



BAILY'S BEADS

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD
300 CAMPUS DRIVE, BRADFORD, PA 16701



Continuous Landscape—mixed media
JENNIFER LAU

BAILY'S BEADS are the highest points of light that appear around the edge of the moon at the solar eclipse. The beads are created by sunlight passing through the moon's valleys. The last bead is the brightest, resembling a diamond on a brilliant ring. This phenomenon lasts but a few spectacular moments.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Baily's Beads is always looking for original pieces that reflect our community, culture, or current events in a distinctive and inventive way. We accept poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction (memoirs, essays, commentaries, interviews, and travel and nature writing). We also accept art: photography, paintings, drawings, mixed media, and sculpture.

If you would like to submit your work for the next issue, please send it to bailys@pitt.edu with a separate cover sheet containing your name, contact information (address, e-mail, and phone), title of your piece, and genre or medium.

So that the staff may judge anonymously and fairly, we ask that your name does not appear on the work itself. We ask that you double space prose and single space poetry. Authors may submit up to twenty pages. Images should have a resolution of 300 dpi and be saved as a jpeg file to ensure a high quality print. We ask that each author/artist submit no more than ten pieces each year.

Entries can be sent electronically to bailys@pitt.edu. We accept submissions year-round. By submitting, you agree to allow the staff to use your work in *Baily's Beads* and its promotions.

AWARDS

COLUMBIA SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

2004 Silver Medalist
2005 Gold Medalist
2005 Silver Crown Award
2006 Silver Medalist
2007 Crown Award
2008 Gold Medalist
2011 Gold Medalist
2013 Gold Medalist
2014 Silver Medalist

AMERICAN SCHOLASTIC PRESS ASSOCIATION

2004 First Place with special merit
2005 First Place with special merit
2006 First Place
2007 First Place
2008 First Place with special merit
2010 First Place with special merit
2010 Best College Magazine Award
2011 First Place with special merit
2011 Best College Magazine Award
2012 First Place with special merit
2012 Best College Magazine Award
2013 First Place with special merit
2014 First Place and Outstanding Theme

ASSOCIATED COLLEGIATE PRESS

2001 First Class with 3 marks of distinction
2003 First Class with 2 marks of distinction
2004 First Class with 3 marks of distinction
2010 First Class with 2 marks of distinction

EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF

SALYNDA HOGSETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR/DESIGN

AMY GABERSECK-HUGHES

STAFF

COLIN ALMEIDA

KAYLA BEERS

ELIZABETH BURKHOLDER

JACLYN GIACOBBI

NOAH HURRE

SELESE HUTH

PATRICK KIRK

STEPHANIE MCFALL

CHRISTINA SMITH

DANIEL TENNIES

SHAHADA THOMAS

MEGAN WHISENNAND

ADVISORS

PROF. ANNA LEMNITZER

DR. NANCY MCCABE

PROF. CAROL NEWMAN

EDITORS' NOTE

Baily's Beads has had a proud history of success. Now in its twenty-first year of local publication and distribution, our small magazine has been only a blip on the radar of all the impressive undergraduate literary magazines in our country. However, that doesn't mean that it is any less spectacular, and *Baily's* can boast an impressive list of awards as evidence.

Baily's Beads has matured much over the years and grown to become the successful publication it is today. Like Pitt-Bradford's students, the magazine aspires to become a successful professional comparable to its nationally distributed peers.

Although we never chose an official theme for this issue, the word "milestones" was frequently on our minds from the beginning. In writing, life's milestones are often key turning points in the development of one's characters or narrators. When we started work on this issue a year ago, we considered that turning twenty-one in our culture often symbolizes the passing of the final barrier between adolescence and all the privileges of adulthood.

Our staff and advisors are hoping to make our twenty-first volume the milestone that marks our professional new appearance with the incorporation of a permanent logo design and format that will be recognizable from year-to-year. We also hope to guide the magazine to wider readership in the future with the increased ease and availability of online publication options within the Adobe InDesign program.

As we move forward with our magazine, we don't want to forget our origins. The name *Baily's Beads* often raises

questions about its origin and meaning. Baily's Beads are the bright points of light that appear around a solar eclipse. They last only a few breathtaking moments. In many ways our magazine is like that: a momentary yet reoccurring phenomenon. Since college communities are always changing, we strive to annually capture a glimpse of the Pitt-Bradford community.

Featured in this issue are two profiles of individuals who make our community unique: Tim Ziaukas and Richard Marcott. Ziaukas is the director of the public relations program at Pitt-Bradford and is the advisor for the school newspaper, *The Source*. Marcott has published excerpts from his memoir in progress, *A View from the Rigging*, multiple times in *Baily's Beads*. His stories bring a greater range to *Baily's Beads* that is not seen in many other undergraduate literary magazines.

We would like to thank advisors Dr. Nancy McCabe and Professor Carol Newman for all their wisdom and supervision throughout this process. We would also like to thank the staff for putting in long hours even outside of class. Also, a huge thank you goes out to our art advisor, Professor Anna Lemnitzer for her help and advice on art and design. We would again like to thank Professor Jeff Guterman and the Division of Communication and the Arts of Pitt-Bradford for the funds that support *Baily's Beads*. Lastly, we would like to thank our publishers, Ben and Jason at Ferguson Printing, who have been very patient and understanding with our tardiness in getting this issue to print.

Once again, we would like to thank everyone who has made this issue possible. We hope you enjoy the 2016 issue of *Baily's Beads*.

—Salynda Hogsett & Amy Gaberseck-Hughes

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Untitled—photography
PAIGE WALLACE



Colors of Childhood

Selese Huth

A bright, flouncy tutu of
canary yellow and bubblegum pink
play together in a sandbox.
Indigo overalls cut short above the knee
wave hello to the neon plastic rain boots below.

The boots happily tread through
a lake of green grass and daisies.
Flowers tied together in a halo
around her caramel cherub curls
embody the beauty of childhood innocence
we wish we could preserve forever.

But like the rest of us,
she too will one day go to jump
into the murky mud puddle again
only to find herself submerged into
the painful red chaos of womanhood
where life becomes complicated and
Prince Charming doesn't exist.

Golden Arch Construction Crew

Heather Fitzsimmons

Tiny little tenants, you twitch and twitter
twits. Brown-and-white barred bodies with sepia-
accented puffs atop black-hooked, reptilian twigs.
I see you slap those tantalizing tatty sticks and
snitch those sesames from a superfluous bun.
My eyes follow you back and forth from bush to
garbage can to gate to Hamburglar's metallic head
as you nervously construct your homes with straw
papers and abandoned shoelaces, all woven tight
with multicolored strands of children's hair left
behind on the bolt from the top of Fry Guy's slide.

Evermore Shall I Sleep

Selese Huth

I hope it rained.

The rhythmic melody of the rain and roof
making music together is soothing, calming,
perfect for falling asleep to.

It would have been a fitting send-off
since I am now in the vast land of eternal sleep,
where I keep company with lidless worms
and the roots of trees that will live much longer
than I.

But trees too are destined to have their lives cut
short.

Great oaks, once fragile saplings that bravely stood
amid three days of shelling at Gettysburg,
veterans of a war no one alive can remember.

They will be cut, planed, and polished to perfection
only to become more corpse boxes
to be buried, to rot in the ground

where the dead dance
and the living go to die.



The Ghost of Vietnam

Brady Major

“They out there,” whispered Sergeant Cole Williams in a voice as strained as my bones and as gentle as the rain pattering off the tops of our helmets.

“Who?” I answered clearly, replying if only to fill the deadly void of silence with something other than my own paranoia at what lay beyond our post. The ever-present fear that my every move was being watched had seized my heart in a death grip since I had begun those nightly shifts deep inside the Vietnamese jungle.

“Charlie out there,” Cole quietly returned, this time pointing with his meaty index finger out over the muddy trench hole and in the direction of a wall of trees beyond our position.

I knew his answer needed no further response. Yes, Charlie was out there. We all knew that clear as day, and Charlie was aware of it too. And that’s where they had us. Our army had the most advanced and powerful

weaponry out there, yet Charlie had us one better: they knew how to play our minds; they knew about fear. We were in their territory, on their home field, and they weren’t about to let some heavy stepping Yankees march into the place without putting up a fight.

It hadn’t taken long to realize that at sunset Charlie owned the darkness, and by association, owned us. As the fierce, sizzling sun sunk deep into the Vietnamese horizon, we all knew that our army full of high performance firearms and explosives weren’t a match for Charlie at nighttime.

They had an almost supernatural hold over us from the beginning. During peak hours of the night they would shriek out in unison as if in prayer, breaking the silence like a gun blast through a pane of glass. Looking back on those moments, I still don’t understand why they did it. Were they joining together in a battle cry? An attempt at communicating with a god beyond the deep canopy of

leaves that blocked out the stars above? Or maybe it was simply a message to us, a chilling missive that they were still out there, breathing, waiting, and packing the kind of heat that made a burning iron feel painless to the touch. Just hearing them all shout in that collective voice acted as a language barrier to our ears and sent chills up my spine. As I laid there in the trench I knew that they were out there somewhere, waiting for us to come creeping towards them through the darkness, just as we had expected them to do.

Once I heard their shrieks, I shivered with a foreboding sense of sorrow, and felt the cover of night fall down upon me like the wave of a nasty swell. I knew Vietnam was a losing game for my fellow boys in the red, white and blue. After we touched down in Vietnam, Charlie didn't need to nail *No Trespassing* signs into the bark of the trees. The stinking piles of American bodies stacked ten high transmitted that

message just fine.

And then there was that jungle, a pit of darkness with a life of its own. Sometimes the rest of the boys and I wondered who the real enemy was: Charlie, or

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the jungle? I mean, Charlie was crafty, but the jungle was on a whole different level. That landscape was absolutely indifferent to race or

ethnicity and lacked the capacity to feel the kind of sentiment found in mere humans, making the terrain like a feral dog released off the chain. The jungle was the all-seeing, all-knowing power in Vietnam, the unchallenged master of masking what we could feel was there, and what we never dared to go out looking for. It played on our anxieties nightly, making damn sure that we woke up soaked with sweat at the snap of every piece of wood and the shuffling of every blade of foliage. At moments like that, we felt like the terrain itself was working on its own behalf, setting evil designs against both Charlie and our unit, ultimately

waiting for the perfect moment to creep out and strike. It was the silence of nights like that, with black darkness that hid away whatever was out there waiting to kill you, that could haunt your wildest dreams. It is the untamed animal of the Vietnamese jungle itself, covered by the hand of night and holder of all that is unknown in this wild country that will eat away at you if you let it. And I let it.

While things were certainly rough there in Vietnam, things were getting just as chaotic back on home soil. Not long before that time, you had big Joe McCarthy waving his so-called “black book” full of known communists around while men and women were getting blacklisted left and right at shoddy trial proceedings. As our country ran to the aid of a crumbling South Vietnam in an effort to combat the very political system McCarthy had previously rallied against, our nation entered its own period of desperation and dissatisfaction. During that time the country had seen some of its darkest days, with its own national forces shooting down fellow Americans during protests against the very

war I had found myself deep in the heart of. Times like those gave you a new perspective on life, making you question just what the hell all this fighting and killing was supposed to mean in the long run. American society as a whole seemed to be at a breaking point, where opposing sides in politics and beyond still couldn’t settle their differences and work together just once for the good of the people. It seemed that just as Agent Orange was eroding the plant life of the Vietnamese jungle, our own people were eating away at each other, fist for fist and bullet for bullet. These were the kinds of thoughts I kept bottled up inside my head during that time, and though it wasn’t exactly healthy, I couldn’t help it.

As the world entered the 70s, commanders flew more often than ever into our bases all across Vietnam almost weekly. Their reports were frequent, and mostly concerned untold numbers of civilian deaths occurring at home during war protests. A few other visiting commanders delivered news focusing on the continued paranoia left over from the communist witch-hunts. As if

to confirm the existence of the storm cloud looming overhead at this period, I heard about the situation at Kent State, Ohio the week of my birthday. To receive reports of our own National Guard shooting unarmed student protestors ate away at me all day and forever after. Needless to say, not even the best dinner the unit could muster up helped to quench my anger, my growing cynicism, and my tireless hatred of that war. The other soldiers often looked at me with growing concern, always telling me to keep my head up. They said that everything would be alright in the end. But they didn't know what I was feeling, and they sure as shit didn't know how badly we were losing the war. I probably could have smiled a bit more back then if I tried real hard, but I quickly found out that after experiencing so much bad you begin to find it hard to see anything good in what you're doing.

As promised, the 70s kicked on and my experience in Vietnam was as soul sucking as ever once things really started heating up. What started as small missions to transport men and ammunition to outposts

along the rivers running deep inside the jungle had turned into far more drastic efforts. My unit and I would watch Vietnamese families living all across the terrain kneel in pain with their crying newborn babies, carrying with them any valuables they could hold on to as commanders ordered us to clear them out of the area, burn their homes to the ground and poison their water supply.

I looked at the crowds of women and children we were pushing out, wondering if any of the Charlie were their loved ones. Gazing at the pure looks of innocence on the faces of the babies, I instantly craved to be a child again, back when I had no knowledge of hate, war, or death. As we removed the Vietnamese from their villages and set fire to all they had known, I found a sick parallel to how my own life had played out, with no place to lay my head and no hands to hold on to for comfort.

Looking at the charred remains of people's homes and sense of safety, you would think things couldn't get much worse for Charlie's loved ones. Sadly, it didn't end there. It never ended there. If our commanders were

feeling especially infuriated that day, they'd order a few boys to line up some of the Charlie and shoot them all down in one burst. The bullet-riddled corpses toppled like dominoes as if it was all some sick game to them. I refused to watch. While I often questioned how we were all a part of the same species, I had darker moments where I had to drop my gun to the ground

Watching them roll
around in a charred
frenzy upon the
pavement made it clear
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ourselves.

just to resist making Swiss cheese out of the bastards. The way I saw it, if you ordered the inhumane executions of a bunch of defenseless innocents you were obviously empty of any tangible humanity and weren't deserving of the kind of respect your status demanded.

Staring down at the corpses of all those Vietnamese laid out in a line, I thought again of their native people fighting elsewhere in the jungle who were now deprived of their families forever. For that moment in time

I realized that maybe we weren't that different after all, Charlie and I, and once again questioned my place in this world. You could only watch so many Charlie light themselves on fire before you begin to question just what the point of all this war was anyway. Watching them roll around in a charred frenzy upon the pavement made it clear to me that the only enemy we

were fighting were the untamed savages contained in ourselves. On most days, I decided that a bullet straight through the heart for any of us would be a pleasant escape from that conflict.

I sometimes felt like sharing these kinds of feelings with the rest of the men in the company, like Cole, but instead chose to shut myself off as much as I could from everyone around me. I had previously made the mistake of creating friendships while stationed close to Saigon,

only to have those closest to me die in my arms, choking on what blood was left inside them once Charlie was finished. No, a young boy like Cole who was only here because he couldn't afford a college education wouldn't be any better off hearing me bitch about my own adjustment issues. And so, I sat in silence most of the time, salvaging what comfort I could from utter isolation. If you switched off like that, and rid yourself of any social contact outside of your mission objectives, you could sleep better at night, though only a little. And yet, no matter how much you try to seek that shelter, there always remains a pounding sense of dread in your heart. You grow concerned that soon you'll become a victim of your own poor decisions, unresponsive to human contact and more like a callous savage than a brave drafted soldier. Yet it was on nights like that one with Cole, away from those of my unit

In my most cynical moments I waited for death, almost wishing for it to take me away from this hell, but did that mean I wouldn't be frightened when it came?

who behaved like animals, that I reflected upon myself and made the distinction that I hadn't yet been completely lost.

"Sir? Are you scared of dying?" Cole had spoken yet again, but my mind had drifted far from my body at that moment and into the abyss. It seemed like every time I made a point of avoiding conversations with my unit one of them would inevitably try to engage me in a discussion. The memories of those who did the same before Cole and grew on to become dear friends still flash vividly before me. First it was Billy Martin, a journalist reporting war news from deep in the field along the Mekong Delta. Not long after him, there was Private Phillips who was working as our unit's translator until the My Lai Massacre where he lost his life saving a family of Charlie our men were mercilessly killing. Then there was Richard Strang,

Jonathan Hardy, and Thomas Pearson, drinking buddies all killed in a failed assault on a known prisoner of war camp deep inside Viet Minh controlled territory. And of course we all knew what had happened to Kurtz. Would Cole become the next friend of mine that I would have to watch die agonizingly before my eyes? Back then I think I knew the answer, and just didn't want to admit it to myself. A savage would have accepted such casualties and moved on, but I managed to cling tightly to what remained of my humanity one night longer. Looking over at Cole on his side of the trench, I saw the recognizable fear in his eyes, the need for reassurance and a desire for some sense of company in that bleak darkness. I indulged him, and asked if he could repeat his inquiry once more, using the same hushed tone.

I pondered his question with earnest dedication. Was I scared of dying? While it seemed like a bit of a vain question to present to a soldier fighting for his country in a foreign territory, I decided to take a bite at the apple and thought it over real hard in my head. In my most

cynical moments I waited for death, almost wishing for it to take me away from this hell, but did that mean I wouldn't be frightened when it came? Of course not. While I was still lost in my thoughts over the matter, I did know one thing: death meant different things to everyone. For some it signifies leaving this plane of existence for a greener pasture up in heaven. For others it's an escape for their soul as they exit their current existence, leaving behind an empty shell of a corpse. And for some others, death is like scratching off a winning lottery ticket, because they view life as one long trial filled with nothing but pain and suffering. They are often too cowardly to kill themselves and instead let fate do its bidding.

