



T A P E S T R I E S

2019

Each year the School of Arts & Letters hosts the **Gunard Berry Carlson Creative Writing and Visual Arts Contest**, a competition open to all Saint Francis undergraduates.

Students may submit written entries of up to 3,000 words in the following categories: (1) fiction, (2) creative nonfiction, including personal narratives and memoirs, (3) essay writing, and (4) poetry, with a minimum of five poems per submission. Students also may submit works of visual art, such as photographs, sculptures, paintings (oil, water, and acrylic), sketches, and collages.

The contest begins in the late fall and ends in the early spring, during which time students may submit as many entries as they wish. Entries must be either e-mailed to Dr. Brennan Thomas at bthomas@francis.edu or personally delivered to Room 307 Scotus Hall before the announced contest deadline.

The 2018-2019 contest winners and honorable mentions were published in the eighth volume of Saint Francis University's literary and visual arts magazine, *Tapestries*.

Also included in this *Tapestries* volume are the winner, runner-up and honorable mention recipients of the first annual **Father Thomas Callan Poetry Contest**, sponsored and co-judged by SFU alumnus Paul Martin. Paul Martin is a prolific writer whose publications include the poetry collections *Morning on Canal Street* (2005), *Closing Distances* (2009), and *Rooms of the Living* (2013).

Opinions expressed in this magazine do not reflect those of the contest judges and magazine editors or those of the Saint Francis community.

For more information about the Gunard Berry Carlson Contest or the Fr. Thomas Callan Poetry Contest, please contact:

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Tapestries

Weaving the Threads of Creativity and Innovation

Faculty Editor

Brennan Thomas

Cover Artwork by Renee Wirfel

“New River Gorge Bridge” (1st Place Winner in the Visual Arts Category)

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Ms. Carol Stoltz, for judging all visual art entries for the Gunard B. Carlson Contest and selecting the overall visual arts winner and honorable mention recipients;

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And finally, all students who submitted their work for the Gunard B. Carlson Contest and Father Callan Poetry Contest, sharing their creativity and innovation with our judges.

Writing Judges

Dr. Roxana Cazan, Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Lauri Chose, Associate Professor of English

Dr. Patrick Farabaugh, Associate Professor of Communication Arts

Fr. Callan Poetry Contest Judges

Dr. Roxana Cazan, Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Brennan Thomas, Associate Professor of English

Mr. Paul Martin, SFU Alumnus and Published Poet

Visual Arts Judge

Ms. Carol Stoltz, Head of Access Services, Library & Learning Commons

Contest Coordinator & Magazine Editor

Dr. Brennan Thomas, Associate Professor of English

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Reason number 7,581 that I love you

by Kathryn Dunleavy

Yesterday you saved a ladybug.

You picked her up

off of my windowsill,

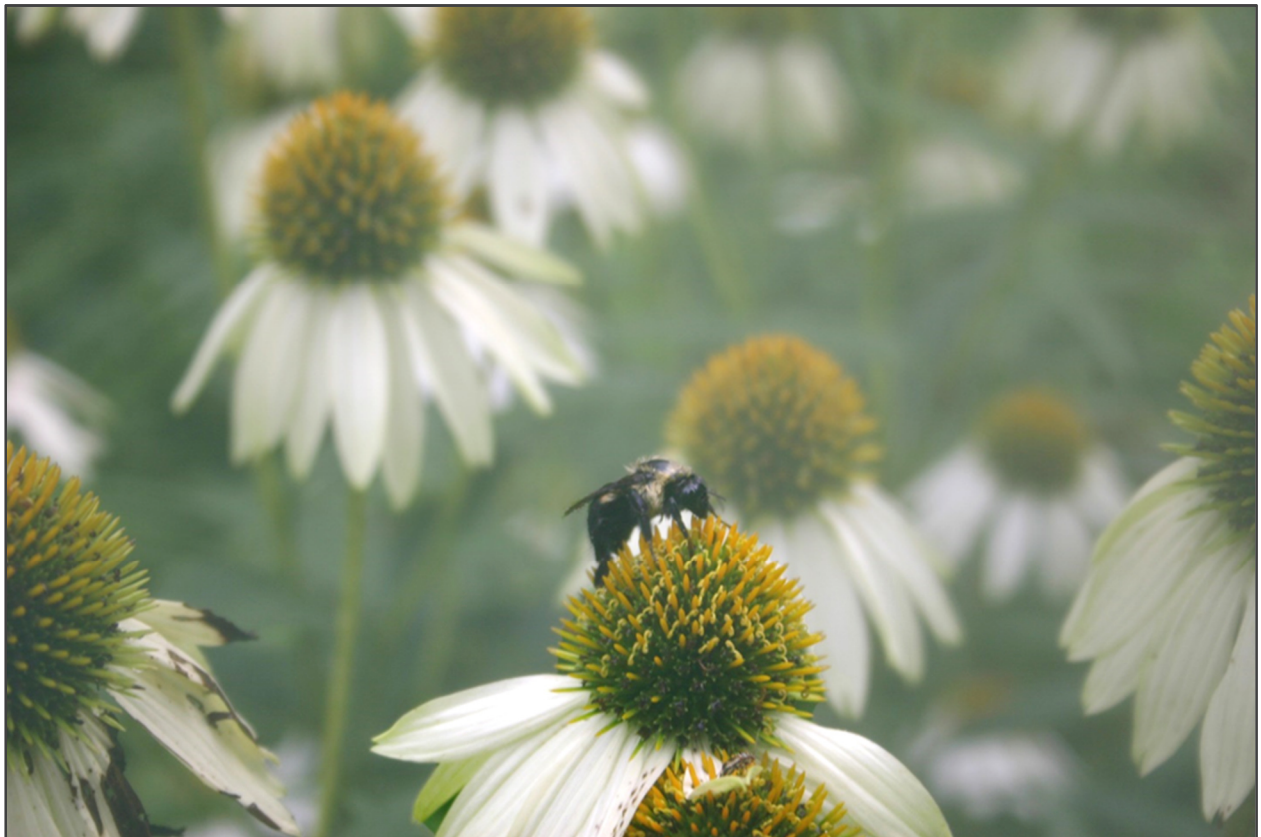
walked her downstairs,

out the door,

and placed her

gently

in the soft grass.



The Art of the Small and the Delicate

by Nicholas McKnight

Home by Shayna Boisvert

2nd Place Winner (Fr. Callan Poetry Contest)

My mother was the Sycamore,

my brother, the Atlantic.

at three I was in love with a rocky seacoast,

the scent of tulips pressed between my fingers,

and the granite mountains that reached for the sun.

If I had a sunrise to myself I would curl up on a rock like the harbor seals do,

and eavesdrop on the humpbacks' whispered "good mornings."

I have found freedom in woods deep as my soul;

I have breathed the smoke of campfires and danced in hurricanes

I was born to dangle my legs over cliff edges

and to inhale the salty air.



Dancing in the Water's Current by Renee Wirfel



Landmark by Samantha Hegedus

The Day the Vegan Was Breeding Chicken

by Elizabeth Catalano

the day the vegan was breeding chicken

9 jan 2019

Last night I was breeding chicken. I have not so much as *touched* chicken in over four years. I was filling in a shift at the late-night eating joint on campus, roughly transferred there from my regular position in the dining hall. Like one of those wind-up toys that keep marching even if you re-chart their courses. It was a new job, one I felt lucky to have.

That night, my manager was a middle aged woman with salt and pepper Einstein hair, bulging eyeballs, and the linguistic tendency to call everyone 'honey' in every sentence.

You just come right on over here, honey.

Yeah, honey, that goes right in that sink, mmhmm.

The breadcrumbs are in that back cabinet, honey, and the bags are in the big box.

No, honey, the other big box. Lemme show you, honey.

My quest for the evening was to bread 15 pounds of raw chicken, prepping it to be baked the following morning. Because honey, the kids love 'em. Even more than the dubious and greasy burgers made to order, guaranteed. The pattern was this: blue latex gloves, sheet pan, parchment paper, open bag, feel the chicken flesh, dump in the panko breadcrumbs, lay on sheet, strip off blue latex gloves because cross-contamination, open freezer with one hand, place pan in, begin again. Don't worry 'bout whatchu doin' next, honey, you'll be workin' on that for a while.

Blue latex gloves.

I looked around me in the back kitchen, alone, tucked away behind the line cooks and the managers and the sleepy woman at the checkout. I looked around at the clock, reading five more hours until I could even think about cleaning up, let alone retreating to the chilly silence of my dorm room. I looked around at the raw chicken packed into Ziploc bags, juices puddling in the corners.

Sheet pan.

Taking my time to gather all the pans together, dripping scalding water on my ragged pants leg, feeling my stomach gently start to churn.

Parchment paper.

I reminded myself that I didn't have to do this, not really. This whole gig was just minimum wage, a measly \$7.25 an hour minus taxes minus tuition payments minus groceries minus loans. I started crunching numbers in my head, using the convenient tool of money to measure how much my time is worth. For my six hours, I would get \$47.50. Minus taxes minus tuition...

Open bag.

I read the recipe hanging above me. Caesar salad. The date was from five years ago and someone had written *vegetarian!* in big red letters at the top. Below that was *GOOD*.

Feel the chicken flesh.

I tried to temporarily forget the fact that there were once small bodies attached to those hunks of flesh. Failed miserably. Started calculating how many chickens fit in each Ziploc bag with the puddles at the bottom.

Dump in the panko breadcrumbs.

And all my mind could keep trundling back to was that morning's seminar, in which we debated whether everyone can be bought. In the morning, I adamantly disagreed. I thought there were things out there that couldn't be touched. Things in *me* that couldn't be touched.

Lay on sheet.

Right there in that back room I began to a) have a crisis of morals and then b) make some startling realizations about life, in that order. Comparatively speaking, it was a rather quiet crisis with little to no screaming, crying, or other disruption to the public order. Comparatively speaking, I kept my realizations about life to myself, as always.

Strip off blue latex gloves because cross-contamination.

Paused my internal deep sea diving to wonder if my coworkers (who must also bread raw chicken from time to time) change their gloves before touching surfaces. Concluding to the negatory.

Open freezer with one hand.

Because I realized that I was bought that night for \$47.50.

Place pan in.

Think about that for the next five hours.

Begin again.

Blue latex gloves, sheet pan, parchment paper, open bag, feel the chicken flesh, dump in the panko breadcrumbs, lay on sheet, strip off blue latex gloves because cross-contamination, open freezer with one hand, place pan in, begin again.

Blue latex gloves, sheet pan, parchment paper, open bag, feel the chicken flesh, dump in the panko breadcrumbs, lay on sheet, strip off blue latex gloves because cross contamination, open freezer with one hand, place pan in, begin again.

Last night, I really began to understand how sometimes your morals or your beliefs or even your identity must take a step back if you want to continue living. How sometimes you need to set aside your dreams and desires and expectations for your life if you want to make rent. What I experienced here was unpleasant and guilt-inducing and maybe made me cry a little bit, but I do not claim to know anything about what that step back truly looks like. I am a privileged young woman who has the opportunity to go to college. Not everyone forced to make those tough decisions can rely upon that golden ticket.

Our society makes it impossible to survive on the minimum wage. Often, it is equally impossible to pursue higher education if you are also trying to put food on the table. Sometimes you can't just go out and get a better job, buff up your resume, smooth talk your way through interviews, update your business cards.

Thus, a moment of gratitude. I am grateful that I do not have to work at that location again. I am grateful that in the grand scheme of things, I did relatively little wrong. I am grateful that I am a student full time, that I have such an opportunity. I am grateful that my morals get tested every once in a while to remind me of who I am and what I stand for and where exactly my limits are. I am grateful that my livelihood does not depend on those tiny and significant compromises.

The Middle of the Dream by Ryan Alu

4th Place Winner (Gunard B. Carlson Contest)

I slumped along, pulled by my mother's shadow. My feet dragged like a tire through snow, arms oozing down in bitter annoyance. My face bent, contorted into a malicious mope. I unwillingly kept pace with her exultant steps with my purposefully slow, ungainly, plopping movements.

We reach our journey's end. She glanced back at me.

"Ready," she requested.

I looked up from my dejected puddle of self-pity.

"Sure," I responded as she bounced in.

Before her shadow towed me in with her, I scanned the evil, but all too familiar sign.

It glowed down upon me with its red letters, melting my skin, boiling me into the concrete. The "o" stuttered, sputtered, and spat. It was mocking me, laughing at my misery. I wanted that hellish sign to just fall on me—get it over with. But it had other plans. It didn't want me dead, just tormented into submission.

The sign read "Kohl's." It was the devil's signature to any 12-year-old.

I looked away from the sign and slouched back down.

Then a thought shocked my mind. My body convulsed and erected. Frustration and sorrow released me from their grasp. I barreled through the front doors and burrowed my feet into the ground. My heart ricocheted around in my chest with excitement, negated by the dead pulses of the customers. I threw my hands skyward and yelled, "Kohl's!" with maximum gusto.

The whole store craned its neck to view the deranged pimple at the front of the store.

Silence. Silence so numb you could feel its nothingness tingle.

Finally, one brave soul quacked, "Why?"

The store exploded in laughter and then returned back to its customary state.

Why did I find so much enjoyment in yelling "Kohl's" to random strangers? The question haunted me each night, daring me to answer it until, one night, I finally did.

I found joy in something so silly because I was defining myself through the journey that is the American Dream.

There is a common misconception with the American Dream. There is too great a focus on the beginning and end of the story. Like a wet rag being rung out, the ends remain wet with information while the middle is drained, devoid, and dry.

Andrew Carnegie—Born in a weaver's cottage in Scotland. Becomes rich with his steel industry. Oprah Winfrey—Raised wearing potato sacks for clothing. Becomes famous media proprietor worth 2.7 billion dollars.

