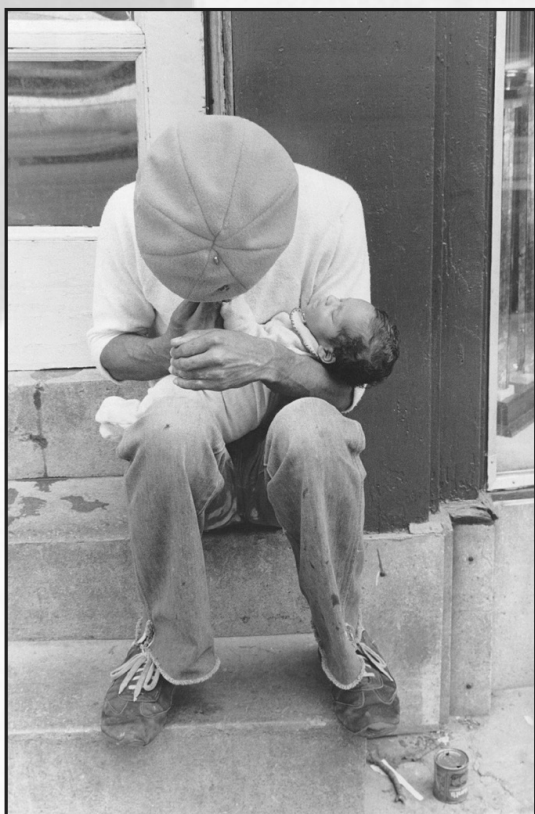


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arts review

Contact

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On the Cover
Father and Son, Prince Street
JIM YESCALIS '68

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Editor's Note | SANDS HALL

Last April, as the Editorial Board convened for our annual dinner—as always, held in a Lancaster restaurant where the food is local and sustainable and delicious—we each carried three or four words or phrases scribbled on slips of paper. We also hefted a dictionary and a thesaurus. Even though we knew we could define words, check synonyms and etymologies quite swiftly using our phones, there is something about the contact with those fine old books full of thin paper and small print that is precious. So we gave them a seat at the table.

| 2 | As we nibbled appetizers, I asked that we keep a few things in mind while we searched for our next theme: previous issues of the *Review* have engaged with ideas of transition—*Turning Points*, for instance (our first volume), and *Shift* (our third), and certainly *Doorway* (Volume II). These themes had generated wonderful, thoughtful submissions, but in our next issue, I hoped to explore something different—though I had no idea what that might be! We also discussed that themes are effective when they are both noun and verb—*Edge*, for example (Volume IV), or *Signs* (Volume V). And so, with this in mind, we tucked into platters of fish and pasta and beef, and began to pass around the little box into which I'd tucked all those slips of paper.

There was magic in the air: each year it feels almost sacred to launch into the decision regarding our next volume. When the word *contact* was read aloud, it elicited some *ooohs*, but it's not as if delight and certainty suddenly shivered down our spines. A number of us, remembering the film of that name, were concerned that we'd receive photographs of outer space. And wouldn't there be too many images of people touching? Above all, we worried the word might generate the clichéd and sentimental.

In fact, the material submitted for CONTACT has been the opposite of sentimental. A number of alums wrote in with their submissions to say what an inspiring theme it had turned out to be, and many took

the idea in intriguing and unexpected directions. Yes, we did get a few submissions that incorporated outer space (including the photo by Brown (25), and the story by Volzovano Catallo (15). And, indeed, we received many compelling photographs of people touching; so many, in fact (and so many between which it was almost impossible to choose), that we decided to devote a couple of two-page spreads to those that fell into similar categories (28-29 and 74-75).

I was struck, and I admit surprised, by the tone of melancholy in many of the submissions, as if they reflected the national upheaval and uncertainty that gripped the nation before and directly after the election, when many of the submissions arrived. Amongst these are Price's story of an unlikely friendship (99); Hill's nonfiction meditation on his effort to find Conscientious Objector status during the Vietnam War (89); and Kintz's wry depiction of a woman facing a scary eventuality (30). This was also true of poems, including a yearning one by Schwartz (7), and especially Medeiros's, with its dark hints at larger change (104). Other stories took the theme in equally thoughtful, yet humorous directions, including Hambright's, with its abiding affection for America (62), and Cieri's delightful exploration of drama in a call center (47).

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Images, too, were sometimes haunting—a storm by Grimm de Mello e Souza (26), an apocalypse by Clements (95)—while others made us laugh aloud: Hagner's depiction of salmon surprise (46) and Lewis' investigation of contact made between gum and sidewalk (60).

A startling aspect of the images submitted this year was not how many were of people—we expected that—but how many were black-and-white photographs. It was as if some facet of the theme could best be distilled without color. This is the first year we've used such a photo as our cover, also the first time our cover has presented figures—bodies. As do so many pieces in this volume, Yescalís' image of a father holding his son speaks eloquently to this beautiful and necessary part of being human: Contact.

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Fall Reflections | LORI LYNN HOFFER '81

Where We Meet You

MARIASSA SCHWARTZ '15

She kneels before your grave,
running gentle hands over
grooves, as if caressing your face.

Her head is bent, like a flower
in the rain. She whispers
and her lullaby falls into marble.

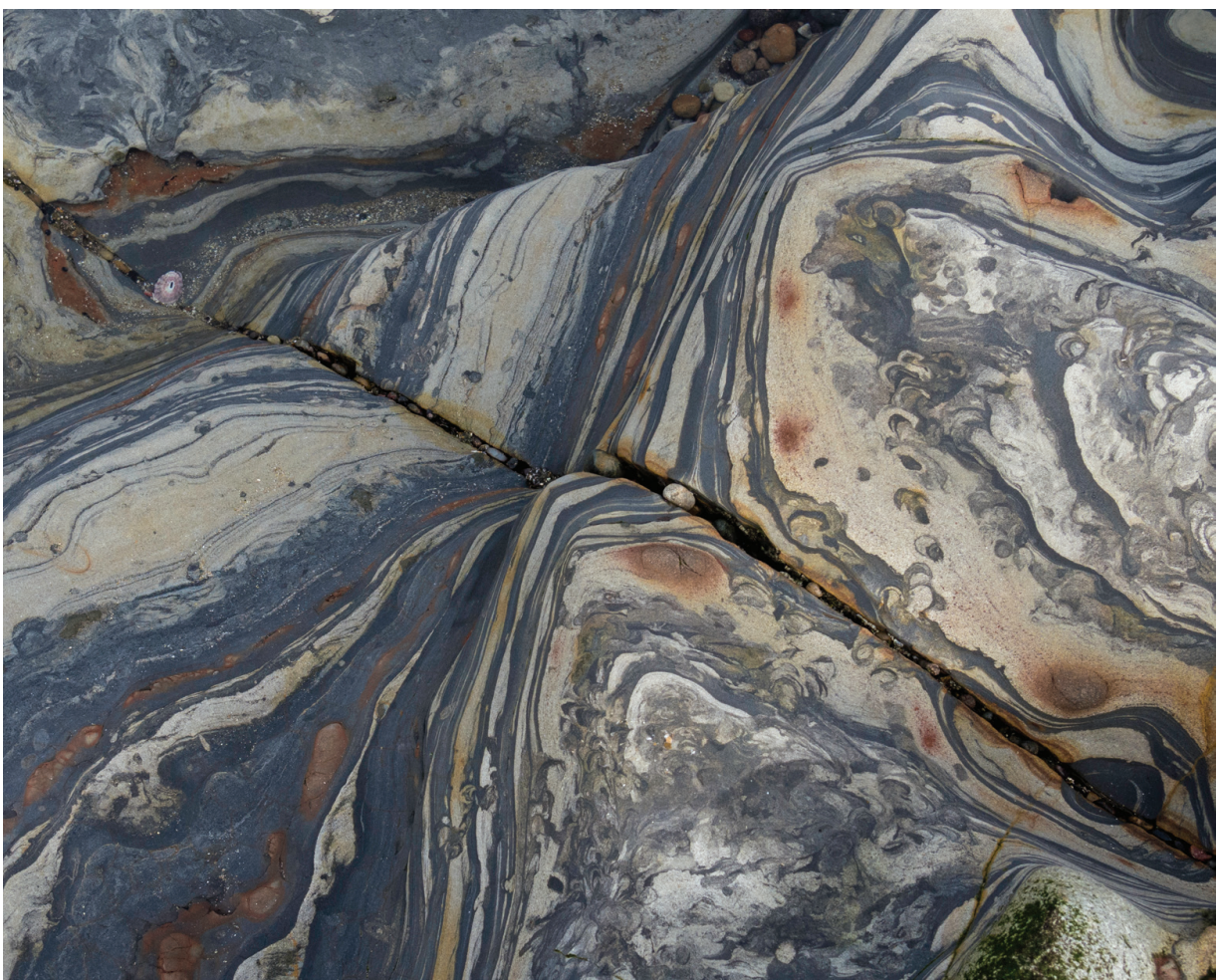
You have become nothing
but stone. She looks up.
The sunrise is splashed across

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my windshield, pink burning
with red, twisting with orange.
Perched atop our magnolia—

always yearning to spring
with color—a robin whistles.
Millions of stars will freckle

night, dancing around
that waxing gibbous moon. You
have become everything in the sky.



In Relief | RICHARD BIDGOOD '76

Mrs. Snow and the Damage Done

ALISSA BUTTERWORTH '08

He's around thirty, give or take, and woke up one day crazy, or so she understands. He's quiet, taciturn, soft-spoken for the most part, and completely off-kilter. He speaks to her kindly each day, calling her Mrs. Snow and asking if her lawsuit against the theme park where she lost her right hand on the Ferris Wheel is going in her favor; asks about her husband and his job as a superintendent of a school she's not sure even exists in the real world.

She has a right hand, by the way, but no husband. Her name is not Snow.

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Each night his family comes to the unit—his parents, his fiancée—and they look at a book, the same one every time, for the whole two hours allotted to visiting and this is the book: a coffee table masterpiece printed on luxuriously thick paper, filled with photographs of people who own vineyards, and their dogs—pictures of dogs in their respective vineyards, beautifully exposed with the light of heaven falling on their noble, timeless bodies, surrounded by grapevines and sometimes with the sea falling off in the background.

This is the space in which the young man who went crazy upon waking one day lives each time his loved ones come. With an excited finger-poke, he shows his fiancée the same purebred dog that arrests him each time, as if he's never seen it before.

Mrs. Snow wonders what it feels like when your future filters through your fingers with each rediscovering of a dog with blue eyes. Will the

fiancée marry him still, someday, if he can see beyond his dogs? Beyond the dogs and his world full of amputees and convivial competitions—for instance, the one with a young man on the unit who he believes he wrestled once and was beaten by in high school?

Mrs. Snow thinks that maybe the taciturn man's life is over, or at least is as good as over. But it's not just his life—it's the fiancée's, and his father's, who looks at his sick son in sad amazement, and his mother's, who brings Tupperware containers full of cookies and soup she's made at home and probably prayed over, trying to coax him to eat.

Mrs. Snow's life, too, has unraveled, just another patient here in the hospital for numerous offenses against self and God. Scars heal but diagnoses are forever, she thinks someone must have said once.

How easy to let herself fade into the long gray dawns, the quiet of rubber shoed techs patrolling the halls. Waking in the morning to face another day-long eternity here. There is endless waiting to be done. She waits for lunch, for her meds, for someone to unlock the door so she can do her laundry, for cigarette breaks she takes even though she doesn't smoke—she waits for them because it's a chance, for even a moment, to get outside and feel the sun on her skin.

Outside it's the end of winter. It's almost her birthday.

Inside, she can't even remember the date.

So instead, she regards the quiet man as he finds his own kind of paradise each evening, borne up again and again in the guise of the dog with azure eyes. Whereas she sees lives ending, damaged beyond expectation of repair, as difficult to put right as the voices and visions that have become to Mrs. Snow as familiar as friends with bad intentions. The terrible things they bid her to do. And how she did them.

The saddest thing is that for this torment, this coming undone, there is no one to blame. Nobody asks to be sick. Everybody wants to get better.

We reach and we reach, she thinks, but can never quite grab hold of each other. The spark of fingertips touching fingertips is the cruelest

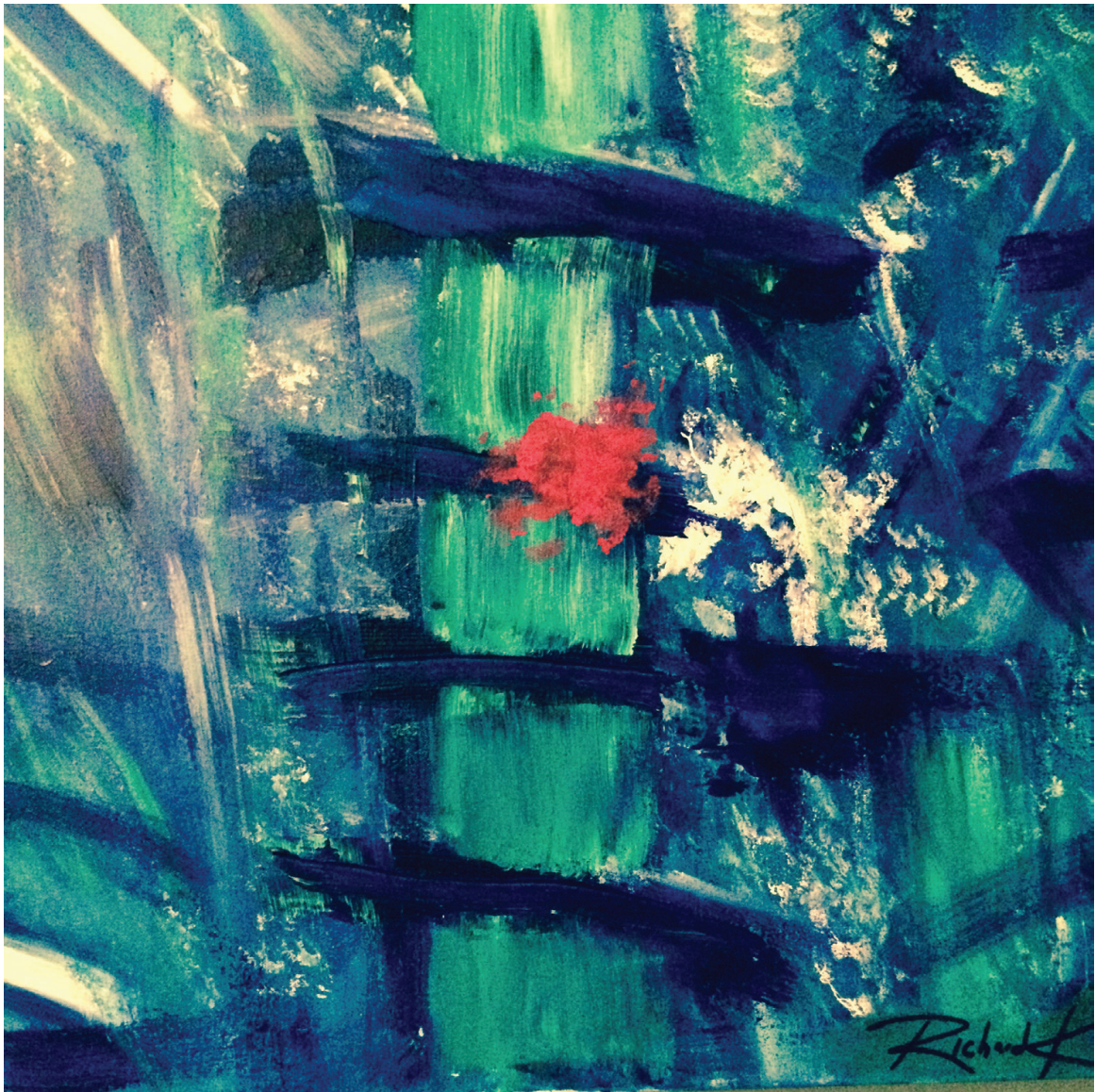
thing denied, whether it's taken by disease or a locked door or unit rules that say any two people cannot sit close enough to touch, or the terrible sharp shift of fate that robs a young man of his mind, a young woman of her ability to be alone without having to fight the itching desire to drag something sharp across her skin.

