single, but saying to yourself, "I'd never stoop that low—Well, judge not lest ye be judged. Walk a mile in my shoes. And, of course, it takes one to know one.

Oh, sure, I understood that there would be certain limitations, but any person you meet has certain limitations. I understood that some people wouldn't approve, but, hey, I'm not dating for their approval; I'm dating to make myself happy. Besides, think of all the money I'd be saving. And if it didn't work out, it was just one night, anyway. I could always dump myself. My mind was made up.

I spent the next several hours trying to figure out the exact words, the perfect way, to ask myself out. It had to be just the right mixture of sincerity, confidence, attraction and humor. After all, I didn't want to alienate myself right from the start. I wanted to set the right tone. So I prepared my approach, waited 'til just the right moment, when I knew I'd be in a good mood and receptive, and made my move.

I briefly considered using, "It's a felony in California to look that

good, but if you go out with me, I'll let you off with a warning." I also flirted with, "Your eyes are the exact same color as my Rolls Royce." Finally, I decided on: "I'm shipping out tomorrow to a combat zone; I could die a painful death without ever having experienced the bliss of being with you."

To my delight, I accepted my invitation. I was dizzy with the evening's possibilities. My friend Ian called to see if I wanted to grab a burger and commiserate about how hard it is to meet someone, but I told him I already had a hot date for the night. He asked if it was a sure thing. I said I could pretty much count on it. Boy was he envious! I shaved, showered, brushed my teeth, used mouthwash (twice!), and put on my best cologne and sexiest clothing that was soft to the touch. Oh, yeah, I was ready.

At my favorite Italian restaurant, I requested an out-of-the-way table so I'd have some privacy with myself. Things got off to a shaky start; after all, this was our first date. I referred to myself by another person's name. Awkward! But I managed to break the ice with a rather amusing story about losing my virginity during my break working at McDonalds, and before long, I was chattering away with myself as though we'd been friends for a lifetime. During the meal, my chemistry with myself was so strong that I scarcely noticed anyone else in the restaurant. We were in our own private world. I gave myself playful little touches and at one point, just before dessert, even played footsie with myself under the table, giggling like a schoolgirl.

The rest of the evening seemed to fly by. I found I had even more in common with myself than I'd imagined. We talked about our plans for the future, our hopes, our dreams, our fears. There was a real connection. Back home, I dimmed the lights, put on some smooth, romantic music, poured us both some wine, and lit a candle. No words were exchanged, no words were necessary, but we both realized what was about to happen, and we both wanted it. It was a magical, remarkable evening of love, and

I learned that it is true what they say—sometimes you don't realize that your perfect romantic partner is right in front of your nose.

It's always very flattering when I hear something appreciative from a romantic partner the morning after a particularly passionate evening. So I'd like to share with you the email I received from myself the next day. "Mark, I just wanted you to know how very special and wonderful our time together last night was for me. As you know, as difficult as it is to meet someone you like well enough to ask out on a date, it's even more so to find a really deep romantic connection. I felt we had that connection. Not to give you a swelled head, but I've never encountered someone so warm, giving, intelligent, interesting—in short, so amazing. It's no wonder our chemistry was so electric and the sex was so mind-blowing. If last night was a dream, I pray that I never wake up. All I know for sure is that I can't wait to be with you again, to experience the magic that we make together, to give myself to you totally, body and soul. Passionately—Mark."

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I'm not one to kiss and tell, but I will say that we've been together about seven months now, and, well, if loving me is wrong, I don't want to be right.



Shadowman | RONALD M. DRUKER '66

T-Storm

FRANCES E. STEINBERG '72

I didn't see it coming. Or
perhaps I did, but put the changes
down to other things. A shift in tide,
season, circumstance. So when

it hit I wasn't ready. Bits of identity
swirled, just out of reach. I managed to grab
hold, but they offered no support in the whirlpool.
I clung on anyway, to the me I'd been.

| 98 | Finally beached, washed up, surrounded
by that flotsam. Every footstep on the sand
heading directions I don't know.
Pooled water reflects a stranger. Who

stole my face? If eyes are the window to the soul, I must be
damned. My body, too, snatched; a changeling in its place.
Strange flesh, muscles, movement.
From breath to breadth, I am not me.

My mind, my sword, honed by slicing through
inanity, cutting to the chase, now drifts
in fog, confused, bemused.
I struggle with the simplest things.

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I speak a new language, an alphabet of T's.
Some days I know their meaning, but not what they mean.
Voices of explanation stir up dust.
Arms of support reach but never bear. I long
for a healer, to take me on her lap and rock me well.
To make the complicated simple. Instead

I build a raft of my broken parts.
Most bits don't fit but I use them anyway.
And I will reach the mainland.

Back to the familiar door of my old house and its baffling new locks.

Man or Mannequin

CAITLIN CIERI '12

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Midnight in the mall, and Macy's was completely dark. The ornaments bore none of their earlier shine, and the evergreens blended with the glass jewelry displays. As the air grew cold, the welcoming aromas of hot chocolate and gingerbread sank into the marble tiles. In the Men's Department, the mannequins were shrouded in gloom, their outlines melding together into nothing.

Macy's front doors flew open and a golden carpet of streetlight flowed in. As wind-flung snowflakes sailed into the opening like confetti, a figure entered, tall and thin as a beam of holy light, heels echoing against the tiles. Her snow-blue nightgown twisted through the air like an aurora borealis. Stray snowflakes landed in her hair, coating her with a most natural body glitter. She strode past multiple racks and displays to the Men's Department, looking more like an omen than a late-night

shopper. In the crowded streets, heads would have turned, but here, her only spectators were the mannequins. And one mannequin, one of the males in Suits, was more interested in her than any other.

The luminescent woman stopped, her wet heels skidding a millimeter. She turned her head as the echoes died, taking in the mannequin with the ink black hair.

“You don’t look so bad yourself.” She cocked her head to one side. “You been working out?” she said with an automatic wink.

“Not many people talk to you, huh?” Her voice was deep, with maturity that had come too soon. “You look awful lonely up there on your pedestal, big boy.”

Again she tilted her head, and nodded. “I don’t know what I would do if I could only look at men my entire life and never speak with a single one!”

The store was absolutely quiet. Clothes didn’t slip, doors didn’t squeak, and nobody spoke. Then again, the mannequin’s silence was enough to answer her question.

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“Is that so? I think I can help with that.” Her long fingers dipped down her leg, slipping beneath her nightgown. She pulled out what appeared to be a child’s fairy princess wand, topped with a wooden star, silver paint flaking from its handle. As she lifted the wand, glowing sparks leapt from it, nearly scorching the mannequin’s silk suit pants.

She stroked the mannequin’s chest with the wand, wrapping her other arm around its neck. “I could make all your dreams come true.”

She brushed a smooth finger across its stiffened lips, her cool breath shushed into its ersatz ears. “It’s okay. I don’t need anything from you. I simply live to turn boys into men.”

She raised her wand again, prepped to tap its forehead, and paused. The plaster below tingled in anticipation.

“I didn’t say, but people just call me Azure. How do you feel about ‘Malcolm?’” She touched his lips with her wand. As his head reeled and

his ears buzzed, he heard her say, within the din, “Abracadabra, big boy.”

Though the wind had died down, the temperature was still cold enough to freeze bone. Few people were out at this hour, preferring to barricade themselves behind frost-coated windows. Nonetheless, two people walked the empty streets, a young blonde and a 20-something man with black-framed glasses and a satchel slung across his chest.

The student kept his hands in his pockets and his chin sunk into a muffler. “I just don’t get why you still want to see him.”

“You’re his brother, Dan!” the blonde said, her voice a little too loud, echoing against the glass of an unlit skyscraper. “I don’t get why you don’t!”

“Look, I understand the need for mourning, Julie, and I know you had a thing back then, but he was awful to you.” Dan kicked some street slush from his Timberlands. “I can’t believe that you aren’t actually, well, a little glad he’s—.”

“Mal is not dead!” She yanked her zipper further up her coat.

“Well, for all intents and purposes—”

Julie stopped in her tracks. “Listen to yourself, Dan!” As a fire engine barreled down the street behind her she whipped around to face him, her hair flying. “If we’d just done...something...then none of this would have happened!”

“Julie.” He took a huge gulp of breath. “He hurt you. He hurt all of us. He pushed you down the stairs! Our mom’s never been the same.”

Julie didn’t reply. Now was the time for action, not for talking. She steadied herself, and continued on to St. Abel’s Hospital. She didn’t want to keep her own mother waiting.

Dan, realizing Julie had left him, got up and chased after her. “Julie! Lorraine will kill me if she thinks you’re coming alone.”

“No she won’t!” Julie called back. “Mom would never do something like that.”

Malcolm’s eyelids fluttered, surprising him. When they finally opened,

he saw pale green walls and blaring lights. He breathed in deeply, only to realize that cool air was already streaming through his nostrils.

“Where...am I...” he tried to mutter. His question was blocked by the tube in his throat.

This was not the Macy’s where he stood most of his days; why, he wasn’t even standing! This room was cramped. There were no clothing displays or cash registers. The window was smaller, with no crowds of people passing by. As his eyeballs rolled about in his head, trying to make sense of what they were seeing, they caught the glimpse of a blonde about the same age as the mannequins sporting the new Zooey Deschanel line.

“Oh my god! He’s awake!”

Malcolm’s heart skipped a beat at the thought of seeing a person up close. It skipped another one when he realized there was actually a heart in his chest. Forcing his eyes to focus on the chair where the woman sat, he let them droop when he noticed she was no longer there.

“Mom! Come in quick! Mal’s awake!”

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His ears twitched and the smallest of smiles chiseled its way onto his stone cold face. The woman returned, swooping Malcolm into a warm, perfumed embrace. Even in the face of these new sensations, he could not help but notice that her coat had been on display at Macy’s, on a female mannequin, 20% off. Come to think of it, where were the other mannequins?

“Julie. That’s preposterous. Nobody could wake from a coma like—”

The mom’s mouth opened in shock, her own eyes bulging like Christmas ornaments. Malcolm noticed a silver brooch on her jacket (15% off with a rewards card) that reflected the image of a slack-jawed young man. His arm twitched, as if to touch its counterpart in the brooch, to press against plaster-white skin, to push back inky black hair, to do anything but lie there in a stupor.