Incredible feats? No doubt. But it is only two-thirds of the story. What happened to the middle?

To me, the American Dream lies in the middle. Like a flat rock being skipped across a lake, I do not care where I came from or fret over where I will end. I only care how many times I skipped on the water and how many ripples I made while in there. I want my American Dream story to be about the middle.

I want my story to be about 12-year-old me in Kohl's, making a store full of people smile. I want my story to be about the time I took a picture with every mannequin in Kmart and made my sister cry in laughter. About 16-year-old me, hugging a friend after she lost her brother. About me, last week, coaching my high school girl's junior varsity volleyball team about the importance of staying positive for their teammates. About me picking up a volleyball after my second stress fracture. I want my story to be about me in school, high-fiving five colleagues before the start of every class. About me breaking my school's status quo by being the only student to use his locker. About me captivating the audience with my trombone or my humorous basketball spinning talent show act.

I want to be defined by the middle because the American Dream is not achieved or completed, failed or missed. It is lived.

Rambling Autobiography by Krista D. Swindell

It was during the Reagan Administration and the Falkland Conflict that I made my arrival. Pictures recount the image of a bobby-haired blonde with scraped knees in her tree house wearing nothing but an apron and a bandana on her head cooking at her stove. I got a black eye in kindergarten fighting “Skidmark” Hall for his shiny, red kickball and am the reveler who ruined a lacey white dress and her mother’s dreams for a dainty daughter in a mud puddle at my sixth birthday party. Orange slices make me think of quilting and a spoon dancing on the rim of a coffee cup overflows with memories of my grandfather. I hear Enya and it transports me to a sailboat cutting through the Pacific as I journey through Australia wine in hand, hair blowing in the breeze. I am owner to the most ticklish feet on the planet and a trusty Toyota that both take me on life-altering adventures. I’ve flown a glider, dived with sharks, climbed mountains, and lived alone in a foreign country, but I am afraid of a spider. I am a yogi and a naturalist, a free-spirit and a comic. I love cheesecake and can beat anyone at rummy. I’d love to sit silently with you in the forest, but don’t offer me your political perspective or any variation of coconut. I have no tolerance for ignorance or the color pink. I am at home in stilettos or waders, in silence or in song. I dream of unsuspecting wildflowers swaying in the breeze and that guy who cleans the cap on my toothpaste. I fear disorganization and a life of stagnancy and regrets. My hope is to disappear to the mountains only to have others read of my simplistic existence.



Diving in by Emelia Crenshaw

Incarcerated by Fashion: A Unique Perspective on Today's Working Class by Jarrod Piper

Brimming with designer couture and emotional volatility, *The Devil Wears Prada* follows the transition of Andrea (Andy) Sachs from an average college graduate to an executive assistant at *Runway*, a New-York-based, high-end fashion magazine. Longing to become an influential journalist, Andy arranges a job interview at Elias-Clarke Publications, hoping to gain experience in the communications industry. However, *Runway's* editor-in-chief, Miranda Priestly, proves a formidable obstacle in cultivating a positive work environment. Her demanding attitude underpins the emotional obstacles Andy will face throughout the duration of her one-year position at the magazine. As she struggles to balance her fast-paced career and interpersonal relationships in a luxury industry, Andy finds that working at *Runway* can easily be categorized as blue-collar. Throughout her journey, Andy faces issues of class identity, corporate negligence, family strain, abandonment of personal values, and prejudice.

At the beginning of the novel, as Andy attempts to self-classify her own position in society, she researches Miranda's familial background to gain greater insight into the fashion industry. She learns that all of Miranda's siblings remained in arguably working-class positions, but she sought to change her lifestyle and class level entirely: "Miriam was the single exception to the family tradition" (Weisberger 38). After leaving her family, she changed her name from Miriam Princheck to Miranda Priestly, completely disconnecting herself from her past life. One of the hallmarks of working-class families is the pride with which they regard their work. Rather than delving into a new, groundbreaking industry, each member may retain relatively the same type of position, owing to cultural exposure. In this case, Miranda defected from this ideal; she sought a more worthwhile position pursuing her true passions. In a way, this conveys Miranda's perceived distinction between classes, especially white- and blue-collar positions in the work force. Even though Miranda considers fashion and couture more of a white-collar endeavor, her own employees, including assistants Andy and Emily, must perform many demeaning, blue-collar tasks.

Just as Miranda engaged in a form of societal categorization, Andy attempts to observe the inner-workings of *Runway* and adjust her attitudes and behaviors accordingly. After only a few weeks, she realizes that she must assimilate into the culture by revamping her wardrobe. While other employees are adorned in lavish Jimmy Choo stilettos and Hermes scarves, Andy is outfitted in basic sweaters and flats. Her co-worker Nigel forcefully tells her, "You're pretty, but too wholesome. And the outfit does nothing for you" (Weisberger 55). Andy desires to be accepted into a different class of people, one that appears to care very little about her well-being, especially with regard to Miranda

Priestly, and eventually succumbs to the pressures of conformity; she begins wearing designer clothing and loses a piece of her identity.

Much of *Runway*'s corporate negligence stems from Miranda's constant derision of her assistants. Andy and Emily strive to accommodate her to the best of their abilities, but she is never satisfied with their efforts. Rather than rationally explaining her requests, she expects the duo to anticipate each and every one of her needs, caring very little for the accompanying stress and anxiety incurred. Frustrated by the situation, Andy questions why this degrading attitude is necessary in ascending the corporate hierarchy: "And all of it so they could say, at the end of the long and exhausting climb, that they'd gotten to sit in the front row at Yves Saint-Laurent's couture show" (Weisberger 209). In a similar way, current and past members of the working-class futilely execute tasks; their supervisors are sometimes uncaring and incapable of empathy. For example, in the past, natural resource workers had supervisors who cared very little for their safety. Some people were injured or killed as a result of unethical employment practices and corporate negligence. Rather than truly caring about those under her authority, Miranda (and many others in supervisory positions) sometimes lack the ability to empathize with their employees and create a positive work environment.

Furthermore, Andy experiences the common working-class issue of family strain. During her time at *Runway*, her relationships with her friend Lily and boyfriend, Alex, are adversely impacted. Miranda constantly calls Andy, especially at inconvenient times, regarding relatively small issues. Some of these calls often require her to leave Alex, resulting in damaged emotions and feelings of inadequacy. In one instance, Alex reveals that he is unhappy, telling Andy, "You're never really around during the week anymore" (Weisberger 187). Because Andy is overly dedicated to pleasing and attending to Miranda, she often lets her relationship with Alex suffer, unable to decide which is more important. Historically, some working-class families experienced similar situations, especially when travel-intensive jobs (i.e., trucking) required a spouse to leave for long periods of time. Unable to effectively manage her new lifestyle, Andy must also leave Alex for an extended period of time. Owing to a debilitating illness, her co-assistant Emily is unable to attend a European fashion show with Miranda. As a result, Andy must go, increasing the ever-present tension between her and Alex. Before telling him what has happened, she conveys that she is "dreading the inevitable fight that would ensue" (Weisberger 283). Had Miranda not created such a demanding, invasive work dynamic, Andy's personal relationships may have had a better chance of succeeding. However, Andy has to cope with her situation by providing multiple, insufficient excuses to her boyfriend, which makes her position in a working-class job all the more taxing. Rather than being able to enjoy each other's company at the end of the workday, Andy and Alex must deal with the repercussions of Miranda's interruptions and overbearing attitude, which becomes a vexatious barrier in their relationship.

Furthermore, as she continues to overcome Miranda's exacting personality, Andy begins to abandon some of her most deeply held values. In some work environments, it

may seem to be acceptable for an employee to attempt to create an artificial sense of equality through illegal means. For example, an employee may feel justified in embezzling money in response to a pay decrease. In working-class culture, this misguided behavior represents the impact of unreasonable superiors and unfair corporate practices, to which some employees respond negatively. Overwhelmed by anxiety and constant prodding, Andy yields to arguably unethical practices, citing Miranda's eccentricities as her rationale. In one case, she utilizes Elias-Clarke funds to purchase Starbucks beverages for homeless people. Rather than ordering only Miranda's coffee, she attempts to create equality by engaging in a form of self-righteous disobedience, noting that she "expensed twenty-four dollars more every day on coffee than necessary" (Weisberger 139). Even though this may appear to be a small amount of money for an international publishing company, the behavior demonstrates that Andy has become desensitized to the difference between ethical and unethical practices. This type of employee rebellion could surface in any type of working-class position with highly critical supervisors.

In addition to her response to financial inequality, Andy's ethics are also skewed as they relate to her personal behaviors. On one occasion, Andy contemplates using a desk cleaning solution to remove food from Miranda's dishes instead of a less harmful substance. Recognizing her temporary mental lapse, she notes, "I was reasonably sure that I had reached a new moral low—which was worrisome that I'd sunk to it so naturally" (Weisberger 140). In other words, Andy realizes that Miranda's actions are negatively affecting her own decision-making processes. In other working-class positions, people may abandon their values in an effort to artificially induce some perception of justice. For example, an auto mechanic could become upset with a customer and deliberately install a faulty tire, which ultimately results in the vehicle crashing and serious injury to the customer. When interacting with employees, workers, and other members of a particular class or group of people, one should be mindful of how he or she is perceived among these individuals. Emphasizing a sense of appreciation and decency in communicating with both blue- and white-collar workers could greatly enhance outcomes and help prevent lapses in judgment among employees and employers alike.

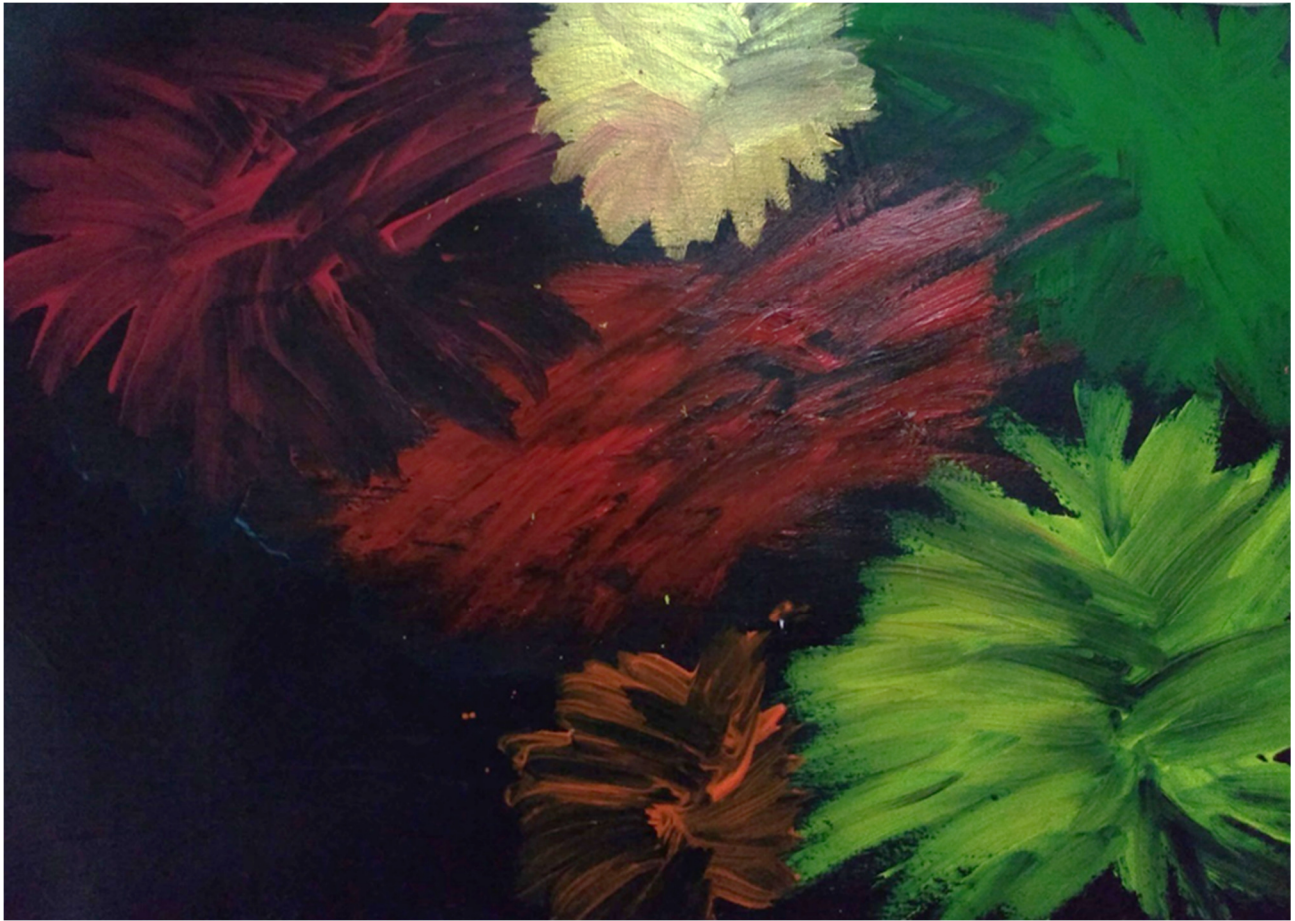
Finally, prejudice is also exceedingly evident in *The Devil Wears Prada*. Andy faces consistent skepticism from Miranda and other high-profile employees owing to her somewhat curvy figure and lack of style. A high-fashion work environment necessitates some form of interest in one's own appearance, and Andy's co-workers detect her shortcomings in this area. Andy recognizes their tactless opinions and laments her flaws: "Not until starting work in this delusional place did I know what it was like to feel short and fat, all day, every day" (Weisberger 174). Prejudice in the workplace, especially in working-class positions, can be exceedingly detrimental to one's self-esteem. Historically, various groups of people have faced discrimination in the workplace because of their race and ethnicity, a condition that continues to this day in a somewhat more subversive way.