The book will be brought out each evening and the ruined man will look again for his dogs, the family for the mean knob of hope that maybe tonight they'll have a different conversation; Mrs. Snow will watch them all for a while, then look at the finely articulated lines of her intact right hand as she moves her fingers one by one. The movement, finally, is something she recognizes.

We are all just here, she thinks. We are all waiting for the blue-eyed dog to come through the door.

And yet my hand realigns itself. And my name is not Snow.

Of course the unhinged young man never eats the food his family brings; they just sit and look at the damnable sad book while other people look at them, and there's another guy on the unit who's been coming down from a manic episode for a month now and has the worst sense of humor God's ever granted anyone. As the family huddles together, looking at the photographs, he says, Hey, I bet half the dogs in those pictures are dead by now.



Through | RICHARD KANTER '89

Guitar Song for My Father

JAMES DAMICO '91

Tonight
on these steps,
beneath this hunter's moon,
the chords I play
(dark and open)
hang with suspensions—
while the passing tones
(confounding the major scale)
tremble by.

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Dolphin Boy | AARON FINK '70

Contact Us!

CHRISTINE VALZOVANO CATALLO '11

Two cubicles away, even wearing her headphones, Eloise could hear the woman's shrieking complaints, which meant that her anger permeated the cloth of Noah's cubicle to drift across Baxter's—who as usual was studying the latest unmanned flight to planets unexplored and playing with his collection of alien action figures—and into her own. She swiveled in her chair to meet Noah's eyes, which she could just see over the top of his cubicle. "Help me," he mouthed, jabbing a shaking finger at his wristwatch.

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Eloise understood. Noah had spent the past shift perspiring and cracking nervous jokes about his impending first dinner with his girlfriend's parents. And being late to that first meeting would do little for his anxiety. "Tell her," she whispered, "that you'll transfer her to your manager."

Laura was in a meeting, but would not mind if Eloise pretended to be in charge.

Noah interrupted the woman to deliver this message in the waxing, apologetic terms of a neutered customer service rep, put the woman on hold, gushed out several thank yous, and then transferred the line. Eloise's phone lit up—terse bursts of red. She put a hand on the receiver. "What's her problem?" she asked.

Noah, a recent hire who still found talk of bodily functions in the workplace inappropriate, averted his gaze to the brown carpeting. “She says Cuckoo Bean gave her diarrhea.”

“Tell her to join the club!” This was Baxter, thundering from the cubicle between Noah and Eloise. “Diarrhea’s our most common complaint!”

Noah knew this, but he still blushed the red of a simmering lobster.

Eloise sighed and answered the phone, ready with her own mother’s medical advice: BRAT. Bananas. Rice. Applesauce. Toast. This, along with assurances of a swift refund, usually did the trick, but not with this woman, who identified herself only as Mad as Hell; she gave a hacking cough, full of wet mucus. “Do you know what else?” she said.

Eloise didn’t. As she wished so many callers understood, she was not, in fact, psychic. She waited.

“That bird in your commercials,” the woman snarled. “IS EVIL!”

Mad as Hell lectured about the multitudinous sins of a singing cuckoo bird that drank and promoted a vile black gunk purporting to be an elixir of energy and vitality when it was, in truth, the devil’s milk. In the midst of this rant, Noah paused at Eloise’s cubicle to whisper more apologetic gratitude. Baxter crept around the corner of his cubicle to jab an accusing alien action figure at him. Slinging on his messenger bag, Noah trudged out of the office.

“I had a cuckoo bird once,” the woman railed, and Baxter covered his mouth with his hand to hide a laugh. “It was a good-for-nuthin bird and then it was abducted by aliens!”

Eloise placed her line on mute so that she could heave a great sigh that carried across the office. She met Baxter’s eye. “Somebody forgot to take their meds this morning,” she said.

“Yeah.” He shrugged. “But I still came in to work.”

She rolled her eyes but smiled.

“Did she say aliens?” he asked, placing the action figure onto Eloise’s desk. It was dark green, with ropes of muscles, a face that sloped up to an absurd peak and flashing red eyes. It glowered at her.

“Yep.”

Baxter arched his eyebrows and smirked, taunting. As a sci-fi aficionado and expert in all things not of this earth, Baxter was of the firm belief that the beings on this planet were far from alone. Their boss, Laura, engaged in loud, cackling arguments with him about this on a regular basis, not so much because she disagreed with him (although she did), but because he ascended soapboxes daily to lecture upon the subject. Noah was of the religious persuasion inclined to deny unwritten wonders, but Eloise was always wondering and never denying any possibilities. Indeed, she felt that it would all be such a great disappointment if there were nothing more substantial than the obvious.

Like everyone who worked in her department, she, especially, felt the squandering of her talents and education. She tipped her head up and back against her chair, wishing not for the first time that she had studied law instead of art history. But her cousins were lawyers, her aunts, uncles, parents, grandfathers. She was different—was going to be different—she was going to be an artist.

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Then why was she in a cubicle on a Friday night, listening to a woman rail about stomach ailments, aliens, and evil cuckoos, when she hoped for incomprehensible possibilities?

Oh, right. The job market was a war zone and she needed money.

Baxter meandered back to his cubicle as Mad as Hell continued her rant. Eloise continued to murmur apologies and assurances of her understanding, just as a good customer service rep should. Meanwhile, her hands fiddled with her electronic mouse and keyboard, absentmindedly clicking around Cuckoo Bean’s website. It was a simple affair now, an example of sleek modernity with a white background and eye-catching

(but not too eye-catching!) purple font. The largest text went to the link in the upper right-hand corner, two words and one mark of punctuation: CONTACT US!

Brother and sister duo Taylor and Tristan Archer (Taylor was the brother and Tristan the sister, which was cause for much confusion) had founded Cuckoo Bean in their basement seventeen years earlier, when the Internet held such promise. Their concoction was a blend of dark chocolate, espresso beans, sugarcane and patent protected substances. Unfortunately, it was also unoriginal, nothing but white noise in a market full of energy drinks.

However, its success had been assured by Taylor and Tristan's devotion to good advertising and warm customer service, which now meant that Cuckoo Bean advertisements were more omnipresent than any god, appearing on televisions, tablets, billboards, phones, free music services, the sides of buses, the walls of football stadiums—everywhere. So, really, there was no choice but to at least try it, like Sam I Am's stubborn friend who, in the face of so much subliminal messaging and verbal haranguing, finally tries, if only to gain a moment's respite, the insufferable green eggs and ham.

On top of the all-seeing, all-knowing advertising—or, rather, underneath, supporting this advertising—was what Taylor and Tristan, wearing matching pantsuits, referred to as a paragon of customer service: no outsourcing, just good old-fashioned American friendliness. Eloise considered offering contradictory comments, but at every company meeting, she only stuffed her mouth full of free pizza and candy.

Somehow, Eloise's ceaseless patter of "I'm sorry to hear that" and "I absolutely understand" had penetrated Mad as Hell's anger. Her voice softened a bit as she asked for confirmation that she would, indeed, be receiving that refund. Eloise, relieved, assured her in a rush that she would, took down the woman's information and, breathless, ended the call.

Baxter executed a slow-clap for her that Laura, drifting from her

office, soon joined. The claps sped up to reach the gait of applause just as a cluster of women from finance wandered by, coats on and eyebrows raised. To the other departments, the ways of customer service were a mystery.

Laura, blond, blue-eyed, and perpetually giggling at a secret joke, placed a folded piece of paper onto Eloise's desk. No doubt Baxter had informed her about Mad as Hell over instant messenger.

"Proud of you, kid," she sang, grinning. "That call hit all the marks of crazy, so you win this week's prize: the drawing I did in yesterday's meeting."

Three stick figures in blue ink danced upon white printing paper, over a landscape scrawled with red marker. Above the figures' heads hung a crudely drawn yellow orb, within which sat a green creature.

"Aw." Eloise brought a hand to her chest, feigning adoration. "This is terrible. Thank you." She pointed at the green creature inside the yellow orb. "What's that thing?"

Laura clicked her tongue. "That's an alien—I was inspired by Baxter." She tapped the picture. "Cherish it forever, Eloise in the Plaza. All right, bye all, I'm out of here."

Eloise waved, and set to logging her call with Mad as Hell. She was working the late shift that evening, so after five she would be the only person in the office. It was a shift she worked frequently, and while sitting in an empty office until nine was creepy, it was also a quiet time that allowed for random Internet distractions.

"Alright," Baxter called, "I too am out of here." He paused at her cubicle, his eyes on her face for too long.

"What?" Eloise said. "What's up?"

"You know that spacecraft that's landed on Jupiter?" he said, slinging his alien-themed messenger bag over a shoulder. "Apparently, Taylor and Tristan paid for part of that. As long as it could have Cuckoo Bean's logo on the side. How crazy is that?"

Eloise drew back in her chair, “Really! Are they advertising to aliens?”

He snorted. “I think those two are aliens.” He shook his head. “In any case, aliens are too smart to drink that cancer in a can.”

“I guess.”

Baxter shrugged. “See ya.”

“See ya.”

Eloise sighed and returned her gaze to the glow of her computer screen. Baxter could be fun to talk to, but he was strange, too. His passion for his pursuits was admirable but intimidating. Sometimes, Eloise felt that her brand of passion—cynical, self-deprecating, reserved—was no match for his. It’s what got in the way of pursuing her painting. She kept telling herself that there were more practical, more important things she could be doing—although, why had she not just taken that notion to its conclusion and gone to law school as her parents had wanted? Why was she working in customer service? Was it too much passion or, really, not enough? She suspected that it was the latter.

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Baxter on the other hand knew who he was.

The phone rang, a loud, electronic jangle, causing her to jump. As she reached for her headphones she noticed Baxter’s little action figure still glowering at her.

“Thank you for calling Cuckoo Bean customer service,” she said brightly. “This is Eloise. How can I help you?”

There was a deep, guttural breath on the other end, an inhalation that racked through her, for its very length seemed to sweep across an immense distance and time. “Why?” a voice demanded.

Electricity crackled in the voice, as if it were metallic, artificial, but there was also a rumbling echo, as if some deity were calling down from a mountain. It was both the most natural and unnatural voice that Eloise had ever heard.

“Why, what?” she asked, trying to be polite.

“Why should we contact you?” the voice asked, almost accusing.

“Um...” While this was not the most ridiculous question she had ever been asked, it was certainly a frontrunner. “Well. It’s just, you know, if you have any questions about our product—”

“Product?” this was a hiss, a fierce crackle of lightning. “What does your kind produce?”

“Well...” She hesitated, wondering why the voice had used the phrase, *your kind*. It was an odd way to identify her company, but she was beginning to suspect that the person on the other end of the line was unfamiliar with the English language. Its accent was curious—sharp and soft all at once, stones hidden beneath a flat landscape.

“Um,” Eloise went on. “We produce Cuckoo Bean—I don’t know if you’ve seen our advertisements? It’s an energy drink.”

“All drinks create energy,” the voice said, the snap of electricity communicating something like disgrace. “The point of imbibing food or drink is to assist organs with the natural process of creating energy. This is not an extraordinary product, El-o-weeze.”

“It tastes like coffee?” Eloise offered, at a loss.

“Coffee?” the voice repeated.

She became aware of a high-pitched popping of voltage, and somehow understood that this popping was another voice. Electronic, somehow.

She tugged on the cord of her headphones. It was probably just Baxter or even Laura, messing with her. She wanted to call them out, to tell them that she was onto them (even if her palms and pits had begun to perspire and she felt certain that something was watching her), but in case it was a customer who had lost his wits, she remained quiet.

“I understand,” the voice said once the high-pitched popping had stopped. “Coffee is a beverage your kind imbibes.”

“Yes.”

“Do not be frightened, El-o-weeze,” the voice went on. “I understand that you are a mere mediator that is not responsible for the major decisions of your kind. Please communicate to your superiors that your

metal trash has landed in our territory. The metal is not extraordinary, but the colors on the side are not like anything we have ever seen.”

“The colors?” Eloise repeated, for what else could she say in response to this very weird conversation?

“Yes. I believe this is one of the...ad-ver-tise-ments you mentioned. The letters say, ‘Cuckoo Bean,’ there is a picture of a very strange creature, and the words, ‘Contact us’.”

She thought of what Baxter had told her—that Taylor and Tristan Archer had slapped their advertisement upon the side of a spacecraft. Her voice squeaked. “Oh.”

“So I have contacted you on behalf of my kind,” the caller said. “We were hoping you might have something profound to say—some grand philosophy that explains why you would send us rubbish with an absurd picture upon it and the instruction to contact you. Perhaps, you hold the secrets of the universe?”

Eloise forced a laugh. “I don’t think anyone knows the secrets of the universe.”

A pause. “I like you, El-o-weeze. You have charm that you are trying to curtail for your profession—are all your kind like this?”

“I...” She hesitated. “I don’t know.”

“You are frightened,” the voice said. “And yet you find humor in the situation.”

In a strange way, he was right.

“Humor is a concept we struggle with here,” the voice murmured. “Perhaps, we can learn from each other: you can teach us humor and we can teach you how to improve your technology.”

“Um...” A strange epiphany occurred to her. “But what if technological understanding comes at the expense of our humor?”

“Fascinating point, El-o-weeze.” The voice was impressed. “Perhaps, our cultures are not ready for interaction yet. There is potential in your

kind, however, a capacity for thinking we would not have attributed to you based on your toy-like technology.”

“We try.”

Another pause. “Ah, humor again. Very good. We will leave you be for now, but please ask your superiors to remove that hunk of rubbish. It is depressing to us that you should consider this worthy technology.”

“I can ask,” Eloise said, trying for a light tone. “But they won’t listen.”

“How unfortunate.” The voice seemed to understand, however. “Well, if it is not removed within a week, we will destroy it, but please do not consider this hostility, El-o-weeze, for we have chosen not to consider your litter as such.”

“Thank you,” she murmured, but she didn’t know why.

“I have enjoyed our exchange,” the voice said. “Farewell, El-o-weeze.”

“Bye.”

The call ended, and she stared past her computer for a moment, at the cloth cubicle walls before her. Hanging from the walls were postcards of various paintings she admired, paintings she kept hoping would inspire her own.

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How poignant it would be if she just ripped off her headphones and stormed out. It seemed the thing to do after receiving such a strange, shattering call. And yet, she lingered, remaining for the rest of her shift, responding to several more calls. Each one made her heart jump until she realized that it was only an ordinary customer with an ordinary complaint.

At nine, she logged out of the phone system and shut down her computer, enmeshed in a foggy tumult of thoughts and questions. She still wondered if it might have been a joke—Baxter was obsessive—but somehow she knew that it had been real—at least, she hoped that it had been real.