“Oh my God!” Julie gasped, “I need to call Evelyn and Phoebe and

Dan and everyone!”

“We don’t need to call Evelyn,” the mom muttered.

“I think that she’d like to know that her son has finally woken up!” Julie’s fingertips brushed the bangs out of Malcolm’s eyes; her touch was gentler than the mall-rats constantly trying to unfasten his head.

The mom kept shaking her head repeating, “No. No. He’s not awake. He’s not.”

“Of course he’s awake, Mom! His eyes are open and his arm is moving.”

“That’s...it’s...he...he’s brain-dead...brain-dead...just reflexes... like the doctor said,” the mom sputtered, grasping a clump of wires that snaked from Mal’s body, attaching god-knows-what to who-knows-where. “He wouldn’t NEED all this if...if...”

While she continued to stammer, Julie nudged her out of the room as a border collie does his herd. In a burst of desperation, Mal mumbled, “Dun guh...”

“It’s just your imagination!” the mom blurted. “He can’t talk!”

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Malcolm’s latest sickbed visitor seemed much more indifferent to his revival than Julie or the mom had been. Her bone-thin legs crossed, she waved her bracelet-covered arms as she launched into yet another story about her complicated life. Malcolm could swear that two months ago he’d seen this same teenager walk past him holding the bracelet now jingling beside its brothers on her arms. He suddenly became aware of the heart-rate monitor’s wires winding from his chest out over his own limbs.

“I know it’s not healthy for me to be obsessing over him so much.” She twisted a strand of hair again and again around a finger. “But what can I do? He’s gorgeous! Heck, I was Christmas shopping the other day and all I could think about was going back to Hot Topic. It’s the only place in the mall I can see him, yanno?”

Malcolm nodded. The feeding tube thudded against his teeth. She’d

been going on and on about her dream man, a shaggy sounding specimen named L. She said he was everything a man should be: strong, noble, clever, and most respectful of women. The strange thing was, more than just loving L., she loved seeing him with other men, particularly a well-dressed man named Raito. Malcolm had just begin to figure out, however, that neither of these men were real people. Just fanciful creations from something she called an “anime,” something she loved far more than life itself.

“I tried dating,” the girl sighed, “but I was always afraid they’d find out about me. That I learned everything I know about sex from fanfics. I’m only 14 and I already know where a guy’s sweet spot is.”

The girl uncrossed her feet, dangling them from the chair. Malcolm’s own feet were weighed down by the blanket, and his own blood-pumping veins taunted him with their activity. He tried to focus on the female in front of him, who moved so freely that even her bangs swooshed about, sending off the scent of pine-needle soap. Her bracelets tinkled as she brushed her hair back, each a different note of a portable xylophone. She stood and placed one of her tiny hands on Malcolm’s chest.

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“It must be weird to just lie there, listening to your little sister go on about her own pathetic life,” she sighed. “But I can’t talk to the rest of the family. Mom would ground me for life, and Dan would just call me a weirdo. I dunno if you can hear me, but at least I can still talk to you. Thanks, Mal.”

“Phoebe!” A voice called from outside.

“In a minute!” Phoebe shouted. “Well, there’s Dan.” She slipped on her coat and dashed from the room.

“You were in there for a while,” said the voice that must be Dan’s.

“What? Were you listening by the door?” Phoebe’s voice, with rising panic.

“Well, you always did have a lot to say to Mal. Used to make me jealous. But it didn’t sound that interesting, so I went to the café and

got myself a pretzel.”

Malcolm heard Phoebe cough lightly before she finally muttered, “Tmma meet Mom in the car.”

“She’s probably still talking to Lorraine,” Dan called out.

“Julie’s mom? She’s here alone?” Phoebe tapped her foot idly. “Weird.”

After Phoebe’s footsteps faded into oblivion, a dapper young man, around 20 or so, trudged into the room. He studied Malcolm, fingering a festively wrapped package, and with a hesitant sigh, nestled the gift under Malcolm’s hand. Pinching the insides of his eyes between forefinger and thumb, he murmured a quick “Happy Holidays, Bro,” and turned to leave. Malcolm heard him faintly mutter, “Oh, excuse me, I didn’t see you there,” before he recognized the clack of high heels across tile. A blonde nurse strode towards him, blue-glitter eye shadow, lips tinted like pneumonia, eyes tinged with melancholy and malice. Beneath the nurse’s costume, Mal recognized Azure, wrinkles creasing the corners of her mouth, scars inflicted from too many years of forcing smiles at the ungrateful recipients of her most unusual gifts.

“Not what you thought it’d be, was it, big boy?” she smirked, like a teacher assigning a pop quiz, “Probably should’ve stayed on your pedestal, huh?”

Malcolm’s mouth quivered, sputtering only a few words at a time, “What...this...not...person...”

Azure shook her head. “I granted your wish, Malcolm. You just said you wanted to be a human. You never said you wanted to be a healthy one.” Her hand slipped beneath his and pulled away the fancily wrapped present. Her ice blue nails sliced through the paper, and pulled out a golden pocket-watch. She held it in her hand, like an egg with a chick inside. Its fob spilled between her fingers, cascading down to Malcolm’s knee.

“Hmm, *Vita Amor Est*. Is that a brand name?” She placed the watch onto his forehead. The cold metal of the fob trailed down his neck. “A

bit strange for the brain-dead to get gifts. It's not like you can appreciate them. That reminds me." She paused, a hand sliding around the doorjamb. "How long will it be before they pull the plug?"

"Happy Thanksgiving!" Julie's arms were filled with Tupperware containers and she led a procession comprised of her mother (Lorraine, Malcolm remembered), Dan, Phoebe, and a second middle-aged woman. The new woman rushed over to Mal and squeezed him in a hug.

"Merry Merry, my little man!" she crooned.

Julie placed the stack of food by the bedside table and started rummaging around the room. "Where's the microwave?" she demanded, cheerily.

"Do hospital rooms even have microwaves?" Phoebe asked, waving 'hi' to Malcolm. Malcolm's eyes followed her bangle-covered wrist.

Julie's shoulders slumped. "There isn't one in here!" She gestured everyone over to her corner of the hospital room. Malcolm felt himself being jostled. Julie pointed to the new woman.

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"Evelyn!" she said. "Go ask the first nurse you meet to bring us a microwave oven. Mom will help you find a good place to put it. Phoebe, you get out the presents and arrange them. Dan and I will set up the decorations. He's tall enough to put up the garlands."

And around they went, hanging tinsel, maneuvering trees, tying ribbons to various cables around the room. A sprig of mistletoe festooned the IV drip next to Malcolm's bed, and taped-up lights glimmered around the snow-covered windows. A pumpkin pie in a glass plate sat on the sill, next to a dancing Santa. When Dan switched on the radio next to the bed, Bing Crosby crooned "Blue Christmas." Julie searched the TV channels until she found the fireplace network. It was as if Malcolm had never left the Men's Department.

"Looks like he already got his presents," Phoebe said, turning over Malcolm's new pocket watch.

Dan plucked it from her hands and placed it on the bedside table. "It's not yours. Don't touch it."

Julie took the wrapping paper and searched for a label. She held up a sticker and read, "To: Mal. From: Your bro. I knew you cared! Even if nobody wears pocket watches anymore!"

She wrapped an arm around Dan and peered down at Malcolm, smiling. "You missed a great Thanksgiving, Mal. I know you can't eat any of it because of..." She tapped the feeding tube. The plastic jostled in his throat. "But I figured you ought to experience it. We didn't have any leftovers so I remade some of the stuff and your mom helped me out with the rest. I'll heat it all up so you can get a good long whiff."

Phoebe finished with the gifts, placing a cylindrical present beside Malcolm's bedpan. Evelyn returned, pushing a microwave oven into the room.

"If we're doing Thanksgiving, then what's with all the Christmas stuff?" Phoebe asked, her clanging jewelry setting off the Santa. It began doing the twist while singing The Kinks' "Father Christmas."

"This room needs all the Christmas cheer it can get," Julie sighed. "I hate how dull and boring this hospital is. Just because Mal can't really talk doesn't mean he doesn't notice how lifeless it all is."

Malcolm thought he saw Lorraine shake her head.

Julie put a bowl of butternut squash soup in the microwave. When it dinged, she threw in some raisins and placed it under Malcolm's nose. "Mom made this one."

It was thick in its bowl; Malcolm could almost feel it creeping along his tongue. The vapors were warm and prickly, both from the heat tickling his nose and a hint of nutmeg.

The microwave rang again. Phoebe yanked open its door. She strode up to Malcolm, bearing a plate full of mashed potatoes. They were blue.

"Adirondack potatoes!" she boasted, squeezing a dollop of butter on top. "As soon as I heard about them I knew I had to make them."

“I’ll admit, you can’t fall asleep from the tryptophan with those radioactive tubers on the table.” Dan laughed.

Phoebe elbowed him in the stomach. “And what about those cranberries of yours? I swear to God they gave me the runs.”

“They would have done worse than that if they’d been canned, Sis.” Dan said, placing the cranberries on the bedside table.

Malcolm’s nostrils flared with expectation, even though no steam came from the bowl. The red orbs glistened in their white ramekin, chewy, yet slick, nothing like the can-shaped cranberry blobs Malcolm had seen in the November catalogues. Nothing sold sweaters quite like a well-dressed mother with a turkey on a platter.

String beans, sweet corn, stuffing and other dishes appeared around Malcolm’s bed and table. Evelyn had even brought a whole turkey, crammed with baked apples and wearing polka dot paper booties.

“We’ll have leftovers for weeks!” she laughed, making sure the turkey wasn’t pressing down too hard on Malcolm’s prone body.

From a bag, Julie pulled six plastic goblets, a corkscrew and a bottle of 2012 Beaujolais Nouveau.

“What made you bring that?” Lorraine demanded as Julie uncorked the wine and started pouring.

“Well, you can’t just let this sit, you know,” Julie said, passing the glasses around.

