

Penguin Review

2014

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Dear Readers,

Thank you for reading this year's Penguin Review. We are very proud of our 2014 issue. This year, we have included artwork along with nonfiction, poetry, and fiction. This is the first time since 2008 that we are including artwork. Returning to that tradition is very exciting for us. We are also very happy to say that this is the first time since the 2008 that the Penguin Review only contains undergraduate work. This is important because the undergraduate writers and artists of this university need a place where they can be heard and seen. We also need to give a big thank you to our adviser, Dr. Tiffany Anderson, and to both the English Department and the College of Language Arts and Social Sciences. Without their support, we would not have the money to print this for you.

We would especially like to thank all of the artists and writers who submitted this year. We understand that writing and making artwork is a deeply personal act of creation, and we appreciate your willingness to share with us. We had more than two times the amount of submissions than we had last year, and the process of deciding what we were going to publish was an extremely difficult one for our staff. Without you, we wouldn't have the wonderful stories, poems, and artwork which bring the 2014 Penguin Review to life.

Finally, we need to thank the staff. You guys are amazing. Without your tireless efforts throughout breaks and over the past year, this issue would not have been made.

We hope you enjoy it,
Tom Pugh and Rebecca Brown
Co-Editors
Penguin Review 2014

Untitled

I'd forgotten what the stars look like,
she says as she strains to watch while we drive by
so I slow down
and drop the ragtop,
so she can be blanketed by the sky.
Its dark, speckled cloth envelops her
and she lets it, enraptured
by its immense being,
by its beauty –
beauty that can only be appreciated
from the countryside.
The cityscape provides nothing
but a cheap imitation,
a lack of imagination;
to think that something man-made could ever compare
to the heavens.

Starbucks Killer

I have ceased trying to explain my motives. I doubt I know for sure anymore what they are. All I know is that I get satisfaction from each successful mission, and there have been many successful missions. I suppose it started with my first job. It was in the same place as my current job as all my jobs have been. They say you always remember your first. I didn't plan it out, not like all my other sprees. I hadn't known that Thompson would come into the Starbucks I was working in at ten o'clock on a Friday night and that there would be only three other people in the café at the time. I'm pretty sure he didn't know about the special rat poison I happened to have with me—that is until he was choking on it along with the others in the shop.

I cleaned up the mess like I would eventually do to so many others and moved on. At first, I thought I had killed them because I hated Thompson—that if I got away with it, I would never kill again. Yet seven months later, I was on the move again having preformed a quick clean up of my second job at Starbucks. It was then I realized it had never been about Thompson. A few more months passed and I moved again acknowledging that there probably wasn't a reason. Or maybe there was and I just hadn't found it yet, not that it mattered. Explaining why would not bring back the dead. So I drove on.

Now I stand behind the counter of yet another Starbucks doing my normal job on what would seem like a normal day except it will not be an average day for anyone. Every detail of it has been planned out, nothing left to chance like in a normal day. Another oddity of today that separates it from any other is the fact that I'm not technically supposed to be working. It was Frank's shift, or the same Frank

A. I. Rendón

who is currently finding out what life is like not having brakes. For those who do not know, Frank lives near a rather large hill that has a sharp incline and, well, to make a long geography report short, Frank will be missing those brakes.

Only Alice, the manager, is with me tonight. She was so very suspicious. That's why I had to bribe her with some chocolate cake. The chocolate cake was also the reason I had to shove her in a closet and lock the door. The cyanide had started to make her flail around like a fish which was fairly off-putting. Luckily nobody noticed. Or maybe they did, but thought better than to ask. I'm so happy people stopped asking questions: It makes it so much easier to catch them like fish in Lake Erie.

The customers come in and come out not knowing that I have begun to slip poison into each and every one of their drinks. For those driving, I slip in a slower acting poison. I can't have them dying in the parking lot. That would discourage other customers from coming in. For the people entering the shop, I slip in a faster acting drug. There is no true reason for that other than I hate anticipation. I glance at the video camera in one corner of the store. It has been broken for months, and no one has bothered repairing it. I like to think of it as my accomplice in this crime, for it could reveal me but doesn't. That thought alone makes me giggle a little.

As the last of the day's coffee lovers' chokes and dies, I leave my counter. I flip the closed sign, lock the door, and move the remaining bodies so that no one can see them from outside. The others, I've been storing in various places. It was making it hard to move, so I'm glad I'm done for the night. It is dark outside so I suppose it won't be too much of an oddity to be closing now. Of course, this is Starbucks, so it may raise a few unwanted eye brows. I shrug away such

A. I. Rendón

thoughts. They don't really matter anymore at this stage of the game. I clean up the store in an almost compulsive way. They were talking about making me employee of the month because I always left my work station as clean as a newly packaged blender. I suspect the habit comes from a long career of cleaning up after crime scenes. The smell of chemicals makes me start to whistle a tune. I have no idea if it is the theme song to Psycho or The Song that Never Ends. I like both of them, and it doesn't matter which I sing to the dead bodies around me. They don't complain. They're so polite that way, so much better than the living. In my opinion they smell better too. All too soon, everything is clean. Then comes the second fun part, which takes me hours. It's worth it, and after what feels like forever I'm ready to leave.

When I get home, I write up a letter of resignation. I'll mail it in a few days, and it will probably arrive with several others from my co-workers who survived. Nobody likes to work where so many people died. They'll probably close the building, which is a shame because I thought it was nicely placed.

After I write my letter, I start packing up my few belongings. I put my bags in my car, get in and leave. I don't know where my next stop will be, but that's half the fun. I'm whistling to myself again, happy as can be. I drive by the Starbucks. It's open again, with an apparently full house. I smile as I see it for I staged it all myself. Bodies can be difficult to reposition, but I'm patient and stubborn: Excellent qualities in an employee, if I do say so myself. There's a couple in the window looking for all intents to be gazing into each others' eyes. What can I say? I'm a romantic at heart. It took some doing and lots of twine to get them into that position and keep them from sliding down, though not as much effort as it took to get Alice to stay standing at the counter. I had to resort to pinning her like a fly. It's a good

A. I. Rendón

thing I brought that knife sharpener and Frank's hammer. You just never know when those things are going to come in handy. No one will know be able to appreciate this of course. Not until Susan steps in to start her shift. Won't she get a lovely surprise?