But for me, death meant something far more frightening. For me, death was Charlie: a nameless, cloaked figure of the night, armed with a gun and charging towards me head-on, muttering words as foreign to my ears as their terrain was to my eyes. They were all specters forever placed over my shoulder. Their cries revealed to this beating heart that they were out there, and they would soon come

for me. It was just a matter of when.

I had prepared to reply to Cole, who sat looking at me in a dumbfounded manner as I had again trailed off into my own little word. Just as I cleared my throat, a familiar wave of shivers traveled along my spine as if a jolt of electricity was making its way up and down my vertebrae.

"Did you hear that?" I lightly asked Cole as I got in closer.

"Hear what?" he returned.

"Exactly." Charlie was usually quiet, but not *this* quiet. While they often made a point to shout out, rustle the leaves or let off an automatic round to ensure we were all aware of their presence, now there was nothing. Not even the slightest whispers or cracks of tree limbs entered my ears. It was like they were listening the whole time, mapping out a plan of attack as both Cole and I sloppily took our eyes and ears off of the environment surrounding us, using it to their advantage.

Before I could prepare a strategy to combat what appeared to be a pack of Charlie approaching for an ambush, my train of thought was derailed as I heard something softly ricochet

against the side of the trench and land with a firm thud into the muddy ground inside. If I hadn't been paying attention I'd have thought it was Cole adjusting himself or checking his gun for a jam, but he was still in that same position, his eyes alert and searching as he tried to listen for any outside movement. Only then did his mind put together the pieces, too, and we both jumped forward to where we'd heard the resounding thud, almost bumping helmets as we went.

Gazing deep inside the mud, I linked eyes with death in the form of a grenade, a homemade design from Charlie himself. Before I could shout a warning to Cole, curse Charlie for his audacity, or give out a shrill cry in answer to the many my ears had endured while inside that thick jungle, it was all over. All I can recall seeing is a bright flash, with hues of yellow, red and orange beginning to engulf the almost holy white light, and in turn, me. My whole body was aflame, as if I was a Vietnamese sacrifice being burnt for their own sacred purpose. The explosion had sent shrapnel on a direct path towards my face where pieces of the hot

metal had now made their home; the blood spilling into what was left of my eyes made them burn with the same intensity as the fire. My ears were apparently still functioning, for I could hear bloodcurdling cries exiting from Cole's lips, deep and guttural as the life too was squeezed out


My whole body was
 aflame, as if I was a
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of him. Through the putrid smell of my own charring skin, I too tried to cry out, but my mouth was overflowing with blood and my vocal chords produced only gags.

Anything I had known up to that point was gone, and I felt as if I was drifting away, the seething fire now more temperate in its fiery passions. What felt like hours of writhing agony passed by in mere seconds as I came closer and closer to my destination at Death's doorstep, the only saving grace being that I would finally escape Vietnam.

As everything in my world grew black, I heard the slightest echo of laughter coming from above the trench, as if a pack of hyenas had come to bear witness to my demise.

Straining my head upwards, I found only a pack of Charlie staring down upon me with rice hats on their

heads and automatic weapons slung over their shoulders. It was there, in those final laughs to ever reach my eardrums, that I found my answer to the conundrum Cole had placed upon my shoulders during his own final breaths. Dying there upon the cold mud that acted as an interesting contrast to the inferno surrounding me, the answer came in one last flash to my mind. I realized that if there existed those like Charlie who found pleasure in the termination of another human being, life was far scarier than death. 

War's Persistence

Blair Patterson

Sometimes I speak with dead men.
We ask each other why
and offer nothing in return.
We laugh,
as if our memories have faded,
but in the dark
they burn our eyes and blind us.
We fall asleep to the rhythm of the shaking earth,
and wake to the screams of our brothers.
Hell is ours.
We, the dead.

Black Lakes and Bruises

Jennifer Willemin

Sometimes a lady drifts away in the midst of unzipping her evening dress, her hand clenching her vodka soda. Sometimes, beneath her sullen eyes, you see her sins, the nights half-remembered. You check your compact, re-apply lipstick.

The water calls, the moon pulling you to the ledge to help you jump, to make you drown. If there are stars, you feel them, numbering each strand of silver. They want you to stay. Back to the water, face to the sky, you feel the cool ripples drift your body toward the deepest part of the lake.

Forget about New York, about taxis, about high rises, about him. He left himself inside you, bruises blackening between your legs. Soon you will crumble, the night will pass, and your bones will weaken like so many others before you—you perfect American girl.

Personality Profile: Tim Ziaukas and His Love of Musicals

Selese Huth

Tim Ziaukas was completely paralyzed, frozen, his mouth slightly agape in awe and wonder. It was Tony Award week, 1991, and the backstage of *The Will Rogers Follies* was bustling with noise and excited energy. Ziaukas was visiting a good friend who was a member of the cast, when all of a sudden, the world around him went silent. His feet became cemented to the floor as Julie Andrews, the legendary Broadway actress, gracefully walked by.

“When I meet celebrities, I try to be cool and have a moment, a memory for the future,” Ziaukas said. “But when Julie Andrews walked by, I couldn’t move.”

Ziaukas has met his fair share of celebrities: Robert Kennedy Jr., Donny Osmond, and David Cassidy, to name a few. Ziaukas remarked, “They’re different.

They’re kind of like us, but they’re not. It can be exciting. I try not to be too weird about it.”

But even Ziaukas was blown away by seeing Broadway’s beloved Julie Andrews less than an arm’s length away. She was host of the Tonys that year, and she was visiting all of the shows that had been nominated, including *The Will Roger’s Follies*. It wound up winning six Tonys that week, including Best Musical.

Ziaukas’s love of musicals came from his mother. They’d get dressed up, and she’d take him to theaters all over Pittsburgh, to the Civic Light Opera and many others, to watch matinee performances. Ziaukas always got excited when they went to see big national touring groups doing productions like *Camelot*, *Hello Dolly*, and *Funny Girl*. His mother never had to drag him to see a musical.

“We saw Carol Channing in

Hello Dolly. A star that big in a Broadway production in your little town was a very exciting thing,” he said.

Today, musicals are a hobby for Ziaukas. “I spend a lot of time, effort, and money on seeing shows,” he said. “I can talk about show business all day; it’s like my sports. Some people can do batting averages, and I can do Tony awards.”

Even though he never performed in musicals, Ziaukas did participate in plays in high school. But when he went to college, he deliberately stayed away from the stage spotlight. “I knew that it was a drug and a trap,” Ziaukas said. “I intentionally did not participate in college plays for fear that I would be sucked into the crack pipe and that I wouldn’t be able to control it.” So he gave up his passion for acting to major in English Literature, which, he remarked, seemed more practical for a poor Catholic Pittsburgh boy.

Ziaukas never strayed far from his Pittsburgh roots. He became the spokesman for the University of Pittsburgh and their main public relations representative. Then, in 1994, he

got a job at Pitt’s regional campus in Bradford as a professor, sharing his knowledge with budding PR students. He continues his PR work, consulting for the Zippo Lighter and Case Knives Company located in Bradford, PA.

Despite his success, Ziaukas does wish that he had gone to work on Broadway. “*If I knew then what I know now*,” Ziaukas sang, laughing at his own vocal attempt before continuing: “The fantasy would have been to move to New York, work in PR on Broadway promoting shows and maybe help making a Broadway star.”

His love of musicals is also academic. Ziaukas is interested in the musical form, in how they are put together and their history. He has even done some writing on the subject. It hasn’t been published yet, but he plans to send it out.

Having Ziaukas pick his favorite musical was like trying to have a child pick out a favorite candy in the candy store. He was overwhelmed by the number of choices but ultimately named two: *Most Happy Fella* and *The Book of Mormon*. Ziaukas said


that *Most Happy Fella* did not get the credit it deserved. "It came out the same year as *My Fair Lady*, and *My Fair Lady* sort of overshadowed everything. It's highly regarded, but people kind of forgot about because it was eclipsed by *My Fair Lady*."

Ziaukas also commented that some people might get the wrong idea about *Most Happy Fella* because it's an operetta. "We think of operetta as some frivolous, old-fashioned kind of goofy thing," Ziaukas said, "but *Most Happy Fella* shows you what the power of operetta must have been like and still is. It's very moving. It's funny. It's a big, epic show: just brilliant."

The more recent, and somewhat controversial *Book of Mormon* is on the exact opposite end of the musical spectrum. Winning nine Tonys, it was the musical that overshadowed all the others in 2011. It was all anyone on Broadway could talk about. "I think it's very religious in many ways and very pro-religion and yet it is so outrageous and

shocking," Ziaukas said. "Despite how outrageous it is, it uses all the traditional structures of the theatre."

Ziaukas pointed out that most of the best roles in any Broadway musical are women's roles but, if he could play any part in any Broadway musical, "Not letting talent or gender get in the way, I think probably the single greatest role is Mama Rose in *Gypsy*. I think that might be the single greatest role with the greatest songs. Maybe I could do it in drag." As far as men's roles, Ziaukas said he would either like to do the MC in *Cabaret*, because he's so demonic and horrifying, or Hedwig in *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*, a part that was recently played by Neil Patrick Harris on Broadway.

For Ziaukas, musicals are "very powerful... religious. The religious origins of theater are still there. Something amazing happens that transforms the air and in turn transforms you. You keep going back for that." 

This is Burchfield

Carol Newman

Reflection on one of Burchfield's Winter in New York paintings

Primary colors are unexpected
in this watercolor madness
infused with sadness. Chaos
is barely controlled by whimsy,
snow-clumped trees, and
a blackened corridor
of encapsulated joy. Trapped
between insomnia and flickering
blue light, Burchfield clings to color
and cries under a sun
that merely flutters shine.



Worst Child Ever?

Patricia Blakeslee

My third son, Adam, was the perfect baby. He had the most beautiful, angelic gold ringlets that framed his cherub face. He was content to lie in my arms for hours, cooing and giggling. Because Adam was such an amazing baby, my husband Jesse and I decided to try for a fourth child. We'd try, one more time, for the girl we longed for.

Convincing Jesse was fairly easy. After all, he loved being a father and he loved the act of baby-making. Though unlike me, he did pause and ask, "What if it's another boy?"

That had never even crossed my mind. I shook the question away and kissed little Adam on the forehead. "Nah, it'll be a girl and she'll be just as sweet as this one."

I now imagine that it was in that moment in the hottest, blackest corner of Hell that Satan himself reclined in his La-Z-Boy, popped open a Pabst Blue Ribbon, and let out a full-barreled belly

laugh as he made the decision to personally impregnate me.

It was a troubled pregnancy from the beginning. Every step, every movement, every breath was agony for me. I was sick from the second my eyes blinked open until deep into the endless nights. In my heart, I knew: only a dirty rotten boy would be this hard on his mother. His maleness was confirmed via ultrasound. It was, indeed, another boy. I was devastated.

The day finally came when Shawn Patrick would make his debut. I was over the fact that he had a penis and couldn't help but be excited over another baby, regardless of his ill-fated gender. Because of my three previous C-sections, I was forced to have yet another. After numbing my body from the chest down, I was placed on a cold hard steel slab in the operating room. My arms were strapped down and out to my sides as though I was about to be crucified. Finally, they hung a drape right above my chest to keep the surgical site sterile.

A little while later, the doctor

peeked over and said, "Ready Mom? He's coming."

Before I had the chance to answer, he pulled our newest edition out of the womb by his ankles and swung him toward me. As soon as my new son passed the sterilized drape, he sprayed urine all over my face.

"Well, that part works." The doctor giggled. It was as though the world and my new son were having a good laugh at my expense.

Shawn was cute enough, with blond hair and blue eyes, though no curls. But he was constantly crying, colicky, and angry. I loved him, how could I not? But he wasn't Adam and he certainly wasn't a baby girl. In fact, before his first birthday, I had formed my "devil's spawn" hypothesis.

Before he could walk, he terrorized my innocent little

Adam. He stole sippy cups, he hit, he bit, he even pushed Adam off a spinning computer chair once. The older he grew, the worse he got.

He learned to speak long before the others had. One day when he was around two years old, I caught him standing against an open window on the second floor of our house. He screamed at the neighbors, "Shut the hew up! I can't even think stwait!" Where he learned such vulgarity, I'll never know.

He was innovative, I had to hand it to him. Once he made steps out of the many books I owned and popped the lock to the front door. As I lingered too long in the bathroom, he was racing behind his Tonka truck down the middle of our busy street. Lucky for me, a relative happened to be passing the house and saw him. I was

I now imagine that it was in that moment in the hottest, blackest corner of Hell that Satan himself reclined in his La-Z-Boy, popped open a Pabst Blue Ribbon, and let out a full-barreled belly laugh as he made the decision to personally impregnate me.

horrified and humiliated. And did I mention my husband works for Child Protective Services?

It gets worse. He destroyed several cell phones: one via trash disposal, one down the toilet, and one in a glass of Pepsi. When he was three, I took him with me to the Chinese restaurant to pick up takeout, and he bowed to the gray-haired elderly Asian woman behind the desk. Luckily, she had a sense of humor and we went home with a couple of extra fortune cookies.

He was helpful at times—kind of. For instance when I dramatically declared that I simply *had* to clean out the yucky fish tank, an hour later I smelled the lemony fresh zest of Pine-sol. I followed the smell to the fish tank, where I found all four goldfish floating belly-up in bright, sudsy, sunshine-infused water.

Shawn also tried to shoo away a bee from Adam's head one sweltering July afternoon. Unfortunately, Shawn used an iron pipe. It did work; Adam never got stung that day, but he did need five stitches.


Life with Shawn was downright exhausting. I spent

many nights asking, "What did I do wrong with this one?" I just couldn't figure out what I had done so differently—or what I had done to deserve such a rambunctious, ornery child.

When my big brother came for a visit, I thought maybe he could shed some light on the situation. Just a few hours after his arrival, we stood outside watching Shawn and the other boys play. I constantly had to yell reminders to Shawn. "Put that down. Stop splashing. No hitting the dog. No drowning the dogs or your brothers!" In the middle of the chaos, my brother and I caught each other's eye like only close siblings can. He smiled and shook his head. "What?" I asked in a defensive tone.

He chuckled and replied, "Nothing. It's just that Shawn is hilarious."

"Ugh, I know. Isn't he the worst child ever?" I said as I narrowed my eyes and shifted in my seat.

My brother threw his head back in a boisterous laugh and replied, "Uh, no, that was you! Shawn is all you!" 

The Month of Augustus

Melissa Krepp

It is the month of Augustus, Caesar of Rome.
From these heights, the scene is laid out.

He rises solitary and triumphant over the
trembling Alexandria:
man's domination of woman,
an unwilling bride forced to her knees at the altar,
man taking her hopes and dreams,
destroying them,
her strong towers, her statues, her people
crumbling under his blows,
all her previous power, beauty, and strength
smothered and weakened,
she trembles, unable to raise her head in defiance.
Does he know what he has done?

Here on the mountain sits a sentinel to the past,
keeper of an ancient world of happiness,
a desperate creature struggling in the water,
praying again for the fleeting sweetness of air.

The vultures, bits of ebony ribbon, ride the currents
of heat below.

Another scene blurs the ebony into the green
of the trees.

A man stands at the end of the rows, waiting
By his condemnation, he sees her coming closer.
She walks, head held high, the triumphant
in a battle for one.

He stands awaiting his sentence
willingly conceding
his eyes on her, his hand in hers, his words to her,
his heart
in the mountains.

a modern Caesar, fleeing blindly to momentary
contentment.
Whether a city or a woman, Augustus mars
her soul.
Does he know what he has done?

Seeing her defeat,
she can do nothing but watch
as she is wed
or discarded.

The scenes blend, become a singular, desperate
struggle:
a city rejected by a man for marriage,
a woman fighting a battle for governance,
a metropolis pained and bleeding,
a lady ransacked and scoured,
a capital heartbroken and crushed,
a mistress crumbling and burning:

pained, scoured,
ransacked, heartbroken,
forced, fighting,
crushed, crumbling,
bleeding, burning,

alone.

In her ruin, she knows
she will rebuild

her walls, her strength, her soul.
She must,
or perish.

The ebony focuses,
the world here and now,
the time has passed,
the battle won,
the defeat complete,

irreversible.

The ebony ribbons float in ignorance,
of the subjugation that has occurred.

All that is left is to jump,
or rebuild—

does he know what he has done?

Bath Time

Cindy Nowacki

Shiny fur reflects in the mirror,
damp and glossy
and perfect from tending.
Rough tongue traces the lines,
and curves become smooth and straight.
The washcloth traces the lines;
curves dampen.
Shiny skin reflects in the mirror,
damp and glossy.
Cat and boy at
bath time.
Clean.

Ecstasy Paws

Angela Nuzzo

I'm content to be here sitting with you—
warm, under the knitted blanket,
eyes heavy and longing for sleep.
You climb up on my folded arms,
press your face into my sweater,
and knead at a phantom mother.
Tiny nails extending in pure joy
prick me through the loose-woven yarn.
You lift your head from the wet spot
on my shoulder and look me in the eye.
What do you see?
Turning, you settle onto my chest,
curling your tail around until
it almost touches your face.
The sound coming from you
is too loud to be considered a purr.
It revs in your body and
creates a rattling of bones.
The heat of you intensifies,
soaks into my weary muscles,
calms my racing mind.
Lashes flutter down
as my head tilts forward.
I can smell the fresh air on your coat,

the sunshine that soaked in
from your midday nap on the porch.
The long, silky hairs
reach with static for my glasses
and tickle my chin as they part
with the breath I exhale.
I can feel your paws flexing,
even in your dreams,
your heart, in its ecstasy,
content to be here, too.