Evelyn gladly took the first one and drank deeply. Dan helped himself to a glass and Evelyn even offered one to Phoebe. Lorraine began to mutter “like mother, like...” before closing her mouth with an audible snap. Julie poured another glass and twirled it under Malcolm’s nose. Each swish of the Beaujolais Nouveau released the scent of grapes and berries.

His mouth was really, really dry. The tube bore into his throat like the pins that had connected his extremities as a mannequin.

“Why are we even doing all this,” Lorraine muttered disgustedly,

“He doesn’t even know what’s going on right now!”

“He seemed pretty cognizant when I was telling him about my day,” Phoebe shrugged, staring at her glass of wine.

“Those are just random neurons firing! He can’t control which way his eyes move or how many times his ears twitch! He’s brain dead!”

“Persistent vegetative state,” Evelyn corrected, and took another sip of wine.

“Exactly! He doesn’t see all this tinsel and he can’t smell the turkey! He sure as hell can’t eat it! It’s a waste of time!”

“He was recovering!” Julie slung her fork to the floor.

“We both know that’s a lie, Julie!” Lorraine enunciated. “And even if he could see all this, it’s just torture! He’s never going to do anything ever again and no amount of sugar-plums or wishes is going to change that!”

Lorraine was breathing hard. Evelyn placed a hand on her shoulder but she shrugged it off. Malcolm felt the base of the platter digging into his legs and the needles pinching under his arm. A particularly hot Christmas light hung by his ear. Its white gleam crept into the corner of his left eye. The robot Santa started dancing to “Father Christmas” again. Nobody bothered with the pumpkin pie.

Visiting hours were over. The nurse turned off the lights, leaving Malcolm alone in his tiny hospital room. He had been in darkness many times before, posed amongst the other mannequins in Macy’s, unable to speak or move yet perfectly aware of his surroundings. Yet the cramped size of the room, the pile of presents on his bedside table, and the plastic invading his orifices left Malcolm frantic and claustrophobic. Again a set of heels clicked against the hospital floors, but they didn’t have the harsh echo of Azure’s shoes. Instead, it was Lorraine who entered, her eyes red.

“Mal...I am sorry for all of this...”

The IV needle in Malcolm’s arm slid around as she scooped up a handful of wires and tubes.

“I won’t lie to you. I hated you. I hated your family. Your drunk mother, your snooty brother and perverted sister.”

Malcolm’s eyelid twitched.

She was looking at the wires again—no, she was looking at their plugs—and tears welled in eyes that were shot through with red, like peppermint bark, Mal imagined.

“You were a terrible boyfriend,” she continued. “Julie said you were attentive but I saw it as just controlling; most of your fights started over some tiny change of her expression. She called you ‘kind and loving;’ as if that made up for your fits of violence. But your real attraction”—a grimace twisted her lips—“is, was, your great taste in wine ... beer, liquor, any spirit.”

Malcolm stirred. Mal’s body had a history, a life and a family who came to see him when he was ill. That same family welcomed Julie’s, even after everything Mal put them through.

“That night,” Lorraine sniffled, her grip tightening, “I went out for a drive to cool my head...you know how I get...” She was trembling, staring at the plugs again, “I saw you...I thought of Julie...and her bruises... and I just slammed the gas and went right for you...and I let you rot here for two years...but now that you’re aware of your suffering...I can’t let you suffer any more.”

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She was about to reach for his feeding tube when she noticed the handful of tubes she’d already pulled out. She began to shudder. A hand jostled against Malcolm’s leg. She threw the cords on his chest and started mashing the call button.

“Nurse! Nurse!” she screamed.

A nurse rushed in. Lorraine pushed the wires at him. “Put these back in him!” she shouted, “I don’t know where they go!”

“Ma’am.” The nurse reached a hand for her shoulder. “This man... we’ve been told not to take heroic measures...”

“There’s nothing heroic about any of this!” Lorraine sobbed.

The nurse sat her down and slowly re-attached the loose tubes and wires. Once he finished applying the gauze and tape, he gave Malcolm a pat on the chest. "You're all fixed up, Mal," he said. Holding Lorraine's hand, he led her out of the room.

They left the door slightly ajar. A curtain of light spilled inside as he heard Lorraine mutter, "I just wanted it to be quick! Quick and painless!"

"Don't worry, Ma'am," the nurse said. "With all that excitement, I doubt he'll last the night."

Malcolm nodded. He knew the nurse was right. And he was frightened.

"Hey there, big boy."

Malcolm's heart twinged. There was Azure, brandishing her wand, prepared to cast another spell. "Ready for your ticket back home?"

Malcolm reeled, jerking his head back and forth, "...No...this... fine..."

Azure lowered her wand, almost dropping it. "This is...fine?"

"F—Fine..." he sputtered.

"I'm not a murderer Malcolm," she said. "I never grant wishes that result in a loss of life."

"Fi...ne..."

Azure sighed, and walked out the door, shaking her head.

Malcolm turned his head and looked out the window at the falling snow. If he hadn't wished so hard to be human he would not be trapped in a body that felt too much and moved too little. He would need not fear death.

But he would also never have seen Julie smile, or mutely have consoled Phoebe in her worries, or received that pocket watch from Dan, or heard Lorraine's confession. People had talked to him, confided their secrets and desires in him. Malcolm had finally known the love of a family, the love that only a person can give or receive. How could he possibly return to Macy's, to a life where he'd be marooned, abandoned in even the largest, most crowded rooms? Being alone with faintly lit Christmas

decorations reminded him far too much of the Men's Department he'd finally escaped. As the high-heeled footsteps echoed away from him, down the hospital hallway, keeping time with his heartbeat, he knew that he would rather die.

Once again, Malcolm was alone. His tongue was heavy in his throat, and the tubes stiff inside him. He hadn't slept since he'd awakened in this body, but he could feel his consciousness slipping. He was drifting off into a new darkness, one with no lights and no doors. But these last few days, spent in a small room in a hospital, meant more to him than all those proud years as a Macy's mannequin.

He wished each of his visitors a Merry Christmas and then closed his eyes.

"Fine."

Our Motel Mom

AMANDA ROCCO '06

I've been trying to cure Mom
for months now—
moving into her heart
where I'll stay a while,
pumping blood for her because
I know how it feels
when things shatter,
like that time my Skip It
broke and you sat at my feet
for hours twirling it
in circles while I jumped,
you counted every revolution.



Aging with Beauty | CHRISTINA BLANCO '96



Rowers Gliding the Arno at Dusk | DAVID H. BAIR '77

Siren Song

LYNN MILLER KINTZ '74

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The music was loud.
It hadn't started that way. It had been lovely, sweet, soothing.
Now an irritating, monotonous blating had taken over.

"Can you turn the music down?"

"Mr. Henley?" A man's voice spoke near his face. Cloth rustled. He heard a light hissing and felt jostled. "Mr. Henley? There's no music on."

"He means the sirens." A female voice, somewhere near his feet.

He listened. Yes, sirens. How could he have mistaken it for music? Why were there sirens? "Pressure, steady," said the female voice. "Respiration, steady."

He heard a regular light beeping now, barely audible under the sirens. And a rushing noise.

"Mr. Henley? Mr. Henley, how many fingers am I holding up?"

The music had been so interesting. No, no music. Sirens.

“What? How many fingers, Mr. Henley?”

“Blind,” he said clearly.

“You can’t see anything? Can’t you see, Mr. Henley?”

“Blind,” he said again. Why did he keep saying Mr. Henley Mr. Henley? “Accident.”

“Oh.” The man spoke more loudly now that he knew he couldn’t see. “Mr. Henley, you were in an accident.”

“Yes, firecrackers. When I was four.”

“No. Yes. I mean no, you were hit by a car.”

“I said firecrackers. My brother and I found some in grandma’s garage, probably left from the Fourth of July picnic. That was 51 years ago now, but...

“When you were four.”

“Yes.”

“You were hit by a car today.”

Sirens, rushing sounds, beeping. “This is an ambulance.”

“That’s right, Mr. Henley.”

Mr. Henley Mr. Henley...

“Can’t you turn the music down?” That intrusive beeping had upped its tempo.

“I mean, the sirens.”

“Blood pressure dropping.” the female voice came again.

Motion all around him, sounds of metallic clanking, smell of rubbing alcohol. He heard someone coughing.

Music began to hum faintly. No, more a vibration. More coughing. Something touched his face. Cool air went up his nose. He realized the coughing had been his own.

But that was all right. Better now. He felt very relaxed.

“Hit by a car?” His voice sounded thick in his ears. “I don’t think so. I would remember something like that.”

“What’s the last thing you remember, Mr. Henley?”

“I had an orange for breakfast.”

“An orange?”

Wait. No, that wasn’t the last thing. He had toast and an orange for breakfast, then put on his coat and picked up his cane and went out the door to walk down to the corner handi-mart because...because he had run out of milk and shampoo. When he got to the store...

“I didn’t go to the store. I didn’t get to the store, did I?”

“A car hit you on the sidewalk.” the man said.

The woman spoke in careful tones. “The neighbor said a car was going down the street very fast. The driver swerved to avoid a cat and ran up on the sidewalk. She called us.”

That would be Mrs. Delaney across the street. She never had anything else to do but watch out her kitchen window at what everybody else was doing. She had actually said as much to him. “Mr. Henley,” she would say, locking his elbow in a death grip, “I was just standing at the window washing dishes, minding my own business, when would you believe I saw with my own eyes...” and continue her gossipy chatter as she propelled him down the sidewalk or up to his door. She knew he lived alone and thought she was being helpful, but he felt more sure he would fall with her ‘help’ than any time he was by himself.

“Still dropping.”

She knew who was behind on the mortgage and what kind of school grades their kids got, who went to church on Sunday...

“He’s in arrest.”

She had a faint accent of some kind, and he imagined she was kicking 70, but of course she would never mention that.

“Mr. Henley? Mr. Henley!”

Mr. Henley Mr. Henley Mr. Henley...

“Don’t shout.” He said. “Blind people can hear.”

“Stay with us, Mr. Henley.”