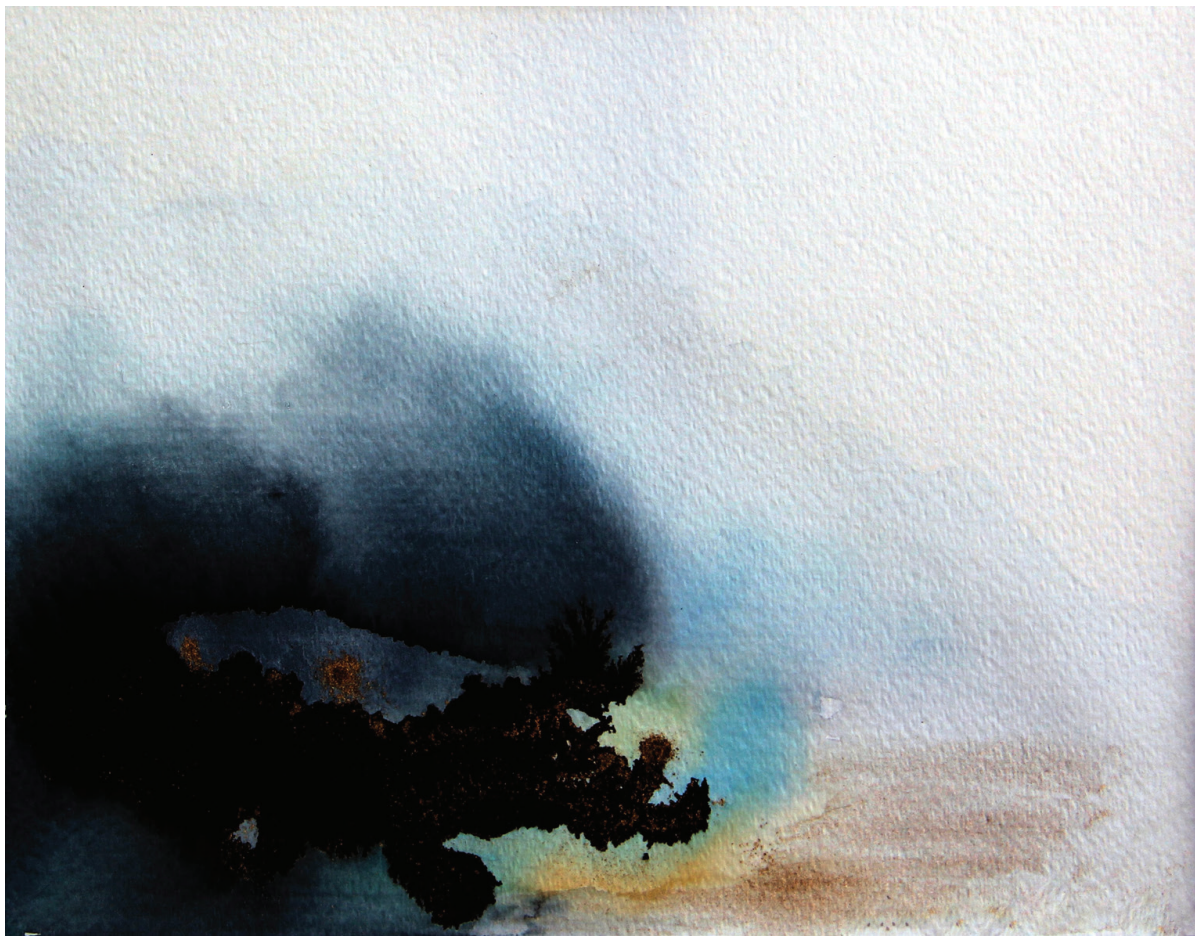
She buttoned her coat, thinking what a shame it was that Baxter had missed it. Well, at least his action figure had been present to witness this event. In fact, she could swear that its scarlet eyes were glowing even brighter. Faintly alarmed, she turned away, wondering about Baxter. Would she be able to tell him? Would he believe her?

As she trudged into the parking lot, she looked up at the navy night sky. There would be a sign, she told herself, a vibrant twinkling of stars. But there was only the faint inkiness of a sky stained with streetlights.

When she arrived home, she tiptoed into the house, careful not to alert her roommate to her presence lest she get dragged to a mind-numbing party. She went straight to her room and closed the door with a gentle click. Without removing her coat, she dropped to her knees, as if in prayer, and pulled her art supplies out from under her bed. She set up easel, canvas, paint, brushes in a clatter. And then she painted darkness with a single burst of yellow light in the upper corner, so that it disappeared off of the canvas, off of the map of the known world, away from the viewer. A burst of wonder in an abyss of ordinary.



Somewhere Out There | G. MICHAEL BROWN '71



Growing Storm | JENNIFER GRIMM DE MELLO E SOUZA '92

Old Friends

SUELLEN BURKEY '76

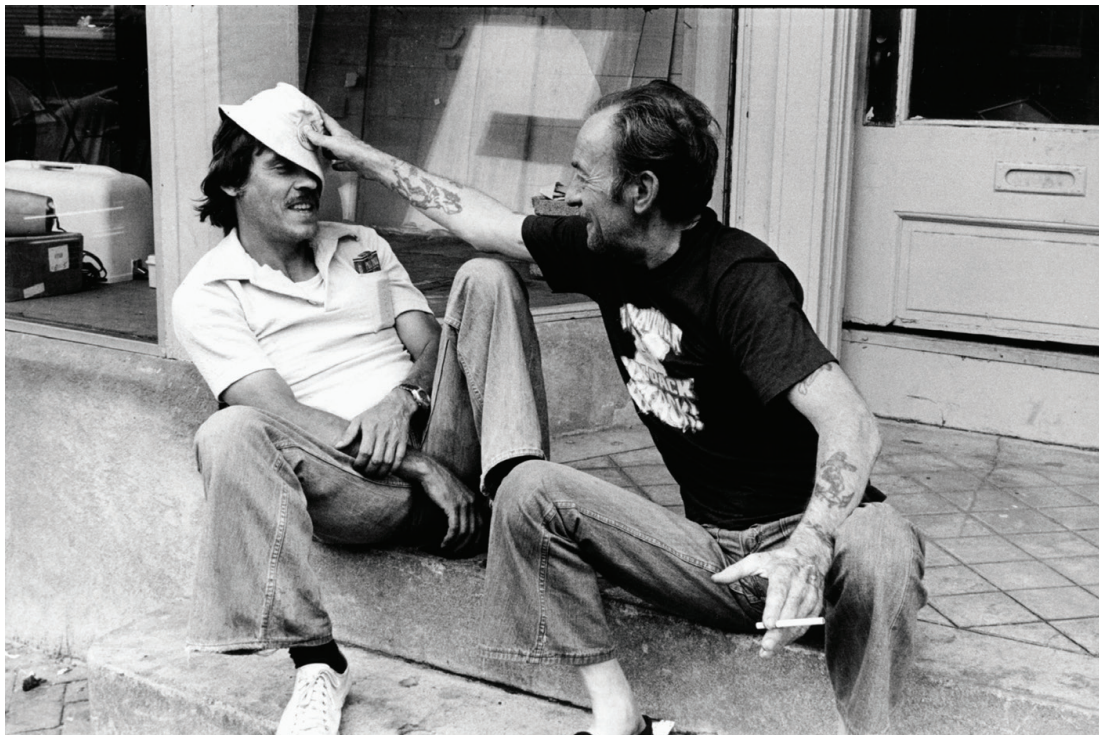
The mountains have turned to rust now,
trees all gone to hell but lovely
in dark reds and browns.

There is always the mystery
of why some souls follow us
through the changing seasons
and why some just blow away
like those leaves on the distant hillsides.

| 27 |

All communication, all backward thought
gone before a light spring kiss
mellows into broad summer green.

We keep in touch, mostly, with those
whose meaning is similar to ours, one supposes.
The friendly ones follow us to dust and damnation
but still give us light, like distant stars
seen through bare winter branches



Fix Your Hat | JIM YESCALIS '68



The Conversation | JOHN SHIRE '66



Brothers | RONALD DRUKER '66

Miriam's Cactus

L. M. KINTZ '74

| 30 |

The flower buds, forming now in mid-January, held Miriam's attention while she waited for Charley to come pick her up. Her suitcases, neatly packed, waited inside the front door, with her heavy grey coat and pink scarf lain on top. She sat primly on the living room sofa wearing her best red winter sweater that accented her silvery hair. A few flakes of snow danced past the glass of the window behind the budding cactus. A storm was on its way, according to the weather service, but not today. Errant flakes were not a storm and besides, Charley would be sure to be here before real snow fell.

Miriam didn't remember how long she'd had the Christmas cactus. Many years, she thought. The plant had a mind of its own. Intentionally denying its name, it never bloomed at Christmas. The flat, segmented arms pushed out multi-petaled coral pink blooms just after Thanksgiving, and just before Valentine's Day, and once impudently bloomed in April. The cactus had enjoyed sitting on the north-facing windowsill in her home, continuing from season to season on its own terms. Now it preened on top of the bookcase at a window facing the street and Miriam didn't remember how it got there.

She didn't remember a lot of things lately. Like she didn't remember whose house this was. It wasn't her own home, with its long windows and wrap-around porch, and the hardwood floors her husband had been so proud of. Was she here visiting someone? Miriam began to be a little afraid, but then she saw her bags and her coat at the door. No matter. Charley was coming for her and he would know.

The front door opened abruptly, admitting a frigid draft and a short, squat woman bundled to her eyebrows in a heavy white muffler. "Good morning, Miriam," she said, her voice fuzzy through the fabric.

Miriam sat up and looked around her. She must have dozed off, and here was Caroline come to help with the housekeeping, and caught her napping. She smiled as the woman unwound herself from the muffler and heavy coat, carefully hanging them on the hall tree by the front door.

Caroline looked at the suitcases standing sentry at the entrance, then at Miriam. "Going on a trip, dear?"

"I, uh..." Miriam didn't know why the suitcases were there. But they were her suitcases. And her coat and scarf. She looked at them a moment, then at Caroline, then down at her hands.

"Well, no matter," Caroline said brightly. "Let's just put them aside for now so I can vacuum in here. Isn't the weather frightfully cold! And snow in the forecast, they say. Well, it is January after all, although February is usually the worst month of the winter. Do you mind if I put on some coffee? Perhaps you could use a cup, dear."

Caroline chatted on conversationally as she picked up the suitcases and the coat and scarf and carried them into the bedroom. In a moment she was back with the vacuum cleaner, which she deposited in the middle of the living room floor, then went into the kitchen. She hummed to herself as she ran water and rattled the cupboards. When she had the coffee made and poured into two mugs she came back to the living room, set one cup on the side table by the stuffed chair and the other

on the coffee table in front of Miriam, who was still sitting quietly on the couch.

“There now!” Caroline announced firmly. “Something to warm our bones, and don’t we need it today.” She sat back comfortably in the big chair.

Miriam frowned. “Caroline, is this your house?”

Caroline stopped with her mug halfway to her lips and studied Miriam for a full minute before she answered. “Why no, dear. This is your house.”

Miriam continued to frown. After a moment Caroline got up and crossed the room to sit beside Miriam, and took both her hands in her own.

“This is your house, Miriam. You moved in here a month ago.”

“Yes, of course,” Miriam answered, and she smiled blankly.

“Now, come with me,” Caroline said in a tone that allowed no argument. She lifted Miriam to her feet and taking her elbow steered her into the bedroom. “There are your things,” she soothed. “Your favorite pink coverlet on your bed. Your dresser with the crystal perfume bottle and your hair brushes. The photo of your fine and handsome husband, God rest him. The stuffed horse your son gave you when he was little, see? It’s right there on the chair, where it always is.”

“Charley,” Miriam said.

“Charley!” Caroline exclaimed in mock astonishment. “Is that the name of that stuffed horse?”

Miriam laughed, a genuine sound. “Of course not! Charley is my son, as you very well know, Caroline!”

“Oh! How silly of me.” Caroline winked. “Of course I know. Sometimes I think I am getting forgetful in my old age!”

They laughed together then. Miriam smoothed an invisible wrinkle from the coverlet, and suggested they return to their coffee before it got cold.

Later, as Caroline was vacuuming and Miriam was making some sandwiches for lunch, she thought about her house. It really was very nice here. No need to worry about ordering heating oil, or doing the laundry. The Center took care of that. Once Charley had moved out and her husband was gone, her old house had become so big and empty. The rooms had seemed frozen in time and her presence in them an intrusion.

This house was small, enough to be comfortable, and everything on one floor. It was easy enough to pick up after herself. She could take her meals with the other residents when she wanted company, or eat alone with the television if she didn't. She would probably plant a few of her favorite flowers on the edge of her tiny lawn, and put in daffodil bulbs so she could have early blooms every spring.

"Caroline, would you like some lunch?" Miriam called in the direction of the laundry room, where rattling and banging indicated Caroline was putting away the cleaning things.

The housekeeper's solid form appeared in the doorway. "Thank you, dear, but no. I promised my girl friend we would meet for lunch today. I need to be going."

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Miriam followed her into the living room, where Caroline began to re-wrap herself in the layers of coat and scarf.

"Why look at that!" Miriam exclaimed, walking over to the Christmas cactus. "The ornery thing has put out a bloom. Isn't it lovely?"

The single flower among the buds glowed bright pink in the grey light of the day, its delicate petals curved open to show the yellow stamen inside with the vivid red drop on the tip. Miriam reached out but stopped just short of touching it.

"I've had this cactus for years. We had it when we moved into the old house just before Charley was born. I made sure I took it along when I came here."

"My grandmother used to say," Caroline remarked, tugging her muffler under her chin, "that flowers in the winter-time are the hope

of the spring. I'm off now. If I don't see you in the dining room I'll pop by for a quick hello before I go home tonight. Keep warm, dear."

Miriam felt the icy air as Caroline opened the door and then closed it quickly behind her. She was still staring at the cactus flower and smiling. Through the window behind the flower she noticed that the snowflakes continued to swirl lazily through the air without serious intention.

Still smiling, Miriam made her way into the bedroom. She picked up her two suitcases and her grey coat and her pink scarf and carried them into the living room to the door. Then she sat down on the couch to wait for Charley.



Past and Present | SAMANTHA PERRINE '14



Cyclist in Wheel | LEE KROHN '79

The Lighthouse

DAVE TAYLOR '81

He finished the note, put it in his pocket, and got his bicycle out of the garage. His wife, Sarah, had the car; she had gone out for the day, and it gave him time. He coasted down the driveway, then pushed hard on the pedals. The bike lunged forward, tires humming on the roadway. His thigh muscles protested, but he knew they would soon loosen up and settle in for the ride.

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Through the morning mist, the sun was trying to gather strength. It would be another humid day. Beach houses went by on either side, most of them well-kept, but here and there derelict, some even open to the weather. If left long enough they would become worthless and likely to be torn down and replaced with something larger and more rentable. Someone could make some money on that. But it wouldn't be him.

The day brightened and warmed and he knew he was about a half hour from the old lighthouse. Perched on a sandy point about fifteen miles south, it still had a functional light, but these days ship navigation was

primarily electronic. Like most lighthouses, it had outlived its usefulness and was now largely a tourist attraction. For five dollars, visitors could climb the spiraling steps inside to the viewing platform encircling the light, and look at the surrounding area from nearly 140 feet in the air. At least fifteen miles of roads, homes, and busy lives were visible to the west. To the east, the ocean stretched out infinitely, disappearing into the horizon.

As he spun the pedals, the gnawing heaviness grew, as though he were climbing a non-existent grade. From the minute he woke each morning and all through the motions of another day, this weight dragged on him, sapping his will.

He had built a successful business, raised a family and was well known as a friendly guy, generous and almost always happy on the outside. No one could see the struggle he felt and the longing he had for it to end. He had wondered what it would be like to just drop the weight: would it feel like a deep breath of cold air, or maybe like the chaotic rush of diving under a breaking wave near shore and then emerging safely on the other side? Or maybe like nothing at all.

Some years before, he'd stood at the top of a cliff in the Smokey Mountains, contemplating a jump into forever. But some small shred of hope had held him back. He later told Sarah about it and they sought help from a psychiatrist who prescribed antidepressants. But while the pills pushed his anguish to the background, they made him feel like less of himself—no more than a reflection in a dark pool of water, wavering and out of reach.

The top of the lighthouse began to edge out of the horizon, tiny, its beacon still visible in the early morning light. He was riding steadily now and he thought of the irony that a lighthouse is a symbol of both danger and safety. Depending on the point of view.

By the time he reached the lighthouse parking lot and put his bike in the bike rack, some clouds were scudding in from the west. There

were just a few cars in the lot. Perfect timing. He felt for the note in his pocket. Dearest Sarah.

His heart raced as he bought the ticket and began the climb to the top. When he reached the observation deck, he could hear a man and a woman talking quietly, but they were on the other side. The gap in the safety railing was nearest to him. An intoxicating mix of exhilaration and dread surged through his body as he moved toward it. He took a deep breath, reached for the bars, and felt the cold metal in his hand.