Ultimately, Andy's assistant position at *Runway* parallels many aspects of historical and modern working-class positions. She struggles to determine which class she belongs

to and assumes an identity appropriate to the one she is in at the moment rather than holding true to the one she was born in. Regardless of her attempts to cross class boundaries, she faces negligence and prejudice from her boss and co-workers, resulting in feelings of self-doubt and the abandonment of her higher values. In the class she aspires to, Andy finds that prejudice is prevalent; she is criticized by others based solely on her appearance, not her personality or contributions in the workplace. In an increasingly more devalued working-class society, one must be careful not to give in to the demanding, high-pressure aspects of certain jobs. Rather than becoming overwhelmed by a sense of inadequacy, one can prevail by retaining his or her sense of individuality. Even though it may be tempting to conform to a workplace's unprincipled expectations, it is essential to maintain one's personal values, especially as they relate to ethical behavior and contributing to a positive work environment for all.

Work Cited

Weisberger, Lauren. *The Devil Wears Prada*. Broadway, 2003.



Fireworks in the Sky by Donella Loughran

Breaking Byronic Boundaries: Anya Seton and the Transatlantic Byronic Hero

by Shayna Boisvert

1st Place Winner (Gunard B. Carlson Contest)

Anya Seton's detailed reinvigoration of the Byronic Hero archetype leads critics to consider Seton's historical tales as semi-autobiographical works in which she reflects her own suppressed desires. The Byronic Hero originated in the nineteenth century, named after its creator Lord Byron. Certain traits contribute to the image of the Byronic hero, an archetype that would later go on to become popular within British literature—especially the Gothic tradition (Fleming). In twentieth-century American literature, Seton developed a new version of the Byronic Hero in her three bestselling novels *My Theodosia*, *Dragonwyck*, and *Green Darkness*. According to critic Northrop Frye, "every poet has his own distinctive structure of imagery . . . which does not . . . essentially change since . . . it [is the] author's entire mental landscape" ("The Critical Path" 283). Each of Seton's texts in which the Byronic archetype appears can be utilized to show Seton's development of the Byronic Hero from a selfish figure to a redemptive one. This progression is not displayed by a change of personality traits, but rather through whether or not the character seeks redemption for his negative actions. Seton plays upon the metaphor of the Byronic Hero, moving it from the European model of the stagnant dark persona to the transatlantic redemptive character through the images of the father, the husband, and the lover, respectively.

Critics attest that the first appearance of the Byronic archetype occurred in 1812 with Lord Byron's Childe Harold, the first recorded character to display the traits of the Byronic Hero (Fleming). The pivotal traits of the archetype are intelligence, cunning, charisma, social and sexual dominance, bipolar tendencies, self-preserving behavior, cynicism, arrogance, and a distaste for social norms. These attributes often lead the archetype to become an outcast from society. However, his intrigue makes him highly attractive to the other sex. The Byronic Hero archetype remained popular in British literature throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although the writings of Lord Byron were read in America, the Byronic Hero Archetype originally was not American. In *Byron, and Byronism in America*, William Ellery Leonard firmly establishes the fact that although Byron was an important force in the development of American culture after the War of 1812, the influence of the Byronic Hero was not prevalent in the nation's literature until after the Civil War era. One of the most famous examples of this archetype is Captain Ahab in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. However, Captain Ahab also serves as a key example in how the American Byronic Hero differed from the British representation because of missing key traits—intelligence and cunning. Captain Ahab's plans are not detailed enough for him to succeed when he sets out to kill the whale, and he eventually falls on his own harpoon. Seton's characters fit into neither of these molds, but

instead, they bring them together. This is likely due to her transatlantic education and travel during her most influential educational years. Seton “by the age of thirteen, had crossed the ocean with her parents eight times. This travel led her early education to consist of a combination of a French governess, tutorials with her cousins and Indian training” (Hellman 34), and this education led to a heavy transatlantic influence on her work and to the creation of a transatlantic Byronic Hero archetype.

Internal influences oftentimes can be subconscious, becoming apparent only through analyzing an author’s works. Frye explains this phenomenon, writing that “documentary conceptions of literature are allegorical conceptions of it, and this fact becomes even more obvious when poems are taken to be allegories of Freudian repressions” (“The Critical Path” 281). Although Seton never stated directly that she was influenced by her own interpersonal relationships and educational experiences, they can be counted as the allegories Frye describes. Seton’s fixation on the Byronic archetype is first seen in her work *My Theodosia*, published in 1941, which recounts the tragic life of Theodosia Burr Alston, focusing mainly on her relationship with father, Aaron Burr. In the novel, Aaron Burr is clearly a Byronic Hero; he is cunningly intelligent, suave, and rejects common societal norms.

There can be no question of Burr’s intelligence or cunning. His intelligence is heightened by the narrator, Theodosia, and her infatuation with her father. This fact in and of itself further cements Burr’s status as a Byronic Hero, as canonically these characters were worshipped by purer characters despite their negative traits. Burr’s intelligence is matched more often than not with his cunning, and the mix of the two traits is seen when Theodosia is suffering from post-partum seizures. Her husband calls upon Burr to visit his daughter, as he believes her to be beyond saving. Burr forces the husband to fetch a doctor, and after the examination, the doctor declares Theodosia’s ailment to be a result of imbalanced humors. However, Burr knows that this declaration is not medically based and is, instead, merely superstition. In response, Burr condemns the doctor, declaring, “[Y]ou are a fool sir . . . and a charlatan. You do not know what to do for Mrs. Alston. You are dismissed” (147). After this brutal dismissal, Burr demands to meet with all the doctors in the county and interviews all of them until he finds one with sufficient medical knowledge to treat his daughter. Burr, a lawyer and later a politician, should not have known medicine to the extent that his character does. The fact that the character possesses this knowledge attests to his superior intelligence. However, his comment after finding a suitable doctor shows that he utilized this intelligence in a cunning manner. Burr turns to Theodosia’s husband before following the doctor into her room and states, “I cannot lose her. . . . I have other needs of her” (151). Burr sees his daughter as a tool rather than someone for whom he has feelings of paternal regard. He also saves her in order to utilize her in his political endeavors, which he did in his later presidential campaign.

Above all, it is characteristic of the Byronic Hero to be an outcast in society due to his negative attributes; these characters accomplish this by going against societal norms. The first and arguably most major occurrence of this trait in *My Theodosia* is when Burr

challenges Alexander Hamilton to a duel, despite the fact that duels were illegal in most states and were seen as archaic and barbaric. In addition, “Hamilton’s pistol was discharged into the air . . . and Burr still shot” (231). Not only was this action against societal norms, but it also constituted murder. Burr utilizes his cunning and intelligence once again by fleeing “from New York to escape hanging . . . [as there was] a jury and they brought in a verdict of willful murder” (232). By running away from his fate and refusing to make any sort of retribution for his crime, Burr does not achieve any sort of redemption.

Lack of redemption and a tumultuous fate were destined for these archetypal characters in both British and American literature. However, Seton’s mental landscape differed from those of the writers who traditionally included the archetype. This difference is seen first by readers not witnessing Burr’s demise and later through the redemption of her archetypal characters. Frye stated that a writer cannot change his or her mental landscape. Therefore, the same desires and fears are prevalent throughout the course of an author’s works. The Byronic Hero can be observed again in Seton’s *Dragonwyck*, once again through her characterization of the antagonist. The novel follows the life of Miranda Wells and her desire for Nicholas Van Ryn, her eventual marriage to him, and the uncovering of his twisted secrets. Nicholas becomes Seton’s most detailed use of the Byronic archetype, as he exhibits nearly every attribute associated with the Byronic Hero, especially charisma and cunning.

Critics often describe the Byronic Hero as being inherently evil; however, even such critics must acknowledge that there is something that creates an overwhelming attraction on the part of the readers for these characters: their charisma. Many critics believe that “from the time this character was created and beyond, he has been cemented in the public eye as the ideal version of a man. . . [because of his] overwhelming charismatic masculinity” (Jamil). Nicholas Van Ryn is an extremely charismatic man, and this charisma is what makes him such a successful portrayal of the archetype. Van Ryn’s charisma is first seen when Ephraim, Miranda’s father, takes her to meet Nicolas. Upon their arrival, however, Ephraim becomes uncomfortable because Nicholas is extremely handsome; Ephraim fears that his daughter will desire him and that Nicholas will take advantage of her. Nicholas notices this discomfort and to counter it “talked a while of Johanna, his wife, and [his daughter] Katrine, stressing the pleasure they anticipated from Miranda’s arrival. . . . Then he flattered Ephraim by asking his opinion on politics and listening with intent interest to the answers” (43). Van Ryn’s charisma sways Ephraim to leave his daughter with Nicholas and distinguishes him as a Byronic archetype.

Ephraim’s greatest fears come to fruition when, despite being under the tutelage of Nicholas’s wife, Joanna, Miranda begins to desire Nicholas. Frustrated by Joanna’s inability to provide him with a son—and attracted to Miranda’s willful personality—Nicholas begins to return Miranda’s affection. However, Nicholas is aware that he will be unable to retain his position in society if he divorces Joanna, so he crafts a plan. Going against societal norms, Nicholas begins to poison his wife, leading everyone to believe that she has

simply fallen ill. Cunningly, he uses flowers as the vehicle for the poison, employing his extensive botanical knowledge to pick a rare plant that others will not distinguish as deadly. When a doctor declares that he cannot find the cause of Joanna's disease and states she will not recover, Nicholas goes to Miranda in feigned despair and begs her to marry him so he will not be a lonely widower. As soon as Miranda agrees, he poisons her with "tipsy cake . . . by adding silver nutmeg mill to the mix" (423). Van Ryn's use of cunning and his blatant disregard for societal norms cement his character as a Byronic Hero.

Van Ryn is an almost perfect characterization of the archetype because of the dark yet intelligent attributes he displays. This blatant representation is likely why Seton chooses this character to begin her challenge of the accepted irredeemable Byronic hero. At the climax of the story, Miranda attempts to flee Nicholas by boarding a ferry with her lover. However, she is caught when it is revealed that Nicholas tracked her and then purchased the very ferry they have boarded. In order to scare Miranda, Nicholas engages in reckless behavior by entering a race that causes an explosion on the ferry. This is where Van Ryn's redemptive arc begins. As he brings the ferry within swimming distance of the shore and forces everyone overboard, Miranda freezes in fear, so Nicholas "pick[s] her up in his arms running with her to the rail. . . . The cold green waters of the river close[s] over her" after he tosses her in (457). He then returns to the ship to help those who were unable to escape on their own, successfully saving a multitude of children. However, this redemption is ruined by his final words to Miranda: "You shall see that I can save life as well as destroy it" (462). Although he performed these actions just to prove himself to Miranda, his redemptive actions are spoiled by the Byronic trait of arrogance.

In 1972, Seton finally accomplished her metamorphosis of the Byronic Hero with her final novel, *Green Darkness*, which went on to "become her most popular [one] by far . . . because she added an element of reincarnation that made it even more irresistible to the denizens of the dawning of the Age of Aquarius" (Moser). This final story follows dual timelines: one based in the Tudor time and one set in the twentieth century. The twentieth century protagonist, Celia Marsdon, falls severely ill when she marries aristocratic Englishman Richard Marsdon. It is then revealed by a Hindu guru that her ailment is a result of the failed love of their past selves due to the Byronic actions of Richard Marsdon's past self—Stephen Marsdon—with his lover Celia de Bohun. Stephen Marsdon can be characterized as a Byronic Hero by his arrogance and strong desire for self-preservation. Throughout the story, he constantly leaves Celia de Bohun behind, ignores his betrothed Emma, and refuses to acknowledge Celia's and his sexual and emotional relationship due to a desire to remain her family chaplain. However, his self-preservation is best seen at the climax of the Tudor era portion of the story. Stephen and Celia De Bohun decide after reuniting (and her realization that she is pregnant) that their love is undeniable and that they will run away in order to get married. However, Stephen sends her away that night to prevent any superstition falling on him. On her way out, Celia De Bohun is cornered by Stephen's ex-fiancée, who declares her "the priest's whore" and then

“lung[es at her; Emma’s] hands closed around Celia’s neck and twisted” (497). Stephen’s desire for self-preservation ultimately results in Celia and his unborn child’s death—cementing him as a Byronic archetype.

Stephen’s actions may seem unredeemable, but adding guilt and concern to his other Byronic attributes allows him to be redeemed. After learning of Celia’s death, Stephen commits suicide. However, it is important to remember that “the basis of generic criticism in any case is rhetorical, in the sense that the genre is determined by the conditions established between the poet and [his or her] public” (Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* 247). Here, Seton sets up the conditions for Stephen’s redemption through her use of reincarnation. Although Celia Marsdon becomes bedridden due to the influence of her past lives, Richard is still able to act. In order to save his Celia, he must reunite Celia de Bohun and Stephen in death by performing a ritual to bring them together. Thus, Richard sets out for London and is able to uncover both bodies and to perform the ritual to reunite them in the afterlife. This causes Richard’s “particularly lingering debts from the past [to be] finally paid” (549). When the debts are paid, Celia Marsdon is able to recover and live a long marriage with Richard, who abandons his former cynicism, thus finally redeeming the Byronic archetype.