It really wasn't sirens after all. It was music. Sort of like a whale-song recording he'd once heard. Up and down, up and down, louder, softer, singing in his inner ear and around his head. He could no longer hear where it came from. Now it seemed to be everywhere. He wanted to go to it. The man said no music was playing, but there was. The man probably wasn't supposed to play music in the ambulance but he did anyway, since injured people being rushed to the hospital wouldn't care enough to tell on him.

"Clear!"

Thump. Suddenly he could only hear that incessant beeping. It drowned out the music, drowned out the sirens, hurt his head. Stop, he said. But he couldn't hear his own voice.

"STOP!" he said again.

"OK, alright, got a pulse." The man's voice.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP...

Stop that, stop that! He wanted to hear the music. It was rising now, lifting him on its sound, blessedly drowning out the infernal beeping. Such achingly beautiful music. Maybe they played it in the ambulance to relax the patients. Mrs. Delany would know—she would know there were firecrackers in the garage and not play loud music. Well, he felt relaxed again and his head didn't hurt anymore. He floated on the sound. It wound through his head, through his chest, through his body. It carried him like gently rising water. The volume of the music rose and rose but it wasn't noise, it was somehow thicker, wrapping him, protecting him. It seemed as though it became part of him, as if he were dissolving in it. And it was magical, wonderful, magnetic. He welcomed the song.



Happy Burial Bone Mover | JOSH LEVINE '89

Hole-in-the-Wall: Doorway to the Wild

F. JEFFREY TRUBISZ '70

A mile long stroll down a gravel beach takes you past Ellen's Creek, which meanders out of trees that mark the eastern presence of Washington State's coastal rainforest. Ahead, two rock spires ascend more than one hundred feet above the waves. They are the sentinels, the first sea stacks, and as you draw near, they soar with power. Beyond them, a long headland sprawling westward into the sea seems to block your passage. Far to seaward an arch appears within it, a gap in the vast wall.

Low tide allows you to walk under the cliff face towards that gap. The dank air begins to feel thicker, cooler; barnacles adorn the rocks. The ocean becomes a dynamic presence, fluid and agile. The two spires jut like sharks' teeth. Grass and plants cling to their sides, stunted trees top their summits. In the distance seabirds trot across the beach, gathering in small flocks, their wing beats muffled in the rush of waves as they lift into the trees. Swells lap and crest; the water churns as you hop and stride across the rocks until you arrive at the Hole-in-the-Wall.

As you step through, the arch seems to heighten and sunlight fades. The rocks are slick, yet their texture is coarse, like sandpaper to the touch as you reach for balance. Puddles cover the uneven floor. Low tide dankness deepens the smell, an aroma of seaweed and salt. Halfway through the passage an eerie quiet replaces the sloshing of waves. Drops fall from above. There's the sensation of walking through an ancient gate to some Old Testament city. Instead of caravans or prophets, starfish cling to the walls, arrayed in orange and maroon.

You're suspended within the Hole-in-the-Wall for a few more moments, green kelp looping at your feet. As air funnels through the



Sea Arch, Washington Coast | F. JEFFREY TRUBISZ '70

arch, the breeze stiffens, cooling your sweat with a clammy edge, and signaling the emerging view on the other side: a small cove, enormous trees lying prone near the forest's edge, a field of water and boulders arcing out to a longer headland.

Sunlight returns once you stride through, the quiet seething of the waves closer again as a new array of sea stacks announce themselves. More sentinels heralding a place less known, more demanding. A few steps on the sand and you hit striated bedrock, then gravel, finally stones covered with seaweed amid puddles. Beyond lies the next headland, reaching further west, one to be rounded under cliffs, and a wilder beach beyond.

Hole-in-the-Wall is more than a sea arch. Passing through means an encounter with untamed Nature. Between two vast presences, the Pacific Ocean and the Olympic Mountains, it's a portal to the wild.

The Night Visitor

TOM LASHNITS '71

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I saw my old friend Phil last night.

I was sitting in my office, looking out to the main room through a glass wall. Someone had pasted a notice on the glass, and I stood up to see what it might be. As I circled my desk, Phil appeared in the doorway, tall and thin with bushy black hair and his big familiar smile.

He came into my office as though nothing had happened. He was walking a little funny, but gave his usual throaty laugh.

“Phil!” I said in astonishment. “You’re here!”

“Yeah, I was visiting some people down the hall,” he said. “So I thought I’d come by and say hello.”

He had some papers tucked under one arm. As he set them down on my desk, I noticed he was using crutches. They were metal, the kind that go halfway up your forearms.

His gaze followed mine down to his arms and legs. Then he gave me a sly grin. “Yeah, I recovered,” he said. “I’m okay...all except my legs. They don’t work too well, so I have to use crutches.”

I still couldn't believe Phil was in my office. But his laugh was real. The papers he'd dropped on my desk were covered in what looked like Chinese characters. I pointed at them, trying to regain my composure. "So what are these papers?"

"I've got to hand these out to some people." Realizing I was puzzled by the strange lettering, he said, "I've been doing a lot of traveling."

"That's good," I nodded. "Where to?"

"I've got to get going." Ignoring my question, he picked up the papers. As he turned to leave, he dropped one of his crutches, but kept right on going out the door. I bent over and picked up the crutch. It was cold in my hand.

Phil peeked back in the room. "Oops, forgot my crutch," he chuckled.

I handed it to him. He slipped it onto his arm, then turned and hobbled out. "Good to see you, man," he called back as he disappeared down the hall.

About ten years ago, Phil offered to treat me to lunch. He'd taken early retirement from our company, but he lived nearby and often dropped over to see old friends. My office was near the front of the building, so when he pulled up in his Corvette and honked, I threw on my jacket, went out the door and slid into the front seat.

I noticed, as he drove, that he handled the steering wheel in a funny way. His fingers were bent over. I wondered if something was wrong, but he was talking and joking, the same old Phil. How could anything be wrong?

Across the lunch table, again things seemed awkward—was something the matter with his hands? I decided he should be the one to bring it up if he wanted to. I searched his eyes, trying to offer a non-verbal signal that it was okay to tell me if something was wrong. But his conversation, his attitude, his demeanor all indicated everything was normal.

After lunch, Phil dropped me back at work, laughing and joking as

usual. We'd had a good time. "So long," I said as I closed his car door.

"Bye bye," he called.

The next day I heard the news. The whole office was buzzing. After our lunch, Phil had gone home, written a note to his wife and daughter, gulped down a bottle of pills, laid down on a bed, and died. He'd committed suicide.

Why? What happened? Everyone wanted to know.

Phil had ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease. He'd been hiding it from everyone except his family. It's a progressive, fatal disease. No cure. No way out. We could only guess what might have gone through his mind: he didn't want to be the object of sympathy, didn't want to become a burden, didn't want to subject himself to the indignities of inevitable decline.

So he'd ended it on his own terms.

Phil, I don't know if you did the right thing. Who am I to judge? All I know is that it's been ten years, and I still miss you.

But thanks. Thanks for coming to my door last night in my dreams.



Southwest 223 | JOHN SHIRE '66

That Day

LINDA YARDEN '81

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That day the sky seemed limitless. Clean, blue, sunny. But after the second plane slammed into the Towers and paper from the buildings fell like rain, we ran to the river. We were office refugees. Heading east so we could trek north, uptown.

The sky turned thick and black. Debris swirled and clouds of dust filled the air, settling on our hair, face, clothing. We shielded our eyes and coughed and sputtered and despite our growing apprehension, kept moving forward. A white truck came rumbling by, a hand extended out the passenger-side window dispensing to each of us a single slice of paper towel: A makeshift facemask. Accepting with gratitude both the perforated calico patterned square and the gracious gesture, we walked on, afraid to look back.

The road was open only to emergency vehicles, all heading downtown. We cheered them as they passed, as we'd seen in movies, troops cheering compatriots on to battle. Planes began to roar overhead, military aircraft.

We were out in the open, exposed there on the side of the road, unsure if we were in danger. Yet we surged onward, a modern day march to the unknown.

What had happened? We could find no cellphone service. Were we in the infamous FDR Drive “dead zone” or had the unthinkable occurred? Our business suits were coated with dust and ash. We jumped puddles the size of small lakes, climbed rusty fences, and passed along outrageous rumors that moved quickly through our ranks.

“All planes are grounded.”

“Three planes are unaccounted for.”

That rumor just as a jet engine roared.

“No, make that one missing plane.”

We were ready to dive somewhere, anywhere, for cover.

“No worries, U.S. military plane overhead.”

As if a simple, “No worries,” could have eased the rising panic of that day.



Hard To Find | JIM YESCALIS '68

Snow Up Over

SAM PRICE '09

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The snow was up over our heads. Jules and I were out on our morning walk and the familiar streets were a maze to be traversed between hard-packed walls of white. Businesses were closed and the power was out and the natural world—from which we couldn't fight back—seemed a prison, each night capturing us in darkness, tuning us to its rhythms. Roofs were caving in; no one even thought about going to work.

I carried a shovel and Jules had already sprinkled the last of our rock salt on the makeshift paths weaving through the mounds of snow. Briefly, the whole town had come together, rallying around snow removal. We burned up our individual stores of gasoline with our snow blowers, going out every few hours to clear the paths. But a few days into the

storm, that enthusiasm had faded. Now only rogues remained, trying to beat back the inevitable.

“The days of broadcasting are over,” Jules said. Her face, dried by the cold wind, resembled oxhide. “Cold fronts and warm fronts don’t appear to exist anymore.”

It’d only been five or six days, but she was right, it felt like forever since I’d flipped on the TV and watched reports of people pushing overflowing shopping carts through mobbed grocery stores. At first when Jules and I sat in the living room, watching the Weather Channel, blobs of red and yellow moving over the landscape of flattened America toward our town, we’d reacted with childish joy, remembering days off, hot chocolate, a snowball heaved at a friend’s head.

We’d been having strange weather, sure. Hot days, like in-the-nineties hot, during the middle of February. But snow, all this snow? After years of panels on global warming, eco-emissions, and alternative energy sources it felt almost cruel.

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“We should check on Sally and Jim,” Jules said, her face serious. These were the neighbor’s kids. Since they’d moved in about a year before, Jules was often by the window, watching Jim run around the driveway next to ours, or watching Alice, their mom, push Sally around on her tiny bicycle. Jules often offered to babysit or just headed over to Alice’s for tea so she could spend some time with the little ones.