A voice jolted him from behind. "Henry? Henry, is that you?"

He exhaled and turned around. It was Stephen and Krista, old neighbors who'd moved away some years before. They smiled broadly, and Krista spread her arms for a hug. He put his hands on her shoulders, but she pulled him in close and he felt the warmth of her cheek against his.

Stephen shook his hand. "Wow, it's good to see you, what are the odds?"

He realized he was tumbling under that wave. He put a hand on the rail to steady himself. "What are the odds," he said. "It's great to see you both, too."

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"Are you here by yourself?" Krista asked.

"Well, yeah, I rode my bike..." He glanced back at the railing.

"Better hurry back then," she said, "it looks like it's about to storm."

He hadn't noticed that the clouds had turned more menacing. From their high vantage point he could see sheets of rain sweeping in from the west.

"Hey," Stephen said, "this is crazy. Put your bike in the back of our pickup and we'll drive you home."

He wanted to say no, he'd be all right. But he felt that tingling of hope, as he had on the cliff years before. It grew stronger. He was coming up on the other side. He found a smile. "Sure, I don't think I could make it back without drowning!" They laughed and headed down the stairs.

The ride was filled with conversation about children and home

improvements. He barely listened. The rain fell, the windshield wipers thumped, and he thought about how close he had come. He felt both sorrow and relief. This was somehow right. Meant to be. He sighed.

They pulled into the driveway of his home. As he lifted his bike out of the back of the pickup, a ray of light streamed through a gap in the clouds. The storm was almost over. The air smelled clean. They said their goodbyes, and as they drove away, he took the note from his pocket, tore it up, and threw it in the trash. He had big news for Sarah. She would be excited. Stephen and Krista were coming to dinner next week.



Earth to Air | ALLAN TASMAN '69



First Touch | GERARD RUGEL '68

Diet Change

ANTHONY HERMAN '07

30 started with acid corroding my esophagus and I pretty much knew because on weekends I would wake up choking on the beer from the night before, aspirating like hell, acid reflux peaking, and I couldn't even lay my head on a flat pillow but had to be propped or else caustic fluid drizzled and I would wheeze the next 5 minutes until I'd cool down and I knew I should take it easy on the drinks but 2 beers felt like nothing and the buzz was all I was going for, really, so I took some pills—prednisone, prilosec, biaxin—and had an endoscopy and saw an ENT and a pulmonologist and a GI and they all said diet change and I felt fucked because the drinks were helping me get through the miscarriages and the job anxiety and my parent's mortality and not knowing who I was, who am I really, so my mom called and my sister called and my coworkers asked and they all thought that the pathology report showed odd cell growth and that meant death early but this all felt way too dramatic and sentimental and clichéd so I felt really fucked on the poem part because platitudes and melodrama and sentiment are all deaths in poetry but I figured that if I addressed them I'd at least be meta and make some gains, still, everything felt heavy but when Gemma was 16 weeks and over the first trimester where we always got slammed and she was beyond the daily nausea and everything went back to color and her belly was bumped and we heard heartbeats and felt flutters and saw fingers and toes, I lost it, because 30 shows you your future and your real friends and your SUVs and your mortgages and your loans and even your diseases but it can also show you that wiggle I saw or how Gemma touched her stomach ever so slightly on that March night before we walked a couple blocks in spring's light darkness to get water ice.

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Jack | KRISTINA MONTVILLE '14

Sunken Dreamboat

SOPHIE KATHERINE AFDHAL '15

You painted yourself Bukowski Blue, Sweet Man
(the Red Devil himself couldn't sit straight upon your shoulder),
when you chose your own cool, coarse coal
over the stone-born gold of me. Can we agree
that's just hilarious? (In a stomach pumping
kind of way.)

Everything simple is made hard again:
The children are horned, the children are scorned.
Buttercream tastes of ashes, taffeta turns so tough.
Sure, fine. Now I actually see
the whispers. Honey Bee, how could I possibly
know you'd package poison for Royal Air Express?

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Oh, Truest Heart, a horde of Red Devils
could not sit upon your shoulder. Since, of course,
I ought to have seen you all assembled:
tuxedo bound, altar ready,
opposed,
from my end of the aisle.
Still, I walked the Dirge March
like a challenge: Don't think
twice. It'll be all right.



Salmon Jumping | SUSAN HAGNER '83

Cold Calling

CAITLIN CIERI '12

CALL LOG

PHONE OPERATOR: Dwane MacAllister Jr.

SHIFT: Friday, November 13, 2015, 7:00 PM-12:06 AM

REPORTED BY: Dwane MacAllister Jr.

TIME: 7:01 PM

NAME: Hall, Miriam

PHONE NUMBER: 570-125-8973

PURPOSE: Sales

DURATION: 5 minutes

NOTES: No interest.

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TIME: 7:11 PM

NAME: Bykovsky, Greg

PHONE NUMBER: 570-921-2141

PURPOSE: Sales

DURATION: 5 minutes

NOTES: No interest.

TIME: 7:21 PM

NAME: Sir Riffs-A-Lot Improv Comedy Collective

PHONE NUMBER: 570-968-5233

PURPOSE: Workplace Improvement

DURATION: 15 minutes

NOTES: Asked for quotes on improvisation lessons for the workplace, thinking this will improve morale and encourage creative problem solving. Also, for comparison purposes only, of course, asked for quotes on individual lessons. Business workshops cost \$2,000 per three-hour workshop, but anyone interested in joining the Improv Comedy Collective needs to take the two-week Improv Introduction class, \$100 for each day of class. Offered a discounted price on bath covers in exchange for discount lessons. No interest.

TIME: 7:41 PM

NAME: Maloney, Anthony

PHONE NUMBER: 570-331-2294

PURPOSE: Sales

DURATION: 5 minutes

NOTES: No interest.

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TIME: 7:51 PM

NAME: Hot Buttons Phone Sex

PHONE NUMBER: 900-513-8008

PURPOSE: Sales

DURATION: 45 minutes

NOTES: Trial run of an experimental cold calling technique. The phone operator Jazzy asked if I had a specific fantasy in mind. Requested a romantic encounter in a bathtub reinforced with Scranton's Sleek Stainless Bath Cover. Emphasized the bath cover's ability to prevent leakage, its patented enamel that resists all stains, no matter how bizarre, and ability to retain its shape no matter what vigorous activities might take place. Jazzy said that while she would be happy to spin such a fantasy for me, she was not familiar with the concept of bath covers and would first need to look into them. I told her I'd be happy to describe them further, but she laughed and told me, "Not right now, Buster." Said she'd look into them between calls.

TIME: 8:41 PM

NAME: Redwood, Skylar

PHONE NUMBER: 570-384-8479

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 5 minutes

NOTES: Caller asked to make an appointment with Steamy Scranton Bath House. Explained to customer that Steamy Scranton Bath House was closed down over a year ago and Scranton Bath Covers had been assigned the number. Agreed that it was a huge loss and offered a new bath cover to soothe the pain. No interest.

TIME: 8:51 PM

NAME: Abernathy, Jeanette

PHONE NUMBER: 570-878-3354

PURPOSE: Sales

DURATION: 5 minutes

NOTES: No interest.

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TIME: 9:01 PM

NAME: Stoner, Jayden

PHONE NUMBER: 570-778-7465

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 10 minutes

NOTES: Caller asked for a woman by the name of Sienna. Said she gave him a massage last year and that they “really hit it off.” Voice sounded familiar, but I explained again about the Steamy Scranton Bath House reassigned number. Before I could ask if he needed a new cover for his bath, caller said something unprintable and hung up.

TIME: 9:16 PM

NAME: Parker, Trey

PHONE NUMBER: 570-559-5762

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 10 minutes

NOTES: Caller asked for a woman by the name of Sienna. Said he missed her and “wanted to mess.” Voice sounded exactly like the previous caller. Apologized. Explained about reassigned number. Caller insisted this was the number Sienna had given him. Apologized. Asked if he needed a new cover for his bath. Was told to do something anatomically impossible then hung up on.

TIME: 9:21 PM

NAME: Emerson, Lance

PHONE NUMBER: 570-584-0105

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 15 minutes

NOTES: Caller asked for Sienna—same voice. Said he “needed her so bad.” Apologized. Caller responded with more unprintable phrases. Made the error of pointing out that perhaps Sienna didn’t want to give him her real number—had he ever heard of The Rejection Hot Line? Was told that he knew where she lives and was “Going over to that tramp’s house to teach her a lesson.” Decided not to ask if he needed a new cover for his bath.

TIME: 9:41 PM

NAME: Emergency Services

PHONE NUMBER: 911

PURPOSE: Life-Threatening Emergency

DURATION: 30 minutes

NOTES: Reported the previous call and gave as much detail as

possible. Did not know the address where previous caller was going, but did give them all his names and the phone numbers he'd called in on. Decided not try to sell them a new bath cover.

TIME: 10:16 PM

NAME: Emergency Services

PHONE NUMBER: Unknown

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 30 minutes

NOTES: Situation resolved. Caller arrested for attempted assault and drunken disorderly behavior. Was thanked for my quick response. A woman grabbed the officer's phone as he was talking to me. It was Sienna, also thanking me. Said she couldn't afford the bath cover, but gave me five former clients' phone numbers to add to the phone banks. Added those, along with all the names and numbers of the loser who called in earlier.

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TIME: 10:41 PM

NAME: The Rejection Hotline

PHONE NUMBER: 605-475-6968

PURPOSE: Expansion of Customer Database

DURATION: 30 minutes

NOTES: Took the opportunity to call The Rejection Hotline's Scranton Branch, and was lucky enough to talk to the manager. Told him everything that happened during my shift and explained how it could be seen that Scranton Bath Covers had been used as a decoy phone number, to ward off a harasser. As that is the purpose of The Rejection Hotline, suggested a collaboration: The Rejection Hotline might use Scranton Bath Covers as a decoy, in addition to its usual pre-recorded rejections. The manager seemed to like this idea, and said he'd call back on Monday.

TIME: 11:16 PM

NAME: Hot Buttons Phone Sex

PHONE NUMBER: 900-513-8008

PURPOSE: Expansion of Customer Database

DURATION: 45 minutes.

NOTES: Asked for Jazzy—she was still there! Told her about my stint with law enforcement. Asked if any of the other phone operators needed a fake number for protection in their day-to-day life. Jazzy's phone passed around. Got twelve different numbers from three different operators. Turns out they know Sienna! Told Jazzy to tell her I said "hi." Jazzy said she was looking forward to hearing all about bath covers, maybe over a beer. Score! Because of the future sale, not Jazzy, of course.

TIME 12:06 AM

NAME: MacAllister, Dwane Sr.

PHONE NUMBER: 484-898-4577

PURPOSE: Incoming

DURATION: 30 minutes

NOTES: Caller begged me not to "throw away a decent paying job just for some damn improv comedy class." Told caller about today's history of calls, and how I was finally finding meaning in a bath cover call center. Caller thanked God that at least one of his sons was making money. Asked if he needed a new cover for his bath. Was reminded he'd already paid for three bath covers—two for his own house and one for ~~Grandma's~~ his mother's. No interest.



Vive La France | BILL SCAFF '57



@ballet | RICHARD DRAKE '68

Prufrock 2016

JOSEPH MACKIN '88

Let us go then, me and you,
Take selfies in morning dew,
Leave your frappuccino on the table.
Let's roll out, headphones by Beats,
The Kanye tweets
Of restless nights in luxury hotels
And lunatic Kardashian kvells.
Beats that follow like a tedious argument.
Wait, why you bent?
Which leads us to the overwhelming question,
Don't ask me, yo, what is it?
Snoop say, go yourself, for shizzit.

| 55 |

On Facebook, trolls they come and blow,
Avoiding Michelangelo.

The too-big-to-fail that rubs its back against the windowpanes,
The whack derivative that floats past tellers' panes,
Licked the poor soul in the corner of the evening,
Lingered by the pool despite the rains,
Wore the smokestack's spew like armor,
Slipped past Dodd-Frank and jumped—
And seeing it could land on those with nothing,
Declaimed: all pumped and dumped.

And some say there's still time
For the yellow hair that slides along the street,
That rubs its hate against the windowpanes;
There is still time, there is still time,
To prepare a face, a perfect avatar, to greet
The endless time to murder and create;
And time for all the copyrights of bands
That used to drop the needle on your fate;
Time for you and time for me,
Time yet for a thousand iterations
And for a million perorations
Before the smoothies and jasmine tea.

On Facebook women come and go:
Hillary—and Michelangelo.

| 56 |

And there has never been such time
To wonder, “Do I care?” and “Should I care?”
Time when all the voices fill the air
And mine is barely there.
(They will say: “My, his MacBook Air is thin!”)
My iPhone, the app that lets me shout into the din,
My backache, Jeremy Lin—
(They will say: “His followers are thin!”)
Do I care
To make a difference?
When a minute will
Erase the reference?

For I have known them all already, known them all:
Have known MySpace, Fox, data dragoons,
I have measured out my life in Spotify tunes.
Then how should I begin
When I have lost the way but not the call,
To roll back the posts and pics and mail?
And how can I vest soon?
And how could I presume?

Is it JLo's plunging dress
That makes me so digress?

Can I say I have walked on gloaming streets
And heard Real Housewives issuing their gripes
On televisions huge in every window?

I should have been a Wall Street fixer,
A WAG, a DJ, a cocktail mixer.

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And the afternoon, the evening, says, be free!
A thousand Facebook likes and hearts and zingers
Filling time that once meant you and me.
Should I, after Trump and oil and ISIS
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have slept and blasted, wept and flayed,
Though I have seen my avatar demolished by the chatter,
I am no Yeezus—and here's the matter:
It'll probably be cancer on my sticker,
Slow-grown, I hope, but maybe quicker.
Look at Jobs, he had it made.

I grow bold... I grow bold.
I shall make anonymity gold.

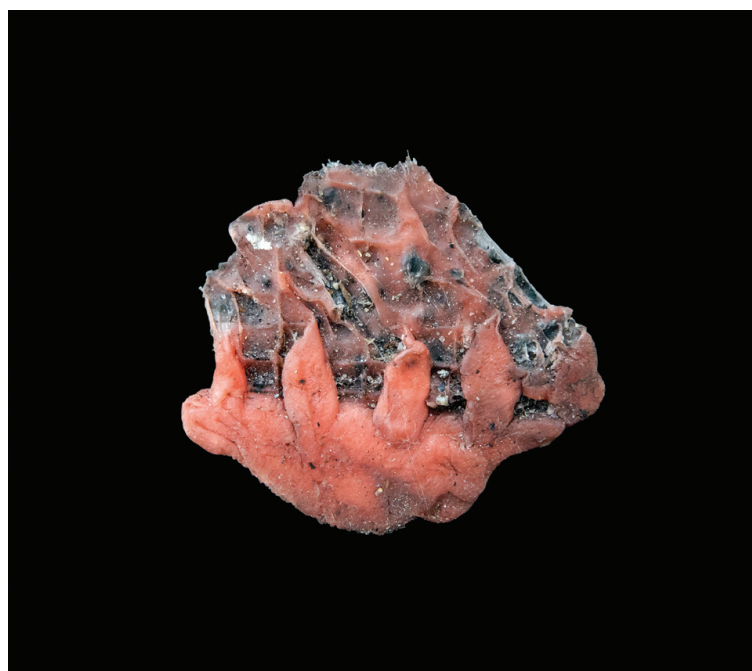
Shall I try a Snapchat story? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I will try the newest new and outperform my reach.
I know that there is something I can teach.

I do not think this song is sung for me.

I have seen words riding in the *New York Times*,
The Vice brigade, *Politico*, the *Buzzfeed* pack;
When Elon Musk says something, they all track.
I have heard the sages of the digital sea
With power only glimpsed by cap and gown—
But human votes they wake us, and we drown.