I laugh at the thought, and continue on my way. I do not know why I do it, why I kill all these people. It is not for any trivial emotional thing like hate or jealousy. I doubt it is some warped sense of survival of the fittest or to lower the oversized population of the human race. Perhaps it is something else? Maybe it is my reason for being. After living a dull life for so long, maybe the only joy I can get out of existing is to end the existence of others. Only time can truly tell. Or perhaps not. Time isn't very chatty, at least not in my experience. The highway stretches out forever in front of me and my smile grows. There's a lot of people out there, a lot of Starbucks, and a lot of time to ponder my murderous habits. My work is far from finished, and, with that happy thought, I move on to my next home: To my next mass murder, to my next Starbucks.

Craig Marks

42nd and 6th: 6:53 A.M.

Were you trying to avoid the rush of tourists and buses full of heavy wallets? Perhaps it was your morning exercise or the need for a filled script which launched you from sleep at a time when the locals knew better, jogging across the white line to beat out the blinking orange man forever counting down.

With one foot ahead, your eyes decided to take a look inside; your tongue tries to be breakfast. What made you go asshole over tin cup? Parting the rush of the human wave as the thud of gravity lays you still on the pavement. The finest, always in wait, cordon you from the helpful hands, reaching.

Perhaps a surprise meal for your sleeping love, rousing to ruffled sheets. Your legs twitch in time to a holiday jingle thrumming in the distance as the wave swells towards you, unable to break view. A silent timber falls as the forest looks on. Maybe they think you are part of the show?

You are the sight to be seen, the story of the trip. Stories from rockers ignore the lights, the deals, the tall lady in green. They tell of the look. Horror mixed with confusion as body takes

over mind, abandoning the motions as you sink
in the sea of bodies. Today, you are this city.

Divorce

I watched the water fill the tub, welcoming the tiny floods that fit my child-like frame. I squeezed the thick, gooeey, bubblegum-scented liquid out from the bottom end of the bottle, only to watch it travel out from the top to form into bubbles under the pressure of my imaginary waterfall. This was the way my toys often traveled to meet me, where the water sang with a softer melody, sliding down the fall like a gigantic waterpark slide. Although it was more of an adrenaline rush for my toys, this was a peaceful place for me. It was the place I went to right after dinner, and right before bed. Leaving this place, this imaginary world I created, was the last thing on my mind. I could play in this place forever, or at least, until the tiny floods turned still and cold and my body formed many wrinkles. That signaled the end of bath time.

I usually bathed with the bathroom door open, when my father wasn't home and when it was just my mother and I. She liked to keep an eye on me; I was, after all, her only daughter, her pride and joy. Right outside the bathroom door was the end of a small, crammed hallway that led to three other doors along both sides of the bathroom door. My room was to the right, my parent's room to the left, and next to my room, right before the hallway ended, was the attic door. After passing the attic door was an open doorway leading to the living room. On the opposite side of the living room was a door that closed off the kitchen.

My mother was doing her daily chores after dinner, rushing to finish the dishes, only to then attend to the unfolded clothes laid out all around the living room floor, which of course had been sitting there since dinner. While in mid-play I heard my dad stumble in

Stephanie Woon

through the door in the kitchen, which swung open and echoed through the walls. Then I heard my mom stomping toward the doorway. From there, there was nothing but faint yelling that began getting clearer and clearer to make out words.

Arguing was typical of them by now, but nothing I was supposed to involve myself in. After all I was only five: how much of a say did I have? I sat in the tub, frozen. The yelling began to get so loud it took over the calmness of my favorite place. I covered my ears and closed my eyes, but it didn't stop. I couldn't take it anymore. I yelled over the noise of my waterfall hoping they could hear me. "Stop fighting!" They couldn't hear me. I heard nothing but the echoes of the water plunging in on itself with small aggressive tones. I couldn't make out what the argument was about. Maybe my mom was mad that he missed dinner. I wouldn't know if there was anything more. As they traveled from the kitchen to the living room my mom made a quick detour through the hallway to shut the bathroom door. I didn't understand what was going to happen but I didn't expect it to be what it turned out to be. I turned off the water and sat in silence, listening.

With my dad's slurred words and my mom's weak, restless voice, it was obvious she had had enough. She cried out, "We are leaving! I am taking Stephanie and we are leaving!!" The water instantly froze, along with everything else: my body, my thoughts, and my playtime. My hands and feet were wrinkles and goose bumps covering me like bees on a honeycomb. My bubbles had died and I had not the least bit of will power to revive them. My toys sunk to the bottom of the tub, no longer sliding down the waterfall. I stared onto the surface of the faucet that reflected me like a mirror, the faucet that birthed those gigantic waterpark slides; I stared deeply into the reflection of the

Stephanie Woon

faucet and watched the waterfall.

Shadows

As a child I asked my mother, What are shadows?
poking my head out from the covers, eyes fixed
upon the darkened ceiling.

She paused, said she thought them charcoal smears
and mixed dye, spread out wide from tired drags
of an artist's palms.

Or perhaps even, they were products of the sun's décor,
a loner with lace drapes
drawn shut.

And what of my shadow upon this mattress,
these fingers twirling atop walls? Simple.
Stuffing that couldn't fit inside skin.

She gave me a smile, said my eyes were key—
pupils black beads
in my brother's kaleidoscope.

We all see darkness differently.

With age, I spy a coalminer's cough upon these walls,
this ceiling;
inky, black splats shifting,
crawling closer to me.

Past mistakes lie chained upon ankles,
abused tables and chair legs,
slaves synchronized with their masters.

These shadows are reflections in a two-way mirror,
where lost souls seek escape
in the glass beneath our feet.