Jules brushed snow off her shoulder. “Those poor kids,” she said. “Scared and all cooped up.”

“We’ll finish shoveling on the way back,” I said. I rubbed my hands together, trying to bring back some feeling. Overhead, the sky was a gray, vibrating mass. Snow landed on snow resting on selfsame piles. The path home already obscured.

Inside, candles put off dim light as Sally and Jim, in another room, yelled in play or frustration.

“Alice,” Jules said softly. They hugged for a time, standing in the kitchen, exchanging heat. I watched the trapped flames dance. I imagined us, all three, in socked feet on the kitchen tile, dancing. “How’re the kids handling all this?”

“Good,” Alice said. “Fine, actually. Maybe better than me.”

Alice was younger by a few years. Long, dark hair, a big smile. She was pretty. Prettier? Jules coerced that out of me once, after we got home from some holiday party.

I wasn’t sure she remembered. Of course she remembered.

Jules had said, “Fuck that guy that left her and those kids.”

I replied, “What if he was abusive. Or a drug addict. Maybe it’s better.”

“You’re always exaggerating.”

“Sure, but to make a point.” In the blurry memory, our mouths and teeth are dark red thanks to the wine, evidence of some nastiness we’d gobbled up and had to let out.

Like they knew they were being talked about, Alice’s kids joined us in the kitchen.

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“I wanna go outside,” Jim said. He was older than Sally—seven, maybe eight.

We talked about eating meals at chain restaurants, spending Sundays at the laundromat, things we didn’t know we missed until they came hurtling out of our mouths.

“I wanna go outside.”

Jules reached for his hand. “I’ll take you.”

“How long has it been since I heard the crack of a soda can,” I said to Alice.

“I might have some in the basement. The kids.”

“The kids what?”

“Oh. They like soda.”

I smiled so she would smile back. It was a glorious thing. Shiny

whites, but that wasn't all—white was everywhere, it wasn't what I wanted—those pink lips, though, hearty, hale.

Alice stood and looked out the window above the sink.

"What is it?" I asked.

"Before the storm I got a call from Paul. He told me he was coming back."

"Paul?" I listened to Sally sifting through Legos in the other room. It sounded like a rainstick constantly upended.

"He said he was coming back to take the boy. That's what he called Jimmy: 'The boy'."

Of course Alice was only looking at the window, not through it. The snow was up above the first floor. She turned around, her mouth twisted in some approximation of fear.

"He said he was coming," she said. "And then the storm hit."

"Maybe he knew it was coming."

"This? How could he?"

"I'm sure he's fine," I said.

She closed her eyes and did a neck roll. "Maybe he expected a few inches, some icy roads, but this?"

I reached out to her as her eyes were closed. I let my hand hover for a moment over her shoulder and then pulled it back. "Wouldn't it be better anyway?"

She opened her eyes. "What would?"

Sally ran in the room and hugged Alice's leg so I wasn't able to ask, "Wouldn't it be the same?"

Sally clamped on to her mother, so much so that it looked like it might hurt. The leg was a wonderful thing. It was something to hold onto, to hide behind. Something fleshy, something real.

Underground, pipes were freezing, bursting. Up above, fires were farces, wicks in wax offering no real heat and barely any light.

Alice, Sally, and I went outside and watched Jules and Jim chasing each other down the path. They ran to us, panting and laughing. We all took some snow from the walls in our palms and ate what we could. Jim brought a handful into the kitchen and let it slide into a glass.

“Slushie,” Jim said. Alice dug some food coloring out of a cabinet.

We sat around the table trying to think of topics that would remind us of warmth. Jules told us about the beach town where she’d summered. Her parents had owned and then sold their beach house. Other people lived there now. This pained Jules to say, I could tell by the way she strained a smile through the words. Sally sensed something similar and crawled onto Jules’ lap and rested her head on her shoulder. Jules reached down and straightened Sally’s socks, which had bunched up around her ankles, and then she played with her toes. Sally giggled into Jules’ shoulder, getting lost in the loose curls of dusty blonde hair that fell about her like a halo running low on juice.

Jim squeezed the red dye into the snow in his glass and stuck a straw in it and it looked almost like a treat.

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“They didn’t want to pass the house down to you?” Alice asked. She stood up and went to the cabinet under the sink. She bent down and her jeans hugged her body. I studied the curve of her spine impressed against her shirt. She didn’t have the few extra pounds pooled around the waistline that I was used to with Jules. Maybe the few inches Alice had on her helped spread it around better. Maybe she woke up, did stretches, crunches, pushups. Ran roadside miles before Jules and I even got out of bed. Alice dug out a bag of tea lights from behind bottles of window cleaner and grabbed a few of the small candles and I wondered about inheritance—Sally was a little round thing now, but would she grow into a pair of long, skinny legs like her mom? Would the boys like her, woo her, abandon her?

“It wasn’t just me. It was me, my two sisters, and my brother. We couldn’t agree on what to do with it, how to split it up. They got sick of all that and sold it.”

"I'm sure there was enough beach house to go around," I said. Jules gave me a stern look.

"Sometimes it's not about that," she snapped. "We loved going there as kids, we had so many memories there, and I knew we'd ruin them all if we kept fighting."

Alice put some of the tea lights on the table and held a sparked match to them. Light and shadow. "When me and the kids moved out and before I got the job here," she said, "first we moved to an apartment in the same town. In the beginning I had to go over to our old place from time to time to get things we'd left. Every time I went, I had to convince myself I'd lived there. It was like Paul lived on surface of the moon and I could only see him through a telescope."

"Yeah," Jules ran her fingers through Sally's hair. "As an adult, being there, we became aware of the nonsense that allowed some of those old, fond memories. All of a sudden I'd remember my father complaining about working weekends all the time to help pay off the beach house mortgage, about the high property tax, stuff like that."

Alice took the red dye from Jim and absent-mindedly peeled the label off it as she talked. "Life, with Paul, was a total fantasy I'd created. And when I stepped out of it, I couldn't see it anymore. I disengaged entirely."

Jules took up Sally's hand and squeezed it. Worry lines on her face creased and uncreased. "I don't know. I remember being at the beach house when I was younger and all us kids slept in the same room, not because there wasn't enough room, but so we could stay up late talking. Our parents only really allowed that on vacation. It wasn't a fantasy, but it sure wasn't the only version of reality either."

Asleep, Sally's chubby face was cherub-like. I hoped she'd never grow up so nobody could come along and break apart her fantasies. I wondered about her and Jim, what memories they would share on down the line, what any of us would choose to remember or be unable to forget.

Jim, tired of waiting for his makeshift Slushie to melt, put his hand

in his glass and grabbed out some snow, turning his fingers red.

Mornings were steam out the mouth and cold toes rubbed by achy fingers and bad, bad breath. Still though, we functioned, our bodies bored in each other's shape, and I was thankful for what routine remained.

Jules rolled off me, her breath slowing. I ran my fingers through the tangle of her hair. The softness was there but the warmth faint or imagined entirely.

For some dumb reason I found myself thinking about my résumé. Could I include surviving this? Would I survive this? I had no idea what my chances were. I relied on some expert telling me the odds.

We stayed in bed. All the blankets in the house, all that we owned, were strewn about us. Layers and layers of fleece, knit, down. Bed sheets and towels and pillowcases.

Together, we ate brown bananas mushed up in grits softened with melted snow. It was something like prison food, something like baby food, but it gave us what we needed. "This is like baby prison food," I said, trying to make a joke.

"Baby prison?" Jules let out a long, slow breath, visible in the chilly room.

"There it is again," I said.

"There what is again?"

"I mention baby or children or child or kids or family or whatever, and you let out some deep, tortured sigh."

"I sigh, so what?"

"I keep having to remove words from my lexicon." I moved under the sheets, which smelled sickly sweet like a cold sweat. I wished I could wash them, throw them in the dryer, take them out and wrap their temporary warmth around me.

"It has to happen eventually," Jules said. "So why not now?"

I spooned up some grits, as if I were thinking over the proposition. The light in the room was dull, it felt almost heavy.

"I mean it," Jules said. "It's not like this can be put off and put off and put off like mowing the lawn."

"I wonder about myself," I said. "About my readiness. Is it stupid to say attitude? It's like Paul, whoever this guy is. What if he was a great boyfriend, or husband, whatever, and then, when the dynamic changed..." I trailed off, refusing eye contact.

"You can't talk to me. You have this inability to talk directly about things that matter." She was looking at me, I knew, but I still did not meet her gaze. Instead, I reached out a hand and put it on top of the blankets where I thought her leg might be.

"I mean, what if that is what happens to me—and I can't be a father and I leave and you're all alone?" For some reason I thought this explanation was better than the truth and that my actions were valiant, keeping the burden to myself.

"Alice left him." Jules touched my chin and turned it toward her.

"So? I could push you away. I could be capable of that, too."

Her blue eyes were bright against the dreary sky beyond the window. "I don't think you understand. I mean, do you actually think this Paul guy was on his way and this great storm just happened to hit?"

"Sure. Why would Alice lie about that?"

"Think about it," Jules said. "Why now?" She tried to turn my face to her again, but I pulled away.

"Times of crisis, I don't know, people become reflective. Try to make up for past wrongdoings."

"People become rash. They'll do anything to avoid loneliness." Jules put her bowl, still half-full, on the nightstand.

"That's what I'm saying, too." I got up and went to the window. It was what I did those days—look for signs that the storm would give. I wondered if Jules meant she'd gone off her birth control without telling

me when she'd said why not now? But there were things I wasn't telling her, too.

Back in college, I'd read Hemingway's story about the man who wants a woman to have an abortion. The couple talked like they were being listened to. They signified, spoke in code. But that was the '20s, and nowadays, I thought, we should be able to speak directly about things of the sort. It didn't have to remain unsaid. We'd been liberated, people had taken the time and effort to work and fight for these tiny freedoms, and some were punished or killed on this quest, so the least we could do was to talk freely, speak our hearts and minds, especially with the people closest to us. Even Hemingway's characters knew what they were talking about, even if they were talking around it. But outside, the day was pressurized. I felt Jules watching me watching the snow. Something immovable weighed down the sky. The snow kept coming.