Sins of the Father

Kimberly Kaschalk

“Everything is cool—everything is cool—just take a deep breath—you can get through this—you have to get through this,” I muttered to myself through clenched teeth. I was sitting in my car at the fire hall doing a mental war dance to prepare myself for what I knew was about to happen.

It was the day of the Clearfield County Fair Parade. Being an active member of the fire department, which hosts the fair every year, we were an integral part of the event. As with most small, rural communities, the county fair was one of the major activities of the summer. My family and I often joked that the entire county would all but shut down for “Fair Week.”

I was about to participate in one of the biggest parades in the area, knowing that in just a few minutes my father was going to be plastered all over the news. He had been arrested the previous day for possession and manufacture of

child pornography. My family and I had met earlier that day to discuss the situation and try to plan for the shit storm that was about to hit.

It wasn’t until after I had left the house and was pulling into the parking lot of the fire hall that my sister called to tell me my father’s lawyer had called to inform everyone the press release had been sent and that the story of my father’s arrest would be on the 5:00 news. The press release wasn’t supposed to have been sent out to the television stations, newspaper offices, and radio broadcasters until the following day.

“You’d better get home,” she said.

“It’s too late, I’m already here,” I said. “It’s going to look really bad if I leave now.”

I forced myself to get out of my car. There was work to be done. Members of the department were going over every inch of the apparatus that would be in the parade. While the host department isn’t eligible for trophies, we would still be

judged and given a score. It would look extremely bad if our company did not score high in our own event.

I took a rag and began checking the chrome for even the smallest water spot, smudge, or anything that might detract from the fire engine's appearance. I

laughed at the jokes, I clowning around with the other firefighters, and I straightened the hems of dress uniforms, while inside, my world was slowly falling apart.

This was turning out to be my worst nightmare. The District Attorney couldn't have picked a worse day to make the announcement. I was going to have to smile, wave, and toss candy to children when I really wanted to curl up in a ball and cry. I also had to hide everything from my brother and sister firefighters, the people I trusted with my life and whom trusted me with theirs.

I've pissed off my share
of people over the
years, believe me, it's
part of the job.

mother. My parents had divorced the summer between my junior and senior years of college. When my mother called to ask where I was and to meet her at my sister's house, I really didn't

think much about it. My mother had a tendency to be a bit over-dramatic. I was living in an apartment

in my sister's duplex at the time, so I just walked out my front door, down the stairs, and around the back to my sister's place on the first floor.

While we waited for my mother to arrive, my sister and I joked about what all the hooplah was about. It seems callous, looking back, how the two of us sat on the couch, casually munching Jelly Bellies and trying to guess what the latest installment of "As Momville Turns" was going to be. Had I been in Vegas, I would have bet she was going to tell us she was going back—again—to the abusive piece of shit she had the misfortune of marrying shortly after she and my father had divorced.

The trouble had begun the night before with a call from my

My sister was laying double-or-nothing on some sort of health scare, either with my grandmother or our other sister.

So when my mother blew into the living room like a Nor'easter and told us that Dad had been arrested, I felt every single gourmet jelly bean I had just stuffed into my craw sprout legs and attempt to climb back out.

"Arrested?" I croaked around a gut full of candy that was about to make an encore appearance. "What the hell for?"

All sorts of possibilities were flashing through my brain. Drunk driving? Hell no, he hardly ever drank. A fight? Stealing? Kiddie porn was never even a consideration. I felt the floor of the living room start to swing back and forth. I locked my jaws and gulped, forcing the sugary glob of mush in my stomach to stay where it was. My brain decided to take a sudden vacation to Jupiter.

Oh God—oh sweet Jesus—oh fuck me. People are going to have a field day with this!

I had just started my ninth year as a news reporter when my

father was arrested. I've pissed off my share of people over the years, believe me, it's part of the job. In the hours after his arrest, my mind kept locking on one particular person and how I was about to have the fight of my life.

There had been an ugly incident a few years prior involving candidates for a congressional seat who had been engaged in a nasty mudslinging campaign. Several days before the election, an anonymous letter had been sent to numerous newspapers in the congressional district, including my employer, alleging that one of the candidates was about to be brought up on charges. The charges stemmed from an incident involving the candidate's girlfriend.

On instructions from my editor, I called the candidate, the chief of police, and the district attorney. While the candidate denied any wrongdoing, the chief and DA indicated that charges were going to be filed later that week. I made several trips to the magistrate's office over the next few days and when the charges were filed, I obtained the court documents and wrote the story.

Both mudslinging candidates lost the election, the accused

person pleaded guilty to lesser charges stemming from the incident, and life went on. However, the candidate began crying foul. He claimed the DA purposely held off on filing the charges for over a year in an attempt to sabotage the candidate's bid for election. While even I had to admit that the timing was certainly fishy, it would be nearly impossible to prove. The candidate filed a lawsuit against the DA, lost, filed an appeal, lost, appealed again, and lost yet again.

For the past several years, this candidate had been nursing a grudge against anyone he felt had played a part in his failed legislative bid. When the DA ran for re-election, this person backed the DA's opponent and launched an even uglier campaign than the former candidate had when he ran for election himself.

Given that I was the reporter who broke the story about the charges, he had plenty of venom to spit in my general direction. He had made some noise about my past relationship with the former police chief. He seemed to think I was dating the chief to "get key information for news articles." I blew him off. Anyone

who knows anything about legitimate media can tell you the golden rule of journalism: no proof, no print. This translates to the fact that the man I was dating could have sat down over a plate of spaghetti and told me every dirty little secret of every person in town and there wasn't a damn thing I could have printed.

I knew this arrogant little snot-rag would think both Christmas and his birthday had come early once he found out my father was under arrest for kiddie porn. I just never would have guessed just how low he would stoop.

If I could go back to college and suggest how to improve the communications program, I would suggest bringing in reporters who have been doing this job for at least five years and have them talk about what being a member of "the media" is really like. Oh, we had people come in and tell us all the mundane stuff, but there's nothing in any textbook that could prepare all those young, idealistic kids for what things are really like.

I think every person who opts into journalism or media arts has

somewhat of a candy-coated idea of what it is that reporters do. They see attractive young people fighting for the greater good, but they very rarely see the truly ugly side of our field: the long hours, the below-poverty-level pay, the way this field can take over your life if you aren't careful.

I have done many positive stories, but the happy-happy, joy-joy articles are not what the people remember. They remember the rapes, murders, police officers and firefighters injured in the line of duty, soldiers horribly maimed in roadside bombings, corrupt leaders being brought up on charges. The public is constantly complaining about how the "warped" media is glorifying all of this violence, but they conveniently forget how they'll pass up a front-page story about someone saving a drowning puppy and slap their hard-earned money down for a story about an explosion taking out an entire city block and killing twenty-five people.

I had been approached with compliments on something I've written. I've got a stack of "thank you" cards, letters, and e-mails that I've received over the years from people who truly appreciate what I do.

I've also had ugly confrontations with people who didn't take too kindly to something I've reported. One memorable incident, a lady threatened to "forget which peddle was the break and which was the gas"[sic] next time she saw me crossing the street in front of her vehicle. This is not a career for wimps. If anyone contemplating a career in the media doesn't have a thick skin, they'd better get one in a hurry or consider another field.

I knew once my father's
crimes became public,
the spotlight of
public opinion would
focus on me.

In my tenure, I've been called pretty much everything but a white woman. You learn to deal with it and take comfort in the fact that while what you write may not always be pretty, as long as it was done truthfully and fairly, there really isn't anything the rabble can do about it. You're

doing your job.

I knew once my father's crimes became public, the spotlight of public opinion would focus on me. I was the only one of my siblings still going by my maiden name. It was a name which had been appearing on bylines for nearly a decade. I wasn't about to delude myself into thinking people wouldn't make the connection. All I could do was brace myself and let it happen.



In the age of Facebook, Twitter, and message boards for just about every subject known to humankind, anyone with an internet connection has the ability to instantly broadcast just about anything they want to the far reaches of the globe. For the majority of these websites, a moderator or team of moderators would review any material being posted and refuse to allow anything which might be considered offensive, vulgar, or a personal attack. However,

there are some websites which are essentially cyber free-for-alls, where people with nothing better to do can go and aim a verbal diatribe at anyone they wish with little or no repercussions.

One of these websites had been making waves in my hometown. It was the "Jerry Springer" corner of the internet, a virtual trash dump where anything goes and nothing was sacred. People were accusing others of cheating on their spouses, their taxes, an expensive bill at a restaurant, corruption of every shape and size; you name it, it would be blasted all over the internet. Nobody was safe.

You never realize just
how cruel and hateful
people can be
until something like this
happens.

The bottom-feeders posting on this site went after elected officials, people no one had even heard of,

young children, anyone who'd laid a hair across their asses the wrong way.

The site was also suspected of being the soapbox where my little buddy, the jilted legislator-to-be, vented his spleen about how the DA had done him wrong

and lambasted the local media for not doing an expose on what he felt was rampant corruption, but had absolutely no proof of that. While it would be difficult to prove without a doubt that the person creating these posts was, in fact, this candidate, many people, including me, had good reason to suspect it was him based on what was being said. I knew it was only a matter of time before my father's crime would be lighting up the board like a bazooka fired through a nitroglycerin plant.

My natural inclination was to get on that filthy website and defend myself, to tell those miserable bastards exactly where the bear shits in the buckwheat, what color it is, and just where they could stick said excrement if they have a problem with it. However, as a member of the media, I am not allowed to do this. Whether in person or in cyberspace, we are not supposed to engage people who criticize. That's what editors get paid for. We are supposed to be the consummate professionals who have no opinion one way or another and who present an unbiased account of what happens. Anyone with a

problem must be directed to the editor and/or publisher. I kept my employers apprised of the situation, but there was nothing they could do to defend me from this website.

It wasn't long after the news of my father's arrest was made public that my cell phone started ringing. From what I was told, a certain person wasted no time making sure my name and my father's transgressions were plastered all over the trash site on the internet.

"Let them talk," I said to my outraged and sometimes extremely emotional friends who had called. "Just don't go on that stupid site. They can't hurt me if I don't read what they're saying. None of the people posting those comments would have the balls to say any of it to my face anyway."

Brave words, but inside I was shaken. You never realize just how cruel and hateful people can be until something like this happens. I fully expected a backlash against my father; I was extremely angry with him myself. I just had no idea how much public anger would be

aimed in my direction. I never actually read any of it, but I had plenty of people telling me about it.

"She's got to be just as sick as he is, growing up in a house with a pervert."

"Must be why she likes older men, cause daddy was messing around with her."

"They ought to arrest her too! She's a reporter, how could she NOT know what he was doing???"

"Enjoy your kiddie porn, Kimmy, you sick bitch!"

"This is karma at its finest!! HAHahaha. I bet she's a total sick freak. She deserves everything she gets, the fucking whore!!!"

"Too bad we can't put HER in a cell with Bubba and see what happens."

"The whole family should be dragged into the street and shot, but save her for last so she can watch it happen."

"People like that are just fucked in the head. They can't be cured. It's genetic. She's probably

doing the very same thing, she just hasn't been caught yet."

Phone call after phone call. I'd tell people to just ignore them, but my friends and family were becoming more and more agitated by what people were writing. I tried to put on a brave face and did my best to be strong for my family. I refused to hide. When the fire siren went off, I responded to the calls. I went to the gym where I'd had a membership for the past three years. I went to the grocery store, to the movies, to all the places I would have gone had this not happened.

I went down to the crowded fair to take pictures and conduct interviews for work. Everywhere I went, I could hear people talking.

"That's her!!! Shh, shh shh, don't look, but she's right over there! The one who's dad was making all that kiddie porn. Oh my god, I can't believe she's showing her face in public! She ought to just shoot herself in the head."

I saw people look at me and put a protective hand on the shoulders of their children, as if I were going to sprout fangs and claws and attack them

where they stood. I watched people cross the street when they saw me coming, whispering frantically to their companions.

I could only imagine the comments being made that I wasn't hearing.

When the threats started, they became more than just a sick joke at my expense. I'm not sure exactly what was being said, as I still refused to go on the website and read it, but from what I was told it was quickly shifting from bad to worse.

Another friend called me up, frantic. She said someone on the site had posted that they were going to "take me out" the next time they saw me. The people making these posts seemed to forget that I had nothing to do with my father's crime. I hadn't lived in my childhood home since I'd graduated from college. How in the world could I have known what he was doing, let alone have had anything to do with it?

More to placate my worried friends and family than fear for myself, I called the local police. The department had a new chief whom I had worked with for several years. I told him what had happened. The local police and even the state police could do nothing about the actual site itself, which is protected under the same First Amendment that

When the threats started, they became more than just a sick joke at my expense.

protects me as a journalist. The chief said he would let the officers know that if substantial threats were

reported or any emergency calls were made from my house, they were to take them seriously and act immediately. It was the only protection he was able to give me.

Under ordinary circumstances, a threat like this on a trash website was given very little credit. However, it was about this time that threats were being made against my father's life. The father of one of the victims had to be physically restrained when police began notifying the families. My father had taken digital pictures of underage

girls and cropped the seemingly innocent pictures to focus on the girls' breasts and genitals. He had even taken the faces of the girls and photo-shopped them onto pornographic pictures he had downloaded from the internet.

This meant the victims didn't even know they were victims until they were informed by the police. It was a huge betrayal because many of these girls liked and trusted my father. Some even called him "Pap."

A sex offender's betrayal of his victims tends to garner all the attention. It's a violation that will take years to come to terms with. I find it difficult to put my father's betrayal of his family into words. It goes so much deeper than just what he did.

Given my chosen profession, I've read my share of graphic affidavits describing sex crimes against children. It did little to soften the impact when I read what was written by police about my own father. It wasn't the details of the actual crime that delivered the greatest blow; it was the double life my father had been living,

apparently for many years.



After his arrest, my father became two different people. There was the daddy I had grown up with. The man who took us camping, who made us chocolate milkshakes in the blender, who met my junior prom date at the door with a shotgun.

Then there was this other person, this dark, twisted stranger I didn't know, didn't want to know, and even hated somewhat myself.

For me, it was like fighting a war on two fronts. The first was the stigma from the public and the impact it might have on my career. The second was trying to come to terms with the fact that my father was now being accused of a heinous felony, and trying to figure out just who exactly my father really was. Was

Can you ever truly trust someone who has been living a double life?

he the daddy I had known for thirty-three years or was he this monster in an

orange prison jumpsuit?

It's a question for which there is no easy answer. Can you ever truly trust someone who

has been living a double life? Statistics show that sex offenders have an extremely high rate of recidivism. While my father had not physically touched any of his victims, an argument could be made that creating the pictures was symbolic of what he wished he could do. Yet one could also argue that some part of his psyche had not allowed him to cross that line from the fantasy of the photos into the reality of physical contact, so perhaps, with the proper therapy, he could be rehabilitated. One could additionally argue that, had my father not been caught when he had, there was a strong chance that he could have gone on to do something much worse.

As the date for my father's trial crept closer, I knew I would have a huge decision to make. I sat staring out my kitchen window in the waning summer warmth of late August, nervously tapping my pen on the glass top table. The initial pounding I had taken from people had begun to fade, but I knew as my father moved through the legal system, it would start up again each time his name appeared on the news. I

was hopeful the worst was over, but I couldn't be sure.

In my other hand was a letter, a two-page, front-and-back scrawl that I had to restrain myself from setting fire to when I first read it. A desperate plea from my father trying to explain his side of what happened.

As if he has a side, I thought bitterly. I had plenty to be pissed about, but what I hadn't been able to get over so far was the fact that my entire family had been blindsided by this mess.

My stepmother had discovered the photos my father had been making on an external hard drive and reported him—in January. My father was arrested at the end of July. Seven months had passed and no one had said a word to my sisters and me. My stepmother had stopped at the house a few days after the arrest to tell us what had happened. She said the state police had come to my father's house and taken the computer, the hard drive, the camera, and anything which might have been related to the case. My sister and I had noticed the missing computer months before and commented on it, only to be told by my father that the computer “needed fixed.”

My stepmother told my father after she had reported his crime that it was his job to tell us what happened. He never did.

I felt the scorching anger building up inside me as I scribbled words in a notebook, then scratched them out with enough force to tear the paper. Had a family member of one of the victims not told my mother what was coming the night of the arrest, we would have had no warning of my father's crime.

I threw my pen across the room. It clattered off the fridge, scaring the living hell out of my aging Pomeranian, who had been sleeping in a beam of sunlight on the kitchen floor.

You could have told us, you sneaky son of a bitch!

It took nearly a month to find the words to respond to my father's letter. Even a person who writes for a living couldn't express my depth of disgust and shame. I had trouble weaving the tapestry of public scorn, fear, self-loathing, and pain that had enveloped my life in the weeks following his arrest into a form he could understand. I had to find a way to make him see what he

had done, not only to his victims, but to those of us left behind to try to glue the fragments of our lives back together.

I encouraged my father to plead guilty and spare us the humiliation of a trial. He listened and was sentenced to two to fourteen years in state prison.