Beorn

It took four strikes before Leofdæg lost his head. Some may have counted more, but for Mildryd who had witnessed such struggles in her brothers training for battle, it was counted by the number of blows each delivered. Eindrithi delivered four; one to her father's left arm, making it harder for him to swing; the second to his flank which made him stagger. The third was at the back of the knee, and the fourth forced off Leofdæg's head in a single motion. Mildryd dropped to her knees as she watched her father's body collapse, a muted cry escaping her lips. Then the women were brought forth, to be surveyed. Mildryd faced Lord Eindrithi with her hair about her face, hiding her tears. It was decided that the King would have her when the need suited him and her maid would be passed around among the men.

They tied Mildryd to the tent while they went about stripping the battlefield. One man in particular was kind enough to bring her water, but she refused everything in her anguish. She tried to block out the sounds of the camp around her, the hostile glares, and the cries of victory while the men disposed of her friends and family. She had been on her way to become a Peace-weaver with the Warrior Dracagar; now she was alone.

Evening settled, and fires sprung up around the camp. They were celebrating a victory today, but Mildryd herself was distraught and begged for silence. She heard the opening cords of the old songs, but didn't recognize the words. She longed for her maid in her time of grief, but the lady had been dragged away to the men's tents. It made Mildryd shiver to think what these savages could be doing to her nurse maid. The thoughts were made worse by the fear that she might be laid bare in front of these scoundrels too.

The princess was too far from the closest fire to feel its warmth, but close enough to see the shapes of men carrying food for the meal. Some had felled a few beasts today, and the feast would not be without its honor. It was just after preparations were made that the old man who had brought her water came up to her, gripping her by the arm and cutting her loose.

"You know the ways of cup-bearing, I hope." Mildryd looked confused.

"The King wishes you to serve him. You will bear his great cup," The warrior explained. The princess nodded, unsure how to respond to such a demand. She was led to the edge of a fire, one far bigger than the rest, where most of the men were. They spoke and drank and sang as if they were returned to their mead halls, even out in the darkness. The king was on the other side; a chair furnished out of an old tree and dragged to this spot keeping him off the ground. A cup was thrust in Mildryd's hands.

"Lord Eindrithi is waiting," the warrior signaled, as if she could forget her father's killer. Her hands shook as she walked around the fire, with each step the heat parched her throat and her balance swayed. The music was drowned by the beating of her heart, slow in that it resounded like one long strike on the cord, but short because there were many per step. Eyes traveled the extent of her skin. When Eindrithi spotted her, his gaze held, waiting patiently for her approach. She stopped when she was in front of him; his arm was resting on the arm of his throne, his cheek in his palm, smirking merrily. His eyes were as dark as the sky around them and just as cold.

"Serve me, Beorn," He commanded, calling her a child as her father once had. Hate filled her as she faced he who had done her so many wrongs, and now wished to speak to her as her King. In an act

of defiance she threw the cup to the ground at his feet. It bounced twice off the earth, a dulled ring from the metal around the lip breaking the merriment as the mead soaked into the dust. Everything fell silent. The night and the fire had to fill in the conversation with light sounds to remind men they still had ears. All the men looked to their King questioningly. Eindrithi let out something between a chuckle and a sigh before rising.

“That was my cup, Woman,” he said, stepping forward, his hands behind his back.

“Now I know you have just watched the fall of your Lord, and because of that I can understand your anger.” He was standing over her now, and Mildryd didn’t have the room to back up because of the fire.

“But you are mine, now. You serve me. There are consequences for your actions, Woman.” His fingers ran through her dark hair. He was smiling because he knew what Mildryd didn’t; what he was about to do to her.

A giant roar came out of the south, so loud that it could almost be mistaken for one giant beast. The battle horns followed. The approaching army was guided by a line of men with spears ablaze. The army about Mildryd sprung to action, unprepared.

The advancing army held the advantage. They knew the hill as well as their opponents, avoiding holes and roots on the path. They moved in a great horde, hard to distinguish; their chain mail was coated with a dark substance, and leather stained to match the night’s sky. They carried slingshots. Some rocks alight with fire caught the cloths of Eindrithi’s soldiers so they had to put out their arms. Whenever the new warriors called, they called together, making the sound of a giant beast.

Eindrithi grabbed Mildryd by her arm, throwing her towards the throne.

“Do not leave,” he ordered. Mildryd had no intention of moving, instead pulling her legs up to her chest and placing her hands over her ears. At some point during the battle she realized someone was protecting the throne and her. She didn’t look. The battle took less time than that with her father, even though that too had been an ambush. The warriors from the approaching tribe let out one more great call before they fell silent. The largest man Mildryd had ever witnessed came to stand with his back to the fire.

“Surrender,” he bellowed his voice as deep as the call of his people.

“She is not our queen. She was captured from King Leofdæg’s tribe,” a man admitted. “I told you about her, King Dracagar.” The King nodded, signaling the warrior aside. The princess took Dracagar in, his height that of the flames that raged behind him and his power evident in his muscles he left exposed despite the mail he could acquire. It took Mildryd a moment to remember her manners, slipping out of the chair and bowing her head to the man.

“Your father sent a messenger ahead of him,” he said. Mildryd was still unable to discern his attitude. “I will admit you are a fair maiden, but my kingdom is no place for gentle souls. So I will give you one test, and if you succeed, then I shall take your hand.” His voice became softer, as if he didn’t want to scare her, but at the same time he couldn’t quite control the power. He signaled to his men with one hand while he reached into his belt and brought forth a knife, long and well laden with jewels. He extended it out to her as the men dragged up the struggling soul of Eindrithi, his hands bound tightly behind him. He was forced to his knees in front of her.

Brielle Campos

“You have a wergild to collect. Take it yourself,” Dracagar said. Mildryd took the blade from him, turning it over in her hands, watching the way the fire light played off of it. She then took in the look of Lord Eindrithi, his position on his knees, growling at her as if she shouldn’t even dare to raise the knife. Then she lifted the dagger above her head, allowing the fire to catch it and glitter up at the stars in the sky.

Clay Colley

Sober

I.

In the middle of the rainforest, storm churns the cloudy skies. Black weights rain down, the tears of the forest, crying as the fronds weep, pouring their souls into me.

Speaking, they cry. Lightning strikes.

The time is near.

Mother Earth is opening herself to us, preparing for a new creation.