I'll work up the courage, I thought to myself. I'll tell her, I have to. It had been too long already. I could tell she weighed our relationship in a formulaic way. Time spent together divided by the number of children. The number of years left in our lives and how to maximize the number of family vacations we'd get. The difference in cost between formula and birth control. How many times we'd change diapers or help with math homework or watch our kids, instead of the neighbors'. We'd been together five years. I'd begun to realize that without a family—which to her implied something more than just us—she would never be happy.

Outside the window there was only storm. There was no bright post-snow afterglow, no reflections bouncing off the drifts, doubling the day's brightness.

The first time Jules went off her birth control she had me visit the doctor. She only started up with the pill again because of a promotion—she wanted to get that settled before trying again. But now we found ourselves back on the familiar territory where we'd waged war before.

After my doctor visit, she asked what we'd found, as if the doctor and I were a team. I lied and told her that there was nothing wrong with me. That I was a fine specimen, totally OK to reproduce. She said that the results, or rather the lack of results, meant there had to be something wrong. I lied again and told her that there was nothing wrong. In those days, I counted my lies. She said that it was OK if something was wrong, because in this day and age, medicine could help fix whatever was wrong. I insisted there was nothing wrong. She looked at me, blinking. I asked her if she had ever read Marx. She looked at me, blinking. I told her that we lived in the times of late capitalism, which meant that they'd taken the means of production out of the hands of the people. I told her that the first tenet of life is that life is suffering, and how could we have children knowing that? Our great pleasure, I told her, begets someone else's suffering. She looked at me, blinking. I told her that she was all I needed. She told me that her doctor visits had gone fine. I asked what she wanted to do for dinner. She shook her head. I told her I was going to get cleaned up and that she should think about it, that I kind of felt like salmon myself. She left the room. I brought a magazine with some half-scandalous ad into the bathroom and jerked off into a handful of toilet paper while the shower ran and steam clouded the mirror and then I rinsed myself clean.

After breakfast I took the shovel and went along the road. Every walk through the blasted landscape was the same: wind weaseling through the paths and nestling in the holes of my jacket, fingers aching with the cold under two pairs of gloves, keeping my mouth closed with a childish fear that my saliva would freeze. I cleared some of the closer paths, but I couldn't heave the snow on top of the walls so I packed it as best I could into the sides, narrowing the way some more. In the frozen maze I took a wrong turn, not the path leading to my front door but instead my neighbor's, and there emerged Alice's house, a grand mirage.

As I stood on the front stoop in the falling snow the sound of Jim and Sally's laughter inside reminded me of a long time ago, with my family at some relative's holiday party. Faint music, the food smelling good. I was anxious, fearful that once again my older cousins wouldn't let me join their games of basketball in the driveway, but also excited that maybe this time they would.

Alice put the kids down for naps. She gave me a cold but unfrozen Coke and I told her we'd split it. I started talking and told her everything I couldn't tell Jules. I told Alice I'd never make Jules happy.

"There are other ways," Alice said.

"I don't want it other ways."

"You don't want it at all."

I polished off my soda and moved to her across the tile floor.

We spent the day turning each other into rotten things, broken fantasies, miserable houseguests.

I still smelled like Jules until that was gone and I was hers.

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I forgot the shovel when I headed home. Maybe because the paths had barely been coated. Jules questioned me as I was stomping off my boots. I told her I'd lost the shovel in the snow.

"How do you lose something you're holding?"

She hugged me for further inspection.

She started crying. I tried to hold her but she pushed me away.

I told her I thought the storm was stopping, or at least slowing.

She said something I couldn't make out.

"After the storm," I said, "we'll take a trip to the Caribbean. We'll go to Puerto Rico and drive around the island until we're sick of the heat. We'll go to Mexico and head south until we don't know where we are and lose all semblance of our former reality. We'll pass through country after country, unable to talk to anyone else, lost within ourselves. It'll

be great, Jules.”

She said, “Fuck you.”

I told her I was going out to look for the shovel.

Back at Alice’s, Sally and Jim were playing with blocks under candlelight in the living room. Alice and I took to the kitchen. An adult place. A place where serious ideas could be exchanged.

“You’re back,” Alice said.

“Jules is pissed.”

Alice took my hand and moved in close and looked up at me, possessive or pathetic, I couldn’t decide.

“Why’d you leave Paul?” I asked.

“He left me.”

“I thought you took the kids and moved out.”

“Well, he kicked us out and we left, but he was the one who made that happen.”

“I was going to ask how,” I said.

“Does it matter how?” Alice took her hand from mine and began playing with a button on her shirt sleeve, pushing it back and forth through the hole.

“I don’t know. I used to think it would.”

“So you did this so Jules could leave you?”

“I did this,” I said. “That’s about all I can say right now.”

The room brightened. Was it lightning outside? Could the storm be escalating? Transforming into something wild, something we’d never seen before?

Was Paul trapped outside in this? Were all of us, and our ex-lovers too, wandering wide-eyed and hopeless through the whiteout?

I heard voices. Weak at first, but they grew louder, clumsier, speaking over one another, straining to be heard. Alice ran toward the kids.

She’d only made it to the doorway when the lights flickered. It wasn’t

lightning. Real lights. Kitchen lights. They flashed again and then hung on. Bright, white light. She turned to me. The lines of her face, the flush of her cheeks, were all of it beautiful and real.

I followed her into the living room. Sally and Jim were sprawled on the floor in front of the now-functional TV. A commercial ran for a brand of cell phone everybody already owned. Blocks were strewn about, forgotten. The kids were quiet; their faces awash in the bluish glow.

Energy currents followed their old well-worn paths. Light and shadow.

Alice sat on the couch and the kids clambered up beside her. I told her I'd come right back. Down in the basement, I imagined the melt that would happen. How the world was about to reveal itself, and what would be washed away. I grabbed some sodas and brought them up, handing one to Sally, one to Jim, one to Alice that we'd share.

And there we were, a family not my own, off with the crack of the soda can, racing joyfully toward the evening's programs.

Haiku 2

LISA BROOKS '85

The winding footpath
Journeys along twists and turns
Becomes the future



The Slide | GERARD RUGEL '68

Contributor Notes

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Ishani Aggarwal '08 majored in psychology and English with a concentration in creative writing, and minored in dance. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in organizational behavior at Carnegie Mellon University, where she also studies photography. She lives in Pittsburgh, and will be happy to hear from you at ishaniaggarwal@gmail.com.

David H. Bair '77 majored in art history, minored in business administration and co-captained the lacrosse team. He currently resides in Cranbury and Harvey Cedars, N.J. For over 30 years, he worked in New York City in graphic arts sales for long run publication printing for top publishers. After a turning point in ownership, he took up painting as a hobby. His works have been sold at the North End Gallery in Barnegat Light, N.J., and he has taken classes and displayed at the Long Beach Island Foundation of Arts and Sciences. He is now publisher of a web-a-zine site ClubLaxMag.com.

Richard Bidgood '76 majored in philosophy and classics before going off to graduate school in philosophy. There, he rewarded himself with a camera the day he defended his doctoral dissertation. Although Richard has been a banker for the past 30 years, he remains an enthusiastic amateur photographer. He lives in Lancaster with his wife, Ann Steiner, Provost of F&M. He can be contacted at richard.bidgood@fandm.edu

Christina Blanco '96 graduated from F&M with a joint business-government major. Her sense of adventure is fueled by her love of the outdoors and need to be constantly active. Every now and then she stops to take a photo, in hopes of sharing with others her perspective at that moment. Should you ever find yourself in Austin, Texas, drop her a line (cjblanco17@hotmail.com) and she'll take you wake surfing, her current passion.

Lisa Brooks '85 P'16 majored in psychology and drama. She owns a home-organizing business, and also teaches, works as the community advocate for a healthy lifestyle nonprofit, and does some freelance writing for a Houston lifestyle magazine. Lisa is the mother of four amazing children, the oldest of whom is a first-year student at F&M. She is the Houston Gulf Coast Alumni Chapter Chairperson for the F&M Alumni Council. Lisa's hobbies include writing, travel, photography, and cooking. In her spare time, she can often be found enjoying the vibrant arts and cultural community in her home city, Houston. She can be reached at htownlisa@gmail.com

Kevin Brown '12 majored in English literature. He lives in Morristown, New Jersey, teaching English and coaching long distance track at the Delbarton School. While at F&M, Kevin contributed to the publication *Epilogue*, helped to plan the 2012 Emerging Writers Festival, and was able to work with the Poetry Paths Project, Lancaster Literary Guild, and University of Edinburgh Literary Society. He hopes you will contact him at kbrown2@fandm.edu.

G. Michael Brown, D.D.S., '71 majored in chemistry and became a prosthetic dentist. After a 30-year career in the Navy, he retired to Virginia Beach, Va. For the past seven years he has focused his energy on his natural light photography business. His images are widely used in publications and on websites. He lectures on nature photography at various East Coast venues. A sample of his images can be viewed at www.gmbrownphotos.com.

After graduating as an English major, **Wilfred Brunner '70** received his M.F.A. from George Washington University. He has worked on the staff of The Phillips Collection and now serves as chair of visual arts and

design at Montgomery College in Takoma Park, Md. Referred to as an “imagist” by the Curator Walter Hopps, his work is in private and public collections including The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Corcoran Gallery and The Phillips Collection. Images can be viewed on his website: **wilfredbrunner.com**

Twenty-two year old alumna **Caitlin Cieri '12** was happy to put her creative writing major to good use in “Man or Mannequin.” She lives in Springfield, Pa, and works as an intern at Philadelphia Young Playwrights. She misses Lancaster’s famous smorgasbords and vows to return one day with a cabal of hungry Philadelphians.

C.H. Coleman '87 majored in English and received an M.A. in writing (fiction concentration) from Johns Hopkins University. He resides in Cheshire, Conn., with Tracy Peters '89 and their blended family of three daughters. In 2010, he won *Fresh! Literary Magazine’s* poetry contest and, in the same year, received third place and an honorable mention in the Naomi Cherkofsky Poetry Contest. Currently, he’s editing a local author’s memoir project.