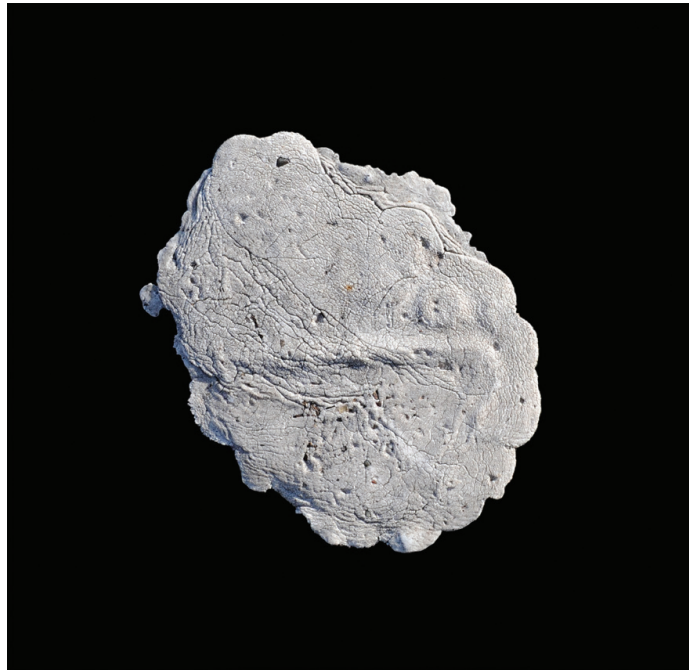


Face On | DENISE KING GILLINGHAM '80



TOP: Lechemere BOTTOM: Providence

These images are from a series of photographs I've been taking of bits of gum on the street: stuff that's been inside of people. You can't tell anything about the chewers (it's gum) but at the same time it's had their spit and you could run a DNA test and learn about them. In some ways it's a group project and you can see the marks of people's shoes, or soot, or bleaching from the sun.



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TOP: Valence BOTTOM: Allston

I'm not interested in extracting information about the chewers, it's the anonymity I'm drawn to, and the ubiquity and overlap. So far I've shot images in England, France, and the US but you can't tell from looking at them. They just hang together and I wish we could all drop our differences and do the same.

GEORGINA LEWIS '84

AT A DO IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

JOHN HAMBRIGHT '62

The Vice President has left the reception.

But Charlie Rose is still roving the brain experts. Marilu Henner is selfless with selfies. Seth Rogen's deep into bromance with the multiply concussed ex-wrestler from *Game of Thrones*.

And now, in the roiling sea of dementia doctors, Tom Spahn spies John Updike.

Alzheimer's donor? Advocate? Victim?

Updike looks just like his headshots: prominent nose, distinguished gray hair. Spahn's onetime Pennsylvania neighbor—prize-winning author of a few good books Tom's read and many more he hasn't—stands apart from the crowd in a tan tweed jacket, pert bow tie, the vibe more quiet country study than Capitol Hill. Tom decides not to approach him. Only this morning he had stood reading Updike's first novel for the better part of an hour, building up the nerve to chuck it out.

"Spazz!" a voice booms from behind. "Bloody woo woo!"

Tom turns to find a snow-capped looney toon he never would have recognized in the throng were he not beaming brightly and emphasizing every syllable with arms spread wide: "Bloody. Woo. Woo!"

Don Ranck? Ducky? "Bloody woo," Tom mutters as his arm's righteously pumped. He finds he's lost all memory of the Bloody Woo Woo handshake. Elbow tap? Finger snap?

"How's you?" says Duck, poking Tom in the ribs with a jab that seems aimed from Thaddeus Stevens Junior High. "Head in the clouds.

How was Paris?”

“Paris? Ah.” The last time he’d seen Duck back in Liberty Tom must have been bound for his plagued postgraduate stint in France. “A moveable feast, Don.”

“A what? What?” Duck fakes another poke. Somebody’s bought him a gold silk tie. Miss Liberty High School? Judy?

“How’s the cute wife, man?” Trudie?

“Tommy, you know our eldest.” A younger Duck is introduced. “Patrick.” He wears, with an open collar, one of those neon blue suits whose moment seems blessedly passing.

“We meet at last,” says Tom. “Old home week.” Patrick looks old enough to have grandkids of his own, which would be about right.

Tom’s never forgotten sophomore spring at Comenius when Duck strolled into psych class on a Monday and announced Miss Liberty was pregnant. Duck and his blonde hottie had slipped over the border Saturday morning for two quickie I-Do’s in Maryland and stayed Saturday night and most of Sunday at the first place they found coming home: a motel in Gettysburg—appropriately, Duck thought—in a room overlooking the battlefield.

“This guy and I go way, way back,” Duck’s teaching his offspring. “Stevens Junior. Liberty High. College.”

Duck didn’t come back junior year. Got into home repair, Tom heard.

“Comenius!” says Patrick, as if pronouncing it properly gained him a prize. “Comenius College. Liberty. P. A. So what’s your interest in Alzheimer’s?”

“He’s got it,” deadpans Duck. “Just caught it from me.”

“Purely professional. I’m a talking head in the documentary they showed earlier.”

“*The Alzheimer’s Story—Gone With the Wind.*” Typical Duck.

“You’re a celebrity,” says the son.

“Hardly that. But Marilu Henner’s running around. Charlie Rose.

He narrates the documentary. And I just saw John Updike.”

“Updike?” Patrick looks blank.

“This guy knows all the Senators,” says Duck. “You worked Capitol Hill, right?”

“Up to just last week. Just retired.”

“Had to carry you out.”

“Health policy. Kept staying on, help get it right.” He refrains from mentioning Affordable Care. Or the Vice-President’s hail and farewell just an hour ago: *Heads high, Tommy. We left our mark.*

“So what’s next? You and the wife. Timbuktu?”

“No, no. No wife. Coupla ideas.”

“Always with the ideas. Don’t knock sittin’ and spittin’, Spazz.”

Patrick brightens. “Spahn? Spazz? Spazz Spahn. You were a Bloody Woo Woo!”

“He was the President of the Bloody Woo Woos,” sings Duck. “Wore a long robe. Big hat.”

“Actually, we had a new President every week.” Tom happily joins the old game. “Since the beginning of time. Nostradamus was a president. Ben Franklin. And all three of the Stooges.”

“Amen!”

“You’re spilling more stuff than this one ever has,” says Patrick. “Pop always says he’s sworn to secrecy.”

“If we tell you, we have to slit throat. Right, Spazz?”

“Won’t get any more out of me.” Tom crosses his heart and taps lips. Same Bloody Woo Woo business they’d played with their girls back in high school: pretending there’s a there there.

Tom could easily tease on but Patrick’s taken Duck by the arm.

“I’ll grab the car. Remember the Gent’s, Papa. Long ride to Liberty.”

The crazy blue suit’s swiftly absorbed by the mob of dementia docs. “Patrick had to come down for this deal,” Duck is saying. “This and a

couple other things he does with the mad scientists these days. He's with the concussion thing."

"Brain disease," Tom says. "We've had some successes lately."

Duck gazes disconsolately over the crowd. "You must do these dos all the time. Meet 'em, greet 'em. Goose 'em."

"It's a living. Always learning."

Duck's face goes sly. "You still writing *War and Piss*?"

"Ah." Tom had forgotten Duck's tag for the budding aspirations long ago boxed up and locked away.

"I keep looking for you when they pass out the Pulitzers."

"You and my mother."

The fall of their freshman year, James T. Farrell—an author Tom had then never heard of—staggered on stage to lecture in Comenius's celebrity series. Tiny and grizzled in boots and blue work shirt, Farrell gripped the podium and thundered: *Ya wanna write the Great American Novel, kiddoes? Skip the lit and get all the political science you can get!*

Tom's spent his whole life trying to get it—with every breaking news bite.

"We knew you when, Spazz. How is your Mom?"

"Long gone, alas."

"Bummer." White eyebrows rise. "Lost Prudie December the twenty-seventh. Two thousand twelve. Fifty-three years, five months, and three days of pretty darned perfect."

Prudence Herr. Miss Liberty. "I'm sorry, Donnie."

"Two days after Christmas." Duck's off into a piece recited myriad times, Tom supposes. Kids and grandkids—the great-grandbaby—all gone home. She went to bed cheery and chirpy and never woke up. "Way to go," Duck concludes. "*The* way to go. Which reminds." He looks at his watch. "Patrick."

Tom again flubs the Bloody handshake as they part. He watches Duck sidle off past Newt Gingrich and Rick Steves, the TV travel guy,

whose mother, like Tom's, suffered years with the big A. Tom's already engaged the Speaker twice this afternoon, but it might soothe the soul to talk temples in Bali with Rick.

Then Tom spots John Updike again, tall in his tan tweed coat, and it floods in on him why he's in no hurry to head home.

The young Chinese couple gutting his Bethesda home has graciously allowed Tom to keep his books and papers in the basement for as long as he needs to decide what to take for the few shelves at the condo. Ju Li has been good about reassuring Tom—telling him these days you can call up any title you want on the phone in your pocket—but standing there in the cellar holding actual books in his hand, old familiar friends, Tom's been held fast time and again by memories. Jobs. Wives. Once and future dreams.

And in the box labeled lavishly with the letters, P. A. —histories, biographies, John O'Hara—this morning he'd found *Rabbit, Run*.

He's owned the paperback since the summer after Comenius, when he was an intern with Pennsylvania's junior Senator. Scholars and artists flocked the White House in that shining moment. You could believe you strode the center of the universe, walking home nights to airless attic digs on East Capitol Street.

Tom had plucked John Updike's first seller from a drugstore rack on Independence Avenue because its jacket flagged the author as a young Pennsylvanian fresh out of Harvard, where Tom was headed after Paris. And he read the book through three times over one steamy August weekend, luxuriating with the living room air conditioner while his Senate secretary landlady was away at the shore.

Rabbit, Run's richly pictured factory town and farm country was Tom's last clear view of the P. A. he was closing the door on and leaving behind for good.

And the view rocked.

At the end of his Bible Belt upbringing, this rural American apocalypse

descended upon Thomas J. Spahn as a book of revelations. For the first time in his life he saw in print, bound between two covers, not the storied stock figures of English 101 and French 202, but a young man he knew very well: Spazz Spahn—without Comenius and passage on the Queen Mary to the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes Européenne*.

Non-educated white-male Rabbit—a young husband and father not ready to be either—teeters through a story Tom’s mother would have called *babies having babies*. Tom had escaped that saga by a hair, more than once. Rabbit was trapped. Caught between his wife and the next girl friend, he scampers back and forth pawing his griefs disconsolately, his author says—disconsolately: Tom has never forgotten the word.

Off to France, Tom left the paperback on his schoolboy bookshelf. A year later, home in Liberty en route to Harvard’s government program, he finally located *Rabbit*, back broken, lying beneath his sister’s bed.

Another drink seems the thing. Scotch and a splash. No ice.

And when he turns from the bar, John Updike nimbly steps back, nods the gray thatch familiar from his pictures, and shoots Tom a sidelong but not unfriendly hello. No way to avoid it. Tom beams his Capitol Hill best: “Mister Updike, I presume.”

The greeting sways, impossible to undo. “If you say so.” Forgiving eyes make merry. “And you are?”

Another bracing gulp of Scotch and Tom states his name and, mental habit, the Senate committee he endlessly penned papers for.

“Front line trenches,” John Updike says. “Doubtless deserve a medal.” Stardom raises its glass to obscurity. Gin and tonic, Tom observes. Limes loom.

Encouraged, Tom drops all talk of Beltway combat and grabs the golden chance to tell John Updike what he might have told him if they’d met when he was a D.C. intern and Updike a young novelist with just one book in the bank. They grew up in the same neck of Penn’s Woods. He is, Tom tells him, Liberty P.A. to Updike’s nearby native Shillington.

The writer nods.

Tom tells of driving past Shillington High with his father on their way to the Bachman factory to pick up pretzels for Dad's Liberty market stands. He recalls the signs on the school's opposite wings: *Live to Learn. Learn to Live.*

"Lovely wordplay," Updike smiles. Another nibble at his glass.

Tom shares his having perused just this morning the copy of *Rabbit, Run* he'd bought here in the capital the same summer he graduated from Comenius.

"Well, you know Comenius College well," Tom says.

"Not well." Updike sips.

"*Buchanan Dying?*"

"Sorry?"

"Your play? Put on by Comenius College?"

James Buchanan had a farm near Liberty. The fifteenth POTUS, forgettable featurette before the epic Lincoln, still reigns the home turf superstar.

John's seven-hour soap about old Buck on his deathbed never made it to the Great White Way but—adapted by a Comenius prof who advised Tom on his graduation speech—*Buchanan Dying* did become Liberty P. A.'s Bicentennial pageant. Updike swept down from his seaside mansion in Massachusetts and for the big night—Tom's Mom sent the news clip—wrapped his mother in gift mink.

"Oh." The man seems pained by the thought. Is he thinking of *Hamilton*?

"I read it," Tom says. "I have it, in fact." Just this morning he'd held the published text in his hand. "Interesting approach. President dreaming back on his life. As he lies..." He feels suddenly flushed. "Comatose."

Updike coughs on his gin and for a moment Tom fears a spit take. Does he dare tell its author what's lacking in *Buchanan Dying*? No chance. John's bent over now. Face averted. Fist to mouth.

“Y’okay?”

Updike waves help away and, gamely hacking, slinks over to a potted palm while Tom looks heavenward and seizes the unexpected break to polish what he needs to say about John’s play.

Like Rabbit in *Rabbit, Run*, Updike’s expiring Buchanan is a trapped anti-hero. Best-prepared President in American history, Buck’s caught in his White House hutch between the dotty Old South he’s wedded to and the hot new populism spreading up North under the spell of his own hometown Congressman, fire-breathing abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens.

Stevens and Buchanan. Forgotten now. Unknowns. But there’s the Great American Novel for you, James T. Farrell. All the political science you can get. And, to prove it, Thomas J. Spahn has all those banker boxes in his basement, files, drafts, notes, boldly marked BUCK & THAD.

Just hours ago Tom had pulled *Buchanan Dying* from one of those cartons and read Updike’s preface saying he’d begun the work as an historical novel. Get back to it—this is what Tom must tell his new best friend. Add Thad Stevens, and this time stick with it. Take these two warring stars, celebrities from the same small city in Pennsylvania—who absurdly crossed streets to avoid meeting, greeting—and make sense of their titanic disunion.

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Did they forget the project of a people more perfect? Have we lost all knowledge of the great game invented by Franklin, Washington, Madison and the rest of the boys at Philadelphia? We’re further along than when the Greensboro sit-ins had been the topic Tom chose for his senior thesis. But by how much, and for how long?

A piss match among pygmies! Tom had cried in Tuesday’s Rotary Club talk. *What we need are giants able to break from the twittering tweets of self-regard and use their heads, commit their hearts, to the betterment of all life everywhere, every, every minute, on this big blue magnificent ball.* Sadly, Tom’s call resounded better in the shower than in the Arthur Godfrey Room at the Comfort Suites in Leesburg.

Updike, composure restored, returns. “Bit of lime” he apologizes. “So...” Teary eyes blink wide. “You read a lot of Updike?”

Tom starts small. “My favorite so far is *The Centaur*.” A boy. His Dad. The snowstorm.

Updike preens. “Mine, too,” he trills. For a moment it seems they might hug.

Perhaps this is the point to spin the tale of the dark and stormy hour in James Buchanan Park, when Tom’s gang of Thaddeus Stevens’ ninth graders skulking around a bronze statue with a stolen bottle of beer and three cigarettes crystallized into—Stretch Bomberger’s brainstorm—the Mystical Union of the Bloody Woo Woos.

“You know.” John clears his throat once more and looks over the crowd. “You lose...”

Lose?

“...track of things, time goes by. So, outside my building they’ve got one of those shabby little birdhouse thingies where people who still have them dump books. Last week I saw *Couples* on the rack and I’m, like, how long ago was that?”

1968. Tom’s then wife was reading Updike’s *Couples* the night Bobby Kennedy won California. The same night he swallowed her contact lenses in the bathroom glass.