I continue to ask myself what will happen once my father serves his prison sentence and is released. Do I welcome him with open arms or do I cast him out of my life for good? Do I really believe he can be rehabilitated and do I want to expose myself to the pain and guilt which will come if he re-offends? Can I live with myself if he harms another innocent person?

If I forgive my father and allow him to be part of my life, will I ever be able to trust him again or will I spend the rest of my life worrying about what he is doing behind closed doors?

If I reject my father, am I cutting him out of my life for the "right" reasons? Am I truly unable to trust him, or am I taking the coward's way out by saying, "I have nothing to do with that son of a bitch," simply to avoid the stigma associated

with pedophiles?

These are all things people who have never been in my situation will not fully understand. It's easy to judge, to spew hateful rhetoric and to blame, especially when you're hiding anonymously behind a computer screen. The people who are quick to label me as "the daughter of a pedophile" have no interest in the struggles that I and others in similar situations are going through.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no support groups or social services for people trying to cope with having a family member convicted of a sex crime. Even among my own family, it's difficult to talk about what happened. There have been numerous fights among family members who feel my father should be given a second chance and those who feel what he has done is unforgivable. The ones who are unsure what to do are either called "heartless" because we have difficulty being able

to simply forgive and forget or "stupid" for allowing a convicted sex offender into our lives. It's not a subject which makes for a pleasant conversation over Thanksgiving dinner.

I am plagued by memories. I see myself as a little girl, staring at my father over a McDonalds Happy Meal, knowing my sisters

It's easy to judge,
to spew hateful
rhetoric and to
blame, especially
when you're hiding
anonymously behind a
computer screen.

will be beyond pissed when they find out we snuck out without them. I see my father in his workshop downstairs, patiently gluing a broken piece back onto a toy to stop my

tears. I see work-worn hands tying a yellow, makeshift sling around my neck to hold a broken collarbone in place as I am rushed to the hospital.

I also see the digital face of an innocent young girl, carefully positioned on a naked woman's body in the dark of night. I see the hot July sun, reflected in the slivery gleam of handcuffs. I hear the slam of the gavel as my father's future is decided in the swish of black robes and the

ruffle of paper.

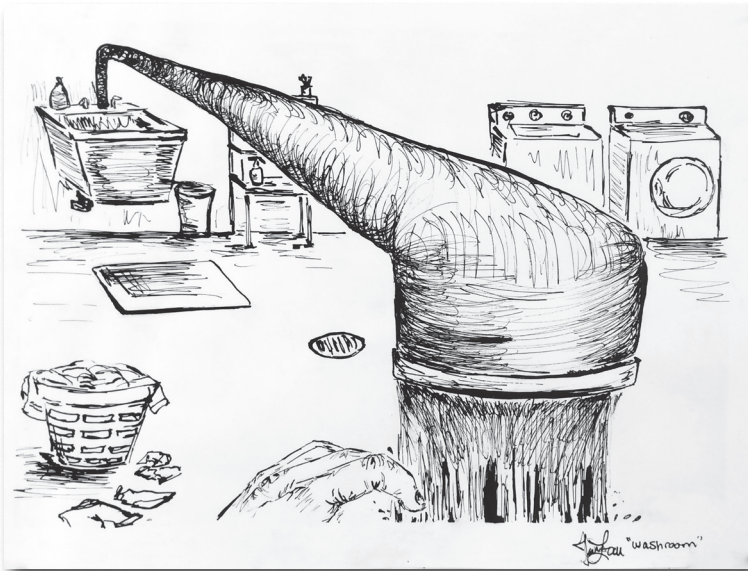
I tried speaking to a psychiatrist, but ended up leaving after about twenty minutes. The “deer in the headlights” look on the therapist’s face after I had only told part of my story made it very clear that this particular individual was unqualified to deal with my situation. So I am left to find my own way through an abyss of judgment, ignorance, and bigotry.

Time and time again I have re-opened this file and

tapped away on the keyboard, attempting to come up with some witty, Lifestyle-channel-worthy ending to this particular chapter in my life. The gutsy heroine overcomes adversity and finds the Hollywood ending to the nightmare and all that happy Disney movie crap.

I keep running in to the same problem: how do you find absolution for a sin you didn't commit?

Washroom Drawing—pen & ink
JENNIFER LAU



Bradford, I Have Always Found It Hard to Love You

Carol Newman

Our house was in the hills, out past Corning Glass, up a narrow road lined with sputtering pumping jacks and rod-line squeaks so shrill, it was like getting used to screams. Dad got the house for cheap: two graves in the yard with tombstones. The driveway was a quarter mile straight up, ruts like ditches. At the top, a maple tree burned bright red in the fall then dropped its leaves like a stripper. The school bus picked us up early, circled Custer City, then up Minard Run where the rich kids lived. Kids that spat in our hair, called us skank and skag; words I had to look up. All we knew then of town were the flames of Kendall's smoke stacks, and at night, the ten thousand lights that lit up the refinery.

Fruit des Bois

Lisa Chapman

Another layer of clothing might have been in order
on this bright April day.

Once I start the digging, the chill will dissipate
from the hiking, bending, tugging, warming.

A green carpet of ramps cover the forest floor,
so welcome after months of white and gray.
Bright sun, bright green, bright spirits,
coolly comfortable to be out.

Then there is the fragrance as the plant is freed,
bruised leaves and severed roots,
giving their distinctive perfume
and later, primal flavor and medicinal power.

It is an annual ritual which always restores
my Appalachian soul.
My fruit *des bois* from Pennsylvania soil
validates who I am and why I am here.

We're Cooking Now

Bonnie McMillen

Hot, steamy,
rich, saucy
curry, spicy,
that's what you are.
Sauteed in oil—No?
How about whipped
cream?
Filled to the brim,
resting on a bed of
let us.
Too hot to handle?
Get a pot holder
before you burn me.
We will roast and fry
till we are tender
to the touch.
Lie in the pan till
golden brown.



Evie

Bonnie McMillen

Evie had a voice like a sonic boom and a big head of dark curls. She stood six feet tall. She didn't shy away from flowery dresses, big brooches, or the latest fashion in spite of her barrel shape, which was only slightly straightened out by a corset. She weighed over two hundred pounds. She didn't try to intimidate, it came to her naturally.

She was my mother's older sister. They were complete opposites and I was terrified of her when I was very young. She'd blow into our house without warning and we children would scatter. If she could catch one of us, we would be in for a bone crushing hug and kisses that left red lipstick all over our little cheeks.

Aunt Evie was what my mother called "a joiner." She belonged to every ladies' club in town. She had bridge club or garden club at her house when it was her turn. She was a foodie long before the word came into

fashion. My mom also described her as "not one to sit and knit." My father said she was "a mover and a groover."

Evie lived in the tiniest, cutest house I'd ever seen. It had a small kitchen and living room, one bedroom, and a bathroom. If she left her house in a hurry, she looked like a giant breaking out of a dollhouse.

Next door to Evie's cute little house lived Harry Hooker; the local junk dealer. His house was a run-down shack and his yard was literally a junkyard. There were no restrictions on where someone could have a junk business back then, at least not out in the country.

Harry Hooker was one of *the* Hookers of Hooker Chemical fame; the Hooker Fulton building in Bradford was named after them. Harry had dropped out of the family and had nothing to do with them. They certainly had nothing to do with him. He didn't own a car and he hitchhiked everywhere he went.

He was one of Bradford's many eccentrics of this era. He was an educated man and an author; he wrote a book, *The Life of a Junk Dealer*.

When I turned eleven, my aunt hired me to help with serving her lady friends at these teas in her garden. I had a front-row seat when Harry Hooker made his entrance. It was clear that he enjoyed interrupting and showing his filthy self to all the dolled up ladies as they nibbled on finger sandwiches and sipped iced tea.

For all her boldness and bluster, Evie didn't know how to handle a filthy hermit who was as much his own man as she was her own woman. Every time she had her garden full of ladies, he would stop to borrow something, ambling over, covered in layers of dirt. If it had rained recently, he might have streaks running down his face. His clothes were filthy rags that he never changed as far as I could tell. On one such occasion, he brought over a few copies of his book and passed

them out to the ladies. The books didn't look very clean as he laid them right on the little plates in front of each lady. Evie's cheeks blossomed red.

"Well Harry, good to see you," said Evie too brightly. "Nice to see all you lovely young ladies," he said. "I brought you all copies of my book and I hope you enjoy reading it."

All of the women smiled tense smiles and made noises that were meant to convey acceptance of his book and their desire to read it.

Evie moved toward Harry and took him by the elbow, and turning him toward his house, she walked him out of her garden.

I could see them talking back and forth as they went, but I couldn't hear what was being said.

After the ladies left and we were cleaning up, I asked, "What did you say to him?"

Evie replied without missing a beat. "I told that little bastard to keep his filthy self at home from

now on or he'd live to regret it."

"And what did he say back to you?"

"That little pisspot told me I was absolutely glowing today and never looked better in my life! You just can't get anywhere with that son of a bitch and the best part is, he'll be back the next time I have a tea, just like today. I could kill him with a glad heart."

I used to ask my mother questions about her and Evie, but Mom would just roll her eyes and say, "Oh she's a one of a kind." I'd ask other relatives and get the same eye roll. "Oh, she was way ahead of her time, that girl." The most I could get out of any of them was that she was a wild one "in her day."

I picture Evie as a young flapper, dancing the Charleston and running around in a short fringed dress. She'd wear lots of makeup, with thin eyebrows penciled on, drink bathtub gin, and bob her hair. She'd ride behind handsome boys on motorcycles.


When my aunt Evie passed away at the age of eighty-eight,

we all went to her funeral. Several friends and relatives got up and shared funny stories and good times they'd had with Evie. The last one to get up was a tiny wizened little man in an old suit much too big for him. He was neat, clean, and freshly shaved. No one knew who he was until he spoke, when an involuntary gasp ran through the crowd.

It was Harry Hooker like no one had ever seen him. He spoke eloquently of Evie. They had become fast friends over the years and he shared stories of her many kindnesses to him and other neighbors. She was a great cook as we all knew and he said for many years she had sent him his supper every day.

At the graveside service, we gathered under a big tent. It was pouring rain and loud thunder rolled across the valley.

Suddenly, a strike of lightning hit that was so close and so loud we all thought Evie was taking us all with her. It was heart-stopping, surrounding us in blinding white light and slamming sound.

My mother said it was just perfect for my Aunt Evie. 

The Art of Leave

Kelly Schucker

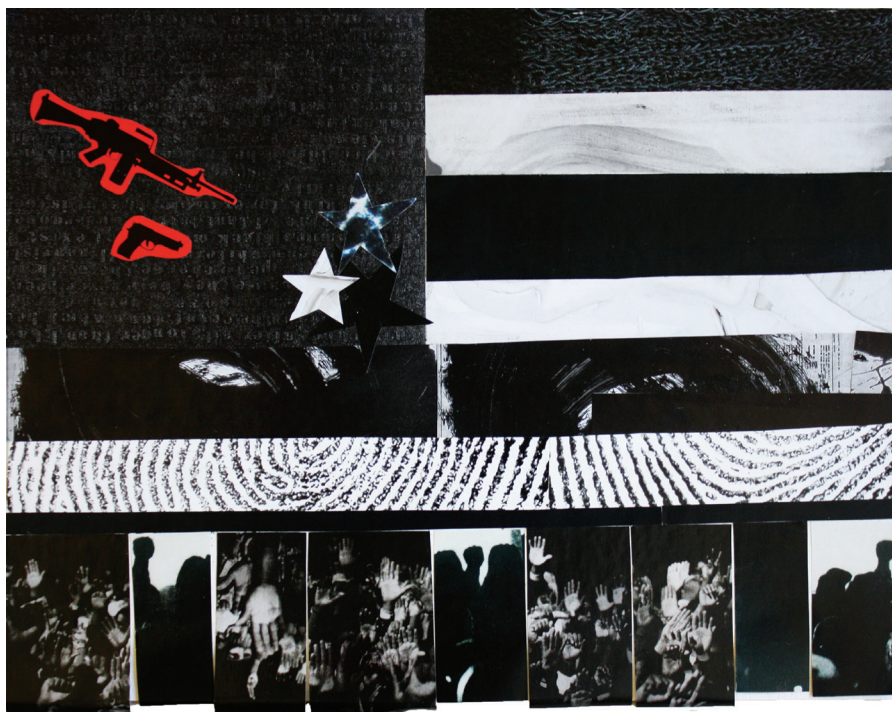
make love to me inside of a
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we love make leave we
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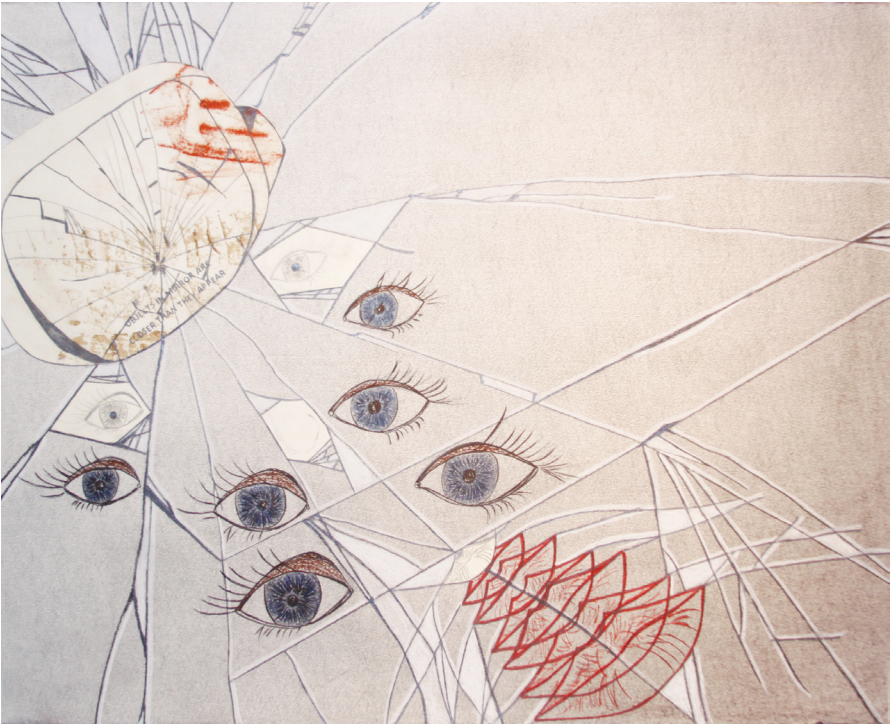
Impression—acrylics
ASHLEY WILSON-REW



mixed media—Patriotism Collage
SADIE McLAUGHLIN



Red, White, and Black Collage—mixed media
SADIE MCLAUGHLIN



mixed media—Getting Older

KAREN SEES



I Know What It Looks Like—mixed media
JENNIFER LAU



mixed media—Self-portrait No. 3
JENNIFER LAU



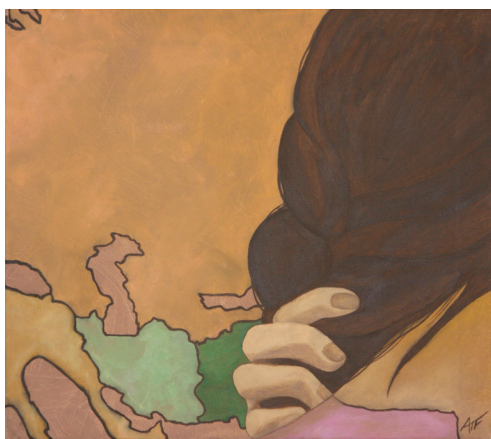
Hidden Palace—photography
KAYLA BEERS



Waiting—photography
SELESE HUTH



acrylics—Transitions
ASHLEY FITZPATRICK





mixed media—Singed
ELISSA JOY DOMZALSKI



Revealing Logic—photography
RICKY BEST



mixed media—The Art of Man Is Born In the Hand

BRADY MAJOR



Gelid Texture—photography
AMY GABERSECK-HUGHES



photography—Summer Wonder
AMY GABERSECK-HUGHES



Curtain Abstract—acrylics
ASHLEY FITZPATRICK



acrylics—Bell Jar
ASHLEY WILSON-REW

Climax

Amy Gaberseck-Hughes

Like a pulsar,
brilliant throbbing blast of nuclear energy.
Fusing like atoms,
reaching with every cell,
shaking like earthquakes,
breath beating winds of a forest fire.
Flood washing away
blowing away,
floating away,
away.
Afterglow like a drifting ember,
slowly cooling,
falling back to earth,
shining from our eyes.

Galaxy: The Second Law of Thermodynamics

Kelly Schucker

“You are a galaxy,” I tell her, big eyes and shivering fingertips. Her lips are the Milky Way. When she skims my skin with her tongue she is Aries, she is Cancer, she is cancer. She is astrology. A goddess. She determines my fate with the way she blinks those big eyelashes. She is a whole damn galaxy. Infinity itself.

I don't want to be just one thing. She wants to be everything. Everything all at once. The personification of juxtaposition, a living contradiction. She wants wants she wants.

I tell her she is nothing less than infinite. I tell her, “You were born in 1612 or 1845 or 1946” and numbers slip from my tongue like love notes. I tell her, “Everyone thinks you are the coldest the coldest one but I know inside of you is a sun, inside of your core is the epitome of lust.” She listens attentively, her eyes two moons.

On the outside she is stone cold stoic, a Venus de Milo, but inside she is Marilyn Monroe on fire.

reddened lips and
quivering fingertips and—
who lives inside of your mirror?