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James Damico '91 majored in business management with a minor in music. He currently resides in Bloomington, Ind., where he works as an associate professor in the Literacy, Culture, & Language Education Department and leads the Critical Web Reader project (cwr.indiana.edu). In addition to composing poetry, James is an avid songwriter. He can be reached at **damico.me@gmail.com**.

Richard Drake '68 has dabbled in photography since the early '60's. Retiring after a 30-year career at UC San Francisco in 2006, Richard “converted to digital” and 20k images later continues to explore the realm of digitally enhanced images. The last of Richard’s images published in an F&M publication appeared nearly 50 years ago in a mid-1960s *Oriflamme*. He may be contacted via email at **richard@richarddrake.com**.

Ana Droscoski '95 earned her bachelor of arts in history and went on to receive her juris doctor from American University, Washington College of Law. She is a New York State licensed attorney, who for several years practiced primarily real estate transactions in the private

and public sector. Currently, Ana works in higher education, at Johns Hopkins University, where she is able to pursue her hobbies of travel and photography.

Ronald M. Druker '66 P'90 majored in English and participated in varsity soccer and baseball, as well as tennis, which he still actively plays. He was a member of the Executive Committee of F&M's Board of Trustees. As a real estate developer, Druker has twice won the coveted "Oscar" of his industry, the Urban Land Institute Award. Active on business, cultural and educational boards, Druker's philanthropy has included endowing a lecture series on architecture at the Boston Public Library, a traveling fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (where he was a Loeb Fellow and faculty member), and the Education and Arts Pavilion at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Denise King Gillingham '80 majored in English. Much of her painting is inspired by travel. Denise is an executive coach and mediator and a columnist for *Women Magazine*. Denise can be reached at dkgcoach@gmail.com.

Anthony Herman '07 majored in English literature. He earned his masters, also in English literature, at Columbia University. With that degree, he has pursued a career in teaching. In October of 2012, he married Gemma Covelli '06. Tony and Gemma live outside of Philadelphia. With the last 30 words of his bio, Tony would like to, again, remind Gemma that she is the best thing in his life.

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Jordan Homer '11 majored in English with a concentration in creative writing. She worked as an assistant editor on the recently published book, *In My Mind*, and has written the script for a music video to be produced later this year. Attempting to follow in the footsteps of David Sedaris, Jordan worked in the Macy's Parade Studio for the Thanksgiving Season. Hopefully her stories will measure up.

Paul Kamm '82 is a poet and songwriter who lives on a small farm in the foothills of Northern California's Sierra Mountains. His songs have won awards from the prestigious Kerrville, Telluride and Rocky Mountain Music festivals, and also receive airplay worldwide. He shares

the stage with his wife, author and singer Eleanore MacDonald. His websites are www.kammac.com and www.achilleswheel.com.

Richard Kanter '89 majored in English with a focus on Elizabethan literature. Richard is an attorney, activist and juried artist who currently works in New York City as senior client support team associate for The Expert Institute. His art has been used to raise awareness of recovery efforts from major disasters since 9/11. Recently his work was on display in an outdoor showing in Times Square. Richard's works can be seen and purchased at www.rkmeditations.imagekind.com

Bruce Kilstein, D.O., '86 writes from Rhode Island, where he lives with his wife, Pam. His novel *Destroying Angel* was published in 2008 and recent short stories have appeared in *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*. He is a regular e-participant in the F&M alumni book club at the Writers House.

Lynn Miller Kintz '74 graduated in a different time in a different age, but her four-year experience opened her to a world of ideas that changed the direction of her life. Her self-created major was ancient civilizations, employing the best of the departments of classics, history and art. She built a career as a dancer, ballet instructor and choreographer, and now, nearing retirement, is redirecting her experience into writing short fiction and historical research. She has a son who is a successful cook, and shares her life with her husband, Joe Kintz, three very large dogs and two cats. You are welcome to contact her at bakerstreet1893@gmail.com

Tom Lashnits '71 majored in English. He spent most of his career in New York publishing, and now resides in Granite Springs, NY, where he is semi-retired, working as a freelance writer and editor. As Tom Sightings, he produces a blog, *Sightings Over Sixty*, that focuses on retirement and baby boomer issues.

William Levin '87 has great memories of time spent as a young boy with his father printing black and white photographs in their basement darkroom. That was the beginning of his obsession with photography. In his day job, Dr. Levin works as a radiation oncologist at the Abramson

Cancer Center at the University of Pennsylvania. He specializes in the treatment of lung cancer and sarcoma. To be an effective, compassionate physician requires constant refueling of the soul, as well as periodic reminders of how precious and wonderful life is. Aside from spending time with his wife, three children, and two mastiffs, Bill's greatest joy comes from appreciating and creating art.

Josh Levine '89 majored in English and thoroughly enjoyed a residency at the Murray Arts House in its inaugural year. His artwork hangs in various private collections as well as in the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington, D.C. Josh co-founded a U.S. business magazine covering Vietnam and Southeast Asia, and established the first U.S. magazine bureau there. He practices photography, marketing and writing from Watchung, N.J., where he lives with his gorgeous wife and daughters. His website is joshlevinephoto.com

Joseph Mackin '88 is the author of *Pretend All Your Life*, a novel. He was the original Internet editor of *The Paris Review* under the direction of George Plimpton, and is co-founder and editorial director of *2Paragraphs.com*. After receiving a B.A. in English from F&M he earned an M.A. in literature from NYU in 1991. He lives in New York with his wife and two sons.

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Ekta Malkan '10 majored in biological studies in literature. She currently resides in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania and works for Hopeful Futures, an international organization dedicated to eradicating illiteracy. Ekta recently discovered her love for photography after travelling around India and getting to live and breathe different cultures of the subcontinent. She can be reached at ekta.malkan@gmail.com.

Mark Miller '74 has written on numerous sit-com staffs, performed stand-up comedy in nightclubs and on TV, been a humor columnist for the *Los Angeles Times Syndicate*, and currently writes a regular humor blog for *The Huffington Post*. Read/subscribe to his blog: www.markmillerhumorist.com He can be reached at markmiller2000@ca.rr.com

David Noble '52 grew up in Philadelphia and graduated with a B.S. in geology. He considers the desire to be creative a curse of the liberal arts education. He is retired from the Virginia Transportation Research Council and lives in Charlottesville, Va. Most of his poetry is a response to emotion.

Greg November '02 is a Seattle-based writer and teacher. While at F&M he majored in English, lived on Lemon Street, and frequented Famous Pizza. He has an M.F.A. from University of California, Irvine, and his work has appeared in *Orange Coast Review*, *The Writing Disorder*, *Philly Fiction*, *Entasis*, *Crosscurrents*, as well as other publications. He and his wife possess several raincoats each but no umbrella.

Luke Oeding '03, Ph.D., studied Brunelleschi's dome in his Foundations course "Architecture and Nature," so it is only fitting that a decade later he would end up in Florence, Italy, as an NSF international postdoctoral research fellow (working on algebraic geometry and signal processing). Exploring Italy and Europe also provided some great photo opportunities. He is currently a visiting assistant professor of mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley. Please keep in touch! lukeoeding@gmail.com

Barbara Nartic Peacock '74 majored in classical languages. She served as an economist at USDA in Washington, D.C., where she married Daniel Peacock. She currently lives in Manassas, Va., with her husband, her son Dan, and her daughter Stephanie. Recently, she published *A Tainted Dawn* (Fireship Press 2012), the first in a series of novels about the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Hard at work on book two, Peacock can be reached at www.bnpeacock.com.

Sam Price '09 majored in English with a creative writing emphasis. He lives in Philadelphia.

Constance Renfrow '12 majored in creative writing, with a minor in comparative literature. She currently lives in New York City, where she works as an editorial assistant at Skyhorse Publishing. On weekends, she pursues her passion for the 19th century by serving as a docent at the Merchant's House Museum. She can be reached at: crenfrow11@gmail.com.

Born in Lancaster, **Dr. Paul H. Ripple, M.D., '43 P'72** majored in biology. After studying at University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine, he interned at Lancaster General Hospital. Entering the U.S. Army in 1948, he was assigned to the School of Aviation Medicine at Randolph Field, Texas; he retired as captain and flight surgeon. He was awarded a residency in ophthalmology at St. Louis's Washington University and after passing his boards returned to Lancaster, where he practiced for 40 years, 25 as head of Lancaster General's Department of Ophthalmology. He lives in Lancaster with his wife Carolyn. Paul has three children, six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Michael Ritterson '62 P'91 is professor of German emeritus at Gettysburg College and a freelance literary translator. Following graduation from F&M with a major in German, he studied at the University of Göttingen and Harvard University. His translations have appeared in *The Literary Review*, *International Poetry Review*, *Seminary Ridge Review*, *Reunion: The Dallas Review*, *SAND: Berlin's English Literary Journal*, and elsewhere. He is just finishing the first English translation of Wilhelm Raabe's 1896 novel *Die Akten des Vogelsangs* (*The Birdsong Papers*).

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Amanda Rocco '06 majored in English with a concentration in creative writing and currently resides in New York City, where she works as a compliance analyst for a major pharmaceutical company. When not working, Amanda loves to travel, explore the city and, of course, write. She can be contacted at roccoaj84@gmail.com.

Robert N. Roth '50 majored in English. After graduate school, he switched to intensive study in the field of sacred music, and spent the remainder of his professional career serving churches and synagogues as organist and choral director. In addition to choral and organ music, he has published a literary anthology celebrating the organ titled *Wond'rous Machine*, and has served as music editor of a children's songbook titled *Chatter with the Angels*.

Gerard S. Rugel '68 is an attorney practicing in Fairfax County, Va. He received a degree in history at F&M, and in 1975 earned a J.D. from American University Law School. Rugel has specialized in the legal issues confronted by individuals with disabilities. While a lawyer

in real life, he's a photographer in his fantasy life. For the last six years his granddaughter Alayna has been his muse. She is pictured in "The Slide."