Before Seton, there remained the question as to whether a Byronic hero could be redeemed or not. Seton answers this question by creating archetypal characters who seek and even earn redemption. She does so by playing upon the metaphor of the Byronic Hero, moving it from the European model of the stagnant dark persona to the more transatlantic redemptive character through the actions of her characters. Whether she did so purposely or not is not important, for as Frye states, “[A] snowflake is probably quite unconscious of forming a crystal, but what it does may be worth study even if we are willing to leave its inner mental processes alone” (*Anatomy of Criticism* 126). This metaphor directly relates to Seton because through a careful study of her works, it becomes undeniable that her type of transatlantic Byronic Hero revitalizes the archetype; however, her contribution to the realm of literature is often overlooked and ignored because literary critics often fail to recognize work that becomes popular among the masses, especially if it is written by a woman, declaring it to be not avant-garde or not avant-garde enough and, therefore, not worthy of study. All literary work should to be studied—whether it be popular or not—because when works of literature are dismissed, the community misses vital contributions like Seton’s.

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The Train and the Tree by Brandon Fiume

Johnny's Story by Rebecca Norris

Everyone at Horizon High School knew how erratic Mr. Andante could be. As our new band director and music teacher, he was bent on making sure that every juvenile that walked through the doors of his music room would leave as a cultured student with good taste in music. But my snot-nosed classmates never took him seriously. Maybe it was because Mr. Andante dressed like a founding father, complete with a white linen shirt with frills cascading down his neck and a knee-length maroon coat. All he was missing was a powdered wig and a tricorne hat. Nonetheless, he was proud and composed himself like a gentleman. He was polite to me, probably because I was quiet and never misbehaved. What really surprised me was how peaceful he seemed when listening to music. His frequently furrowed, grey eyebrows were set back and relaxed, and if you looked closely, you could see the faintest smile upon his lips. Sometimes he'd even dance or hop a little, as if possessed by some sort of muse. But, if one of the clarinets squeaked while playing music on a bad day, his face would quickly turn red, his face would wrinkle, he'd toss his papers and yell at the band.

But for as outdated as Mr. Andante was, he knew a plethora of good music, and even better stories. It wasn't uncommon to walk into band class and to be handed a new piece of sheet music that was yellowed and covered in dust. One such piece he abruptly handed us as we walked in was "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." As usual, we sight read it, lost our tempo, and were treated to the sight of Mr. Andante flailing his arms in frustration. Although this outburst was different. He opened his mouth to scream at us, but he suddenly stopped short, slouched, and put his glowing head in his wrinkly hands. I could have sworn I heard him murmur something concerning his doctor and his blood pressure.

After a moment of silence and fiddling with the music score, he looked at us band kids on the risers and said, "Did I ever tell you the story of 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home'?"

Those of us who were paying attention shook our heads, but many just idly tapped away on their phones hidden away on their music stands or gossiped with one another. Mr. Andante took a big gulp of water from his water bottle and collapsed back into his seat.

"Now pay attention!" he cautioned, "I'm only telling this once..."

This is what I can recall of Mr. Andante's narrative. The story takes place in the midst of the Civil War. In rural Pennsylvania, a young boy—about ten years old—resided in a small, blue house with only a few farm animals to accompany it. The boy's name was Johnny, and he loved his family more than anything. Johnny loved Robert, his older brother, and how they'd play for hours in the yard. Mr. Andante didn't say, but I imagine

that secretly, Robert would always let Johnny win whatever they were playing. He also loved the way Mom smelled like flowers and how she grinned whenever Johnny was a good boy. He was good about helping to collect eggs from their chickens or milk their cow. And whenever Mom or Robert would go help him, he would chew their ears off talking so much.

Now, the house has felt emptier since Johnny was three. That's because Father passed away from cholera, but from what Johnny knows from the stories Mom tells him, Father was a very brave soul. In fact, he served in the army for about ten years, and sadly, it had cost him a part of his arm. Mom misses him dearly and will sometimes retreat into her room, pull out a picture of him, and cry in the candlelight. So whenever the call came for a man in the house to serve in the Civil War, Mom was terrified to let Robert go.

"Mom, I'm 16 now. I'll be fine," Robert assured her.

"I know you're older, but..." her eyes teared up, "I don't know what I'd do if I lost you!" Mom dug her face into her handkerchief.

Robert rubbed her back. Mom quivered and cried, "Promise me you won't end up like your father!"

"Mom," he said softly, "I promise that I will be okay, no matter what." After that, he rode into the horizon to join the Union army, with Mom desperately calling out things like "Don't forget to write!" Johnny's brown eyes flooded with sorrow, too. Once Mom caught sight of her usually cheery child weeping, she tried to contain her tears as she ruffled his golden, soft, floppy hair. After a few weeks, they received their first letter.

"Training is rough," Robert admitted in his letter, "but I'm part of the strongest group of soldiers there is—The First Infantry Division." Johnny pictured Robert beaming while writing this letter.

For the most part, Mom was okay if she got her weekly letter from Robert. And often, they came right on time, on Fridays at 8am sharp. But one day, there was no letter that came at the usual time. It didn't come the next, nor Monday, nor for the rest of the week. Standing on the porch on a heavy, humid evening, Mom wistfully looked out into the red horizon into which Robert had disappeared.

"Why didn't I stop him?" she murmured. In her hands she tightly grasped onto her prayer beads and continued to beg God to bring her eldest son home. Johnny was concerned for her and wished that he could take her pain away. He wished that he could be the man of the house—someone heroic and strong who could make other people smile. But he wasn't sure if he could ever be that someone. Heck, little Johnny had a hard time chopping logs for the fire. After shaking his thoughts, he stepped onto the porch and stood next to her with their kitten in his arms.

"Mom," he said, "would it make you feel better if I poured some milk for you?"

She shook her head. Johnny stroked the kitten's soft head for a minute and then offered, "What if I make dinner for you tonight?"

"Oh, Johnny," her voice quivered, but she never took her eyes off of the horizon. "If only you could bring Robert home."

Johnny froze for a minute. But before he had time to swallow what she had said, she told him, "I'm sorry, dear. I shouldn't have dumped on you. Why don't I go start dinner now?" She kissed his soft cheek, but then hastily withdrew into the kitchen. Alone with the kitten and the dissipating sunset, Johnny reflected on what had just happened. Suddenly, he had a glimmer of hope.

Earlier in town today...didn't I see an ad from the Union that they were looking for young drummers nearby in Gettysburg? he thought. Later that night, when Mom fell asleep, Johnny searched their attic by candlelight. There, he dusted off an old snare drum, the one his father used to play when he was young. Johnny hauled the drum downstairs, tiptoed past Mom's bedroom, and began to saddle up their only horse left—little Misty. As quietly as he could, he left his homestead, only leaving a poignant note behind, which among other things proclaimed, "Wait for me, Mom. I will come marching home, with Robert by my side!"

A few days later, Johnny rode into Gettysburg, which was buzzing with commotion. Word of the town, Johnny heard, was that there were soldiers camped nearby. Upon asking strangers where he could find these camps, he found that they were set up on a hill. The sun beat down on Johnny, who wore Father's coat for luck, and because his coat still smelled like rosewood, just like Father used to smell like. Riding alone through town, he really wished that Father were there. Johnny imagined that he would encourage him, maybe something like, "You can do it, champ! You'll find Robert, bring him home, and save the day!" In fact, the more Johnny thought about it, the more he grew excited about finding Robert. He vaguely remembered the feast Mom threw for Father when he returned. Roast beef, sweet potato, and Father's favorite pie—apple—lined their kitchen table. Johnny couldn't remember if he got any part of that feast, but he thought that if he brought Robert home, Mom would throw a feast for him, too!

Johnny's daydream was shattered when he heard gunshots nearby. Suddenly, anxiety swelled up in his body, but mostly his head, which now felt dizzy. Now closer to the camps, he was sure that what he saw was a Union camp.

"Oh no," he shuddered, "If I don't get Robert out of there, he could be in big trouble—or even killed!" So he pursued the sound of the gunshots and held his breath.

When he arrived at the foot of the hill, he saw many men dressed in blue firing up the hill. At the top were the Confederates, dressed in gray, casting shadows down onto the Union. Johnny knew he was in a bad position, but he froze in fear. Misty became spooked when a gunshot barely missed them and she threw Johnny off of her back, along with the drum. Panicked, he searched his coat pockets for his gun, which was a little pistol. He

loaded it and tried to shoot up the hill like the blue men, but the pistol would not fire. Seeing his trouble, one of the Union soldiers screamed, "Here!" and threw him a larger gun. He nearly dropped the gun, but quickly regained himself and held his drum as a make-shift shield. Mostly, though, he just wanted to get out of the situation. The loud screaming men and fierce gunshots scared him.

But before Johnny could make his exit, the blue men roared, "Charge!" and stampeded up the hill, firing at anything in their way. Unfortunately, he was in the middle of their rushing herd. To avoid being trampled, he rushed up the hill with them, but he was too overwhelmed to fire. All around him, he saw men falling, bleeding, dying. Johnny decided that he didn't want to be brave anymore, and wanted to go home right then and there.

Suddenly, two Confederate soldiers started towards him, one with a pistol and one with a long knife. His heart beating, Johnny fired at them, but the shock made him stumble backwards, when his foot caught on a rock. He rapidly began to roll backwards down the hill, until his tumbling was stopped by a big boulder—head first. Before he could do anything, Johnny's vision blackened and his consciousness slipped away.

"Hey kid... wake up!" One of the blue men shook Johnny awake. Johnny's eyes open slightly, and towering before him in the harsh sunlight was a man who had a full white, ghastly beard.

"We won!" the man cheered. Johnny's eyes sprung open. He sat up and held a hand to his head—no headache! Not only that, but now that the battle was over, he felt great. Looking at the man who told him the great news, he smiled. But, his smile was interrupted by the thought of his brother.

"Hey, maybe you know where my brother is?" he asked.

"Who's ye brother?"

"His name is Robert, and he's in the First Infantry Division!" he said proudly. "But he stopped sending letters home..." Johnny's eyes darkened with worry.

"I dunno who Robert is, but I saw a young man lying against a tree over yonder, and he looks a lot like ye." He pointed to a small patch of woods close by.

"Thanks!" Johnny jumped to his feet and proceeded into the patch of woods. Soon, he found a figure slumped against the foot of a wide tree. It was a teenage boy, with hair that was sort of a dirty blond, but he had an incredibly exhausted look on his face. Drawing closer, Johnny realized who it was.

"Robert!" he cried, and he gave his big brother a strong bear hug.

"J...Johnny?" Robert groggily spoke, his green eyes slowly opening. His lips slowly turned into a smile, and he hugged his little brother back.

After a moment of warm embrace, Johnny told him, "Mom and I were so worried about you. So I came to bring you home."

"Home..." Robert repeated and slowly got up, giving Johnny another hug. "Yeah, I think I'm ready to go home."

Johnny cheered when suddenly they heard rustling in the foliage just behind the wide tree. The boys both grew concerned, and Robert cocked his gun. Johnny discreetly peeked through some bushes, when he saw that it was Misty, who was lying down almost like a statue, tranquilly listening to the birds. Johnny laughed to himself. He noticed, though, that she was as pretty as ever, her white coat glistening in the sun. Soon, the boys hopped onto her, and headed in the direction of home.

Along the way, the two chatted about the good times they'd had together and what awaited them when they got home.

"I bet all of our friends and neighbors will say 'Hurrah!', and ring the church bells for us!" Johnny happily said.

"Yeah," Robert laughed, "Maybe we'll even get girlfriends!"

Maybe it was because Misty was happy, too, but she seemed to trot more quickly on their way home. But abruptly, Robert pulled the reins and stopped the horse.

"Do you hear that?" Robert asked just as their hometown came into view.

Johnny listened for a minute. "No, what?"

"Marching music," Robert replied staring into the distance, and he proceeded towards it on the horse. When he seemed to hear the music get louder, he stopped and jumped off the horse.

"Where are you going?" Johnny asked.

"I'm going to follow that music. It's the most beautiful thing I've ever heard."

"But what about coming home to see Mom?" Johnny said pointing in the direction of their house. By now, they were on the outskirts of town, but Johnny still could not hear any music.

"I'll see you later," Robert promised, and walked away, disappearing as if he were fog in the morning sunlight.

Johnny, somewhat deflated, proceed home. When his house finally came into sight, he was so happy that he nearly fluttered off the horse, his feet feeling like they were walking on air.

"I'm home!" Johnny announced, but the house seemed to be empty. He called and called for Mom, but to no response. Not even the kitten acknowledged him being there—it just kept sleeping. That's when Johnny realized that Mom probably went to church, as she often did in the evening.

He ran to the church, but it was full of people dressed in black, which was unusual. He didn't realize it was a funeral until he saw Mom standing in front of a wooden coffin. When he heard her crying, his heart sank.

"Who could've died?" he pondered. "Was it our neighbor down the street? One of my cousins...?" But when he looked into the coffin, he felt as if he were shot right in the heart. In the coffin laid his own body, with his golden floppy hair combed neatly, but his eyes remained shut. In shock, he stumbled back.

"It can't be..." he thought. He tried placing his hand on Mom's back, but his hand went right through her. He called and called for her, and cried, "Can you hear me? Please, answer me!", but she did no such thing.

All of a sudden, it made sense. No wonder his head didn't hurt after he had fallen into that rock—it had killed him. He grew angry at himself for not realizing it earlier. A coldness swept over his body, and he felt as if his heart split into two. His limbs grew heavy, tears fell from his eyes, and he slumped to the floor. They delivered his eulogy, but he was too dazed to listen. Faintly, the sound of marching music wafted into the chapel. In fact, the chapel seemed to glow. He turned towards the sounds, which almost seemed to be beckon him.

Johnny felt warm and tranquil, but he turned back towards Mom, who was now crying even harder. He knew that she would be all alone in the world now, but there was nothing he could do about it.