Purification.

II.

Here I lie, caked with mud. Gasping for air. Bleeding. Water swirls around me, the flood entering my lungs, choking me.

Crying, I am crying. They beat my ribs, the savages. Broken limbs of trees.

They batter my body. I feel the bones crack.

But still I am conscious. Black spots float across my vision, pulsing with the pain I cannot escape. They scream in tongues and chant their filthy, guttural prayers.

The ritual is underway.

Flames ignite my line of sight, and the beating has ceased.

Momentarily.

Silence.

III.

Dizzy. I can't see out of my left eye because of the blood.
Missing teeth.
Coughing up
blood and mucus, saliva, tears.

IV.

They push me so I lie on my back.
The shaman has come. His staff, old and weathered
with generations.
He chants,
touches my swollen face with the end of his staff,
my jaw.
He quickly turns away and the crowd closes in, maniacal.
Teeth flash in malevolent grins. Eyes wide, bloodshot.
A thousand hands molest my face; every one hurts.
Nearly crushed by their weight,
They pull on my jaw so hard it hurts.
I feel the strain,
but they know it won't budge.
One of them speaks and they all back away.
Scatter.

V.

Four of them close in on my limp body. Two of them hold
my arms, outstretched.
One is on my legs. One holds my head; all I see
is the inky black sky pouring rain down upon me.

Then I see the brute.

He wields a club.

Lightning flashes. Drums begin. The brute advances, instills
fear in the circle of faces surrounding him.

He swings back.

Swings forward. I feel the breeze on my face.

The heat of his body.

Swings back.

Swings forward. Nearer now. The masses are
screeching for more. He laughs, swings back, lunges forward.

Contact.

VI.

My skull collapses, implodes, and I'm blinded by
a numbing pain. White light floods my vision. I hear them
stampede toward me,
feel their fingers searching,
hear my bones crack
as they pull my jawbone off.
They carry it away.
I feel nothing.

My head collapses into the mud.
Coolness of the water flows down my open throat.

VII.

Blink.

Sight.

Mind.

White.

Eyes.

Blind.

Body. Die.

The Color of Swine

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - PRESENT DAY

The room is small, black, gray, and white, with an
impossibly bright light illuminating the area.

DETECTIVE ROSA, 39, sits in a tailored suit with her
hair up in a ponytail. She closes a file on the table.

DETECTIVE ROSA

Where's Peter?

Grace is sickly looking, visibly upset, and noticeably
more frightened than usual. She stares at the table in
front of her as if expecting it to get up and walk out
of the room all by itself.

DETECTIVE ROSA

Grace, can you tell us where Peter is?

Grace?

Grace doesn't look up. She shakes her head slowly in-
stead.

DETECTIVE ROSA

If you tell us where Peter is, we can talk
about getting your girls back.

Grace's eyes fly up to Rosa.

B. A. Alexander

EXT. THE ROAD - A FEW DAYS AGO

OFFICER ROTHBURY hears a pop down the road that seems to be coming from his car. The car begins to wobble. He stops and gets out. The front tire is flat. He sees a piece of shrapnel sticking out.

OFFICER ROTHBURY

Goddamnit!

Rothbury begins walking back to the Daily brother's farmhouse.

INT. DAILEY FARMHOUSE - BASEMENT - CONT.

JULIA fights to get up the steps.

ANDREW pulls her down off the steps.

She slides down with a few thumps.

Andrew grabs hold of her.

Julia breaks free and runs back up the steps. She slips and then tumbles back down.

Julia lays there limp.

Andrew sighs. He kneels down and checks her pulse.

Julia jumps up and grabs the knife from his belt. She takes a stab at him but fails.

Andrew wrestles the knife off of her. He stabs her in the gut a dozen times.

B. A. Alexander

He lets her fall to the ground. His clothes and hand are left bloodied.

He wipes his forehead with his clean hand. Then he wipes his blade on his pants.

EXT. DAILEY FARMHOUSE - BARN

Andrew drags Julia's lifeless body to their pig pen.

INT. POLICE STATION - PRESENT DAY

DETECTIVE ROSA

Let's talk about Andrew.

Grace stares at her.

Rosa stares back for a few moments.

DETECTIVE ROSA

Where is he?

GRACE

I don't know.

DETECTIVE ROSA

Is he with Peter?

GRACE

I don't know.

B. A. Alexander

DETECTIVE ROSA

Have either of them tried to contact
you?

GRACE

No.

DETECTIVE ROSA

Grace?

GRACE

No.

EXT. DAILEY FARMHOUSE - BARN - A FEW DAYS AGO

Rothbury comes around the house and to the barn. He
witnesses Andrew toss Julia's body into the pen. The
pigs swarm and sniff their next meal.

OFFICER ROTHBURY

Andy?

Andrew looks up at Rothbury for only a moment before
making a run for it.

EXT. WOODS BEHIND DAILEY HOUSE - CONT.

Rothbury runs into the woods.

Andrew is running past trees as fast as he can.

Andrew trips and stumbles. He stops and sees that his

B. A. Alexander

scraping and more steps.

A door upstairs slams.

Peter looks at Grace and gently releases his hold on
her.

PETER

He's gone.

Peter leans back, waiting for a response out of Grace
other than shock.

GRACE

I'm gonna die, aren't I?

PETER

I don't know.

GRACE

Where did he go?

PETER

I don't know.

GRACE

Are you going to kill me?

PETER

NO!

Grace shudders, afraid of him.

Immediately, Peter touches her shoulders with his

B. A. Alexander

hands and rubs them gently.

PETER

No, no, no, shhhhhh. Shhhh. Just calm down. I'm sorry.

He grabs Grace and hugs her to him.

PETER

You have to be quiet. He doesn't like noise. If you scream he will kill you, ok? I don't want him to kill you.

Grace nods.

GRACE

I wanna go home.

PETER

I know.

They part.

GRACE

You can help me. Help me go home.

PETER

I...I can't-

GRACE

Why not?!

B. A. Alexander

leg has been cut.

Rothbury catches up with him. He pulls out his gun.

OFFICER ROTHBURY

ANDREW! STOP!