Something to fear. She fears her desire, her lust, she melts under the heat of her burning potential. She converts her latent desires into shame. I think about visual agnosia. [Seeing without seeing.] I wonder if there is a thing like this in terms of metaphorical existence, or if it only applies to the concrete.

She drinks coffee from the Little Dipper. The dust of burning stars enlivens her fingertips. She is Zeus and Hera and Hercules all at once. I want to be important, and artistic, and courageous, and brilliant, and lovely. She isn't just one thing. She is Pluto in her bed buried inside of a book. She plays with gravity to make my knees weak, to cause tidal waves inside of my stomach. She is a whole damn galaxy. She is infinity itself.



We'll Meet Again

Richard Marcott

There were sacks of mail stacked on the pier in Norfolk, Virginia when the Coast Guard cutter *Absecon* returned from Ocean Station patrol. I was so glad that I had several letters from Carol. I whipped through the highlights, then went back, not to the first one, but the last one. I reread it several times: “Well, the mailman came today—so I guess we’re officially engaged now.”

I hadn’t seen her in more than two months. I’d graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in June, 1957, met Carol over the summer, and reported to the *Absecon*, my first duty station, in September. My first patrol had been a tough one; we’d had a rough ride through a hurricane that led to an international search for survivors of the *Pamir*, a four-hundred-foot, three-masted sailing ship. The German training vessel, capsized by the same storm, lost eighty-one of her eighty-six crew members, fifty-one of them teenage cadets.

I wasn’t looking forward to the long trip to Long Island, New York, but that’s where Carol was and that was where I was going for the weekend. I left the ship before lunch, trying to beat the sailors. That didn’t happen. Not on a Friday. It seemed like half the U.S. Navy was getting out of Norfolk.

I eased my ’57 Mercury onto the end of the car line. The loadmaster bellowed directions and waved furiously, moving us into position to load onto the next Little Creek–Kiptopeke ferry.

The *Del Mar Va* had pulled out just as I arrived. The terminal agent changed the huge red arrow on the sign on the overhead archway: *Next ferry at 2:00 P.M.* I had to wait an hour.

I rolled down the window and tamped a fresh bowl full of London Dock pipe tobacco into my favorite straight stemmed briar. I sucked at the Zippo flame, staring down my nose at the growing circle of embers. The rising cloud of smoke encircled my head, spreading its soothing

aroma of freshly lit tobacco. With my pipe clenched in my teeth, I surrendered my body to the plush white leather seat, leaned my head back, and thought about Carol's letter.

She had written that she had rushed home from work every day and rifled through the mail until she found the orange postal notice for an insured box. "Mom," she whooped, "the package came. I'm going right back out to the post office. See you in a bit." There was nothing in the box. Her mailman was "still out on the route."

She said she drove back home, then backtracked what she knew was George's route. She had known her mailman for years, babysat for his children. Swinging up and down the side streets, she spotted him, bag over his shoulder, on Henry Street. She tooted the horn and slid her old Dodge coupe alongside the curb. She popped out, waving. "Hey George. Do you have my package?"

"Just this little box from Herff Jones," George said, giving her the prize with a smile.

Carol ran home, tore into the box, and yelled, "Mom, it's here! It's here! My engagement ring!"

We had missed the traditional moment when many cadets got

...there was none other
like it in the world, nor
would there ever be.

engaged—the ring dance. Amid the strains of "Cherry Pink" and "Apple

Blossom White" and "Unchained Melody," beautiful women in colorful gowns and handsome cadets in dress whites swirled by, whispering quietly to each other. Flickering lights reflected from a rotating crystal ball followed the dancers like flitting moths.

Whenever an engaged couple strolled up the ramp to stand beneath the crown of a giant plaster replica of our class ring, nearby dancers paused to share the moment. The cadet presented his miniature, a traditional engagement ring for all service academy graduates, and kiss his fiancée while they both accepted the smiles and quiet applause from the dance floor.

For Carol, the moment had to be by proxy, from the mailman, while I was at sea. I had sent the ring to Herff Jones to change the setting. Given the ship's

schedule, it made sense to have it sent directly to her house. At least we took pleasure knowing her ring would be unique. It was an exact replica of my class ring (which limited it to sixty-one). Reset with her tourmaline birth stone and a small diamond arrangement, there was none other like it in the world, nor would there ever be.

The sounds of revving engines, parents herding their kids back into cars, and the staccato thumps of car doors jolted me back to reality. Finally, *The Princess Anne* was maneuvering into the dock, ping-ponging her way between the narrowing pilings, as if forcing her way into a funnel. No need for precise ship handling here. The docking team secured the ship in a noisy but precise ballet of deckhands shouting over the din of running chains and clanking ramps. From the ferry, the hollow roar of several hundred cars and trucks starting their engines at the same time echoed off the high cave-like bulkheads.

I opened my driver's door, banged out my ashes on the

rocker panel, and closed the door and the window to ward off the impending fog of exhaust fumes. The cars offloaded, in rhythmic double bumps, over the steel ramp. The hulking blue and white ferry, nearly four hundred feet long, could move as many as a hundred and twenty cars and twelve hundred passengers across the eighteen-mile entrance to Chesapeake Bay. With seven ferries in the system, Route 13 had become the shortest and most popular way south from New York and New England.

In a practiced routine, big trucks were first, stacked inboard to outboard on either side of the centerline engine room cowling. The cars were loaded the same way, all according to a weight and balance plan orchestrated by the loadmaster. Now, bumper to bumper, six lanes wide, the full length of the ship, we had been formed into one steel package, a chunk-o'-cars on wheels.

The Princess Anne pulled out and headed north toward the Kiptopeke terminal on Cape Charles. The ferry's double-ended pilot house made it easy for cars to drive straight on, then straight off on the other side. I

knew the crossing would take an hour and a half, so I squeezed out of my Mercury and made my way topside for a ham sandwich and some fresh air.

The sea was calm. The bright blue sky sported a narrow band of wispy clouds on the horizon. People had migrated to the open topside deck to enjoy the pleasant afternoon on this beautiful October day. A few couples strolled hand in hand, watching others snuggled on the rows of benches. A handful of obnoxious kids circled the perimeter in imaginary chase. A

growing flock of seagulls swooped and squawked at each other, fighting for the best position over the wake to snatch the bread crumbs tossed into the air by giggling

teenagers. Sailors were clustered in random groups, noisily sharing their plans for their Liberty Weekend. A few remained aloof, retreating to remote benches, their necks crunched deep into upturned peacoat collars, like

turtles deep in private thoughts.

As we crossed Thimble Shoal Channel, I leaned on the starboard rail, took the last bite of my sandwich, and restoked my pipe. The sun, still high, cast a bright streak on the rippling wavelets and frothing wake. Like a beam, it guided my thoughts over the horizon. It was hard not to think of our last patrol, when the German training ship *Pamir* had sunk. The tragic loss of young lives was a reminder of the power of the sea and Hurricane Carrie. That had been less than a month ago. I wondered how

long it would take me to let it go.

We pulled into Kiptopeke on time, 3:30 P.M. Reversing the disciplined order of boarding, the loadmaster emptied the

chunk-o'-cars over the noisy ramp.

A wolf-pack formation of cars headed north on U.S. 13. One by one, drivers broke off while the big rigs blew by us like we were out for a Sunday drive.

A few remained aloof,
retreating to remote
benches, their necks
crunched deep into
upturned peacoat
collars, like turtles deep
in private thoughts.

Seven hours to go. With one short stop for a snack, I could probably make it to Roosevelt, New York before midnight.

My drive was accompanied by the steady hum of tires and my low pitched radio that changed from static, to music, to sports

as I dialed in whatever station was in range. I had plenty of time for mind-drift. Random scenes danced in and out of my head:

my high school prom; saying goodbye to dad and mom on the steps at Chase Hall; Thanksgiving visits; graduation; meeting Carol. I chuckled to myself. "Poor Carol. After my nebulous, when-the-hell-did-it happen, what-did-I-say proposal, now she had to get her engagement ring in the mail."

A welcome sign alerted me that the Delaware Memorial Bridge was ahead. I had been on the road for four hours. I crossed the bridge and within a short time merged into heavier traffic on the New Jersey Turnpike.

Hunger pulled me into the first Howard Johnson's Plaza.

There were no other choices. They had an exclusive contract. If you were going to eat on the Jersey Turnpike, it was going to be at Howard Johnson's. I skipped the all-you-can-eat fish special and wolfed down a platter of their famed macaroni and

In the darkening
twilight, thousands of
white lights built their
Etch A Sketch profile
of tangled pipes and
cracking towers.

cheese. Lots of ketchup, good stuff. With not enough time to choose from twenty-eight flavors, I grabbed a small plain vanilla cone

for the road. As I exited the plaza, the famed Ho-Jo's orange roof with their trademark "Simple Simon and the Pie Man" weather vane faded away in my rear-view mirror. I was on the road again.

At some point, I became aware of a faint odor that triggered thoughts of home. I cracked the window. Oil! Through the latticed power-line towers, I could see the distant silhouette of tanks: flat, short, tall, thin, and onion domed. They formed a dark base that sprouted tall chimneys. Clouds of billowing smoke rose from some while others stood as silent sentries with red blinking

aircraft warning lights. A few flashed burning flames.

In the darkening twilight, thousands of white lights built their Etch A Sketch profile of tangled pipes and cracking towers. These huge refineries stood unaware that they owed their birth to the oldest refinery in the world, the Kendall Refinery back home in Bradford, Pennsylvania. I felt a little smug.

My exit was coming up. I maneuvered right, comforted to be passing under the overhead sign: *Exit 13 to Verazano Narrows Bridge*. Traffic was less than I expected. I peeked through the steering wheel

to glance at the directions on the cheat sheet I had taped to the dashboard. *Merge to Belt Parkway, then Southern State, Exit 21 to Nassau*

Rd. I pulled into the Berlinghoff driveway at 65 West Roosevelt Avenue a few minutes after 11:00 P.M.

It had been a long day, but I perked up when I saw Carol

running to the door to greet me. Her mom, in her bathrobe, stood behind her. Her dad had been long since in bed (way too late for an early-rising milk man.) Her mom chatted with us amicably.

“How was the trip? Are you enjoying the ship? I’m excited for Carol. I’ll see you at breakfast.” Then, in a polite move, she said goodnight and went off to bed. I was so tired that within a few minutes I was headed to the small bed in the attic and Carol to her bedroom. It wasn’t even midnight.

Oh yeah—she was wearing her ring. So, I had missed the bended-knee-slip-it-on-her-finger moment too. But although the seahorse tails and eagle wings of her miniature have rounded

But although the seahorse tails and eagle wings of her miniature have rounded to smooth gold over fifty-five years, the magic of the ring still works for us.

to smooth gold over fifty-five years, the magic of the ring still works for us.

I managed a few trips to Roosevelt between ocean station

patrols and our wedding in March 1958. Distance, time, and winter weather made it difficult. I usually arrived near midnight on Friday. We enjoyed a late Saturday date, dinner and dancing, or a movie. I began leaving later and later on Sunday night. We did work in a little talk of wedding arrangements, but it was clear that Carol and the “Queen Mother” were going to be in charge of that. I told them both, “Ron [my best man] and I will arrive on time in March—just tell us where to stand.”

On my last trip before the wedding, I didn’t leave Roosevelt until very late. I knew I was in trouble as soon as I hit the Jersey Turnpike. I fought desperately, and not too successfully, to keep my eyes open. I saw two young men hitchhiking in dungarees and peacoats. I stopped right next to them, not even pulling off the road. I opened my door and yelled over the top of the car, “You guys Navy?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You headed for the ferry?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Do either of you drive?”

“Yes, sir.”


“Get in. Take us to the ferry.”

I already had the back door open. I slid in and flaked out on the back seat with no idea even of what their names were. I was asleep in seconds. The abrupt bounce of the ferry hitting the pilings and the vibrations of her backing engines woke me at 7:00 A.M. I was still in the back seat, below decks, not a sailor in sight. The loadmaster mustered me off in time for me to make it to the ship for morning quarters.

I couldn’t keep doing this!

When Ross Parker and Hughie Charles wrote the WWII hit song “We’ll Meet Again,” I wonder if they knew how timeless those words would be. Sea duty! They were going to apply to Carol and me for a long time.

We’ll meet again, don’t know where, don’t know when.

But I know we’ll meet again some sunny day. 

What Do Women Want

Bonnie McMillen

I want a man to stay young
and handsome. To
lie under a car
like he knows what he's doing, to
roll out from under that car with a smile on his
face,
wipe his greasy hands on a rag, and say
he's got it all under control.

I want a man to leave in the morning
and get out of my way and
not come home for lunch.

I want a man to always be home at night
and weekends,
to hold the baby on his lap. It's okay if he
falls asleep watching the news and it's okay
if he spoils the children and plays games
with them instead of doing homework.

I want a man who knows his mind and can be a
little
stubborn. I don't want a pushover. He must be
good to

his mother always. He can get annoyed with his
father
but never show it.

I want a man who will go out dancing
once in a while, but he doesn't
have to be good enough
to turn other women's heads.

He must be faithful and true, he must only love me
and
never stray.

He must be a good father and have a sense of
humor.
He should be exactly like you.

The Iron Staircase

Elizabeth Burkholder

A Tribute to Edgar Allan Poe

In winter, when the sky is grey,
And death does sing throughout the day,
Over the hills and far away
There lies the Iron Staircase.

In stone-made tower, high and cold,
Surrounded by the webs and mold,
At top of which a bell e'er tolled,
Was built the Iron Staircase.

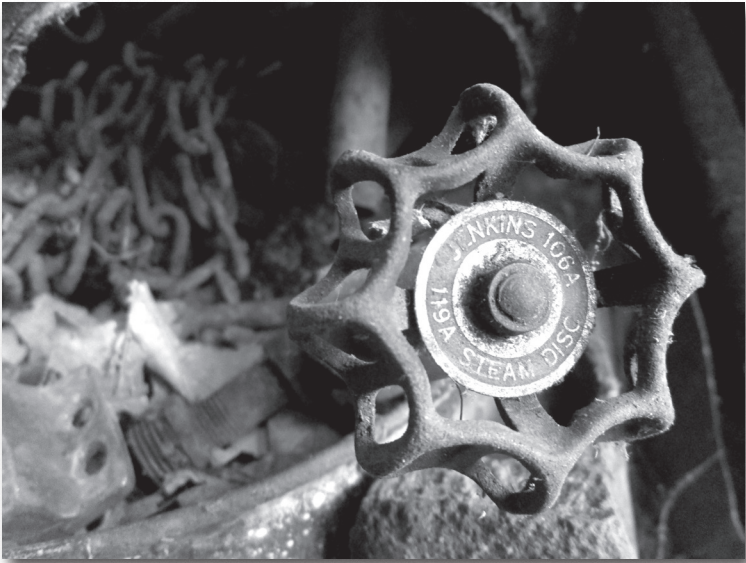
'Tis said that crows would ever wheel
About the top, and never feel
The terror of the bell's harsh peal
Above the Iron Staircase.

Yet those poor souls who passed by,
In terror off the cliffs would fly
And in the sea's cold grip would die,
For fear of the Iron Staircase.

And when a sound the harsh bell gave,
All those nearby would surely rave
And rather would embrace the grave

Than face the Iron Staircase.

What lies in tower, none can know,
For none returned, but Edgar Poe,
Who willingly to cliffs did go
To climb the Iron Staircase.



Richard Marcott Interview

Patrick Kirk

This spring, I had the pleasure of meeting one of Bradford's most interesting and notable characters, Captain Richard James Marcott. He graduated in 1953 from Bradford High School, then continued his education at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut in 1957, followed by a sterling military career spanning more than 28 years. Retiring back to his hometown with his wife of fifty-seven years, Carol, he first began writing the events of his life story at the behest of daughter Kimberly Marcott Weinberg, who wanted him to document his life, career, and world travels for her two children and the generations to follow. Several chapters have since seen publication in previous issues of Baily's Beads.

He was outgoing, with a casual sense of humor befitting such a man of the world. He invited me into his study and we settled into our conversation about his childhood in Bradford

and his life since.

PK: You were born pretty much smack-dab in the middle of the Depression Era. I imagine that made for a comparatively unconventional childhood, all things considered.

RM: The community here in 1935 was a mixed one of a lot of people who had done extremely well with oil production. There were a lot of middle-ground people who were the shop owners and shopkeepers and businesspeople. And then a whole lot of the labor force for the oil fields and factories that were being built up at that time. My father was a chauffeur for the president of the Bradford National Bank. So I grew up on a dirt street in basically a working class blue collar neighborhood right across the creek from the high school.

PK: And what about education? How was that for you?

RM: I was pretty lucky, I guess. I did well going through high school and I had a number of opportunities to go off to college,

but my family had no money. I had a couple of scholarships in line, and I had been interested in the service academies for some time, since eighth grade or so, so I was always looking at West Point and Annapolis. Then I discovered the Coast Guard Academy. I made the application to go there, and a couple weeks after we had graduated I got a telegram from the Coast Guard that I had been accepted as a cadet.

PK: Was it just the fact that it was the Coast Guard that offered you a scholarship that made you enlist, or did you have a particular keen interest in the Coast Guard?

RM: I was interested once I started reading about what the Coast Guard did, but this is an academy, like West Point or Annapolis. It's not an enlistment. It's a full-blown scholarship. They pay you to go to the Coast Guard Academy; you are in the military as a cadet where you incur a four-year obligation of service when you graduate.