In the distance, Johnny caught sight of his drum and he also noticed Misty, his loyal horse, grazing peacefully.

"Mom, I love you!" he called, his little brown eyes squeezing out a few tears, "and I'll come back to be with you for the rest of your days! I promise." But Mom didn't hear him. He wasn't sure that he wanted to, but his body seemed compelled to pick up his drum and play a timely beat. His feet seemed to have a mind of their own as he proceeded along the path. As he continued, he eventually found Robert, who was sitting on a log with Father. Father was in his army uniform, but this time his arm was whole. Upon seeing Johnny, he raised his hand into a salute and smiled. However, Johnny would never forget this bittersweet moment: marching on towards his loving eternal home but leaving the one he fought hard for behind.

At this moment, I remember one of the girls in my clarinet section who wasn't paying attention abruptly asked Mr. Andante, "Can I play first part for this?"

Mr. Andante furrowed his brows and said to her, "You think you're good enough to play first part?" He scoffed. "You're in over your head, kid."

American Indians and the Dogs That Define Them; or, the Injun, the Savage, and the Canine by Jack Weidner

2nd Place Winner

It would be too difficult for Americans to view the native inhabitants of the land they call home as human beings. As a society, the image of the primal Indian is far too strong, and sadly, the truthful aspects of the native's identity are far too distorted. The hopes of restoring an accurate representation of the natives in the distant future seems to be a losing battle as well. As Hani Morgan stated in his article "Over One Hundred Years of Misrepresentation: American Minority Groups in Children's Books," American Indians are not writing their own stories and are not creating their own truthful identity. As a result, "authors who are not of Native American descent often rely on popular [past] perceptions of Native Americans and produce books with biased perspectives" (Morgan 371).

So what are white men to do when they are tasked with the challenge of creating an image for a people they do not view as human but must accept are slightly more elevated than the beasts the primitives feed on? The answer would be to compare them to familiar animals that are viewed by whites as either companions or a worthy, fearful enemy: the canine. The view of American Indians as canines has evolved from the start of American literature and has developed in an interesting manner when analyzing art of the present day. The goal of this paper is to examine the view of natives as canines, starting with Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and concluding with the 1995 film *Last of the Dogmen*, to determine how this comparison has evolved over time.

Beginning with Cooper's long-winded romance *The Last of the Mohicans*, there are two distinct classes of good and bad representing Native Americans: the savage Indians and the tame Natives. The savages take the form of the wild wolf, while the tamed take the form of the loyal hunting dog. These forms make sense. In a time when the American people were struggling to suppress the Natives in the country, Cooper takes the stance in his writing that the good Indians are tamable like dogs; they can be controlled and used for the white man's benefit. The evil are still feral beasts running in the woods, killing in packs, and fighting civilized development.

Cooper easily creates the savage persona. He refers to the evil Indians as "clusters of lolling savages," with Magua as their leader (11). This creates the idea that bad Indians hunt in packs like wolves. They are exclusively referred to in groups, never singled out. They are one mass of naked flesh-eating savages. This creates a lack of individuality for readers and prevents them from seeing American Indians as anything other than beasts. The savages are all members of a feral pack that is meant to be feared; it cannot be tamed or reasoned with. Cooper also writes that after killing a deer, "without any aid from the

science of cookery, [the Indians began] gorging [themselves] with this digestible substance" (11). He describes the Indians ripping into a fresh carcass and devouring the raw meat, as wolves do to their kills. This is an unmistakable comparison.

Cooper has to work slightly harder to create tame, dog-like Indians, but he accomplishes this by reversing what he did to create savages. Dogs are individual animals that listen and act on command of white men. Cooper gives these characteristics most obviously to Uncas. Uncas is "the *last* of the Mohicans" (3; emphasis added). He and his father have successfully been singled out from a group. They are Hawkeye's companions and there will be no hunting among them like a pack of feral animals. The Indian is much less threatening alone. Uncas also follows orders. When gripping an enemy, Uncas waits with his knife in hand until he hears the command from his master, Hawkeye. "Now!" Hawkeye yells; Uncas kills the man, and Hawkeye is "obeyed" (Cooper 7). Uncas also "waits patiently" for his master to call him over to join the group near the fire (Cooper 17). Though Uncas has a father, Hawkeye—the white man—is clearly his master, and he willingly follows Hawkeye's orders. Uncas has been taken from the pack, domesticated, and trained to follow the orders of white men.

The stereotypes created by Cooper have taken hold of American culture and refuse to let go. In a children's book titled *They Were Strong and Good*, Robert Lawson writes that Indians enter the house of a woman "without knocking and s[it] on the floor. Then they...rub their stomachs and point to their mouths to show they [are] hungry" (35). That is not the description of a human being. These Indians are not evil in the book, so they take on the persona of dogs. They are tamed and in need of help from whites. They must be fed, and they sit on the floor and beg for their dinner. (They probably roll over and shake as well.)

Continuing the trend of the tamed American Indian needing assistance from whites, the dime novel *Deadwood Dick's Doom; or, Calamity Jane's Last Adventure* features a good Native American named Dancing-Plum, who has been "run off his land" by a group of "vile savages" and is forced to go to the village to get assistance from the white men in town (Wheeler 11). A tamed American Indian is describing how he has been displaced by a *pack* of savages. His plight demonstrates a further divide between good and bad Indians in terms of being either wild or tame. The bad are fighting in *packs* and hurt their own kind like beasts who have no regard for life. The good are helpless against the savages and must look to masters (whites) for help, like pets.

As time advanced from the 1800s and in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement during the '60s, minorities began to develop a more prominent voice. During this time, Americans looked back at the age of the Wild West and realized its ridiculousness. Seeking to give the American Indians a better voice, attempts were made to showcase the treatment of them in art, books, and films. The satirical *Cat Ballou* (1965) was one of the first movies to deal with the terrible stereotypes of Native Americans and attack it with humor. The sole Native American in the movie, Jackson, is working as a farmhand for

Frank Ballou. Frank represents the Old West. He repeatedly treats Jackson as a dog needing a master. When he first introduces Jackson to Cat, his daughter, he refers to him as a “brincobuster” rather than by his name. This demonstrates that Jackson’s title is determined by his work, not his true manhood. Frank also makes harsh remarks toward Jackson throughout the movie as if he were disciplining him. When Jackson finally speaks up for himself, Frank explains that “[Jackson] has a mean, stubborn, streak in him”—the way a man speaks of a troubled dog who refuses to cooperate with training. The hyperbolic actions of Frank’s treatment of Jackson brings to the forefront the issue of how we treat and imagine the Indian. This point is even further demonstrated when Jackson turns out to be one of the most competent characters in the movie, rising far above farm-dog status. Progress seemed to moving in a positive direction.

Analyzing works today, however, the progress of pointing out the ridiculous image that has been created for the American Indian does not appear to have worked. Rather than splitting the Indians into two camps—good dogs and savage wolves—*The Last of the Dogmen* combines the two and creates the mystic wolf. This movie romanticizes the Indians just as American culture has done to the wolf. The Indians hunt in packs, moving swiftly through the fog, as many Americans imagine wolves hunt. They also do not speak the same language as any other men on Earth. This further removes them from the title of human beings and closer to a species that humans can have no communication with. American Indians are also shown as stoic—a temperament inspired and epitomized by the wolf. A scene depicts an Indian becoming annoyed by a dog barking and while showing no emotion, he shoots it with an arrow. This act places the tribe in a survival of the fittest mentality; viewing the dog as lesser, the Indian American killed it with no regret. It is as if the wolf is killing the tamed dog, a bastardized version of itself. The American Indian must kill all traces of his past tamed self, but he is not a true wolf. If he were a true wolf, he would have killed the white man, not the dog. By 1995, the American Indian has been transformed into an elusive and mystic wolf that does not speak the language of the countrymen and roams free in the wilderness: the noble savage.

The image of the American Indian has been repeatedly defined by a vicious stereotype as being less than human. Originally, being identified as two groups—savage wolves and tamed dogs—the natives’ image seems to have followed the course of the wolf. They were fearful and beast-like while they roamed the land abundantly and posed a threat to civilization. However, when white Americans successfully tamed and killed off their great numbers, American Indians became glorified, yet still lesser beings than man. Their legacy, like that of the wolf, has become endangered, and like all other endangered animals, they have been romanticized and placed in sectioned off parks and reserves. In the end, white Americans want to keep them wild, but wild on white terms.

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Winter Tree Line by Michael Yahner

Re-evaluating Chaucer's Madame Eglantine: The Saphead and the B*tch

by Wendelyn Bintrim

3rd Place Winner

In the decades since the Holocaust, Chaucer's "Prioress's Tale" from his *Canterbury Tales*, due to its anti-Semitism, has generated a massive amount of critical controversy (Wilsbacher 3). As a consequence of the tale's offensiveness, scholars are faced with either being apologists for or faultfinders of Chaucer and his Prioress. Is Chaucer condemning the anti-Semitism of the secularized prioress Eglantine or condoning Christian hatred toward Jews? Some critics posit that there is insufficient evidence to determine Chaucer's intent (Frank 229) or maintain that the Prioress's character in the "General Prologue," but not her tale, is mildly satirized (Thomas 97). Cited as evidence of this mild satire are the Prioress's worldly distractions. First, she treats her little dogs as substitute babies, feeding them meat and bread softened with milk (the type of baby food recommended by the medieval Persian physician Avicenna, whose books were studied in Europe as well as the Middle East) (Condren 194). Second, attached to her rosary is a brooch engraved with *Amor vincit omnia* ("Love conquers all" in Latin¹)—a somewhat curious motto for a celibate nun (Chaucer 7). This pendant on her rosary was probably given to her by her lover, the Monk (Woznak 8 October 2018 Lecture). Third, the nun appears sappy—crying if she sees mice caught in traps, whether they're suffering or dead (Chaucer 7). Even her name sends a mixed message—"eglantine" is synonymous with "sweetbrier," which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as a Eurasian rose with sweet-smelling leaves and hooked prickles (Chaucer 6, "Sweetbrier"). Naming her thus, Chaucer may be suggesting that she has a dual nature: vicious to Jews (analogous to the unpleasant nature of the rose's prickles), but still charming to fellow Christians and to nonhuman creatures in her own strangely sentimental way (analogous to the sweetness of the flowers and leaves of the rose).

The Prioress likely acquired her fancy table manners, little dogs, and stylish clothes after observing the secular women who would have stayed with the nuns while their husbands were off in wars or on pilgrimages. The wives of the five nouveau riche, middle-class guildsmen portrayed in the *Tales* demand to have their names prefaced with the pretentious title "Madame" when being addressed, an affectation the Prioress reproduces (Lambdin and Lambdin 43; Chaucer 6, 13). While bishops disapproved of the nuns' boarding of the worldly ladies, there was nothing the bishops could do to eliminate the practice, as the rent charged helped to keep the priories running (Lambdin and Lambdin 43). Other than contact with these secular women, nuns were supposed to stay cloistered. As supervisors, prioresses were given more freedom than other nuns so they could go on errands to town or other business outings (Lambdin and Lambdin 43). But any nuns who

¹ A Virgilian motto

went out into the world, even for pilgrimages, were viewed with suspicion (Lambdin and Lambdin 41). The Prioress, going off on a pilgrimage and encountering the Cook, Miller, and their sketchy ilk along the way, therefore was a runaway nun.

For all her rebelliousness, this nun flouting male and ecclesiastical authority in the form of bishops has a rather conventional hatred of Jews, who are faceless, ill-defined figures in her tale (Collette 142). By contrast, the Christian boy whom the Jews martyr² in her story is personified and described in tender detail, and his mother is a loving, pious widow (Chaucer 171). The sweetness of the little boy and his widowed mother make the Jews, incited by Satan to kill the “little chorister” boy, look even worse by contrast (Chaucer 173). The Prioress is a product of her time because her attention to smallness, innocence, and holiness reflects a trend of her day toward sentimentality in Christianity and the arts (Collette 138). Because she is such a saphead, her reason (which would make her realize that her anti-Semitism is irrational) is overwhelmed.

The Prioress is as incapacitated by her sentimentality in general as she is by her fixation on the particular and the recent. The Prioress’s Jews are not only faceless and shadowy, but distant—the story is set in some faraway, unspecified Asian town. By contrast, the little boy is specifically likened to “little Saint Hugh of Lincoln”—a relatively familiar and local blood libel saint from England³ who the ignorant Prioress claims was murdered recently, when in fact the alleged murder of “little Saint Hugh” occurred in 1255, over a hundred years before the composition of the *Tales*⁴ (Zitter 278). The Jews are pushed out of the picture and thereby out of readers’ sense of sympathy, but the little boy is in full view. Perhaps there is some satire on Chaucer’s part that the Prioress is so ill-informed (or overconfident) in her knowledge of history. The Prioress wants to make her tale into a tearjerker, but she only succeeds in making it maudlin.

The Jews are brought back into the picture toward the end of the “Prioress’s Tale,” but not for purposes of eliciting readers’ sympathy for them, but rather for denigration. In revenge for the killing of the little boy, the Christians in the town drag all of the Jews out of their homes and commit a massive pogrom (Chaucer 174-175). The message of the Prioress here is that the Jews, being bloodthirsty, are less deserving of life than the filthy mice that she cries over (Chaucer 173). She can never get over the fiction that the Jews of her story (or their ancestors) murdered this little boy in particular and the Holy Innocents as a class (Chaucer 173).

The little Christian boy and his mother might symbolize Jesus and the Virgin: both pairs are pure, holy, and reverent (Chaucer 171). The Prioress capitalizes on this analogy

² The Jews in the “Prioress’s Tale” hire a hitman to kill the Christian boy who sings a Marian hymn every day on the way to school (passing through the Jewish ghetto), a habit the Jews consider obnoxious.