“And as for *The Centaur*, and the many, many others,” John is saying, “I mean, my Aunt Dolly collected every state quarter. There must be obsessives buying everything old Updike’s thunk up.”

“We happy few.” Tom scans his brain for any latter-day Updike he might mention. *Valley of the Lilies*?

“Self-consciousness. How’s that for a title?” The author’s on a roll. “Updike calls his memoirs *Self-Consciousness*. Do we have any idea what self-consciousness even means? The more we learn how the brain really works, the less we believe in fiction’s fancy shmantzy. Y’know. Yada yada. Cha, cha, cha. It’s all—”

Familiar tones ring deep in his tweed. *Blowin' in the Wind*?

"Scuse," he says. "Test results. Gone crazy at the lab."

The gentleman carries his empty glass to the waste cart and when he passes Tom by, his iPhone is up and "Sorry" he says. "Insane connection." His gray head, tweed back, are soon swallowed up by the ocean crowd as Tom stands watching from a distant shore.

Tom makes for the coat check a little later and is surprised to find Duck's Patrick alone in the wacky blue suit, holding a black parka and standing before the exit doors. He seems to be waiting for someone.

Tom, it turns out.

"Just wanted to say. You have Donald's phone? Email?"

Donald? The Duck? "Your Dad and I haven't been in touch."

They exchange cards.

"Pop gets squirrely. Home alone with the remote."

"I'll try to stay in contact," Tom manages to mumble.

"Do it." Patrick's putting on his parka. "Life is short."

"Amen to that."

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"You never married, Spazz?"

"Gave it a shot." Tom grins. "My exes all say I married the U. S. Capitol." He lifts his chin. "Guess it'll be the book now. I'm into this book thing. I'm writing a book."

"Yeah, Pop was telling me. Which reminds." Patrick moves to the door. "I'm sure you know this. John Updike is dead."

"Sorry?"

"John Updike. He died some time ago. Big news in P. A."

"No," says Tom. "Yes. Sorry. Crazy. Wasn't. Y'know. The brain."

"I'll look for your book."

"Yeah. Yeah, thanks."

Patrick's pushed down the door handle. "What's it about, by the way?"

"Sorry?"

"Your book. What's it about?"

“Ah.” The standard question. “About five hundred pages, I used to tell people. Joking. Years ago.”

Patrick looks severe.

“America,” says Tom. “It’s about America.”

“Take care, Bloody Woo Woo.” The kid bucks open the double doors to a blast of late November chill. “God bless America!”

“Safe home!” prays Tom into the falling darkness.



Fastened | KATHLEEN BERKEY '05



Dad | TOM MUSANTE '80



Laughter | GERARD RUGEL '68



Tough Love | JOHN SHIRE '66

The Scythe

F. JEFFREY TRUBISZ '70

I saved
the scythe
my grandfather
swung in the fields
on Long Island
back in the 20s.

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Long wooden limb,
two handles inviting grip,
it twists like a dancer
sinuous in the curving blade.

Sweeping the scythe
in an arc atop the ground,
slicing time present to past:
into fields of grain breathing heat,
rippling beneath the steady whoosh
of arm-wearying strokes
under a summer sun.

Imagining him
with blistered fingers
pausing the hovering blade:
Polish immigrant
with mouths to feed
committed to a dream
that engendered four children and
from them, four more, including
me.

Sweeping the scythe again
the vision of him
vivid:
gruff laugh later to become a deep, moist cough,
gnarled, lumpy hands, brown and armored,
hawk eyes that could wither or approve,
scent of sweat and beer,
his voice calling me Frankie
sharp as the edge of the scythe's
blade.

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Driving by a Maasai Village—
Tanzania | STEVE ZIMMET '74

On Edward Albee

JOHN OTTAVINO '77

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Playwright Edward Albee, famous for his ferocity, humor, humanity, and insight, died last September, at the age of eighty-eight. He wrote thirty-four plays, won two Tony Awards, and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for drama three times. While best known as a playwright, he also directed his own work and the work of other playwrights around the world.

Between 1985 and 1993, he hired me seven times to act in plays he was directing. The first of these was at Vienna's English Theatre, where we performed an evening of four one-acts including Sam Sheperd's *Hawk Moon*. In the middle of that run, on our day off, the U.S. Embassy invited us to perform that play at the National Theatre School in Prague.

We left on a Saturday morning and drove to the border. There stood the "iron curtain": twelve feet of barbed wire, a tank barrier, a mile of plowed fields with guard towers, German shepherds, and teenage soldiers with machine guns. Even in an embassy car it took us more than an hour to cross into Czechoslovakia.

When we got to the theater school, we were escorted to a 100 x 100 foot room. A temporary stage had been set up at one end. However, instead of chairs, the room was full of large tables, as though there were going to be a luncheon rather than a performance. The Cultural Attaché from the embassy said, “Well, they did it to us again.”

When I asked who had done what to whom he told me that while it was his job to get American culture out into the world, it was “their” job to prevent it. To accomplish that, the Czechs had given tickets to our play to only a “select few,” while our embassy had put out the word that who ever wanted to come should simply show up. The more tables there were in the room, the fewer people could fit into it. The tables were there to make sure that only the “select few” would get to see our work.

“Not your problem,” Edward said to me. “Get dressed, and have a great show.”

I went to my dressing room. After about ten minutes there was a knock on the door. It was Edward. He walked in, went to my window, opened it, leaned out, closed it, said, “Be wonderful,” and left.

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Ten minutes later: another knock. “It’s going to be great, John. Go get ‘em.” He again walked to the window, opened it, leaned out, closed it, and left.

After another ten minutes: knock-knock, window open, window closed, pep talk, and Edward out the door.

When I made my entrance to act the opening monologue, I found an unexpectedly packed house. Young people sat on the floor between the tables, others crammed the lighting balcony overlooking the room, still more were perched on window ledges; a few young ladies in the back sat on the shoulders of men who didn’t move for the full hour-and-a quarter we performed.

There was a magic in that room that I have only felt a few times in the thirty-seven years I have been a professional actor.

I learned later that as the audience started to arrive, Edward had stationed himself at the front door of the theater. He personally greeted every audience member, shook their hands, said, “I’m Edward Albee, I directed this afternoon’s play,” and then took their tickets.

Every ten minutes he came to my dressing room to open the window and throw the collected tickets to the groundlings below. He did that until the room could hold no more.

This is how the “unconnected,” those the Czechs worked to exclude, got to see our work, crammed cheek by jowl with the “select few.”

The man had guts.

We’ve lost a giant.



Strength of Strings | WILFRED BRUNNER '70



Chance Encounter | LISA SCHREINER '85

Signs

MARCY GRAY RUBIN '78

I'm not one of those who finds comfort in the supernatural or the sacred. Unlike some, I've no idea where my inner path will lead or if I want to change my ego-centered self for a humbler version. Before you died, Jon, you watched me struggle to meditate. My squirmy body rebelled even as I tried to stay grounded and focus on the present. Twice a week (okay once a week), I practiced yoga. You laughed at my elaborate excuses not to go to class. When I did get there, shifting through the flow of poses on my mat, I was wobbly and lopsided beside my graceful classmates, who fluidly alternated between their ying and yang as bone and muscle obeyed them. At the end, I "Ommmmmed," but even that was short-lived and choppy.

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Two years after you died I went to a psychic. Wearing a fuzzy chenille bathrobe and dangly earrings, Clarice added up numbers on a yellow legal pad with a worn-down pencil. Finally, she looked up and said I'd be invited on a trip to Hawaii. She wasn't specific about the island. I hoped it would be Maui or Kauai, rather than Oahu, which is overcrowded and touristy. Anyway, it's not a huge leap to travel there as I live in Los Angeles. So I bought white shorts and a big tube of lotion with enough broad-spectrum SPF to protect me on Saturn. I'm still waiting.

Because of my general lack of spirituality, I didn't believe in signs. The idea you might send me messages through the ether, as easily as you might leave a package on my doorstep, was ridiculous. Other women

in my grief group explained how such signals are the forensic evidence we widows need to understand that our husbands are watching over us. They looked for them as eagerly as teenagers check for flirty texts, and they all got them—in their cereal bowls, on airplanes, through Facebook—except me. Oh, there were the flickering lights in the living room and the occasional dream, but as far as big, meaningful messages, my spiritual mailbox was empty. Maybe you were having so much fun you simply forgot to send some my way. But I don't think so. You loved me too much. As I loved you. So much so that, even as the years went by, I just couldn't let you go. I see now that by fiercely holding onto my bundle of grief, I didn't leave room for you to be in touch. I didn't realize that, as I began to let go a little, I was giving you a thumbs-up.

And then, on the third anniversary of your death, something happened. I'd been having a particularly tough time, missing you like hell. I wasn't sleeping and I kept bursting into tears: every song that played on my car radio, every couple wheeling a cart down the grocery aisle, every fragment of conversation I'd have reminded me of you. I was on my way towards going off a cliff, like Thelma without Louise, and probably would've soon. That morning, I decided to go for coffee at Peet's, rather than having my usual crying jag at home. I thought being in the midst of a crowd clicking away on their laptops, and eavesdropping on their conversations, would make me feel less lonely. After ordering my café Americano, I reached for my wallet. Instead, my fingers found, surprisingly, some money at the bottom of my purse. I handed the barista a dirty, scrunched-up, five-dollar bill.

And, while I was waiting for my coffee, the manager appeared, waving a bill in my face.

"You can't use this," he said.

"Why not?"

"Because it's counterfeit. Phony."

"Counterfeit?" I repeated. "How could it be counterfeit?"

“Look,” he said, holding it up to the light. “The watermarks are fake. We’re trained to spot them.”

I couldn’t see watermarks. I was too busy freaking out—terrified of being manhandled, cuffed, and taken to jail for passing funny money. I assured the manager I wasn’t a felon in the habit of forgery or check kiting. I was a stand-up gal, a tax-payer, a therapist, a citizen. I was a good girl—just ask my mom. Fumbling in my purse, I found my wallet and took out some more dollar bills that I barely managed to cram into the manager’s hands.

“Wait here for your coffee,” he said, and walked away, still holding my five dollars, evidence of my crime.

I was mystified.

How did that five-dollar bill get into my purse? It hadn’t been there before. And then I realized it was you. I should have known that a sign from you would never come in some ordinary way. Never be as recognizable or predictable as, say, the sudden appearance of a bird at my window, its Morse code tapping out the presence of something otherworldly. Nope, that wouldn’t be your style. But this one smacked of your handiwork: it was lawless and playful. Of all the things you could have me sent that day, none would’ve been more perfect.

Standing at the milk and sugar station, I laughed hysterically while tears plunked into my coffee. I was grateful that those ordering chai teas or non-fat lattes were preoccupied with their iPhones.

You turned me into a believer, Jon. Now I’m always on the lookout. Please keep them coming.



Naptime | LISA BROOKS '85

Socks and the War

DOUGLAS HILL '15

It had, initially, to do with socks. Not socks as a concept; a particular pair, resting on the carpeted living room floor of a very nice old house in Great Neck, Long Island; the real East Egg. Fitzgerald's young alcoholics had long, by that June morning in 1970, been replaced with successful Jewish fathers who rode the LIRR in and out of offices on Broadway and Madison and 45th; and their highly organized and too-intelligent-for-their-roles wives; and their children, primed for success, though not necessarily of the type envisaged by their parents.

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David explained all of this.

I am sad to say that they were not altogether clean socks. And they were mine, and I was a guest, and there they were. I think now that perhaps they were blue, but time may have softened this memory; they may have been a more intrusive white. Some small concern was registered, if not calmly, at least clearly, outside my sight but within my hearing.

A natural comparison was made to one's own sons who thoughtfully did not do such things.

I mentioned my friend David. I was a goy guest at his family's home, a week early for my summer sublet on the Upper West Side and my summer job on Wall Street.

Those Socks, as they came to be known, left me depressed. For good reason: David's mother might kick me out. Overtly her displeasure centered on the socks, but I thought it was really my hair, or any number

of things about me. I had no other friends in or near the city, and no money for a hotel. And I liked the Frankels. They ate dinner together, and everyone talked at the same time, often intelligibly. I enjoyed those dinners a great deal, though I spoke little, a suspicious quality amid the glib. Mr. Frankel was particularly plain-spoken on the subject of the thin, insipid corporate beer that had, kudzu-like, seized America. He mourned each dead small brewery—thrown under the train by advertising and ignorance—in deep detail, as though that day were its death-anniversary.

The socks made me sad. I did not want to be that guy who left socks in living rooms. And two days later, in the breakfast nook, gorging modestly on real bagels, smoked whitefish, scrambled eggs, and a pitcher of Hawaiian Punch, there came to light another dark mark: I had not provided my name and contact information to the Selective Service Administration.

| 90 | I had not for what I judged were good reasons: doing so got you killed, and before that you killed other people. However, it was decided that my inaction was Not a Good Thing. It was Un-American, risky, disrespectful, cowardly. Much of this from David's mother, who had mastered indirection through a lifetime of its exercise; again, as with the socks, I appreciated her delicacy of phrase. And I liked these people more than my own, much more. Sock-guilt led me inexorably to the post office and to the form. I registered.

Two years later I was living in L.A. I had just traded the last in a series of disastrous college experiences for a live-in girlfriend and a guy roommate, but the pleasures of that life passed. While still in school I'd been handed The Black Spot, a draft number of 46, and it had long been reached and exceeded. By the fall of 1972, the unlucky members of my cohort had all been trundled off to Nam. So I was not supposed to be in L.A. applying for a job at a temp agency. No, I was supposed to

be pouring talcum powder into my jungle boots, getting high on Thai stick, listening to Jimi Hendrix, and worrying about being fragged by people in pajamas. I had been staring at the war in horror, leaning over the tourist barrier above the Grand Canyon. Losing my deferment broke the railing, and gravity took it from there.

Prospective employers assumed that at any moment I would be seized by MPs and hurled into a C-130. So I put up 3 x 5 cards on bulletin boards at UCLA and worked faculty parties, serving and cleaning up, sometimes helping make the food. Not much money, but I got by, mostly thanks to my girlfriend. I came to think that the draft thing was a hassle, but they hadn't found me and this too would pass.

It didn't. Draft notices are straightforward: you aren't in school, we found you, get your ass down to the big building because we're gonna process it. I decided to postpone the arrest, and went. Following one popular theory of draft avoidance, I stayed up for seventy-two hours before my appointed time; I'd be at my worst for the physical, and this would get me out. And I carried a high trump, a letter from an ophthalmologist—formerly an Army ophthalmologist—testifying that my double vision would create awkward situations on the firing range.

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The processing center was a learning moment. The exhaustion, the letter, my flat feet, a grand mal seizure if I'd staged one in the waiting line that crawled through the building; none of this mattered. Maybe in '68, kid. No longer. What was critical in 1972 was that you could turn your head to the left and cough. After that, welcome to basic training. The British Navy used to recruit by whacking drunks on the head in dockside bars. It was like that, but without the booze.

Being declared fit did not complete my draft experience. I haven't mentioned that not only did I not want to kill anyone, I had a religious revulsion to killing anyone. I had hoped to ignore this and resolve the draft problem in a less honest way, but Richard Nixon's administration was impelling me inexorably toward a moral stance. The irony of this feels stronger in retrospect.

I'd been raised within a little bitty old-country (German and Swedish) Methodist country church, so small it had to share a minister with two other congregations, equally miniscule. And yet, united in Christ and checkbooks though our hamlet churchlings were, they still could not afford a full-time minister with a diploma. So they hired late-stage seminary students and rode those mules until they graduated. The trainee minister would scuttle from church to church in his battered car, three services every Sunday plus chatting outside, and a thousand small duties. Many, many covered dish suppers. I think we paid them a small old house and pocket change, and gave worn clothes to their kids; all of these men had received the calling after setting out in life and were well supplied with dependents. Zeal was necessary. As a result of all this, I was treated to a series of committed, intellectual young clergymen. I learned about Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Buber while my father thought dark things and yearned for a normal sermon, one that didn't contain some rabbi. He explained all this on the drive home. I felt kin with the preachers but not the flock.