PK: Where were you stationed throughout your career?

RM: My first assignment was in Norfolk, Virginia. I had

two assignments there on an ocean-going patrol ship. I had command of a ninety-five foot patrol boat while I was there. My first piece that appeared in *Baily's Beads* was on that ninety-five foot boat as the Commanding Officer, where we saved a guy in an operation. This piece is called "The Minnie V." It was published in 2013.

PK: What were the names of the vessels you served on?

RM: Well, the first one was the *Epsican*, out of Norfolk, Virginia. *The Cape Knox*, which was a ninety-five foot patrol boat. Then I did some shore things, and then I was on the Coast Guard Cutter *Resolute* out of San Francisco; that's when I did the Bering Sea patrols. Then I had command of the *Chelua*, an ocean-going vessel out of Morehead City, North Carolina.

PK: What would you say is the most interesting or significant thing that happened over the span of your career?

RM: Whoa, boy. That's a tough question. I think that the most significant thing was discovering that training and education was a niche that really sort of shaped my career. And I wanted to shape it in that

direction. After I came off of LORAN duty in Okinawa [an island in Japan], I was assigned as an instructor at the Officer Candidate School in Yorktown, Virginia. I didn't have a feel for it at first, but I discovered that I loved being in the classroom. It kept me oriented in training. I went from there to an assignment at Headquarters, administrating part of the training. I had the chance to start the Coast Guard Leadership and Management Training Program in 1976. I went back as a Chief of Training and Education for the Coast Guard, and I taught at the National Defense University in Washington. After I retired and came back here, I was teaching at Pitt-Bradford for a while.

PK: What did being in the Coast Guard mean to you?

RM: First of all, you are a military organization. The Coast Guard is older than the Navy. They've been in every major war and battle that the nation has ever been involved in. But they have a peace-time duty that goes well beyond just preparing for the next war. The search-and-rescue aspect of it, and the buoys, and the various missions of the Coast Guard were very appealing to

me. You always knew that you were doing something that the country needed, and it had a positive impact. We basically had a lot of respect from everybody for the Coast Guard's missions. It was a great life.

PK: Where would you say is the most interesting place you've ever been?

RM: Well, the place I would go back to is Copenhagen. It seemed like a really neat city. The people were wonderful, everybody spoke English and you could get along very well

PK: Around what point did you start writing?

RM: About six years ago. I'm not sure if it's always been a good thing—sometimes it's a burden—but I have this insatiable curiosity about things and I like to tackle things that I've never done before. I like learning new things. So, especially when I retired, I kept getting myself into these things that I had never done. My daughter, all through her growing up, would be with friends or they'd stop by and I'd be telling some of these stories that I got involved in during my experiences in the Coast Guard. She would always say "Dad, you've got to start writing

those stories down for your grandchildren.”

So, I started to go into my family history, background of the family, and I got very frustrated with that because it didn't tell you anything about them. It just said that part of the family grew up here, and then there were the relatives there, and all you learned was where they were, where they had been, and where they went. Nothing

about them as people. Now I understand what my daughter meant when she said, “You really gotta start writing some of those stories down.”

I had two things going for me: I like telling stories, I'm pretty good at it, and I was fortunate enough to have a career that put me in a lot of circumstances that gave me stories to tell. The one disadvantage was that I didn't

know how to write them. I didn't know how to write. So, back to the drawing board. Pitt-Bradford had Dr. McCabe who was going to present one of her classes,

“Writing from the Self,” so I monitored that class. It was an upper-level writing class. That's when I wrote my first piece. And Dr. McCabe asked, “Would you submit that to *Baily's Beads*?” I said, “Yes,” and that kind of got me into this whole genre

I had two things going for me: I like telling stories, I'm pretty good at it, and I was fortunate enough to have a career that put me in a lot of circumstances that gave me stories to tell. The one disadvantage was that I didn't know how to write.

of Creative Nonfiction. *The View From The Rigging*, that's my potential name for my memoirs. I've got twenty or so chapters. I am certainly a writing student; I'm not a practiced writer to any great extent.

PK: Do you have a favorite?

RM: Well, the individual chapters are stories that in many ways can stand alone. “The Minnie V,” and another one

where I save a guy who comes parachuting down out of the sky, and another chapter about the Russians, and the chapter with me meeting and getting drunk with Ernest Hemingway down in Havana. Those are all stand-alone kinds of stories. And I have a few more of those to tell. I don't know that any one of them is any more of a favorite to me than any of the other ones. I guess if I'm looking for a theme it's that "life is a crapshoot, and whatever comes your way, do the best you can with it." Make the best of whatever falls your way.

PK: Let's talk a little bit about family life. You have the one daughter?

RM: One daughter. We didn't have her till the thirteenth year. It's been a wonderful experience. And I've been blessed with a wife who's been so supportive and strong and has the same resolve for the same things that I was trying to do. We've had some wonderful times. My daughter has been right; she said I gotta start writing these things down. So, you know, here I am now, starting to learn how to write, and not having any experience in it at all, and I'm seventy-five to seventy-seven years old. I'm

gonna be eighty this summer. So I've been writing for five years. And because of the encouragement of my friends and the few people who have read some of the chapters, I'll probably self-publish. There will be a few of my classmates from the Academy, high school, and some friends around town who will be interested in it. I don't have any great expectations that it'll be a piece to sell nationwide.

PK: Well, you never know how these things are gonna take off.

RM: I know, you never know.

PK: I mean, look at Pop Rocks.

RM: Yeah, I get surprised. I wrote a piece about the freshman year at the Academy, it was called "Swab Year." I was surprised when people thought that was interesting. I thought, "This was the boring part, how life was at the Academy and how you went through it and what Academy living was all about." So when that kind of thing happens to me it keeps me encouraged, it keeps me saying "Let's go ahead."


PK: You've been published three times in *Baily's Beads*, is it?

RM: Yes. I've had three chapters, and they've selected

another one for this year[“We’ll Meet Again”].

PK: Just as a final commentary, anything you might want to add that we haven’t yet discussed for the readers out there?

RM: I guess I would just encourage people to never, when you get to be my age, never give up on learning new things. It’s been the thing that has kept me

involved and kept me alive and feeling good and learning new stuff. Give it a try. Everything I’ve wanted to try didn’t always work out. Don’t let yourself just go with the flow. Find something of interest and dig in! I think if there was a message, just know that lifelong learning is good for you. It’s good for a long life. 



Photograph by: Patrick Kirk

Mum is the Word

Scott Bartholomew

A young boy stepped out of line
into the park garden and ate.
No red bricks, no white fences,
just chrysanthemums even Monet would eye.
“Richard, what are you doing?”
blurted the student teacher.
Classmates stopped, still as models posing.
Puzzled, the boy replied,
“I thought since I can smell ‘em,
it would be fun tasting ‘em, too.”
He pushed back his pop-bottle glasses.
“These are okay, but over here,
these are it!”
The teacher happily informed him:
“You like tulips, and really like mums,
but do get back to the path.”
“Okay.”
And he scrambled his near-blindness back.
This could not be elementary education.
Time continued.

Amante del Café

Selese Huth

Dark,
robust,
hazelnut,
four sugars,
20-ounce mug,
add milk, not creamer.

Drink it cold because hot incinerates the taste buds
and warm reinduces this Sleeping Beauty's
slumber.

The sweet nectar of the gods
that glides over my tongue
and rejuvenates my soul.

An exuberant elixir that dances the
paso doble of passion in my mouth.
The lustful lover of my taste buds.
A mocha shot of energy to my veins.
A caffeine jump-start to my heart.

Calligraphy and Cigarettes

Kelly Schucker

Your slow
breathing
in midnights
that shift
the room,
you in bed,
me at my
desk lit
by a 60
watt and
you inside
of my
shadows

This world,
in this
room is
like
learning
calligraphy.

This isn't pretty. It
doesn't flow like your
breathing, it

hitches like
lungs consumed
by cigarette
smoke.

Not pretty, but this
room is
ambition.
We are freshly chopped
wood, we are grainy, not
smooth, but we burn
slow
and
we slowly burn.



Andy's Hollyhocks

Carol Newman

The hollyhocks grew so tall last month that a photographer came out from the newspaper office and took a picture. I remember the sky that day was that rich deep blue that can't be duplicated no matter what it says on the paint chip, and I guess that's why they decided to run a color picture. The tallest was eighteen inches or so above Andy's head and he's six feet, give or take an inch.

When Lillian Foster gave us a coffee can of crackling seedpods spilling the flat seeds, I thought maybe we'd plant a row or two, if we got time. But Andy spent hours as he prepared that bed and then squatted back on his heels as he planted them one by one until he had filled the whole garden behind the dog kennel.

Now that I think about it, that's about the time Andy stopped talking to me, too. I mean, he's never been much of a talker anyway, but it was right about then that he started going in to work early and staying

later and later. At first, I thought maybe he was just too tired to talk. I asked him if everything was all right, but he just asked me why I was asking, and since I couldn't exactly put my finger on it, I didn't know why I was asking.

Looking back now, it seems crazy that the one thing I couldn't say to him was how much I needed him. Instead I stuck to things like "Is everything all right?" or "Maybe you could help me with some things." Anyway, I doubt if it would have changed anything.

Meanwhile, that garden had started to grow.

About the same time those hollyhocks pushed their way up out of the ground with that ugly first-year foliage, late August or early September, I noticed that the yellow plastic box that held our morning paper was broken. The metal had corroded underneath until the box had flipped upside down, held on by merely a thread of rusty metal. I told Andy, but he said it didn't matter to him since he didn't

read the paper at home anymore.

His logic didn't surprise me; it had been weeks, maybe longer, since we had sat and read the paper together. So, I called the newspaper office to explain that because the underside of the box had holes and was now flipped upside down, it would be useless at protecting the paper if it rained. The young woman who answered said she'd let the carrier know. The rest of that week, there was either no paper at all or the paper was in

the ditch, the pages blown ten or twelve feet in either direction. At the end of the week it rained,

and although the paper was there in the broken box, it was soaked beyond any use.

I put off calling the newspaper office for a few more days for some reason.

It wasn't until Lillian Foster called to see if Andy could bring her a wrench to fix the flag on her mailbox that I remembered that the paper box still needed fixed, so I called them again. The same young woman answered the phone, and when I explained

about the papers in the ditch, she said that it sounded as if our paper carrier was trying to get back at me for complaining. She said that it sometimes took a few days to replace a box, but not to worry.

Over the next few weeks, Florida was swept by three hurricanes one after the other, while our own weather remained gloriously calm with cool mornings and sunny days in the seventies. In the mornings

I'd hear the paper carrier's old car rattle up to the box and then tear away with a roar of the muffler, sometimes

leaving a paper and sometimes not. The next time the paper was in the ditch, I tried to rationalize all the reasons the carrier might have for missing the box, but no matter what, in my mind it just didn't make sense.

It was right about that time that I started having a recurring dream about the newspaper carrier. In my dream he drives up, his car rattling like a truckload of tin cans, belching smoke and

The bullet hits me with
a thud, and it's not
at all how I expect a
bullet to feel.

roaring from that bad muffler. Then, with no warning, he sticks a gun out the window and shoots me. The bullet hits me with a thud, and it's not at all how I expect a bullet to feel. Instead of pain and blood there's just this feeling of having been knocked down. Hard.

I mentioned the newspaper again to Andy, suggesting that it might be more effective if he called the newspaper office. He was so busy sealing the driveway with that sticky tar-like stuff that takes days to dry, using a paint sprayer that left black speckles on my phlox and the burning bushes along the edge of the garden, that he didn't answer. Andy's hollyhocks were far enough away from the driveway that that black residue never reached them.

When the new kitchen faucet began to shut off midstream I waited until Andy came in from weeding his hollyhocks to show him. He stood there at the sink in his ragged shorts and old T-shirt, bits of grass stuck to his knees, dirt covering his hands like gloves.

"What?" he said as he turned on the faucet and put his hands

under the stream. "What's wrong with it?" When the water stopped, "Just get a new one," he said, and wiped his hands on my kitchen towel.

It just didn't seem right that we should have to replace the whole faucet after only a few months, but I went ahead and dug out the lifetime guarantee and called the toll-free number. A young woman answered the phone and I was amazed to hear her zero right in on the problem.

"It's your diverter valve," she said. "We'll have that right out to you in three working days, no charge, have a nice day."

The part for the faucet arrived within three working days, just as the woman had promised. I explained to Andy how she had identified the problem immediately and sent the part right out to us. He asked me if I knew where the part went, and of course I had to tell him no. He said he'd look at it later, if he got time. Until that morning, the water still stopped midstream, but if I jiggled the handle and squirted the water out of the sprayer for a while, it sometimes adjusted itself.

In the meantime, the paper showed up in the broken box

regularly enough that I got used to it again and sat down to read it with an extra cup of coffee in the morning. When the bad weather started in November, I tried for a while to keep the mailbox and the paper box shoveled out, but the snow got too heavy and it piled up on me. When the paper started ending up in the ditch again, I knew it was because the snow had hardened into ice, making it difficult for the carrier to get close to the box. The mailman could still reach the mailbox, so he left one of his papers with a diagram of how to clear the space front of your mailbox.

So, I took that old pickaxe that Andy had leaning against the wall in the garage, the one with a point on one side and a broad bludgeon-like head on the other, and I chopped as much ice as I could. I closed my eyes every time I brought the pick down as a way to shield myself from ice chips, but one still flew up and caught me on the cheek. I could feel it bleeding and stinging in the cold air, but for some reason it gave me tremendous satisfaction to keep on chopping that ice. Later, when I told Andy about it, he said I should know

that chopping ice without safety glasses is dangerous.

Meanwhile, I kept having that dream, the one where the paper carrier shoots me. Not every night, but often enough that I began to think of it during the day. In my dream, I hear the car coming in the dark from a long way off, that muffler roaring and the fenders rattling. Then it's right there, right at the broken paper box. As always, the window comes down slowly and he sticks out that gun and shoots me. The thud is always the same.

It was in February that the phone went out of order. I remember because Lillian Foster called to see if Andy could help her move her dining room furniture back onto a rug she had had cleaned, and Lillian and I heard these voices: phones ringing, people answering, and then whole conversations. The voices were so loud that we had to hold off on our own conversation and wait until these other people were finished. They couldn't hear us, but we could hear them. At first Lillian thought maybe it was her phone, but then it started happening every time I talked with anyone; so I finally called the phone company.

I got one of those recorded voices that you talk at, and somehow it answers you even though it's recorded. After a white silence and a click, this woman said she was sorry to hear that I was having problems.

She then gave me directions on how to test my phone. She said to disconnect it inside, take it outside and plug it in where the phone line comes in to the house. She said if they could be of any other help, don't hesitate to call.

When Andy got home, I told him about testing the phone and asked him if he understood just where the phone needed to be plugged in outside. In spite of what she said, I was reluctant to disconnect the phone line on the outside of the house and then plug anything into it. Andy was busy rearranging the drawers in his toolbox and didn't answer.

It was right after that that the paper box fell completely off the pole. I knew the paper carrier had

stopped that morning because, as usual, I heard the unmistakable sound of his old car pulling up to the box and roaring off. When I went down it was still dark, like it always was, and the paper was in the ditch, already starting to blow apart. The box had skidded on the ice halfway to the neighbor's driveway. I

He stood there with his head cocked to one side, that tool belt sort of weighing him down, anchoring him there in my kitchen, and he asked if there was anything else he could do for me.

picked it up and tried to reattach it, but the rusty threads of metal had completely disintegrated. I leaned it against the pole, anchoring it with a couple of chunks of ice I pulled up out of the ditch when I retrieved what

was left of the paper.

I called the newspaper office again and explained to the same young woman that the box had now fallen completely off the pole. She asked me to slow down so she could write it all down. She said it might take a few days to fix the box, but not to worry.

I never did get enough nerve to test the phone. When I called the phone company back, I

waited until the recorded voice offered the directions, and I firmly said no. It paid off because she said in that mechanical voice of hers that they could send a technician to check our lines sometime the next day between eight in the morning and six in the evening, and that someone would have to be available to let the technician inside the premises. I really didn't want to hang around the house for a ten-hour stretch on a Saturday, but since it felt like a breakthrough and my luck might be changing, I punched in a 'one' which meant it would be okay. Andy was gone all evening again so I never got a chance to tell him.

My luck held out and the guy from the phone company arrived early on Saturday morning, wearing one of those tool belts slung down around his hips, all the little pockets bulging with tools that jingled and clanked. He only had to use a clunky box with a dial attached to call someone and the phone was fixed.

He stood there with his head cocked to one side, that tool belt sort of weighing him

down, anchoring him there in my kitchen, and he asked if there was anything else he could do for me. The sleeves of his shirt were rolled up to his elbows, showing his forearms, his name *Dan* stitched on the left pocket of his shirt in red thread. For a minute, I thought he was looking at me the way Andy used to look at me before he went all silent. I don't know what came over me, but suddenly I wanted to tell him everything. How Andy didn't talk anymore, how I wasn't good at fixing things, and how the paper carrier, whom I had never met, hated me. But I didn't know where to begin, and before I could make up my mind, he was gone.

That night I tried to explain it all to Andy, but he sat there in his chair with the television turned down low, watching one of those fishing programs. I've never understood the appeal of fishing, especially when it's watching someone else fish. Anyway, Andy never looked up.