³ Blood libel stories were popular anti-Semitic tales of Jews killing young Christian boys, often for ritual purposes. Folk Catholicism in the Middle Ages venerated some children martyred thus as saints. Of course, these supposed saints were not officially canonized due to the hateful anti-Semitic lies surrounding them.

⁴ Written between 1387 and 1400

to make the Jews in her story into pseudo-Christ killers; many medieval blood libel stories similarly carry the theme of Jews crucifying little Christian boys⁵ (Archer 48). However, when one considers the savagery of the genocide (the Jewish community is annihilated, innocents included), the Christians' revenge seems excessive, almost presaging the Holocaust. The Christians didn't obey Jesus's instructions to turn the other cheek (the Christians could've imprisoned rather than dismembered the accused), or even an-eye-for-an-eye. The Prioress's story makes sense neither according to New Testament moral standards nor according to baser human instincts to merely get *even* with one's specific wrongdoers.

If the massacre of the Jews in the "Prioress's Tale" seems excessive, we should remember that the Prioress is a woman of excesses, both in her self-indulgences and treatment of her story's characters. The exaggerated dichotomy between the decent Christians and the indecent "cursed folk of Herod come again" might ironically reflect the Prioress's own ambiguous nature—as if she subconsciously realizes that her own nature is torn between sentimentality and savagery (Chaucer 173).

Furthermore, the Prioress's Christian tribalism is highlighted by her name. Eglantine, after a type of wild rose, might call to mind Jesus's Crown of Thorns, reflecting her concern with suffering and emotion (Kuhl 325). Or might her name, after a *wild* rose variety, reflect her rebellious personality? Is she wild because she disobeys the bishops who insist that she stay cloistered and also because she apparently breaks her vows of chastity by keeping a lover? The rose, closely associated in medieval times with romance just as it is now, might symbolize her passionate nature—both religious and sexual.

Like her name, the Prioress's jewelry contains ambivalent symbolism. The Prioress flaunts the crowned "A" on her golden rosary pendant (first letter of *amor*: "fond or passionate love" in Latin) ("Amor"). Thus juxtaposed with her name, which theoretically represents the Crown of Thorns, the celibate nun and the secular, sexual woman in the Prioress conflict. But is this just a modern misreading of the Prioress's character? She may be obsessed with religion, not romantic love. The Monk and Prioress might not be lovers. The association of her name with Christ's crown is just as plausible as the link of roses to romance. *Amor* might refer to divine love rather than sexual adventure. The Prioress, a confused woman herself, confounds us moderns.

While the Prioress's love, particularly for her furbabies, charms modern readers, her defamation of Jews does not. Her love and hate seem disparate, but in combination, they show what a literal b*tch she can be. According to the University of Michigan's online *Middle English Dictionary*, *bicche* in Middle English, like its Modern English descendant "b*tch," could be "used contemptuously or profanely...of a woman" ("Bicche"). What comes to mind, in addition to her dog-mothering, is how, like hounds ripping apart hinds,

⁵ The difference is that in the "Prioress's Tale," the hitman hired by the Jews slits the boy's throat instead of crucifying him.

the Christians in her tale draw and quarter the Jews. Anti-Semitism is thus portrayed as savage and bestial.

While the Prioress may have more than her share of faults, she is not a flat, evil caricature. The Prioress has her sweet, motherly qualities that counter her religiously bigoted, animal inclinations. Perhaps scholars shouldn't b*tch about her quite so much.

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Retraction

In the spirit of Chaucer's retraction at the end of *The Canterbury Tales*, I decided to pen a reconciliatory paragraph. *Bicche* was used in Middle English to refer to both disagreeable women and men, just as its linguistic descendant does today ("Bicche"). I do not think that "b*tch" legitimately constitutes a slur aimed at females. Rather, it is an effective personal insult. Removing the b-word from all texts is too dainty. Context should be considered in censoring offensive words, especially those that do not target a highly specific group of people.

The Wild Card by Molly Fischer

I met Nadine at a party.

I was leaning against the wall, sipping on a lukewarm concoction that my peers called “Jungle Juice,” yet I had serious doubts about whether the drink actually contained any juice or not. I had my phone out and was scrolling through Instagram, hoping that a cute boy would notice me looking effortlessly flawless and ask me to dance with him.

Eventually, a boy walked up to me to say, “Do you go to school here?”

“No,” I responded. “I’m visiting my boyfriend.”

He wasn’t very cute.

About a minute later, a girl appeared out of seemingly nowhere and grabbed my hand.

“I need a partner for pong,” she said quite frantically, as if her life depended on whether or not she played a game of pong right that instant.

“Oh, no, I don’t really like—”

“It’ll be quick, I’m really good,” she reassured me.

This girl was at least six inches shorter than me and probably weighed about two-thirds my weight. She had ridiculously long, dark brown hair that whipped around her as if she didn’t even know it was there.

She stumbled over to the “beer” pong table—though, given that everyone was too cheap to spare *actual* beer, the cups were filled with water—while I cautiously walked behind, suddenly feeling responsible should this girl completely eat shit in the middle of a party.

“We’re gonna kick your asses!” my partner shouted, her words slurring together. I kind of half-smiled, not sure whether or not the other players would take her seriously. They just laughed.

Within three minutes, the other team had made five cups, while we—I—had only made one.

“We’ve still got this. We’re coming back,” she said as I just laughed. Clearly, we were not coming back, though I appreciated her tenacity.

The other team took their next shot and hit the side of the last cup, knocking it off the table and causing water to splash all over my jeans. Disgruntled by my misfortune, I let out a small groan.

“Oh no!” shouted my partner. Before I could say anything, she started unbuttoning her own jeans. “Why don’t you just take my jeans and I’ll wear the wet ones.”

This was preposterous for a couple of reasons, of course: one, we were clearly not at all the same pant size and her size 0 jeans would likely only fit my calves; two, we were in the middle of a crowded party, and social norms suggested that it was *not* an appropriate place to take off your pants.

I quickly grabbed her wrist to stop her from stripping, saying, “That’s not necessary.”

She nodded slowly, perhaps then realizing that it was not a good idea to take off her pants in front of thirty people.

“Let’s go to the bathroom and I’ll help you dry off.”

I followed her through the crowd, once again feeling like a mother watching her toddler walk two feet in front of her, ready to pick her up if she fell. We wandered around a bit—so long, in fact, that I started to question if she actually knew where the bathroom was. When I was ready to give up and just tell her to go back to the party, she threw herself against a door and it opened to reveal the bathroom.

It’s difficult to describe what a bathroom at a frat party looks like, but I’ll do my best to describe it: everything was sticky. No towels existed anywhere, hold for one bunched up in the shower for some strange reason. There were numerous rolls of toilet paper scattered across the bathroom—some of which were wet. The toilet seat was not connected to the rest of the toilet and the toilet lid was sitting in the shower with the stained towel. Despite being shared by at least three men, there was one toothbrush, no shampoo, five bottles of conditioner, and two bottles of the same body wash. And, of course, there was a very distinct smell: someone had just vomited.

“This is disgusting,” I said, realizing that nothing in the bathroom would help to dry me off.

“I used to hook up with Jack, so I’m used to this,” the girl replied. I didn’t know who Jack was, though I assumed he lived in the house.

“What’s your name?” I asked, finally realizing that I never learned her name.

“Nadine,” she said with a sly smile.

“I’m Grace.”

“That’s a very classy name,” she said. After a couple of seconds, she asked, “Wanna make out?”

“What?”

“Just a suggestion. We don’t have to. Let’s get back out there.”

And just like that, Nadine turned around and walked—stumbled—out of the bathroom.

I was in awe of her and I wanted to be her friend.

I saw Nadine the next day at the local coffee house. Her hair looked the same as it did at the party—it fell all around her as she acted like she didn’t even know it was there. She was wearing an oversized sweatshirt and shorts—the type of look that made it look like she wasn’t wearing any pants. She was sitting at a small table near the window, drinking an iced coffee. After ordering my own drink, I slowly approached her.

“Hi, Nadine.” I said, smiling at her.

“Oh, hi,” she said. After a pause, “I’m sorry, do I know you?”

“I’m Grace. We met last night.”

“Oh, shit, I’m sorry,” she said. “I totally blacked out last night.”

“I figured.”

We paused there for a second. I probably should have just left, but instead I blurted out, “You offered me your pants.”

She laughed a little bit. “Sounds like something I would do.” She kind of eyed me up and down before continuing. “What else did I do last night?”

So Nadine and I talked for a while about the previous night’s events. She laughed when I mentioned her offering to make out with me, then went into detail about how that is a common occurrence for her. She told me stories about other wild things she’d done while drunk, too. Our conversation flowed naturally—so naturally, in fact, that I didn’t even register the boy approaching our table until I heard his angelic voice say, “Hi, Grace.”

Trenton was the love of my life in the most simultaneously dramatic and undramatic ways possible. We were casual friends, had two classes together, and nothing romantic had ever happened between us. But I was fine with things being like that, because at least he wasn’t seeing or sleeping with anybody else.

“Oh, hi, Trenton,” I smiled at him. “How are you?”

“I’m pretty good. How are you?”

“I’m fine. Just nursing a hangover.” It was odd that, no matter how intrigued I was by Nadine, Trenton still managed to take my attention away from her. So when I felt Nadine gently nudge my leg, I jumped back into reality. “Oh, Trenton, this is my friend Nadine.”

“Nice to meet you,” Trenton smiled at Nadine and she flashed him a smile back. He turned back to me. “I’m nursing a pretty sick hangover, too. Just came in for a bagel. I’ll see you around.”

Nadine and I watched as Trenton walked over to the counter to order his bagel. When it seemed as if he was out of earshot, Nadine said, “He’s cute.”

“I know,” I said. I paused, debating whether or not I wanted to tell this girl I had just met about my undying love for a guy she had just met. But this was Nadine, and she was

cool, and from my general assumptions about her character, she was probably a really great wing-woman. If anyone could set me up with Trenton, it would likely be her.

"I'm like, low-key in love with him," I said.

"Okay," she said. "So I won't sleep with him."

Before I had time to react, she abruptly changed the subject. "What are you doing tonight?"

"I'll probably go out somewhere."

"Where?"

"I'm not sure yet." I paused. "I'm waiting to be invited."

"Don't wait. You should just come with me."

"Are you sure?"

"Totally. Let me give you my number."

So at 10:02 p.m. that night, Nadine and I walked up the steps to a frat house and knocked on the door. It opened a crack, and I was surprised when it suddenly swung open and Nadine was greeted with a very forceful kiss from the guy at the door. She made out with him for a solid ten seconds while I stood there, trying to peek around them to see if I could sneak inside. Finally, Nadine pulled away from the guy.

"Eric, this is my friend, Grace."

Without waiting for Eric to say anything, she brushed past him and went inside, so I followed suit. She immediately grabbed a beer out of someone's hand and handed it to me.

"Did you just steal this?" I asked.

"Grace, if you learn one thing tonight, I want it to be that pretty girls don't pay for drinks."

Her words of advice didn't really excuse her actions, given that there were other free ways to obtain beer than taking it out of someone else's hand. But damn, that was a cool line to deliver.

"Who was that guy at the door?"

"His name is Eric. We hooked up a couple of times."

I nodded, pretending I understood and thought that was a normal phenomenon. I didn't live in a world where you randomly made out with guys you've hooked up with when you see them at a party. I lived in a world where you avoided the guys you've hooked up with by any and all means necessary. I once dropped a class because I had kissed a boy who sat three rows behind me.

But Nadine lived in a world where you did whatever you wanted. I wanted to be in that world.

My roommate, Hailey, never liked Nadine.

We had had multiple conversations about her, and every time, Hailey would make some comment about how every time she tried to like Nadine, Nadine did something to make Hailey dislike her. When I asked for an example, Hailey just said it was the things she said and the things she did.

On one tragic evening, Hailey, Nadine, and I were all supposed to go to a party, but I caught a bad cold and decided to stay in—a rare decision, especially once I became friends with Nadine.

I told Hailey and Nadine to go to the party without me, and they both sounded fine with it. They left our apartment at 9:49 p.m. while I snuggled up in bed with some soup and a nice rom-com. I didn't realize what time I had fallen asleep, but I was jolted awake by a slamming door at 5:36 a.m.

I got out of bed and tiptoed into our living room to see what was going on. Hailey was there, rummaging through her purse, looking for something. Her makeup had smeared all over her face, her dark brown hair was thrown into a messy bun, and she was in her clothes from the previous night. I assumed she had hooked up with somebody.

"Rough night?" I asked, my voice playful.

"Grace, I do not like that girl," she said.

"Who?"

"Nadine."

I let out a little laugh. "What happened?"

"She *left* me there."

I gave her a puzzled look.

"I started vomiting. So Nadine apparently took off with some random guys. I passed out in the bathroom. She didn't come in *once* to check on me."