Andrew starts running again, occasionally stumbling from the pain in his leg.

OFFICER ROTHBURY

Andrew I don't want to hurt you, bud!

Andrew comes upon what looks like a short cliff. There is water below.

Andrew looks back.

OFFICER ROTHBURY

Andrew!

Rothbury breaks the brush and comes to the cliff. Andrew has disappeared.

INT. DAILEY FARMHOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT - 9 YEARS AGO

Peter places his hand over Grace's mouth. Her hair sticks to her face in wet streaks. Tears paint her cheeks. She shakes under him. Grace is pressed up against the painted brick wall. Peter kneels in front of her.

Up above footsteps resound. Both Grace and Peter look up, waiting for more noise. It comes in the form of

B. A. Alexander

PETER

You belong here. You can't go.

GRACE

P-Peter? I don't belong here.

PETER

Yes you do. You'll see.

Grace crawls away and leans against a chair near her.

Peter watches her.

GRACE

I want to go home.

PETER

You are home.

Grace curls up into a ball where she is.

The whole house is silent.

Brad Dubos

Untitled

The bold wind which sounds the bells
On your wedding day,
That same wind will bob your
Grandchild's kite in the sky.
The breeze that rustles the hem of a burqa
Tangles your lover's hair in the park.
It caresses all and knows all,
Whirls a spectrum of emotion:
It knows rage and roots up a home,
Knows calm and laps waves at aching feet,
Knows mercy and scatters autumn's spores.
Encircling, every tender and terrible fragment
Is collected, fused and coalesced, and
Whispered to the one who will hear it,
Then floats on without direction or command.
Most words evaporate; some elevate man,
But never is the wind marked their scribe.

Safe Hex

I watched over my body. Severely battered and mutilated, it was left in several parts on my bed, strewn amongst the blood splattered on my blue bedroom walls. My dog was chewing on one of my fingers. If there were ever a need for a good example of the importance of abstinence, I was it.

During the weeks after Leah Barlow moved in, she quickly became known as the prettiest girl in school. It was strange, though. She had this sort of weird charm. It was like she put a spell on everyone. The floor was wet with drool whenever she walked past. One day I saw a fight break out between two guys over who could carry her books. A fight. Over books.

One day as I was walking down a hallway to go home, I heard a commotion on the stairs. Peeking over the banister, I saw her and a group of guys.

“How about hanging out with us at the diner up the street?”

“No. No thank you,” she said. She stood completely composed, no sign of fear on her face, even though she was against the wall. The guy’s eyes met hers and for a minute I thought he was going to let her go. He seemed dazed. Then he shook his head and the taunting continued.

“Leave her alone!” The words leaped out of my mouth before I could stifle them. She used the distraction to wiggle free and ran behind me.

Crack! was all I heard as the first punch landed square on my jaw. I fell to the ground and watched Leah run away. A kick met my stomach. A kick here. A punch there. They all seemed to mold together into one big pain.

I looked up from what little vision I had left from my swelling eye. It was Leah with the principal to the rescue. Leah and I watched as Mr. Hendsley took them away. I struggled to get up, but was pushed back down by Leah who had a wet paper towel to hold against my eye.

“The nurse is on her way. I’m sorry you got involved in this. I had it under control,” she said using the paper towel to dab the cuts on my face. She used extreme caution not to touch me as if I had AIDS.

I looked at her for a minute. I saw worry lines creasing her forehead.

“You love me, don’t you?” I joked.

She let out an exasperated sigh, but the small grin on those lips that I adored let me know I made progress.

“How can I repay you?”

“A date?”

She hesitated as if I had asked her to go sky diving over a lava pit. “Okay. On one condition.”

“Anything.”

“You can’t touch me. Ever.”

“Uhh... okay,” I said. The nurse came before I could ask why.

That night I had a dream about her. She was so confident, so different than she normally was. We had the most amazing sex. I woke up disoriented, weak, and paralyzed. My mind was there, but I couldn’t move. At all. And I was cold as hell. I stared at the ceiling and remembered hearing about something called sleep paralysis.

That Saturday, I invited her to go bowling. After a few matches, in which I had my ass handed to me, we sat down for nachos. I watched her as she ate. She ate quickly, but with little bites like a

mouse nibbling on a cracker. I laughed because she had cheese on the side of her mouth. I went to wipe it and brushed against her cheek. She looked at me and I looked at her, mesmerized by the softness of her skin. Our movie-worthy gaze was interrupted when her teeth nipped my finger.

“Ow!”

“I’m sorry! It was an accident. You just smell really good.”

“Did you mistake me for food?” I joked.

“No,” she said, “I don’t feel well. Can we leave?”

Before I could answer, she doubled over. I carried her to the car and drove to her house. I hope her mom will believe I didn’t do anything to her. She looks drugged. When we pulled up to the house, I prepped myself for the impending reaction. Surprisingly, she didn’t seem too concerned.

“Bring her inside. She’s hungry,” Mrs. Barlow said, ushering Leah inside. “She has a condition. It’s a family thing. She’ll be in school Monday.” I heard multiple turns of locks as I walked away.

All night I thought about Leah. That must be what happens when you become a boyfriend and not a one night stand. I thought about the past few weeks and noticed things I hadn’t. I was always so concerned about Leah, I let myself go. My eyes had more bags than a cargo hold of a plane. I had to have lost muscle tone, my hands were always cold, my skin turned rough and dry, and my hair was falling out.

While I started to feel better, Leah didn’t come to school that Monday. Nor did she any other day that week. She didn’t answer any of my calls or try contacting me. I didn’t dream about her. Even my mind was being ignored.

A text from Leah interrupted my not studying in history.

“Hey,” it said.

“You okay?”

“No. There’s a problem. We should end this. Before we get too attached.”

“What do you mean? Why?”

“Don’t question! I like you a lot and messing with me will only bring you trouble.”

“You’re different! I’m different. I swear it!”

“You don’t understand.”

That night, in a last ditch effort, I invited her to the park after school. I agreed that if after that day she still wanted to end it then we could.

We talked about everything. She listened attentively, nodding and laughing.