If someone had said to me right then "make a wish," I'd have wished for things to be the

Then I stumbled over
that pickaxe of Andy's.

way they used to be: back when Andy talked to me, back when he'd smile at me and reach out his hand and say, "don't worry, I'll fix it."

The carrier still hadn't gotten around to fixing the box, so when it got too wet to climb into the ditch to get the paper, I tried to tie the box back onto the pole. But without the anchoring metalwork, it was no good. For a day or so I strapped it to the mailbox with one of Andy's old belts. But the mailman left another paper, this one explaining in simple diagrams that nothing could be attached to an official mailbox unless it met with the standards of the United States Postal Service.

I called to cancel the paper a week or so after the phone was fixed, but the young woman said that she would report everything to her manager and he would personally see to getting my box fixed.

By late spring, Andy's hollyhocks had begun to shoot up out of the ground in their second growth, those rough green leaves as healthy and strong as any I've ever seen, the stalks tall and sturdy and studded all the way up with tight flower

buds. And I have to admit: when summer came, those hollyhocks made quite a show. Soon, people were stopping, asking for seeds, and taking pictures, and that's when Lillian Foster said those hollyhocks should be in the paper, and sure enough, that photographer showed up.

After that, if I got up early enough, I could get the paper before it got too wet in the ditch, and since we had such a dry summer it worked out really well until we got this rainy stretch. Then this morning on my way out the door I could see rain coming down in sheets, running down the driveway into the ditch. I stood there, smelling that rain and the wet earth, thinking about the paper sodden and useless in the ditch, and something white-hot started to bubble up down in the pit of my stomach.

Then I stumbled over that pickaxe of Andy's.

That's when the idea came into my head, sort of like those hollyhock seeds, just a speck of an idea planted in the dark earth of my brain. It was as if that little seed of an idea sprouted into ugly foliage, rough and dark green like those festering hollyhocks,


until it finally burst into flower.

I smashed the faucet first. I didn't realize until the water began to gush all over the kitchen that somehow I knew where to shut it off under the sink. That done, I used a kitchen towel to wipe up the counters, avoiding those places where the pick had gone through, and I got down on my hands and knees and used paper towels on the floor.

Next, I smashed the phone. It was fixed, but it didn't matter. I felt the same way I had when I was chopping that ice last winter, like I was finally getting something accomplished. When I finished I picked up all the pieces and wrapped them in a Wal-Mart bag before putting the whole bumpy mess in with the regular trash.

Afterwards, slipping and

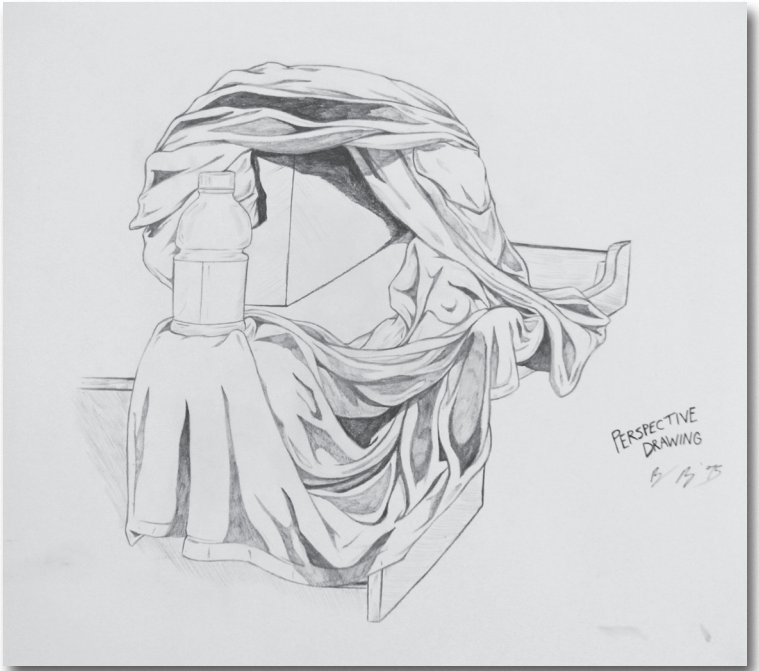
sliding on the wet grass, I went after those hollyhocks, that pickaxe bumping against my legs all the way across the yard. Even in the dark, I could see the tall stalks with those ragged leaves, the flowers closed up tight. The mud sucked at my feet throwing me off balance, slowing me down, but I kept on swinging until every one had been driven back into the earth.

When the paper carrier pulled up a few minutes later, the sound of his old car muffled by the rain, I stood there waiting for him, the bottom of my summer robe covered with mud, my hair streaming. The window came down slowly, and just like that, there was my paper, dry and folded neatly, encased in one of those skinny little see-through plastic bags. 

Moth

Bonnie McMillen

Moths large and dusty
fling themselves against the screen.
Hot dark summer night.



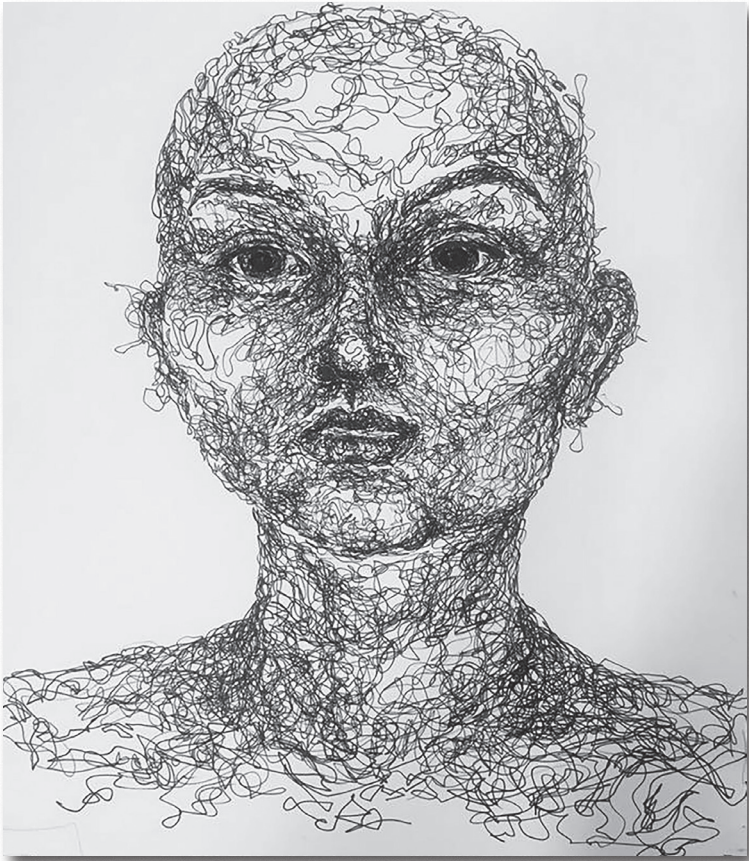
Consensual

Kayla Beers

Every woman belongs to you.
That college student walking home from a long day
of classes,
needs your strong hands to show her
how to relax.
Take her by the hair and have your way.
She's yours after all,
even if she doesn't know it yet.

The more that she claws at you like
a savage beast just means that
she wants it too.
Bind her up like the animal
she is.
Don't be afraid to beat her around a little.
Like the forbidden chocolate Wonder Ball,
open her up and there's a surprise inside.
She's yours to discover.
When all of the fight has been drained out of her
like venom from a wound,
remind her how grateful she should be to you.
Never mind the years of trauma and therapy that
will make
her debt grow to the height of Mt. Everest.

After you're done, leave her there on the street,
a discarded doll not worth a second glance.
It's time to move on to the next one for
every woman obviously belongs to you.



Self-portrait No. 4—pencil
JENNIFER LAU

The Ides of March 2015

Carol Newman

I remember those long winters
of my childhood, icicles as tall
as we were, and how we never seemed
to notice the cold. Afternoons,
we came in early, listened to The Hit Parade:
*When the moon hits your eye
like a big pizza pie, that's Amore!*

Now, the young I know write
of unrequited love, abuse forgiven,
as if love should be tempered, always,
with some kind of pain. They learn life
from Lifetime movies and Pinterest, feel
compelled to starve or stuff their bodies,
tattoo, pierce, or cut.

Today, my driveway is steeped in ice
like a satin bedspread, slick and
shiny but way too slippery
for comfort. Housebound,
I stare out the window,
wonder what to do
with the sixty-pound bags of sand
that weigh me down.

Your voice comes to me from
two thousand miles away. We speak
of common things: the dogs, they miss you,
(they always liked you better);
the weather: cold here, warm there;
our respective plans for the day; and
the date, far off, when you return.

Solitude brings its own kind of peace,
a calmness of mind, an uncluttered existence.
But, there comes a separation of emotions
as well as bodies, an existential
awareness of past and present. Love
seems as distant as the miles, and
I have never known a colder winter.



Just One Breath

Patricia Blakeslee

The world seemed different from the back of the ambulance. Some parts played in fast-forward, like the EMTs who frantically maneuvered and asked me questions I could vaguely hear. Other parts slowed down like the thump of my heart that seemed to thunder through my body, vibrating and echoing in my ear.

I wondered why we hadn't moved yet. I lay on the gurney, watching my husband whisper to our doctor right outside the open doors. I knew I was being given medicine to stop the contractions, but the only thing it seemed to do so far was blur my vision. I focused hard to read the doctor's lips, but I couldn't tell what he was saying. I tried desperately to sit up and ask, but was immediately reminded of the straps on my arms.

When I felt like I might vomit, I couldn't seem to form the words to warn anyone. I turned my face to the side just as the viscous, acidic liquid reached

my mouth and slid onto the cold steel grid of the ambulance floor. When another wave of nausea began, I turned my head again. But this time when I gagged, I felt a warm spreading sensation around my legs and under my behind. I merely patted the area below my pregnant belly to signal to them that the worst had happened. I once again faced the rear of the ambulance, still barely able to make out the form of my doctor. This time, he was shaking his head silently at my husband. With that, the technicians closed the doors, and we sped off, sirens blaring. I knew it was too early for my babies to come. This wasn't going to end well.

During the Memorial Day weekend leading up to that moment, my husband Billy and I were stationed at an Air Force base in South Carolina together. With a three-day weekend in sight, we'd decided to slip away to his mother's house in Virginia.

After the six-hour car trip, we pulled up to my mother-in-law's

townhouse. Billy turned with an excited smile and said, "Stay here for a sec." He skipped up the steps like a little boy. Watching him made me smile and without even realizing it, I rubbed my protruding belly. One of the babies moved in response.

When he finally returned, he had a grin like a Jack-O'-Lantern. He opened my door, helped me out and held my back as we walked to his mother's door. As soon as we reached the landing, the door burst open. "Surprise!" My mother-in-law's home was filled with pink and blue balloons and a throng of people, all giddy and eager to feel my belly.

My mother-in-law was first in line. "Oh my lord. Just look at you!"

Instinctively my hands returned to my babies. "Are we sure it's a boy *and* a girl?" someone asked.

"Well, not one hundred percent," I said as I continued to work my way through the hugs.

"Our friend did the ultrasound on the sly, but I think

I've seen enough to know," Billy chimed in.

Mom's brow furrowed. "Oh no! I thought a doctor said so!"

"Mom, please! I've been working as an L&D tech for like eight years," Billy said. "Seriously, I know what to look for. I'm ninety-eight percent sure one's a boy and one's a girl."

Mom didn't seem convinced. She grabbed my hand and led me to a crepe paper-decorated chair. She squeezed me one more time and said, "Aw—I sure hope so because everything I bought is so precious. Wait till you see. Oh, I'm just so excited!"

His mother and her friends had outdone themselves. On Monday morning, we could barely fit all of our gifts into the car for our trip back to South Carolina. I had to sit nearly erect with very little space for my swollen feet. The babies had been extremely active. They kept balling up together, which made everything seem tight and strained.

It was when we arrived back

It was when we
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that I realized there
was something wrong.

home that I realized there was something wrong. I needed to use the restroom, and when I did, I noticed I was spotting. I screamed, “Billy!”

He barreled down the old wooden hall. “What? What’s wrong?”

“Look!” I pointed at the tissue. This time there was blood and mucus both. Billy’s face went pale. He sat down on the edge of the tub. Our knees met, the bathroom was so small. He shook his head a couple times, presumably trying to shake the inevitable away.

Finally he said, “Baby, don’t get upset, but that’s what’s known as a mucus plug. It comes out right before delivery. Have you had any contractions today?”

I instantly replied, “No,” but when I started thinking about it, I had an awful *Aha*-moment. “Oh my god, oh my god. I thought—I thought it was just the babies tensing up. I didn’t know. Oh my god. I didn’t know.” I was sobbing by then and trying to convince him and myself that this wasn’t my fault. “How could I be so stupid? I thought contractions hurt?” I cried.

Billy placed his head in his hands, elbows resting on his

knees. Teary-eyed, he finally exhaled and said, “Baby, they only hurt near delivery. Oh my god. I gotta call Doc.” He rushed out of the bathroom. While he ran down the hall, he barked out orders: “Clean up as best you can and grab a bag and shoes. Wait. Just—just. Oh goddamnit. Just get in the car!” I did as I was told, and a couple minutes later he joined me.

As we backed up on to the old Spanish-moss-covered dirt road, I felt the familiar tightening that I had been experiencing all day. It was so obvious now that it was contractions. How could I be so frickin’ stupid? I thought. I grabbed Billy’s free hand and placed it on my belly. “Is that it? Is that a contraction?”

He felt around for a second and replied, “Yeah, that’s a contraction.” He pushed the gas a little harder. The car jerked and as I was forced further back into my seat, I put my head back, closed my eyes, and prayed.

Doc was waiting in the parking lot when we arrived at the hospital. He hurried to the car with a wheelchair. He asked question after question that Billy answered before I could. Before I knew it, I was flat on my back

on an exam table. Doc didn't even bother warming up the lube before spreading it across my torso.

As soon as the Doppler touched my skin, my untrained eye saw a problem on the monitor.

Doc reluctantly said, "Patty, you have what's called *hourglass membranes*. Your cervix has dilated, and the amniotic sac is protruding into the vaginal canal. I'm going to give you a push of a seriously heavy drug called magnesium. We've got to try to stop these contractions."

He snapped off his gloves and yelled to the nurses, "Let's get this table angled so her feet are up." He looked at me and said, "We're gonna let gravity do some of the work, but in the meantime, I'm transferring you to the closest hospital with a NICU." Then, back to the nurses: "Someone call Richland. Tell them we're on our way."

The room exploded into chaos. Two nurses placed pillows under my hips, and another tilted the exam table backwards. Still another secured a tourniquet and started an IV. When she couldn't find the vein, Billy stepped in and said, "Just let me get it. I got

it. I got it." He didn't even bother with gloves, he grabbed the IV and masterfully threaded it into my vein. He pulled back to ensure a good flow then secured it with tape. The nurse behind him started the automated pump, and I instantly felt burning through my arm.

While the magnesium crept through my body, my eyelids began to feel heavy. Everything seemed to slow down and blur. Someone was pushing the inclined table with me on it through the hall and into the elevator, but all I could feel was panic. I could hear my heart and my individual breaths. A heavy metallic taste saturated my mouth. It was a chore to keep my eyes open.

I remember being lifted into the ambulance and everything that followed. After my membranes ruptured, the paramedics finally shut the door and peeled out of the parking lot, they placed an oxygen mask over my face. I fought it at first because it was so confining but finally gave up, the fight in me gone. All I could do was lie there and think about what was about

to happen.

I was later told that we made it to the hospital forty-five miles away in under thirty minutes. As soon as we arrived, more chaos ensued. People I didn't know in white coats and scrubs asked me questions I couldn't understand. I heard Billy answer, and it felt good to hear his voice, but my eyes couldn't find him.

When the gurney finally stopped, I was parked in a dimly lit room, and I found him again.

He squeezed my hand while he looked down with tears in his eyes. I didn't even realize there was a doctor between my legs until an excruciating pain ripped through my lower body.

"Oh god! What is he doing? Oh, it hurts, god, it hurts!" I tried to scream, but I could hear that it didn't come out right.

Billy's first tear released down his cheek. He sniffed and shook his head. "Babe, one of the babies is almost out. They're trying to get it out, okay?"

Another ripple of pain flooded my lower body. I moaned and cried. I screamed and hit Billy repeatedly with my fist. When I

couldn't take it anymore, I sat up panting and sweating and bore down. I felt pressure, then relief, and just like that, my first baby was born. Dead. His little sister kicked me to let me know she was still in there.

Billy followed the nurse who whisked my baby boy out of the room. There were doctors and nurses still working at the foot of my bed. I heard them mumbling something about the placenta needing to come next, but nothing was making much sense. I ignored them and lay back. I turned my head to the pillow and howled all the hurt I could muster.

I don't know how much time went by, but when I woke, Billy was sitting next to me. As soon as I saw him, a tsunami of emotions smacked my brain. My body felt ravaged. My baby girl hadn't taken over her sibling's space yet so my belly was caved in on one side. The room was dark.

Billy asked gently, "Do you want to know what's going on?"

I couldn't even answer him. I just nodded.

He continued, "So, they

"Oh god! What is he
doing? Oh, it hurts,
god, it hurts!"

think that the placentas of the two babies are fused, which is why you didn't deliver the boy's placenta right after. That's not good news because that means it just stays in the womb until you deliver the girl, which increases the chance of infection."