Beverly Beyers Ryan '73 majored in psychology. She has an M.S. from Columbia University, and has studied at the Corcoran College of Art and Design, Washington, D.C. She currently lives in Alexandria, Va., where she works as a painter in her studio in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Beverly teaches painting courses at The Art League School, also in Alexandria, and is an adjunct professor in the art department at Montgomery College, Germantown, Md. Her work has been exhibited regionally and internationally. Beverly's paintings are held in many private and corporate collections and she is represented by Gallery Plan B in Washington. More of her work can be seen at www.beverlyryan.com.

William Scaff '57 graduated with a B.S. in economics and spent his working years in the insurance industry. In the '80s, while living in Bermuda (it's a tough duty but somebody has to do it), he bought his first single lens reflex camera and photography has been his passion ever since. Bill enters juried shows and images of his wife's flower designs have appeared numerous times in a nationally distributed weekly calendar. They live in Fair Haven, NJ.

Kelly Schenke '95 graduated with a degree in philosophy, and went on to receive an M.Ed. in School Counseling from Millersville University. Volume One of the *Alumni Arts Review* kindly gave her her first published poem. Since her time at F&M, she has been pleased to watch Lancaster City grow into a vibrant, diverse and art-loving city. She and her daughter, Kate, can rather too frequently be found haunting the city's fantastic ice cream shops.

John Shire '66 majored in business and accounting. He currently lives on Virginia's Eastern Shore, as close to heaven as he may ever get. Although there is little that he does not enjoy photographing, he has always been drawn to and concentrated on people. He's had several exhibitions of his work, including shows in Connecticut and New York's Greenwich Village, and currently teaches photography and "the art of seeing" at his local community college. www.johnshirephotography.com

Floyd Skloot '69, Doctor of Humane Letters '06 has published 16 books, and in nearly all of them there's something about his years at F&M. He has won three Pushcart prizes, the PEN USA Literary Award, two Pacific NW Book Awards, and his work has been included twice each in the *Best American Essays*, *Best American Science Writing*, *Best Food Writing*, and *Best Spiritual Writing* annual anthologies. Floyd lives in Portland, Ore., with his wife, Beverly Hallberg, and is the father of the bestselling and widely honored writer Rebecca Skloot.

Deborah Slater '71 majored in English/modern poetry. Working for 30 years as a director, choreographer and performer, and exploring social issues through original dance, text, and music, Slater directs the visually gorgeous, acrobatic, talking dance of Deborah Slater Dance Theater; and has run Studio 210 since 1980. Awards include CHIME WITHOUT BORDERS with David Gordon; a Gerbode Fellowship; a CHIME Mentorship, 9 NEA Fellowships, multiple Izzie nominations and awards, and commissions from the Cocteau Centennial & the Exploratorium. www.deborahslater.org

Mitchell Sommers '80 is fiction editor of *Philadelphia Stories*. In addition to the *F&M Alumni Arts Review*, his work has been published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Stories*, *Nailpolish Stories*, *Postcard Memoirs*, *The Big Toe Review*, and, later this year, in *Apiary Magazine*. He received his law degree from Penn State, Dickinson School of Law, and his M.F.A. from the University of New Orleans. He practices law in Lancaster and Ephrata, Pa.

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Frances E. Steinberg, Ph.D., '72, psychologist, acupuncturist, martial artist, writer, interactive learning designer, was among the first women to graduate from F&M. In 1994 she ran off to New Zealand, where she spends most of her time presenting training workshops, writing nonfiction and fiction, developing multimedia guides, making pasta, and taking walks on the beach. Frances can be reached at solun@xtra.co.nz, or see more about her at www.solutions-unlimited.co.nz.

Marc Straus '65 P'92 is an oncologist. He has three collections of poetry from TriQuarterly Books/Northwestern University Press. *NOT GOD* (2006) is a play in verse that has been staged several times and revised. There are two characters, a hospitalized woman and

her oncologist; “Alchemy” is in the voice of the doctor. Marc has won numerous awards in poetry, including The Robert Penn Warren Award from Yale. Marc is a renowned art collector and in 2011 opened a contemporary art gallery in New York. He can be reached at marcstraus@hotmail.com

While earning a graduate degree at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, **Frank Jeffrey Trubisz '70** discovered the mountains of New England and has been photographing, hiking and climbing ever since. Explorations in the west, especially the three national parks near Seattle (Mt. Rainier, North Cascades, and Olympic), have provided rich wilderness experiences. A retired educator (Melrose, Mass., public schools), he currently resides in northern Vermont and continues to photograph and hike with his wife, Shayne, and their Irish setter, Maggie. The Green Mountain Club awarded him a first prize for a photograph of the Long Trail in its 2010 contest. His work can be seen at onthetrailphotography.com.

Christine Valzovano '11 graduated with a degree in English literature. She is working on a masters in library and information science at Long Island University and plans to graduate in May. In her free time, she enjoys reading and writing. If you would like to contact her, you can do so at cvalzovano@gmail.com. She would love to hear from you.

Pubudu Wariyapola '94 majored in physics and is currently living in San Francisco and working in strategy/analytics for online retail. “Blue” was taken in Tela, Honduras on a backpacking trip. Pubudu can be contacted at pwariyap@yahoo.com.

David Weinstock '74 studied English at F&M for two years before transferring to Wesleyan University. He reviewed poetry events for the *College Reporter*, and with friends founded a short-lived literary journal named *riverrun*. He is now a freelance writer and creative writing teacher living in Middlebury, Vermont, where he leads the Otter Creek Poets workshop. His poems have appeared recently in *On Barcelona* and *Blue Angel Landing*. He blogs at waitingforhungry.blogspot.com. Email him at david.weinstock@gmail.com.

Frances Donnelly Wolf '96 lives and works in Mt. Wolf, Pa. Born in New York City and raised abroad, she received a B.A. from the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, a subsequent B.A. from Franklin & Marshall, and an M.A. from Bryn Mawr College. Frances's paintings have been exhibited in the Lancaster Museum of Art, York College of Pennsylvania, the Artists' House Gallery in Philadelphia, and the Lynden Gallery of Elizabethtown.

An American studies major, **Linda Yarden '81** has developed strictly legal writing skills throughout her career as an attorney in Manhattan, where she lives with her husband and two children. Over the past several years, she has been exploring her creative side and warns anyone who contacts her at **linda.yarden@gmail.com** that they may be grist for her gestating novel.

Jim Yescalis '68 graduated with a degree in history on the eight-year plan. His serious interest in photography began in 1968 and became his profession. He retired from Millersville University as university photographer and now concentrates on exhibiting personal work. He lives in Lancaster with his wife of 43 years, Jill. His email address is **jimandjillyes@aol.com**.

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Acknowledgments

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Volume Two of the *F&M Alumni Arts Review* owes much to those who helped to launch Volume One, and I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them again: Kerry Sherin Wright, Director of the Philadelphia Alumni Writers House, who over coffee one day proposed the idea; interim president John Burness '67, who recognized a good notion when he heard one; Carol de Wet, Professor of Geosciences and last year's Associate Dean of the Faculty, who offered support in every conceivable way; and Senior Associate Dean of the Faculty Alan Caniglia and the entire Provost's office, including Provost Ann Steiner, whose perspectives and support allowed an initial vision to fully manifest.

And none of it would have happened this year without the level head, good ideas, and staunch support of Carmen Tisnado, Associate Dean of the Faculty.

President Daniel R. Porterfield's passionate enthusiasm for every aspect of the College includes this project: publishing a top-notch journal that features the work of F&M's many talented alums, which may serve as both reminder and inspiration regarding the lifelong learning that a liberal arts education can provide. I am grateful.

I could hardly imagine lurching forward this year without Jill Colford Schoeniger '86, but she led the way so well and thoroughly with Volume One: *Turning Points* that her guidance continued to be felt on Volume Two: *Doorway*. While Nicole Nagine is to be credited with much of the AAR's original layout, her successor, Graphic Designer Heather Stief, provides her own terrific aesthetic, and working with her has been a significant pleasure. The talents of Jason Klinger, Director of News and Publications, and Sri Dasgupta, Director of Web Content and Multimedia, are deeply appreciated, as are the steady aim and eagle eye of Production Manager Anita Focht. Every member of F&M's excellent Office of Communications is a joy to work with. Thank you!

The Office of Alumni & Parent Relations is another essential element of this endeavor, especially in terms of getting the word out regarding the *Review*, and planning its delightful April "launch party." I am particularly grateful to Director of Alumni & Parent Relations, Catherine Roman '77.

Without the backing and understanding of my beloved English Department, this would all be more difficult and a lot less fun.

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The Philadelphia Alumni Writers House not only provides the *Review* with an office, supplies, and meeting rooms, but with many other less tangible and deeply appreciated forms of support. In addition to Director Sherin Wright, I'd like to thank Assistant Director Joanna Underhill, House Coordinator Delphine Martin, and the lively bustling literary and artistic world they help create and that we have the enormous pleasure of sharing.

The members of this year's Editorial Board are students Anita Asiedu '14, Alexis D'Addio '13, Conlan LaRouche '15, Keiran Miller '15, and Charlotte Roth '14; Assistant Professors Marci Nelligan and Kerry Sherin Wright; and alumnus Lisa Seidman '79. In the midst of busy schedules—studying, teaching, and, in Lisa's case, writing—they took substantial time to view and read and prepare comments on dozens of submissions. Their lively discussions and responses are essential to this project, and I am consistently moved by their engagement and enthusiasm.

In addition to serving on the Editorial Board, and sometimes leading its meetings, Charlotte Roth '14 is the extremely capable Assistant to the Editor, providing invaluable organization and insights. Her hard work consistently makes mine easier, and I know the contributors appreciate her as much as I do. *Doorway*, like *Turning Points*, could not have come to fruition without her significant contributions.

Final thanks are due you, F&M's diverse and talented alumni. Submissions arrived from those who live as close as Walnut Street and as far away as Tasmania, from one of your number who graduated in 1943 to a few who earned diplomas in 2012. We looked at your photographs, your sculptures, your paintings, and—frozen in image—your dances; we read your poems and essays and stories, and even your songs.

We look forward to seeing more of your work next fall, as we create the *F&M Alumni Arts Review: Volume Three*.

Sands Hall, Editor



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