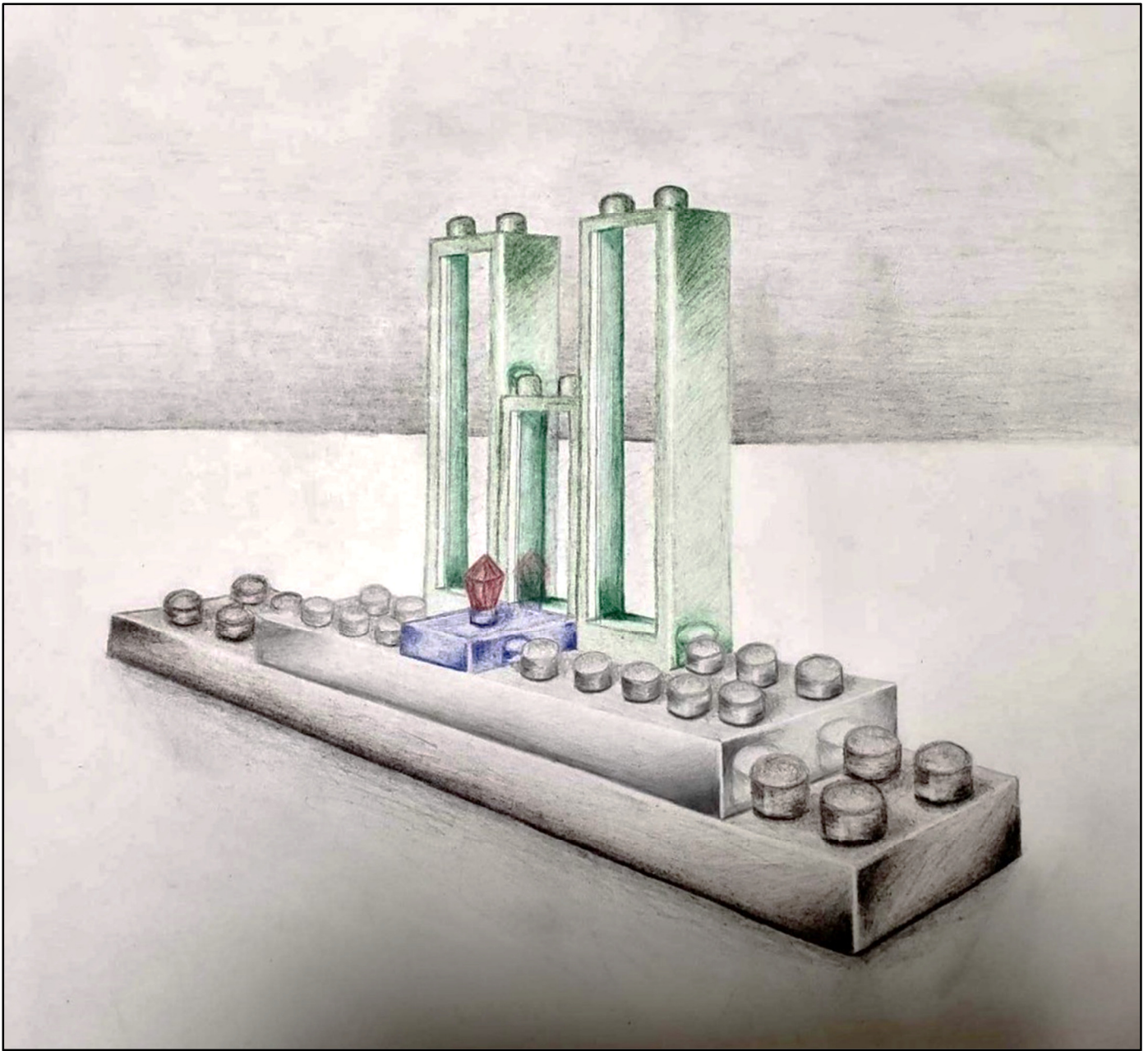
I could tell Hailey was pissed, but she just wasn't understanding Nadine. Nadine wasn't the type of friend who took care of you when you were sick—she was the type of friend who got you to that point.

"I'm sure she was asking people how you were doing," I said.

"I'm sure she wasn't. I asked someone to grab her for me and they said she had already left. I spent the night in a frat bathroom because she couldn't be bothered to walk me home."

I didn't say anything.

"Don't jump to her defense," she said. "I already know you're going to."



Legos by Kayla Rosas

“Nadine’s just not really the type to take care of people when they get sick.”

Hailey didn’t say anything, just clenched her fists. Some strands of hair were falling out of her bun, making her look further disheveled by rage.

“What’s so great about Nadine, anyway?” she finally asked. “You’re like, obsessed with her. Why?”

“I’m not obsessed with her,” I spoke quietly. But Hailey was right—I was a little obsessed with Nadine.

“Just tell me what’s so great about her,” Hailey demanded.

“She’s fun. She makes me try things I never thought I’d ever try,” I said. “She’s like a wild card. You never know what she’s going to do next, but it’s always exciting.”

Hailey didn’t say anything, just taking in what I had to say.

“That’s it? She’s fun?” Hailey asked, calm and quiet.

I didn’t have an answer for her.

“I’m just saying, Grace. This girl is fun, yes, but would she be there for you if you really needed her?”

I didn’t want to think about it, but Hailey had a point. On one occasion, Nadine and I were at a party where a girl was crying in the bathroom. I asked Nadine if we should go comfort her, to which Nadine responded, “I don’t do tears.” At the time, I had thought that was the coolest thing ever. But then, reflecting on it with Hailey, I started to wonder: if I was drunk crying in a bathroom, would Nadine comfort me?

It was like glass shattering on my entire friendship with Nadine. It was superficial. We didn’t have any real connection; she was just a fun person. She didn’t offer me any real friendship, just a drinking buddy.

After that conversation with Hailey, I had a hard time being with Nadine. Every time we went to grab lunch or study together, I looked for any sign of Nadine being a good friend outside of a party atmosphere.

While we were getting ready to go out one night, I finally asked her, “If I was drunk crying in a bathroom, would you comfort me?”

“Of course, Grace,” she said. “You’re one of my best friends.”

I felt a little bit of relief, but something told me she was lying. I didn’t care. At least it was a nice lie.

* * *

Despite hitting a rough patch, my friendship with Nadine continued. Though, after a while of looking for positive qualities and finding nothing, I found myself inadvertently looking for negative qualities. I found myself annoyed by everything she did. When we went to parties and she danced on tables, I thought, *She just wants to be the center of attention*. When she brought me coffee one day, I thought, *She knows I’m annoyed and is just trying to get back in my good graces*.

Nadine couldn’t win. I was looking for an out from our friendship—maybe that’s why she did what she did, but it was no excuse in my eyes.

Trenton was the love of my life.

Until Nadine slept with him.

She told me over coffee. She was acting nonchalant but I could tell she was nervous about something. So when I said, "Is something wrong?" she just blurted out, "I slept with Trenton last night."

I couldn't tell if I was angry or sad. Maybe both. My eyes were welling with tears though I wanted nothing more than to yell at her. I tried to say something, but I didn't know what to say, so I just stared at her, waiting for an explanation.

"I don't know how it happened," she said. "Well, I guess I do. We were just both at this party and he said, 'You're Grace's friend, right?' So we got to talking and then he kissed me and—"

"Stop," I said. "I don't want to hear it."

"I'm sorry."

"How could you?"

"I'm sorry, Grace," she took a deep breath. "I guess, at the time, I just didn't think you'd care. It's not like you guys ever hooked up or anything."

"I have real feelings for him, Nadine!" I was almost shouting in the coffee house. "Do you know what those are?"

"That's a really mean thing to say," she said quietly.

"That was a really mean thing for you to do," I retorted. "Do you ever think about how your actions affect other people?"

She didn't say anything. I didn't say anything either.

I cried on the way home. I didn't know how someone I trusted so much could so blatantly disregard my feelings. Yes, I had been pushing her away, but to get back at me by sleeping with the guy I liked? I had never felt so hurt in my life.

Hailey found me crying in my room, eating a pint of cookie dough ice cream.

"What's wrong?" she said, rubbing my leg gently to soothe me.

"Nadine slept with Trenton," I sobbed.

"That bitch!" she shouted. "Who does she think she is? Oh, honey, I'm so sorry."

"I'm never going to talk to her again."

"I don't blame you."

We sat in silence—hold for my intermittent sobs and sniffles—for a couple of minutes.

"You were right," I said. "I should have listened from the start."

"You were right, too. She was fun."

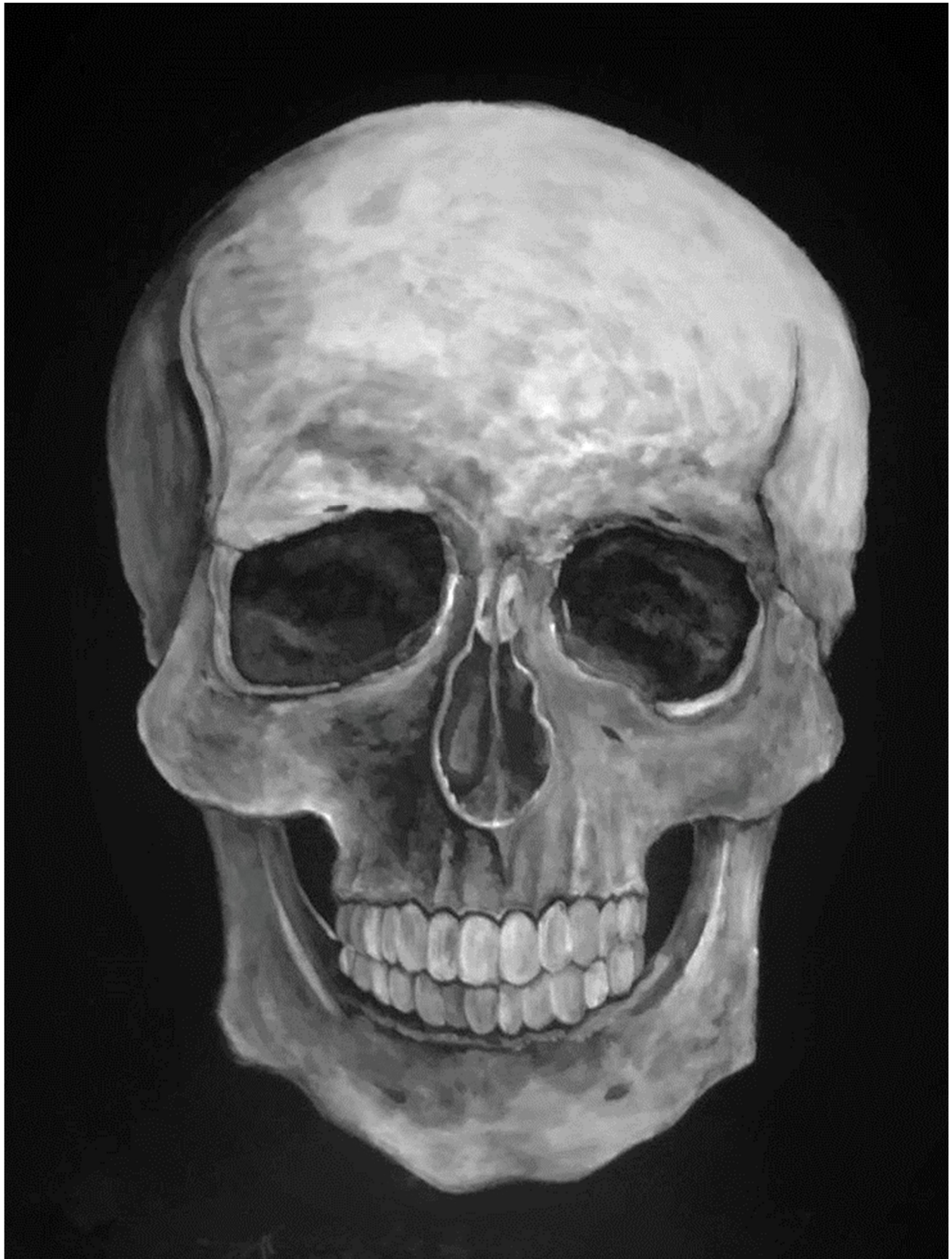
"No," I said. "She wasn't very fun at all."

Gary Heidnik

by Anthony Vassalotti

America, the land of the free.
With a small kitchen table
And a small kitchen stove,
A small old man makes his dinner.
He chops it up with a small kitchen knife
And throws it on the fire.
He adds some spices.
He adds some heart.
He smiles at his quiet life.
No one bothers him.
He sets the small timer
To go off around noon,
Then goes to the living room
To watch TV.
The news screams about a missing child
Brown hair like what he used to have
And bestowed with beautiful blue eyes.
He changes the channel.
He doesn't care about that.
Sad thoughts upset his stomach.
His small rocking chair creaks
Back and forth it goes
Trailing his flannel robe around
Like a child with a blanket.
But he keeps his slippers on
For not too long the food is ready.
He slowly gets back to the stove
And he turns it off.

He grabs his small little plate
And small little fork
And he takes some of the meat out
And heads back to the TV.
He watches his show more.
It was a documentary
About the lovely life of Gary Heidnik.
Suddenly, he puts his fork down
And reaches into his mouth
To remove a long brown hair.
He tosses it aside
And continues watching his show.



Eldritch by Vittoria LaRosa

Master of the Game by Anna Baughman

The library is quiet on a Thursday afternoon. Sasha sits with her back to the door, hoping Lou won't see her if he stops by. She tries to focus on the task at hand: discrete random variables. Unfortunately, as riveting as calculus is, she can't focus. She can only stare at a large chip in the paint on the wall before her and think of her most recent fight with Lou about waving to other guys or not answering texts fast enough or something.

The longer she looks at the peeling paint, the more it looks like a familiar scene: a boy and a girl, walking down the street, almost hand-in-hand. Their arms are stretched toward each other, but Sasha thinks the girl is probably pulling away. She knows this girl moves away slowly. If she pulled away from him all at once, he would notice, and the week-long fight that would ensue was not worth it. The chipped-paint-boy's hand stretches out to the hunched over girl. Sasha knows from experience that this snapshot was a mere second in time, as the boyfriend's head would snap over if she didn't reciprocate instantly. Though the imagined picture is from behind the couple, Sasha can guess that the unpainted girl's face is miserable, perhaps with silent tears running down it.