Hearing him speak about "the boy" and "the girl" made me angry. I knew he understood all of this, but I didn't, and they were our babies, not specimens. All I could think to ask was, "So pretty much I will lose her too?"

Billy shook his head fast and said, "No, no, no, not at all. We just have to stay here until she can be born safely and they can continue monitoring you."

"Well, how long is that? I'm only twenty-two weeks," I replied.

"I know. You need to be at least twenty-four weeks for her to be viable."

"Would you please stop talking like a frickin' tech! God!"

"Patty, what do you want me to do? Maybe if we knew you were having contractions earlier,

we could've done something."

"So it's all my fault, then? Why don't they tell people what contractions feel like?"

I'm twenty-two years old. I've only been pregnant one other time and lost it at four weeks. How the hell am I

supposed to know what it feels like?"

Now he was defeated. He sank in the chair, released my hand, and said, "I don't know. It just seems like you would've known something was different. Whatever. It's not your fault. We couldn't afford them anyway."

He might as well have stabbed me in the heart. His words sliced through me. I didn't have the energy to fight or speak. I just wanted to sleep. I tuned him out, focused on the whoosh of my baby girl's heart on the monitor, and fell asleep.

That's how it went for nearly a week. Neither of our families came to help us. Some friends popped in, a couple that we were close to. I heard the wife talking to Billy in the hallway. I strained to hear what they were

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saying but couldn't make it out. I didn't like the way she smiled at him, but I knew I was probably being irrational, so I didn't say anything.

I wasn't allowed to get out of the bed, not that I wanted to. Billy went back and forth between the hospital and home to take care of our dogs. He seemed to stay away longer each time he went. I didn't blame him.

One afternoon when he left, a beautiful young blond nurse came in. She opened the blinds and said in her too-perky voice, "We need some sun in here, don't you think?"

I tried to be pleasant, but I didn't feel like it. She came over to me and said, "Well, I hear that no one has bothered to wash your hair or to give you a bath so I'm here to do it. You'll feel so much better. Will you let me?" She sounded hopeful.

Just what I wanted, some young, hot southern belle trying to perform a miracle makeover on me. But when she was done, I did feel better. I even sat up and ate some broth and Jell-O.

I called Billy and asked him to bring me some underwear. The nurse said I could wear them as long as they weren't too tight. I was looking forward to that one piece of dignity.

Billy seemed excited to hear me. He rushed back to the hospital with a few pairs. I was so thrilled! But when I went to put them on I realized that he had brought my oldest pairs, the ones that we had used for our dog when she was in heat. Most of them had a huge hole cut out of the back to make room for her tail.

"Wonderful!" I remarked.

Billy saw the holes and began to smirk. "Oops!" he said and laughed.

I threw the old panties at him and yelled, "Just leave! You ruined the one thing that might make me feel human again!"

I'm not sure why I was surprised and even dismayed that he complied and left me alone again, feeling sorry for myself with so much guilt to bear. Just as I thought maybe I'd call and apologize, a line of men

"Just leave! You ruined the one thing that might make me feel human again!"

with white coats walked in, all older, dignified, and even dapper but with fake smiles painted on their faces.

The oldest, smartest-looking one spoke. "Hi Patricia, I hope they're treating you well. We need to have a realistic talk with you."

My head scrambled. I didn't understand this crap. I needed Bill.

Flustered, I said, "Um, can you come back when my husband is here?"

"Well, actually we wanted to talk to you without him here. You see, we have a real unique situation here. Because you didn't deliver Baby A's placenta—"

I cut him off. "My son, you mean—"

He continued, nodding apologetically. "Yes, yes, of course, your boy. Uh, anyway, your labs aren't looking too good. It appears that you are getting an infection. Also, even if we *do* get to twenty-four weeks, which I doubt, the baby you have

will not be the baby you want. We're talking about massive intervention for your baby to make it, the baby would require one hundred percent oxygen, which can deteriorate the bowel, cause eyesight issues, just a gamut of things you don't want to deal with. After all, you're only twenty-two. There will be other babies. You're too young to deal with this atrocity!" He looked at his cohorts for support. A couple of them nodded while another just stared at the pink tile.

Before I could ask any questions, he started again. "And that's if you even make it another nine days. You are contracting more and more every day. The magnesium is not doing its job anymore and we can't give you any more. I think the best thing for everyone is to wean you off the magnesium and let you go home. You'll be more comfortable there when the time comes."

I was so confused. Billy had said I just had to get to twenty-four weeks, but this doctor said otherwise. I felt like I didn't have

He looked at his cohorts for support. A couple of them nodded while another just stared at the pink tile.

a choice so I just nodded. They all walked out, one after another. The doctor who stared at the floor squeezed my shoulder as he went by. A nurse came in before I had time to process what had just happened and began unhooking the IV.

I called Billy, frantic. I blubbered out as best as I could what had happened. He was at the hospital in no time. When he arrived, he hit the nurse call button.

“Can I help you?” The nurse said through the intercom.

Billy growled, “Yeah, we need someone in here now!”

When the nurse came in, it wasn't the same one who had disengaged my IV. Billy began berating her for taking the IV out. He barked, “If they were weaning her off the mag that sure is a helluva way to do it. Don't you think?”

The nurse was obviously taken off guard. She stammered, “Uh—um—I'll go look at the notes but it was my understanding that the patient agreed to discontinue care.” With that she scrambled out of the room.

Billy's head whipped around to me, “You did this? Jesus Christ, Patty.”

I cried pitifully, “No, no, I didn't mean to. I mean—they told me they couldn't do anything for me anymore and that the baby would not be okay.” Defeated, I simply lay back, only to sit right back up when a wave of pain made its way through my back and belly.

Billy paced the floor. He called a few people and repeated the story. He wasn't blatantly blaming me but rather the doctors who came in when he hadn't been there. I thrashed in pain and finally had to call the nurse myself.

When she came in, she saw what was happening. “Okay, honey, I'll go get you something for the pain.” She was back in moments. Billy gave her a dirty look when she buried the needle into my arm. As she depressed the plunger, my eyes grew heavy again and everything went black.

I didn't wake up until the morning. Billy was asleep in the chair. My baby girl was kicking and had finally taken over her brother's space. I lay on my side with my hand under my belly so I could feel her. I lay like that for a while and cried for my boy who I never even got to see.

Billy stirred and came over to the bed. As he did, I felt a sneeze coming. My head tilted back as my nose tickled and “Achoo.” And just like that, my water broke—again. I murmured to Billy in a barely audible voice, “It’s over. Water broke.”

He pulled back the covers to see for himself. He hit the call button and once again, I was the center of chaos. A doctor I had never met waltzed in to the room and over to the bottom of the bed. He announced without so much as an introduction, “You’re dilated enough to push if you’re ready.”

I grabbed Billy’s hand, sat up, and pushed. Again, pain—pressure—relief, and my baby girl was there. This time though, the nurse took her, wrapped her in a blanket and handed her to Billy.

The doctor told me to push again, but I ignored him. I wanted to feel my baby. Billy handed her to me and she was perfect, small but perfect. She was beautiful. The doctor stood up and said, “Never mind, we’ll just do a D&C later. Just leave them alone for a few minutes.”

Everyone cleared out of the room except for Billy. I couldn’t

take my eyes off of my baby. How could something be wrong? She was divine in every way. She was just a little too small, too young. I rubbed her chest and her mouth opened as if she were gasping for breath. Billy grabbed a stethoscope and listened to her.

“Her heart is still beating, but no breathing sounds—it won’t be long.” He slumped back into the chair.

I continued to hold her. I prayed for a miracle. “God, just let her live!”

I don’t know how many minutes passed but Billy listened to her chest again and shook his head. “Give her one last kiss then I need to take her.”

I kissed her forehead. I thought of all the fairy tales where it took just one kiss of true love to wake up the princess. It didn’t work.

He took her out of the room and she was gone, forever.



Billy and I stayed married for another year, but it wasn’t much of a marriage. We had two more miscarriages until finally, in October of 1997, God blessed us with our darling Nicholas. He was perfection personified. Three


months later I found out that I hadn't been crazy in the hospital when I'd suspected Billy and our friend of hiding something. It turned out they had carried on quite an affair even as I lay in the hospital doing everything I could to keep my baby girl alive. Eventually, he did all of us a favor, met his soul mate, and asked me for a divorce.

Nick and I were alone for two years until out of nowhere, I too, met my soul mate, Jesse. We were married in 2001. Together we had three more beautiful and perfect boys. As much as I love and cherish my husband and my four sons, I will never be able to forget my firstborn children. Their movements, their kicks, and my baby girl's attempt

at breath will never leave me. Maybe it's selfish of me to grieve for what I could have had when I now have so much.

On Mother's Day this year, I crept down to the basement and opened the box that I've kept for so long. I unraveled the nearly two-decade-old hospital baby blanket. Inside were pictures of my twins that, thankfully, someone at the

I kissed her forehead. I thought of all the fairy tales where it took just one kiss of true love to wake up the princess.

hospital thought to take. Not for the faint of heart, these are pictures only a mother who has lost could find healing and comforting. What would have happened if they had survived? Maybe back then, God didn't think I was ready. Maybe, just like my babies, I was simply too young. 

Parting Gifts

Cortney Hedlund

I want my life to smell like old books and musty cologne. I want it to hang on my clothes and cling to my hair. I want a life that sounds like floating laughs and old music that you can dance to. I want wholesome, lively, and crisp. I want dewy grass and golden sun. I want to capture the moment of love in your eyes and remember it until I die. I want to show it to God and wear it like a necklace, close to my heart. I want to hold the feeling of late nights on my feet, and when I look back, I don't want my life to be bright. I want it to be dim with candles to light the way. Cozy rooms and Christmases with woodstoves, sunsets, and the glow of the moon against your skin; nights that hold your breath and refuse to let it go.

I want to die with the memories of summer. I want to take to my grave a fist full of bursting laughs, and I want you to make sure my other hand is open to let go of every regret. I will die with cobblestones in my pockets and dandelions in my hair, and the sweet taste of raspberries will cling to my lips as I mutter my last words on this ink-stained and boundless planet.

But first, let me experience another night filled

with whispers of crickets and the sound of your breaths. Let me feel your palm against my cheek, just one more time. And this time we will not bid farewell, we will not part with tears on our cheeks, but rather, smiles in our teeth and the hum of birds fluttering in our hearts.

I will speak words of love and leave with nature's call, and you will only have the lasting memory of me at seventeen with a child's smile that's lit up by the stars in your eyes.

And goodbye will be painful, but I will look to the stars and the heavens painted with pink and orange hues that color my skin golden, and I will leave behind an initial on an oak tree, a foot in cement, and a print upon your heart; for I was here, and I have lived, and now I have left.

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Katelyne Barr is a 2015 graduate of Pitt-Bradford. She is a lifelong PA resident who finds joy in the simplest of life's puzzles.

Scott Bartholomew, 62, has controlled epilepsy which was career limiting and is proud to call the University of Pittsburgh one of those centers at the forefront in the neurological/NIMH field. He has published poetry, a review, and journalism. He worked for fourteen years as a telephone service representative at APAC.

Kayla Beers is a 2015 graduate of Pitt-Bradford. She received BA in writing and was an editor for the 2015 issue of *Baily's Beads*.

Patricia Blakesslee is a 43-year-old happily married mother of four gorgeous boys. She retired from the United States Air Force in 2008 at the rank of Master Sergeant. She is an avid reader and writer. She enjoys an array of genres, but creative nonfiction is by far her favorite.

Lisa Chapman works for Pitt-Bradford at the Center for Rural Health Practice and is a semi-retired registered nurse. She recently returned to her hometown of Smethport after retiring to concentrate on birding, gardening, making apple cider, reading, and writing, not necessarily in that order.

Elissa Joy Domzalski is a broadcast communications major with a minor in art. Originally from Wilkes-Barre, PA, she loves abstract artwork and images that can make you think. She also paints, draws, and does film work.

Anne Garcia is a senior at Pitt-Bradford majoring in early childhood education. She plans on teaching overseas after she graduates.

Cortney Hedlund is currently attending college for her bachelors in creative writing and plans to graduate in 2019. She has been writing since she was twelve years old and has been an avid reader since discovering the literary genre of fantasy. In her piece “Parting Gifts,” inspired after reading an obituary in her local newspaper, she dabbles with prose poetry.

Amy Gaberseck-Hughes is an interdisciplinary arts major at Pitt-Bradford with aspirations of producing her own annual magazine/almanac focusing on the holistic rituals of daily domestic life, art, and gardening. When she is not crouched over a keyboard or sketchbook, you can find her outside in the real world delighting in nature activities with her family.

Selese Huth, a former co-editor-in-chief of *Baily’s Beads*, is a 2015 graduate of Pitt-Bradford where she earned her BA in writing with a minor in digital graphic design. She was the 2015 recipient of the Robert C. Laing Creative Arts Award in Writing at Pitt-Bradford. Selese is currently working as a mentor and art teacher at Taylor Diversion Programs in her hometown of Tionesta, PA.

Kimberly Kaschalk is a 2002 alumna of Pitt-Bradford. Following graduation, she was employed with WOKW 102.9 FM before taking the position of a news reporter with the *Courier-Express* newspaper for eleven and a half years. She recently took a position as a news writer with Gantdaily.com and a department clerk in the Clearfield County Prothonotary’s office. She serves as a volunteer firefighter with the Clearfield and Goshen Fire Departments and qualified for the Pennsylvania State Wildfire team. She lives in Goshen with her husband Martin and her menagerie of pets.

Patrick J. Kirk began writing about unusual characters and dialogues at age eight, and sixteen years later he found himself a writing major at Pitt-Bradford. He lives in York, PA where he shares his home with one cat, a mini wirehaired dachshund, his mother, and her endless champion show dogs.

Martina Kranz grew up in Johnsonburg, PA with nine siblings. She is an English major with a minor in writing at Minot State. She has written cooking articles for a regional magazine, *North Dakota LIVING*, and creative nonfiction for the local military newspaper, *Northern Sentry*. She's written short stories for the online fiction showcase *Page & Spine*. She loves to read romance novels and go for long walks.

Brady Major is an interdisciplinary arts major hailing from Port Allegany, PA. Art was his first love and as he matured, writing became another creative outlet. He hopes to pursue projects that utilize both visual and textual faculties. When he's not creating art or writing stories, he finds himself engrossed in cinema, music, literature, and video games, always fascinated by fictional worlds and the characters that inhabit them.

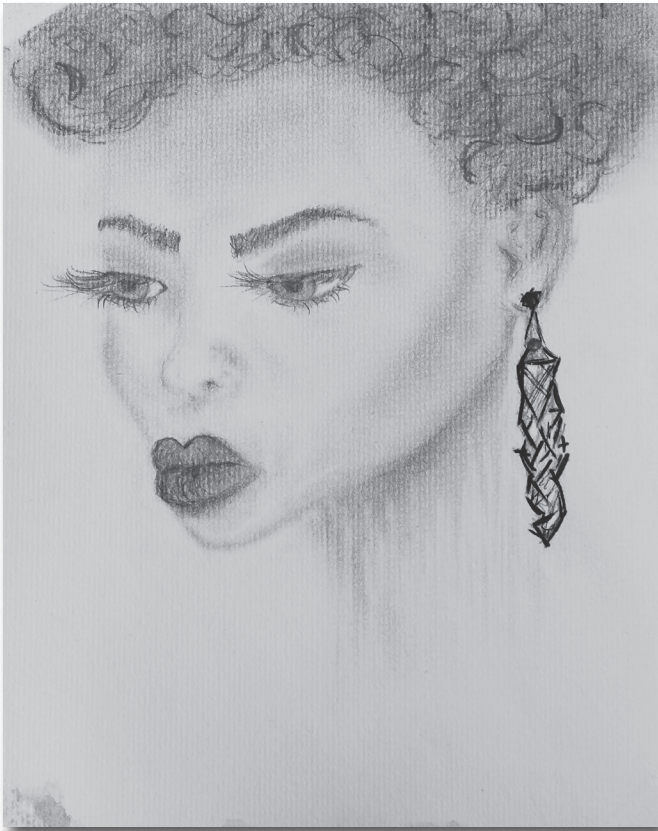
Richard Marcott is a retired Coast Guard Captain. His memoirs, *The View from the Rigging*, are a work in progress. This year's piece, *We'll Meet Again*, is the fourth excerpt to appear in *Baily's Beads*. He thanks his daughter, Kimberly, who encouraged the project, and the Pitt-Bradford writing staff and the Bradford Writing Group for keeping him on track.

Sadie McLaughlin was born in Singapore but raised primarily in Oil City, PA, the place she calls home. She graduated from Pitt-Bradford in spring 2015 with a major in public relations and a minor in art. She has always loved art, but she didn't know it was a passion until her third year at Pitt-Bradford. She loves expressing herself and finding peace in any form of creating. She is currently living in Pittsburgh, PA, working at ModCloth Inc. as a customer care advocate.

Angela Nuzzo is a human owned by Smokey Sue (the cat in the poem). Angela is a 1995 graduate of Pitt-Bradford, but more importantly, she is a constant provider of food, water, fresh litter, chin rubs, and napping support. She is loved unconditionally, except for the half hour after bath time. And when the food is late. And

when she gets up from her chair.

Jennifer Willemin is a 2015 graduate of Pitt-Bradford, earning her degree in writing and public relations. She currently works at a marketing firm as a blogger, content writer, and event coordinator, while also writing some freelance articles from time to time. She is an avid food and wine enthusiast, classic movie buff, and wandering spirit.



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