Then, she took too big of a bite and got ice cream all over her lips. Seeing an opportunity, I decided to take a scene out of a movie I saw once. I put my hand under her chin and kissed her, getting the ice cream on my lips, too. In the movie, the couple laughed. In my life, Leah turned and started to vomit. Well that worked well. Stupid, stupid.

“Leah!” I shouted.

“N-not now,” she said getting up and staggering to the slide.

“C’mon. My house isn’t far. You can rest there, okay?”

“No. I...need...go...home.” She collapsed.

I caught her and rushed her to the car. I peeled out of the lot heading for my house. She was sweating and her face held a grimace. I didn’t feel so well either. My girlfriend was ill, so of course I was freaking out, but my head was so foggy. My body felt like lead and I realized panic wasn’t the only reason I was swerving on the road. I was

so out of it that the existence of the hospital completely slipped my mind.

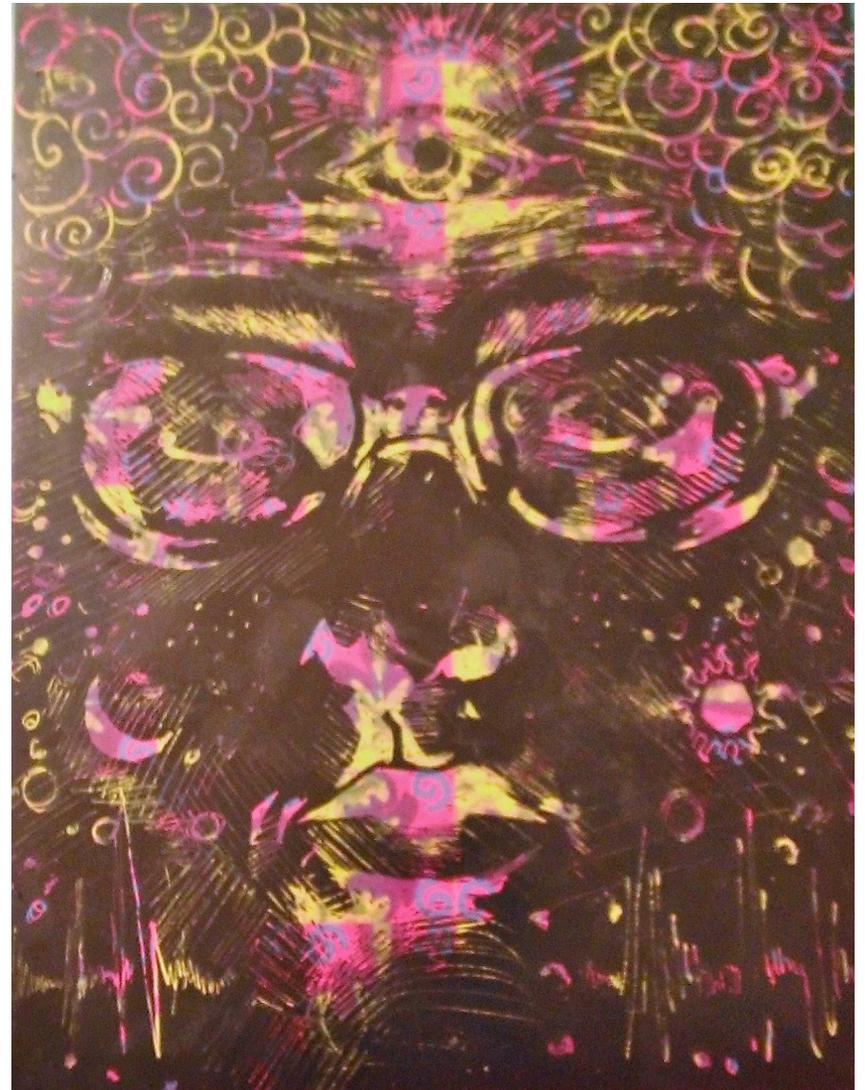
“No hospital.... no,” she mumbled fading in and out of consciousness, “Your bed.... I can rest... there.”

When we had gotten there she was completely unconscious. I laid her down on the bed and went to the bathroom to get a cool cloth for her head. She didn't move. I looked at her chest, rising and falling, slowly, until it stopped moving all together.

I bent over to give her mouth to mouth and nearly had a heart attack when her eyes opened as our lips touched.

She sat up and looked me dead in the eyes. The room felt like it was spinning. I felt my energy draining from me. I felt like I was floating. I looked at her with eyes half-closed. Part of me noticed her chest still wasn't moving, but most of me didn't care. I wanted her. By all logic she should be dead, and yet I was sitting there feeling the blood rushing to lower regions.

Something isn't right. Her eyes became increasingly more golden, almost glowing. I couldn't look away. What's happening? She sat there and stripped completely naked, looking at me as each piece of clothing dropped to my bedroom floor. I can't move! Do I want to? I think I do. She grabbed me and in an instant we switched places and I was on my back on the bed, completely paralyzed. She pulled me by the hair as she kissed me passionately. Her lips were cold. Ice cold. My mind was nearly gone. She had control of it and my body, too.