Her skin prickles on the back of her neck. She knows he's close, watching her, like he does. He stops behind her, and she pretends she doesn't notice, taking those last few seconds of peace before he announces himself.

He brushes her hand. *He's ready to play the game.* She immediately turns her head to see him sitting next to her and smiles when their eyes meet. If she smiled, then looked up, that would mean that she didn't care who was touching her. If she looked at him and didn't smile immediately, that would mean that she wasn't happy to see him.

Relief is apparent on his face. He knows Sasha isn't going to fight with him.

"I'm happy to see you," he says, shifting so that he can put his arm across her shoulders. Claiming her so that the two other people in the library will know that she has a boyfriend.

"You look beautiful," he says, his voice guarded.

This sentence alone could start a doozy of an argument. Sasha knows Lou doesn't like when she wears make-up. He doesn't understand why she has to look that good when she only sees him once or twice a day. However, Sasha has learned by now how she should respond.

Her smile widens. "Thank you, baby. All for you," she says, leaning in to plant a soft kiss on his temple, an actress reciting her lines perfectly.

Pleased, he runs his thumb back and forth on her hand, the proud director.

Lou releases his hand for a moment to retrieve his phone, which he sets down on the table. It lights up, revealing multiple missed calls and texts from his mother.

"Are you ignoring her again?" Sasha asks, immediately knowing that this was the wrong thing to say.

Lou's eyes light up. Not happily or lovingly, with a flicker like a candle or a burning of passion. They light up like a forest fire.

"I don't need to talk to her right now."

Sasha nods, hoping she looks understanding and not afraid, and Lou takes her hand again; the moment has passed.

"What did you do today?" he asks.

She knows that the question he's really asking is, "How many guys did you see today?"

Once again, Sasha knows the game. If she only says women, he'll think she's lying. If she disperses male names in the list, ending with a female, he'll let it slide.

He nods as he listens, his hand tightening around hers every time she says a boy's name. *A warning.*

Talking to boys breaks the metaphorical rule number one. Sasha carefully reminds herself that his jealousy shows how much he cares.

When she stops talking, he looks at her thoughtfully.

"We're good, right?" he asks, but she knows what he really means.

You're on your best behavior today, right?

Sasha nods. *Always*, she wants to say, but she would be answering the rhetorical question. They aren't always good, and she knows that.

But, he is one of the good ones. Mama said so after she met him. And after Mama's endless parade of beaus, she would know.

Mama doesn't know everything about him. Mama doesn't know that Lou yells at Sasha if she doesn't respond to his texts within the hour. Mama doesn't know that he won't talk to Sasha when she makes him mad, and she has to guess what she has done wrong in order to fix it. Mama doesn't know that he cares about sex way more than he led her to believe at the beginning.

Lou still could be a good one. He'll probably calm down after they've been dating longer. Nine months isn't that long in the grand scheme of things. Plus, he's clearly head over heels in love with Sasha. Otherwise, he would let her do whatever she wants.

At least, that's what he tells her.

Lou leans back in his chair, looking pleased with where they are.

Sasha directs her attention back to discrete random variables, ignoring the wet spots appearing on the pages in front of her.

In his teen years, Lou still went by Louie, and he mopped the John Adams High School floors late at night for forty extra dollars a week, on top of his weekly fryer's paycheck from Jim's Diner.

On a Thursday night, Louie shoved the mop into the murky bucket, pulling the lever to squeeze the excess water out. The mop slapped loudly against the not-so-white linoleum, echoing through the empty halls.

Louie was stewing over his most recent fight with Cathy. She never understood why he was mad, and lately, she had been avoiding him. She told him that he had a problem with communication.

Louie heard a noise far away: a door closing. Teachers came back to school at night often, so he thought nothing of it. He continued to mop. His not-brown-not-blond hair, greasy from hours of leaning beside a fryer, tickled just above his eyes. When he ran his hands through his bangs, they stayed where he pushed them.

But, why didn't she understand that talking to guys made him upset? He shouldn't have to say it. The way she talked about her lab partner—Brad—made it so obvious that something was going on between them.

Footsteps echoed down the hall, so Louie looked down at his mop, ready to avoid eye contact and forced conversation.

And Cathy had the audacity to say that Brad wanted to date one of her friends, as if Louie didn't know that guys tried that all the time to get into girls' pants.

A laugh traveled down the hall, coming toward Louie. A laugh he recognized.

His head snapped up to see Cathy in a short blue dress—a dress that she would never wear for Louie—and Brad walking along the lockers, a beaming smile across her face—a smile she would never wear for Louie. They didn't even notice Louie at first, too lost in their conversation.

Brad was taller than Cathy, taller than Louie. His brown hair was always slicked back with gel, showcasing his blue eyes that girls loved. He said something that made Cathy laugh so hard that she had to cover her mouth to contain herself.

Brad saw Louie before Cathy did. "Oh, hey, man! I forgot you worked here," Brad said with fake happiness.

Louie said nothing, his eyes on Cathy. After a beat, she said, "Brad, why don't you go to the lab? I'll catch up."

Brad complied easily, wishing Louie a good night. Louie nodded in his general direction, still staring at his supposed girlfriend of a year, whose eyes were watching Brad disappear down the hall.

Once Brad was out of sight, Cathy turned to Louie, her bright eyes—blue or green, he could never tell—bearing into his murky brown ones.

“Did you drive past Brad’s house last night?” she asked, anger clear in her voice.

“Why are you here with him this late?” he said, not acknowledging that she had spoken at all.

“He saw a silver Ford Focus outside his house *at least* ten times last night. Was it you?” Cathy stood with her arms crossed and her feet planted firmly on the ground; she was not backing down.

When she stood like this, Cathy was taller than Louie. He didn’t like it. Unable to look into her eyes, he took a moment to scan the blue, maybe gray, lockers behind her.

“I just... I had to make sure you weren’t there,” Louie finally said.

“Louie...” Something in Cathy’s voice made him look away from the lockers—they were definitely blue—back at her. She was still in her warrior stance, but her shoulders had sagged in defeat—had he won? Louie allowed some relief to creep into his heart.

“I can’t do this anymore,” she said, and Louie felt his heart constrict, sending the relief right back out. “I have never cheated on you, but you keep making me feel like I have. It’s too exhausting. You won’t believe me, no matter how hard I try to convince you.”

Louie opened his mouth to respond, but Cathy turned and walked away quickly before he could say anything, her white Keds squeaking on the freshly clean floor. He stared at the gray lockers, where she had just stood.

Louie couldn’t believe he ruined it.

No. He couldn’t believe *she* ruined it. Anger boiled in his blood, and he had half a mind to go after Cathy, but he stopped himself. She wasn’t the one, clearly. He needed a girl who understood him. Not a girl like Cathy, who gave up at the first sign of troubled waters. Not a girl who flirted with another guy when she had a boyfriend. A girl who was willing to fight for love like he was.

Louie decided that once he found her, he was not letting go, just like his father had told him.

* * *

Little Louie laid across the fuzzy brown couch on his stomach, his chin resting on his hands on top of the arm of the couch.

The five-year-old watched his parents through the open kitchen door. Daddy couldn’t stop kissing Mommy today. She giggled and tried to pull away from him, but Daddy wanted to kiss her more, so he pulled her closer, making her laugh harder.

“Harvey,” Mommy said.

Daddy laughed, too, and let her go, looking out to see Louie’s eyes on them.

“Look how beautiful Mommy looks today, little man,” Daddy said, pulling Mommy into the living room.

Louie sat up, balancing on his knees to get a better look.

Mommy’s lips were bright red, and she had black drawn around her eyes. They looked very blue.

Louie smiled at Mommy and nodded. Daddy looked pleased with his answer and kissed Mommy one more time before grabbing his jacket for work. He walked over to the couch and messed with Louie’s hair.

“When you find a woman like Mommy, keep her, Lou. I’m one lucky man,” Daddy said, winking at Mommy.

Mommy smiled after Daddy, watching him until he closed the front door behind him. She turned back to Louie.

“Louie, sweetie, Mommy has a present for you,” Mommy said.

Louie excitedly bounced on the couch as Mommy left the room. She was gone for a long time, so the cartoons on the TV distracted Louie, who was on his stomach again, now on the floor.

Mommy walked back in right when the cat was about to catch the mouse, and she stood in front of the TV. She had changed from her blue flannel pajamas into a small red dress. Louie tried to look around her at what was happening with Tom and Jerry, until he realized that her arms were around her back. Louie stood up in front of Mommy and held out his hands.

“Close your eyes, Louie,” Mommy said.

Louie complied quickly. She placed something in his hands; it felt like a little person.

He opened his eyes to see an army man, dressed head-to-toe in green and brown.

“This is a special army man,” Mommy said, kneeling down beside Louie. “He’s in covert operations. Do you know what that means?”

Louie shook his head.

“He keeps secrets for the rest of the army. Do you think we could play a game with him?” Mommy asked.

Louie nodded, excited about what they could do with his new army man.

“I want you to work with your army man on covert operations. I’m going to tell you a secret, and you can’t tell anyone. Can you do that, Louie?”

“Yes, Mommy!” he said, ready to play the game.

“Okay, Louie boy. My friend is coming over today. We need to talk privately in my room, and you can’t come in or knock on the door while we’re in there. Do you understand?”

“I understand, Mommy,” Louie said with the genuine sincerity of a five-year-old.

“Most importantly, you can’t tell Daddy that my friend came over. Can you do that, buddy?”

Louie nodded happily. A secret between him and Mommy! She kissed him on the head. He looked up at her, his adoration so clear in his eyes.

“Don’t ya think you’ll be cold in that dress, Mommy?” Louie asked.

Mommy looked sad for a moment. “Just play with your new friend until this man leaves, okay?”

Louie had already broken away from Mommy to introduce his new army man to the rest of his army collection.

Minutes later, Mommy’s friend came to the door, but Louie didn’t look up. Relieved, Mommy led her friend quickly through the small house to the bedroom.

Louie’s army men went to war, which occupied him longer than a five-year-old is typically occupied. It would have continued to occupy him until Mommy’s friend was long gone, but as the man walked out of her room half an hour after his arrival, he said, “Who’s the kid?”

Louie looked up at Mommy’s friend, startled by his loud and gruff voice. He seemed dirty and older than Daddy. He didn’t have a beard, but there was some hair on his face. His t-shirt should have been white, but it really wasn’t anymore.

Mommy looked at Louie. Her eyes were red, and she smiled slowly, as if she just remembered who Louie was.

“That’s my kid. Cute, isn’t he? My little Louie,” she said dreamily.

The friend grunted and looked away from Louie, focusing back on Mommy. He put his arm around her waist.

“Thanks for the good time, Darlin’. Next week?”

Mommy smiled happily and nodded, a giggle falling easily from her lips. The friend pulled her close and kissed her.

Louie watched. These weren’t like Daddy’s kisses. Daddy played with Mommy and laughed and gave her soft kisses. This friend kissed her hard, like she had done something wrong, but Mommy seemed to like it. When she pulled away, she smiled until she saw Louie watching them. Her eyes widened.

“You need to go,” she said, moving her friend toward the door. He laughed, and then he was gone.

Mommy turned back to Louie. "Don't tell Daddy, Louie," she said, her voice very sad. The young boy nodded. He never told Daddy.

* * *

The library is quiet on a Thursday afternoon. Lou walks in the front door, quickly scanning the room for curly, red hair. She is almost hidden by a bookshelf. *On purpose?* He tries to suppress the thought and the feeling that comes with it.

Sasha must know he's coming. He always meets her at the library after his 2:45 English class. Today, he's five minutes late because his professor was too excited about Alexander Pope, but five minutes is nothing. She still should know he'll be here.

Sasha clearly feels him before she sees him, as her shoulders tense up. Lou pauses for a moment, waiting to see if she does anything. When Sasha doesn't turn around, he steps forward and sits in the seat next to her, brushing his hand against hers. She turns her head to look into his eyes. She flips her hand over, facing the palm up, so that he can intertwine their fingers. Her lips tilt up into an easy smile as he does it, and he allows some relief to creep into his heart.

"I'm happy to see you," Lou says. Sasha's smile mirrors his own. He shifts, moving her left hand into his, and puts his arm across her shoulders.

"You look beautiful," he says, taking in her red lips and black-rimmed eyes.

Her smile widens. "Thank you, baby. All for you," she says, leaning in to plant a soft kiss on his temple.

Pleased, he runs his thumb back and forth on her hand for a moment, before taking his phone out of his pocket and laying it on the table in front of them. His phone screen, lit up, says, "Mom: 2 Missed Calls. Mom: 10 Messages."

Sasha asks him about it, but he brushes it off, taking her hand once more.

"What did you do today?" he asks.

She tells him about her day, what she did, who she saw, how it was.

He nods as he listens, his hand tightening around hers in a gentle squeeze every so often.

When she stops talking, he looks at her thoughtfully.

"We're good, right?" he asks.

Sasha nods. Lou feels his shoulders sag in undiluted relief.

This. This is true love. To err is human; to forgive, divine.

Lou leans back in his chair, thinking they are two of the most divine creatures on the planet.



Siphon by Caroline Manley

anthropomorphic cabinet by Elizabeth Catalano

1st Place Winner (Fr. Callan Poetry Contest)

sometimes i feel like a Dali
not melting clocks but more like
woman propping herself up on
withered fingertips
the drawers of her chest all yanked open
emptied
her hand thrust out in shame or in fear
i don't know which
and her legs are all wrong
out of proportion and distortion
and the way that she's sitting just makes you ache
i think sometimes all women feel like that
naked and dirty and lying on the floor
with your drawers yanked open
reaching and
reaching

14 november 2018

Tapestries

2018-2019

Weaving the Threads of
Creativity & Innovation