It was the early sixties, and these ministers inculcated me with the creeds of the committed. Some marched in the South, some for peace in Washington, and they brought it back to us. I believed them, and from this came my problem with joining an organization that was murdering Vietnamese kids. That word, murder, is still not too strong. Except for a tiny evil fraction, found in anything, American soldiers were not murderers; they were serving their country. But, still, ask the dead and they'll say they were murdered.

So I wrote my country: Here's where you can come and get me or, better for all of us, classify me as a conscientious objector. Specifically, 1-A-O, which meant mopping floors at Wadsworth Medical Center for two years. With a 1-O you got out of it completely, but that was reserved for Amish and Quakers.

The feds acknowledged my request by rejecting it, their obvious move in Selective Service chess. I appealed, and for months wondered what had happened; perhaps I had been misfiled. However, an answer finally arrived just before Christmas, ordering me to meet, in four days time, with my local draft board.

Which was 3,000 miles away. In Great Neck: the local board where I had registered. On December 18.

After this there would be no legal alternatives. Canada was out; I was an American, my parents came here on ships. My dad flew night fighters in WWII, and Gramps got a Purple Heart in WWI. I was raised to serve. But I could not fight in that war and be worth anything to myself; if I didn't get the CO I'd at least be honorable enough to languish in my country's prisons. However, it would be good to avoid that.

I gutted my checking account for the plane fare and ten bucks to eat on, and flew. Then New York, as it so often does, created an impromptu obstacle: a transit strike on Long Island. I took the subway as far as it went, to where it should have connected to the Great Neck bus, then stood on the curb and offered my thumb to motorists. It felt good to be outside, even with the temperature in the thirties. And then it began to rain—slush from the sky, actually, in a stiff December breeze—and this dissuaded potential rides from stopping. Heck, if I had a car I wouldn't want some draft dodger tracking in slush and mud. My socks saturated and my shoes filled, overflowing when I shifted my weight.

I arrived at the building, somehow a little early, eager to make my case. I had my nascent belief in Buddhism, a letter from one of those childhood pastors, and a Quaker prep for every standard question. I lacked just one thing: a quorum. Only two members of the draft board showed up. One was a rabbi who might have been the one who told me the funny story after Shavuot services a few years before, standing and joking with Mrs. Frankel. I and the attending board members waited a while for someone to show up. No one came, one guy left, and the rabbi

suggested we chat anyway. We did, for over an hour; he was fascinated by Buddhism, or just a kind listener to a fervent young man. He would see what he could do. I moseyed off into the slush and thought about visiting the Frankels, but my wet socks and the memory of that earlier pair held me back.

In late January of 1973 the government sent me a card that read “1-A-O.” I was a CO, a side effect of which would be mopping floors at the Wadsworth VA Medical Center. Except that the draft ended a week later, on January 27th, before they had time to process me. It was over.

I had impolitely left my socks, blue or white, on a carpet; this led me into a breakfast ambush. Which led to a draft office, which put me on hold for a year, wondering about prison. I was proud of my virtue, but while I was inconvenienced, a million Americans, Vietnamese, and Cambodians died; or two million, or more; historians differ. I do believe that most of the dead, if handed the choice, would have chosen to wash dishes in Brentwood, or swab floors at Wadsworth. I was saved by entirely random encounters with Methodist ministers and a Conservative rabbi. A little luck and a little courage will sometimes speak to power and succeed. But not for the million, or two million, or three million.



Apocalypse | CINDY CUBA CLEMENTS '85

High Fever

KEIRAN MILLER '15

This nectar has run dry
and you can't sit here
anymore.

I don't want your pollen,

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you know I'm allergic.
We are allergic. I can
admit that. These roots
feel like fossils and this
half life is too far
to pull back the building
blocks.

Now I was never a science
person but

biologically, we make sense,
bursting and colliding
like constellations.

But these chemicals are unstable,
actively combating laws
of physics that separate
by more than just states.

The state of our friendship
is that of plasma—
something that I don't fully
understand, but I know
is dangerous.

You appear well,
flaring with the sun's vitality,
snickering from social media's
panopticon,

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those eyes like two facing mirrors. As if to say,
I see you looking. Drink, drink and be full.
I hope you swell and shrivel.



Strider | EMILIA LIEVANO '84

Omar

SAM PRICE '09

Exhausted after being flown across the country and then dropped off by a cab in front of my house, I took off my shoes and socks to walk barefoot on my front lawn because I'd heard that grass helped cure jetlag. But the yard was brown and prickly and its healing power gone.

Inside, I dropped my bags and guitar and went to the basement door. I called down for Omar. He didn't answer, but that wasn't unexpected, since his truck wasn't in the drive. I'd been gone for two weeks on an East Coast tour and I expected Omar might even be done with the whole renovation. Walking down the steps, I wondered how I'd sum up my trip to him. I mean, I couldn't admit what it really was—a sleazy, cashgrab reunion tour where I played rhythm guitar on songs from a ten-year-old album. All the aging punks who showed up had babysitters waiting for them at home now, drank cheap beer for nostalgia's sake, had given up their dreams of art or music or writing with bartending and serving on the side for office gigs touting health care plans. Plus, none of them wanted to hear anything new. As if the last ten years of practice and growth were worth nothing. I'd have to steal some rock-star story from Joe Walsh or Keith Moon to entertain Omar.

I saw the basement as it had been two weeks prior—a pile of wood rather than a finished subfloor, no drywall, no smell of fresh paint. Certainly no soundproofing or molding or any of the elaborate finishing

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touches Omar had been talking about the day I left—the things I hadn't known, until then, I'd expected to return to. So much for my recording studio.

The blowup mattress Omar had been sleeping on slouched in the corner, mostly deflated. The minute I'd left for the airport, Omar must've split with the money I'd fronted. It seemed out of character because even though our relationship had begun purely economically, I thought it had grown since then. I'd offered to let him stay at my place instead of him driving the hour and a half each way and he'd accepted, and sometimes at night we'd play cards or watch a Padres game drinking his Modelos or my High Lifes. But how well do we know anyone?

I headed upstairs and found a Modelo hiding behind some bean dip in the fridge. I dragged my suitcase to the bedroom and upended it on my unmade bed. Sufficiently unpacked, I returned to the kitchen, where I found the bean dip moldy, so I ordered some food. I sat on the couch, drinking with the TV droning in the background, thinking about Omar describing his final vision for the studio. "You're gonna love it, man," he said. "It's good to have something for yourself."

"I feel like I've said that before," I replied.

Omar tipped back a beer, listening.

"I must've been trying to prove some point to an old girlfriend," I said. I picked up my beer and found it empty. "We were doing the thing. Dating seriously, talking about marriage and kids."

"You like kids?" Omar said. We both laughed.

"I got a niece I never see." I crumpled the empty can and chucked it toward the kitchen, where it clattered short on the living room floor. "She's cool. Either way, my band sold an album. We did a cross country tour, and then another. I'm doing this for me, I thought then, figuring the woman I loved would be right where I left her when I came back."

Omar shook his head, said he was sorry. At the time, I wondered if someone was waiting somewhere for him. If he doubted their loyalty.

If I'd planted those seeds of doubt. But, having found the basement skeletal and Omar gone, all I could think was that I must've given him the idea to split. I had his cell number, but he didn't answer, and I had no other way to get in touch.

I polished off the pizza, drank some more beers, and passed out on the couch with empties littering the floor. The next morning I woke to the morning sun cutting through the blinds. I took a few aspirin and went down to the basement, cursing Omar and the half-finished subfloor. I measured two by fours and the saw squealed along my pencil marks. I broke a bit of a sweat and I suppose it felt good to work like that. Still, I didn't get far. I was used to people carrying my amps, loading up the van.

Later, as I ate nachos idly watching baseball, my cell phone buzzed. It was Omar.

"Man, you gotta help," he said.

"What?"

"I'm down in the detention center in Calexico. They pulled me over and found some pot and charged me with possession and driving under the influence."

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"What do you need? Can I get you out?" I asked.

"They're gonna send me back. I need two grand to get back over."

"Two grand for a plane ticket?"

"No, man, for a guide. A coyote."

I knew then that he did consider me a friend. I felt awful thinking he'd up and left, but what could I say? I worked as a touring musician and even though it wasn't a thin period, I knew to expect one.

"I don't know. That's a lot of money," is what I did say.

"Yeah, but you'll get a recording studio with it. And I'll get back to America, to making some money for my family."

I thought about some empty mailbox down in Mexico. Wondered who was down there checking it. I guess I was silent for too long because he said "OK, I get it, man," and hung up.

I grabbed a beer and went out to the front porch. The block was quiet, the same as ever. I'd moved from the city to the suburbs for idyllic dreams, shared dreams: cookouts, gardens, jam sessions around a fire in the back, a yard transformed into Fenway Park, pickup games in the driveway. But life stayed the same: a blur of hotels and bus rides. There was no point, coming home to an empty house, to putting a hoop in the driveway.

Omar never called again. Eventually I stopped wondering as much about him, but when I go down in my unfinished basement I see the exposed subfloor and the wood piled in the corner and somehow it still smells fresh, like it's just been cut.



In Touch...Avoiding | RONALD DRUKER '66

Excerpt from an Article: November 9, 2016

SARAH MEDEIROS '11

Fog lights break the mist above,
and below slide over boards
untouched by rot.
Crewmen tug at rigging,

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careful not to let steel lines jar
those of twine. Silence holds
sway: bows unbroken, posts unbound,
and hollows filled by ticking code.

Wreck after wreck they find
the sectioned hulls that came before,
lying scattered on the floor. Others wait,
masts rising from immobile, airless depths.

So it is with vessel 44, its ropes
curled still around cedar and bronze. Its petals fall
open to the conqueror, sides bruised
with battles long past but carvings

deep and sure. Born of the Black Sea
and trapped lest it crumble, the ship endures.
Onward they search for waters not plundered,
and retreating wonder what awaits

in number 45. If it is cracked, weathered, warped
further—if its ghosts clamber over fathoms-
high walls—if lens or blood taint the sailors sketched
on sheepskin—if veins of decay twist in hope's wake.

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Contributor Notes

Sophie Afdhal '15 (p. 45) majored in psychology and completed a thesis under the excellent guidance of Professor Michael Penn. Sophie loved learning about psychology and human behavior at F&M and it is the driving subject of her writing. She is currently in the Masters of Creative Writing program at the University of Oxford. She can be reached at safdhal@fandm.edu.

Kathleen Oppenheimer Berkey, Esq., AICP '05 (p. 73) majored in American studies and minored in public policy before completing her dual Juris Doctor/Master of City and Regional Planning degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is an attorney and certified land planner in Fort Myers, Fla., concentrating in Land Use/Zoning/Local Government, Environmental, and Community Association law. She loves photography, creative writing, and life with her husband, Robert M. Berkey, Ph.D. '05, and son, Ryan. She can be reached at: berkey.katie@gmail.com.

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Richard Bidgood, Ph.D '76 (p. 8) majored in philosophy and classics before going off to graduate school in philosophy. He bought his first camera the day he defended his dissertation. Bidgood recently retired from a career in banking. He lives in Lancaster, although travels frequently to Greece and Italy, where his wife, Ann Steiner, works on several archaeological projects. Bidgood is the photographer for the Poggio Colla excavation in Tuscany. He can be reached at rbidgood@fandm.edu.

Lisa Brooks '85 (p. 88) majored in psychology and drama. She works as a tutor for students with learning differences, and freelances—writing and photography—for a Houston weekly. She has a photo blog on social media, and posts one of her photos every day. Lisa is the mother of four amazing children. She is the Houston Gulf Coast Alumni Chapter Chairperson for the F&M Alumni Council, works as a FAN volunteer, and is a member of the Alumni Association Board. 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.

G. Michael Brown '71 (p.25) majored in chemistry and became a prosthetic dentist. After a 30-year career in the Navy, he retired to Virginia Beach. For the past 10 years, he has focused his energy on natural light photography. His images are used in various publications and on numerous websites. He lectures on nature photography at various East Coast venues, and contributes photography-focused articles to Boomer Living Plus. His images can be viewed at **www.gmbrownphotos.com**.

After graduating as an English major, **Wilfred Brunner '70** (p.83) received his MFA from George Washington University. He has worked on the staff of The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. and as a Professor of Art at Montgomery College in Takoma Park, Md. Referred to as an “imagist” by the Curator Walter Hopps, his work is included in a number of private and public collections. He is the recipient of a 2016 Franz and Virginia Bader Fund Grant. **www.wilfredbrunner.com**

Suellen Burkey '76 (p.27) majored in English with a minor in art history. She currently works with the Franklin County, Pa., Historical Society, and is researching a presentation on women in the First World War. She's also writing a young adult novel set in the Civil War.

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Alissa Butterworth '08 (p.9) majored in English with a concentration in creative writing. In 2012, she graduated from Lesley University with an MFA in fiction. Her prose and poetry have been published in print and online, and she is finishing her first novel. She teaches courses in creative writing and literature.

Christine Valzovano Catallo '11 (p.15) majored in English and spent a lot of time thriving at the Writers House. She is a librarian who is passionate about reading and writing and still thinks fondly on the lessons she learned at the Writers House. Contact her at **cvalzovano@gmail.com**

Caitlin C.C. Cieri '12 (p.47) earned a bachelor's degree in creative writing from F&M, and a MFA in playwriting from the University of Essex. She currently works as a transcriber, and regularly produces radio plays on **cccieri.com**. Most recently, she was commended by the BBC for her play, *Shoujodan: The Song of the Scouts*.

Cindy Cuba Clements '85 (p. 95) majored in government and went on to practice law in New York and Boston. She retired from the law to raise her family and later found her passion in painting and mixed media. She shows her work in galleries in the Boston area. Cindy sits on the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the state agency responsible for distributing funds for the arts, sciences, and humanities. **www.cindycubaclements.com.**

James Damico '91 (p. 13) is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Literacy, Culture, and Language Education at Indiana University. He is the author of a book, journal articles, book chapters, as well as poetry and music. Some of his songs appear on the album, *American Lullaby*, by his band Amigo Fields (**www.amigofields.com**). During his time at F&M, he cultivated a love of language and has been gratefully composing poems and songs ever since.

Richard Drake '68 (p. 54) graduated in 1 BW (Before Women, aka 1968 AD on the Gregorian calendar), just before F&M formally shifted its educational perspective from late-18th to mid-20th century. After working and living in Lancaster for several years, where he was an accessory after the fact to the unfortunate “redevelopment” of downtown Lancaster, he shifted, in 1974, to the Left Coast. He resides in San Francisco where, with some trepidation, he awaits the next shift along the San Andreas.

Ronald M. Druker '66, P'90 (pp. 29, 103), president of The Druker Company, Ltd., has been involved in a variety of development activities encompassing retail, hotel, residential and office projects. His most recent focus has been on urban mixed-use developments, including The Heritage on The Garden in Boston's Back Bay, and The Public Garden and Atelier|505 in Boston's South End. Both of these complexes were recognized by the Urban Land Institute by winning the coveted “Oscar” of the profession, The ULI Award for Excellence.

Aaron Fink, M.D. '70 (p. 14), Professor Emeritus of Surgery at Emory University, majored in biology. He received his M.D. from Johns Hopkins and completed his residency at the University of Michigan. He has held academic appointments at UCLA, University of Cincinnati, and Emory University, where he was chief of Surgical Services at the Atlanta VA

hospital. Dr. Fink is also a passionate underwater photographer. He and his wife, Vicki, now live in Sarasota, Fla.

Jennifer Grimm de Mello e Souza '92 (p.26) majored in art, and counts herself very lucky to have studied under Bill Hutson. She lives and paints in the Pacific Northwest, which inspires much of her work. Jennie shows her work regularly and teaches art to adolescents and adults across the region. She is currently working on a series of illustrations of animals in old-fashioned formal wear. You can see more of her work at www.jenniedemelloesouza.com.