Skeleton
Foundation drawing



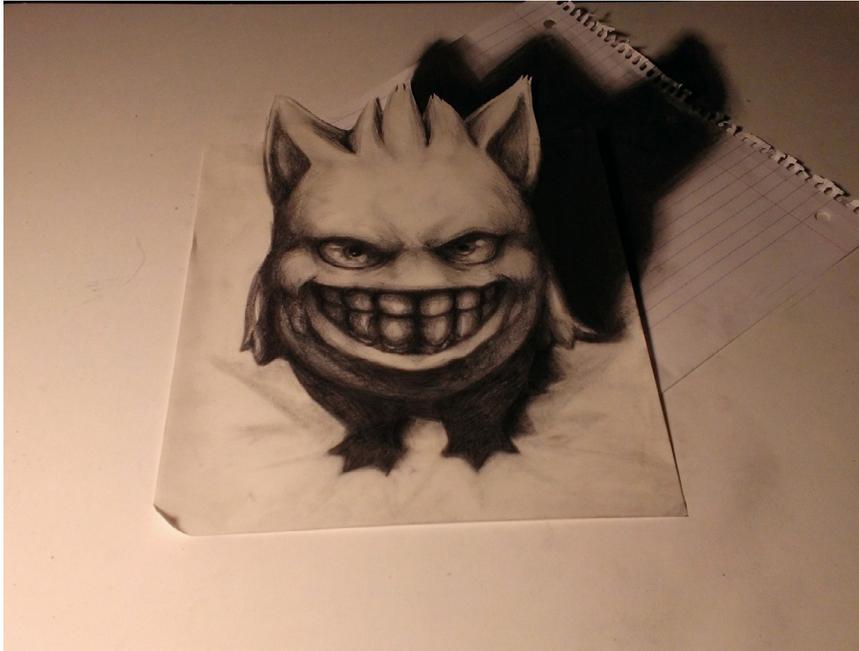
Spiderman on the Page
Oil paint and ink



Bonfire
Photograph



Untitled
Photograph



Gangar
Pencil sketch



Untitled
Photograph.



The Sea Monster
Watercolor on canvas

She straddled me and I watched as with each kiss she grew stronger and her fangs and nails grew sharp. Her claws cut through my clothing like tissue. For what seemed like an eternity, she made love to me. Violent, painful love. My mind wasn't there, but I still felt everything. Gashes across my chest, clumps of hair pulled out of my scalp, the feeling of her fangs sinking into my flesh. With each thrust I felt my life melting away.

I was long dead by the time she was done. My disembodied spirit watched as she slid away from what was left of me. She got to her feet and kissed me softly on the cheek. Some of her tears fell onto my face before she fell to her knees next to my bed.

"I should've listened. You should've listened. I thought I was ready. I thought I could control it," she said wiping the tears and blood from her face, "I really did like you. Oh I'm sorry!"

My girlfriend was a succubus.

Mary Smrek

Rage

The uncontrollable urge:
the desire to hit, to slam, to break,
the absolute need to yell, scream, roar.
It's volcanic.
The eruption is unstoppable.
It's a tsunami.
The tide engulfs everything.
It's nature,
unforgiving and unbelievable.
Tightly held, it builds
until the tirade is over and tears are left.
The calm can come
once damage is done.

Joshua Colwell

Morning Drive

I see their lights dotting the horizon. Fading in and out like specters in fog, they dance back and forth in a haze of color. Screaming hunks of metal zoom past me faster than I can count, but not fast enough to where I don't see a raccoon applying makeup in her mirror. Old, worn-out trees, the surrounding landscape, provide just enough cover from the slowly-rising sun, enough to hide the dilapidated houses behind them. My hand brushes across the thick, grey leather, leaving the imprint of my hand worn into the wheel. Recurring yellow lines paint the road before me with neatly-laid breadcrumbs, now faded from years under the baking summer sun. I barrel over several cracks in the road, fractured from the stresses of its job- much like the students who take it every day. The lights pick up speed now and blaze out into the urban jungle.

Super

All-righty. If you could be anything, what would you be? *Absolutely* anything. And no, I'm not talking about a lawyer, surgeon, or any of those other societally fixated upon and stereotypically accepted career paths which people, young and old, have and continue to *settle* upon. If you could be anything, whether it's within your mental reach or if it were literally out of this world, what the Hell would you be? If I could be anything- absolutely positively anything, I would be — a superhero. You read that right. I want to be a superhero. No, I'm not crazy. I can justify it.

Ok. I know that may have come off as insane, weird, stupid, odd, unlikely, impossible, and every other word with a negative connotation. But, humor me. The other day I was watching Spiderman 3 (and yes, I am able to tolerate the movie despite the typically bad reviews that come with it.) I was thinking about my life; my future, my present, my own happiness, etc. This led me to do two things. The first was to hunt through the wild *Amazon* forest in search of a great Batman graphic novel and other superhero comics for my *Kindle*. But the second was to jot down this idea.

Considering that I've had a lot on my mind lately, I try to find ways of "getting away from it all," if you will, for as long as possible. This comes in the form of listening to music, playing video games, and, writing. I'm really just trying to escape from it all - mask my worries for as long as I can in order to maintain sanity.

Escaping reality. You know, now that I think about it, we're all just trying to escape reality at some point in our lives. We need to in order to maintain any sense of normalcy, stability, and cognitive awareness. There is always an underlying reason for it — for example;

my infatuation with the thought of being a superhero comes from my childhood and up-bringing. I used to watch all the shows— *Batman*, *Superman*, *Power Rangers*— read all of the comics, play with all of the action figures, and watch all the movies. I guess this hidden desire of mine is just my longing to live out some unconventional dream that I wish could come true. I, along with pretty much everybody else, have always (in the least narcissistic way possible) just wanted to be admired. Admit it; you know you want people to look upon you with respect and trust. You want to be looked up to. You want to be seen as a hero and a leader. You want to be a superhero. Someone who can not only assure you that everything is going to be alright, but also prove it with their actions; not just mere positive reinforcement brought upon by cliché and pacifying *Hamlet*-era "Words, words, words."

I have a pretty romanticized view of the world, which perfectly segues into my next point of why I would love to be a superhero: You get to save the pretty girl, again and again. Isn't it secretly every guy's dream to swoop in, pick up your dream girl when she has fallen, defeat her enemies and fears, show her that everything is going to be— and will be— alright, and fly off into the sunset? She'd fall in love with you before you could say "my secret identity is..." and everyone would view you— you— a hero and a savior. Oh, and, in this case, quite the lady's man.

But along with this adoration and praise, superheroes can still be everyday people, with everyday problems. I go through my own 'stuff', and you go through your own. Everyone has their own troubles that they face on a day-to-day basis. So who wouldn't want to slip into some body armor and possibly colorful attire, throw on a cape, and put on a disguise; not to runaway from your problems, but

Dan Rosen

to mask them, so that for maybe a few hours a day or week, you can escape from it all. You can escape from reality and live an amazing, powerful, impactful and important life. You could change lives. You could save lives. You would have a purpose. You would matter and know your place in a world of constant and utter confusion. You could make a difference. You could be that difference. Who wouldn't want that? All I want is to know what my purpose is in this life, so what could be better than being a *hero? A superhero...*

Fly on. Stay super.