Susan Hagner '83 (p.46) graduated majoring in studio art with an unofficial minor in art history. She received an MFA in '89 from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. She is currently an active member of the Boston-area arts scene, creating art in several media: collage, painting, iconography. She also teaches iconography. Contact Susan through her website: www.susanhagner.net.

John Hambright '62 (p.62), a Lancaster native, completed a triple major in government, French, and history. He received the Williamson Alumni medal and was a Fulbright Scholar at Strasbourg and Oxford, and a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Harvard. He has divided his years between college teaching, government service, and creative writing. John lives in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

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Anthony Herman '07 (p.43) lives outside Philadelphia with his wife of three years, Gemma Covelli '06. He and Gemma continue to teach and work, respectively, with pharmaceuticals. They are not “breaking bad,” however, no matter how much they fantasize about it.

Douglas Hill '15 (p.89) had a pleasant time majoring in creative writing, and was the oldest student at any institution in Europe or the U.S. He writes all the time now, mostly. He was lured to Lancaster by Professor Nancy Kurland, BOS, which went well all around. Before academia, he ran marketing at five tech companies in L.A. and still charges a reasonable hourly; ask for a quote. Do please write him at dhill@fandm.edu with anything that can improve this piece, or his life in general.

Lori Lynn Hoffer '81 (p.6) majored in studio art/art history, and continued those studies with graduate work in Florence, Italy. She has run Waterlily Design for over 30 years, but recently returned part time to her first creative love, oil painting. Landscape is an easy subject choice as she lives in the beautiful Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts. Life on the “farm” still includes one child living at home with lots of animals and outdoor time. lorilynn@waterlilydesign.com

Richard Kanter '89 (p.12) majored in English, and is an attorney consultant, activist, and juried artist. His works have developed over the years to raise awareness of the healing power of art. Richard is pleased to announce that he had his first one-man show in Brooklyn, N.Y. this past summer. His prints can be viewed and purchased at www.rkmeditations.imagekind.com. Richard also welcomes commissioned works. He can be reached at bodyofwaves@gmail.com.

Denise King Gillingham '80 (p.59) enjoys exploring the magic that happens when water hits pigment. Her paintings reflect a fascination with layering color and seeing the beauty in everyday life.

| 110 | **L.M. Kintz (Lynn Miller) '74** (p. 30) studied ancient history, but after graduation, pursued a career in dance and choreography. She continues to teach ballet and follow her interests in archeology, history, genealogy, cooking, and writing. She has received honorable mention in Glimmer Train and the annual Harrisburg Magazine writing contest. She lives near Carlisle, Pa., with her husband and three large dogs. Contact is welcome at bakerstreet1893@gmail.com.

Lee Krohn '79 (p. 36) works in land-use planning and emergency management, serves on the Shelburne, Vt., Volunteer Fire Department, and remains as passionate as ever about sharing unique perspectives on our world through his photography. Friends are encouraged to contact him directly at leekrohn1@gmail.com, and visit his image galleries at leekrohnphoto.smugmug.com.

Georgina Lewis '84 (p.60) majored in English and art history and holds additional degrees from Bard College and Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts. She is the recipient of various fellowships and residencies, including the Millay Colony, VCCA, and Harvard's metaLAB.

Her work has been presented widely in the U.S. and abroad. For additional information see **birdfur.com**. Be in touch, especially if you have contacts at NASA!

Emilia Lievano '84 (p. 98) enjoys exercising her artistic eye through various forms of creativity: photography, jewelry making, mosaics, and gardening. She majored in experimental psychology and enjoyed taking various art classes at F&M. She currently works as an occupational therapist and lives in Philadelphia's inner suburbs with her husband, daughter, and rescue dog. She can be reached at **emiliacl@mindspring.com**.

Joseph Mackin '88 (p. 55) is the author of *Pretend All Your Life*, a novel. He was the original internet editor of *The Paris Review* under George Plimpton, and is co-founder and editorial director for 2Paragraphs.com. After receiving a B.A. in English from F&M, he earned an M.A. in Literature from New York University in 1991. He lives in New York with his wife and two sons.

Heather Belaga McLean '86 (p. 115) majored in business management, obtained her Master's in physical therapy, and is now Inpatient Manager for PT at Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore. She has presented internationally on a variety of pediatric PT topics, and combines her love of travel, cultures, and people with photography. She lives in Owings Mills, Md., with her husband, Robbie, and their cat, Michi. **rhmclean@verizon.net**

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Sarah R. Medeiros '11 (p. 104) majored in English with a concentration in creative writing, and has spent much of the intervening time exploring where her own words fit in. In May, she will graduate from American University in Washington, D.C., with a master's degree in International Media, but experimenting with words of all kinds continues to be her primary preoccupation.

Keiran Miller '15 (p. 96) majored in English with a concentration in creative writing. Co-founder of F&M's first spoken-word poetry club, L.I.F.T., he seeks to connect a world of divided people through shared poetic experiences.

Kristina Montville '14 (p. 44) majored in history and English with a studio art minor. Her love of photography strengthened during her years at F&M through studio classes, traveling abroad, and working in the photo lab. After graduating, Kristina spent four months working at *National Geographic* magazine and a year working at F&M before accepting a job at Columbia University and moving to New York City. Her photograph, "Hot Spring in West Thumb Geyser Basin, Yellowstone National Park," was featured on the cover of the *Alumni Arts Review* Volume IV, EDGE.

Tom Musante '80 (p. 74) graduated with a degree in economics. Over the past 30 years, he has held executive technology positions in financial services, management consulting, and, most recently, transportation. After a 20-year hiatus, Musante returned to photography, finding success with both gallery shows and published work. His photograph, "Passage Through Time—Lanaconing Silk Mill," was featured on the cover of the *Alumni Arts Review's* second volume, DOORWAY. More of his work can be seen at www.tommusante.com.

John Ottavino '77 (p. 80) has been a professional actor in New York City, America, and the world for 37 years. Since graduating, he has performed on campus three times as artist-in-residence. He is slated to act in plays in Arkansas and Florida over the next six months.

Samantha Perrine '14 (p. 35) double majored in anthropology and studio art. She is currently working as an independent photographer and continues to explore many other artistic mediums, including sculpture and painting; you can often find her with camera or paintbrush in hand. Samantha enjoys traveling and visiting with fellow alumni. She also recently adopted a cat, Lucky! Samantha and Lucky can be contacted at samantha.perrine@gmail.com.

Sam Price '09 (p. 99) lives in Philadelphia. He can be found on the internet at samwprice.wordpress.com or at swittmannprice@gmail.com.

Marcy Gray Rubin '78 (p. 85) majored in English and theatre, and worked for many years writing sit-coms and episodic television. "Signs" is a prologue from a memoir-in-progress, *Nothing But Net*. Currently, when Marcy is not agonizing over the precise word choices

with which to compose sentences, she works as a psychotherapist in private practice.

Gerard Rugel '68 (pp. 42, 75), an attorney practicing in Fairfax County, Va, majored in history, and attended the American University's School of Law. His work focuses on legal issues confronted by individuals with disabilities. F&M's *Oriflamme* published his first photographs in 1968; 45 years later, the *Alumni Arts Review* Volume III, SHIFT, featured his photograph, "The Cartwheel," on its cover. Email him at rugellaw@aol.com.

Bill Scaff '57 (p. 53) graduated with a degree in economics and spent his working years in the insurance industry. 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 his art in 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, N.J.

Lisa M. Schreiner '85 (p. 84) studied art and business at F&M, and graphic arts at The University of Applied Arts in Vienna, Austria. "Essentially, contact, to our environment, to family members, friends and strangers, and to our emotions, provides innumerable sources of inspiration. Inspiration is everywhere," she says. Lisa currently lives and works in Vienna, and New York, City. Lisa.m.schreiner@hotmail.com

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Mariassa Schwartz '15 (p. 7) majored in English with an emphasis in creative writing and minored in Chinese. She is now a fifth grade teacher in Princeton, N.J. She loves sharing her love of poetry with her students, encouraging each child to find his or her own voice, and to use it to make this world a more beautiful place.

John Shire '66 (pp. 28, 75) 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 has 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.

Allan Tasman, M.D. '69 (p.41) is Professor and Emeritus Chair of Psychiatry at the University of Louisville and Schwab Endowed Chair in Social and Community Psychiatry. A psychoanalyst, cognitive neuroscience researcher, and past president of the American Psychiatric Association, Tasman has published 35 textbooks and lectured extensively around the world. He received the F&M Alumni Citation in 2012. With his spouse Cathy, an artist, teacher, and mental health advocate, he has three adult children. He spends most of his free time gardening and making photographs.

Dave Taylor '81 (p.37) majored in English, minored in psychology, and took every writing course available in the catalog. He currently resides in Lancaster and owns a branding consulting firm. He is a regular columnist on branding and marketing for the *Central Penn Business Journal* and *Reading Eagle* and has recently become addicted to crossword puzzles. He can be reached at dt@taylorbrandgroup.com.

F. Jeffrey Trubisz '70 (p.76) majored in English and pursued a teaching career in the Melrose, Mass., public schools, from 1974 to 2008. Exploring the mountains of New England and the West is a passion, along with photographing those adventures. He currently resides in Burlington, Vt., with his wife, Shayne, and their Irish setter, Maggie. His work can be viewed at onthetrailphotography.com.

Jim Yescalis '68 (Cover, p.28) 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 Jill, his wife of 45 years. jimandjillyes@aol.com

Steven E. Zimmet, M.D. '74 (p.78) has a solo practice in Austin, Texas, focusing on cosmetic dermatology and the treatment of vein diseases. When not working, he enjoys playing golf, guitar, traveling, and photography.

Acknowledgments

As Editor of the *Alumni Arts Review*, each year I ask a number of students to serve on my Editorial Board. Sometimes getting that group together is a bit like chasing marbles spilled on a hard surface, as students have very active lives, in addition to their studies, and participation on the Editorial Board requires a number of meetings, and not only those in which we discuss submissions. There's the "Copyedit Party" (work of the eagle-eye kind); the "What's our next theme?" dinner (a lot of fun); and the "Stuff & Mail Party" (this last a fairly vast project involving getting boxes full of *Reviews* to the Post Office ready to be mailed to all alums who over the years have sent us their work). Members of the Board also do a lot (a lot) of reading. They peruse all submitted poems and stories and essays, providing short commentary on the same; they study the many pieces of visual art, and again offer their views. Not everyone comments on everything—I stagger these assignments—but it is a lot of work and demands commitment.

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This year's Board has been deeply and marvelously engaged, and my first thank you goes out to these wonderful students: those who graduate this spring (I will miss them terribly): **Caylah Coffeen**, **Clarissa Grunwald**, **Greer Kann**, and **Brien Miceli**; those graduating in '18 and '19: **Indira Rahman**, and **Emilia Donnelly** and **Katie Pierce**; and two sterling first-year students: **Kim Brandolisio** and **Laramie Graber**.

Also serving on the Editorial Board are assistant professors **Meg Day** and **Marci Nelligan**. I am particularly grateful to these fine poets, who took considerable time and effort to provide editorial suggestions on a number of poems. I learn much just by reading the concepts they suggest to our alums, and the poets they work with are as grateful as I am for their invaluable assistance.

I am also grateful to members of our campus community who support the *Alumni Arts Review* in any number of ways. I'll begin with **Tamara A. Goeglein**, Professor of English and Interim Director of the Phillips Museum, who last year proposed a collaboration between the Phillips and the *Alumni Arts Review*. This past fall, during Homecoming Weekend, this collaboration came to fruition: an exhibition of a selection of images from the AAR's first five volumes. At the Homecoming reception, we also featured a number of alums reading from their work. It was a memorable afternoon—visual and literary. It was such a success that we plan to move our annual AAR Fall Reading and Reception—during which writers and artists talk about their work—from late October to Homecoming, to be held in the Writers House.

Speaking of the Writers House, which houses my office and offers so much material sustenance: another enormous thank you is due its Director, **Kerry Sherin Wright**, who lends such support as both a member of my Advisory Board and as friend; and to Assistant Director **Joanna Underhill**. Jo is at every turn gracious and helpful with my myriad questions and requests, from the small: "How many donuts do you recommend I get for the Editorial Board meeting?" to the vital: "Can you help fill out a Student Employment Request Form?" I can't adequately express my thanks for her willingness to help and her endless good humor.

Many thanks to **Mary Mazzuca**, Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, who is so generous with her time and knowledge, as well as to her lovely assistant, **Pat Fossler**; and to **Donna Pflum** and others in the Office of Alumni Relations: just some of the assistance they offer includes coordinating and emailing announcements and invitations, helping to organize the Publication Party, proofreading the Contributor bios, and searching for lost alums. They are a great team and I could not do any of this without them.

In the Provost's Office, I want to thank Provost **Joel Martin** for his enthusiasm and support; and Associate Dean of the Faculty, **Kim Armstrong**, for her much appreciated perspective, sense of humor, and good advice.

In the essential Communications Office, thanks to **Jason Klinger**, Senior Director of Creative & Brand Strategy, who keeps a steady hand at the helm of that incredibly busy office; **Sri Dasgupta**, the quite amazing Director of Web Content and Multimedia; and **Chris Karlesky '01**, Editor, *F&M Magazine*, who each year selects a few pieces from the *AAR* to include in the *Magazine*, which helps expand those who get to read and view the work of our alums: I'm very grateful for this support.

And none of it would happen without graphic designer **Michael Fink**. Not only does he put the entire journal together, dealing with endless rounds of copy edits; he offers an appreciated perspective on art and balance and color. I always enjoy the weeks in which we are finally assembling the issue, when we are in touch almost hourly by email: discussing, joking, changing, confirming, perfecting. The *Alumni Arts Review* simply would not be what it is without him.

The entire wonderful English Department also has my gratitude, especially our chair, **Judith Mueller**, who combines so beautifully a pragmatic mind and loving heart, and our superb Department Coordinator, **Debra Faust Saporetti '91**.

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And F&M President **Dan Porterfield**: for his vision and wholehearted support for the aims of the *AAR*.

The most vital thank you of all is to the many alumni—growing each year—who submit their work to the *Review*. Where would we be without your wonderful work? As the Editorial Board and I make our way through the submissions, the diversity of style and talent and range is something we often discuss. Once the Editorial Board has offered commentary, and it's time for me to get down to gritty work of putting together a particular issue, these are amongst the things I take into consideration. I also juggle graduating years, gender, and various “takes” on the given theme. We only have so many pages, and it's often excruciating to make those decisions.

And those alums whose work is accepted usually have more work to do: writers receive editorial comments from me (or via me, from the professors on the Editorial Board); even visual artists may receive requests for higher resolution and the like. No doubt the first of these emails, proposing changes, is a bit startling. However, the friendships created with any number of alums, as we work on making their piece the best it can be, is one of the most satisfying parts of my job. Often these exchanges include a dozen emails, often many more, as we get a stanza to do the work it's capable of doing, find exactly the right verb, determine the placement of a piece of punctuation. So I want to express gratitude to those alums who submit their work in the first place, and also to those who work so hard with me to make their work shine.

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I've been so lucky with my editorial assistants over these first six years of the *Review*, and this year is no exception. **Greer Kann '17** has been a lively and delightful comrade as well as assistant, excellent and quick at every aspect of the job. She has also been most generous in training my up-and-coming assistants, **Emilia Donnelly '19**, and **Kim Brandolisio '20** (both of whom so impressed me in their first semesters on campus that I asked them to join the team). This past fall, Emilia set a tone of engagement and expertise on the Board for which I am grateful; she'll be taking over from Greer—as Greer took over from Delia, and Delia from Maeve, and Maeve from Charlotte, and as Kim will assist and then eventually take over from Emilia. It's always hugely difficult to say goodbye to my assistant—we work so closely on myriad details—but they do have to graduate. I am deeply grateful to Greer for her delightful sense of humor, her dedication, and her insights. This issue is what it is because of her many contributions.

Sands Hall, Editor



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