Julia Illich

World's Greatest Pizza

Margret always said I would know when I loved someone because I would miss them when they weren't around. And I always said, "How will I know that I miss them?"

"You won't be able to stop thinking about them," she said. "I don't know," she said. "You just know."

We spent that summer driving as far away as we could, down dirt roads, and to cities we'd never heard of. That was how we found Sal's Pizza.

"I'm starving," I said for the fifth time.

"Goddammit" she said for the 87th time. "Look. We're going to eat here."

And there it was. One bright, shining strip mall among a sea of dust and crab grass. There, next to Ca\$h Fa\$t and Dollar Saver, was the home of the World's Greatest Pizza.

We ate there 22 times over the next 16 weeks. I counted everything that summer. I didn't tell Margret that there were 264 days until she was moving to a school in another state. She didn't count anything.

Instead, we ate pizza. There were 14 topping combinations. Each one, we decided, was the best of its kind.

"Remember the pizza?" Margret says months later. "Sal's Pizza, the World's Greatest Pizza?"

I always tell her I remember because it was important to her that I do.

I remember the car, the long hot days, the way the pleather seat stuck to the back of my legs.

I remember Antonio, who mopped the floors at Sal's on Fridays,

Julia Illich

and the red glasses we filled with ice and water.

I remember how clear the sky was as we drove home the final time.

“Yes. I remember the pizza,” I say. And she says, “God! I can’t stop thinking about that pizza.” (This is the ninth time today).

I can’t remember what it tasted like.

(She is leaving in 82 days).

I think I’ll never fall in love.

Phillip Ault

In the Meadow by the Lane

In the meadow by the lane,

A sunny day, one without rain.

They frolic to and fro,

And round and round.

A rabbit, robin and woodchuck

On the ground,

The robin, digging for a worm,

Has not a care.

And pays no mind to the hopping

Of the hare.

The hare, nibbling on the grass,

Doesn’t peel off from the woodchucks near pass.

Out-sizing the other two,

The woodchuck resembles a dog.

The robin and hare think nothing of it,

‘Tis just a groundhog.

The robin, rabbit and woodchuck

Are truly blessed creatures.

Each come from different nations and cultures and even have different features.

The woodchuck is from the nation of underground.

The robin is from the nation of trees.
The rabbit is from the nation of wherever he is pleased.

The robin, rabbit and woodchuck have not a care.
They care not for power, greed or warfare,
But for peace, harmony and the world to share.

No woodchuck attacks on the rabbit's lair.
No robin bombings from the air.
No surprise attacks from the speedy hare.

Each is a different species,
But still can coexist.

What, did humans miss the train?
Didn't humans make the list?

Human brains are smarter than those in the robin, rabbit and
woodchuck.
But if you look around, maybe human brains are bad luck.

Out of all the mammals that live on this sphere,
For carnivores, their excuse for killing is the simple chain of life.
But for humans, smartest of them all,
It is a bad day at the office, or a fight with the wife.

I am not putting down humans, for I am one and fairly humane.
All I am trying to say is we need to take more drives to the
meadow by the lane.

Last November

The old Elks Building
was converted into a theater
decades earlier and
everyone
except the two of them
knew she fell in love with him
a few weeks ago, in October,
at that dive bar,
the night he loaned her
his coat because she never
did remember to wear warm enough clothing.
But that's irrelevant.
Everyone knows that it wasn't
the Elks Building
or October
that changed her—
it was a theater
in November,
well, standing just
outside the theater
after the show, smoking—
him smoking,
her trying not to die of secondhand smoke
—when she knew.
Blue wind howled in the distance.
Something awakening inside
of her, a feeling that

she had never known
before. She knew,
intrinsically,
that he was no good
for her, but she wanted
the wound
of his kiss.
It was cold,
walking back with her friends
talking about him
the way girls
could talk about boys
long after the boys were gone.
He didn't believe in anything—
not God, not heaven,
certainly not love
—but she believed in him.
*Haven't you heard the word
how I want you?*

Believing

It was the middle of hurricane season, and nature wouldn't let the congregation forget it. Harsh winds swirled around the church house. Gusts crept into the old building, lifting up moans of worship and offering creaks of praise. Reverend Dean Davis was an excellent orator, but he couldn't compete with the roars and blasts, the creaks and moans.

Everyone was worried.

A twelve-year-old boy with bleach-blond hair and cuts on his face pulled away from his mother and walked boldly to the altar. It was halfway through the ninety minute church service, and Reverend Dean Davis was only on his second point of five. The congregation, caught up in the ecstasy of an unforeseen interruption, gazed intently at the boy as he stopped in front of the pulpit. Reverend Davis looked up from his notes and smiled at the lanky boy confronting him.

"Son, are you lost?" he asked loudly into the microphone, sparking some laughter from his flock. "Where's your mama?"

She was right behind the boy, having just caught up to him. The boy's sister, a tiny figure with blond pigtails, tottered after her mother. The whole family was now front and center. Red as the carpet, the mother apologized to the good pastor and reached for her son's hand. He pulled away again.

"I have a question," he urged Reverend Davis. The preacher beamed.

"Y'hear that, folks? The boy just has a question. Ain't it a blessing to see our young so curious about the Good Lord?" The congregation clapped in agreement.

"Son, I will be more than pleased to answer your question

die-rectly after the sermon has finished. You'll be first in line."

Reverend Davis nodded at the mother, and she once again attempted to usher her son away. Once again, he resisted.

"It's important!" he shouted with a passion no one expected, not even him. It came in the form of a shrill, high voice; the two words flattened the churchgoers. The whispering and murmuring twisting through the room gave way to silence. After looking awkwardly from side to side, the boy's eyes returned to the pastor's.

"It's only one question," he added in quite a different tone, embarrassed by his outburst.

The preacher's countenance changed. He cleared his throat. He said something into the microphone. And then, to the boy's delight, he stepped away from the pulpit and knelt down in front of him.

Reverend Davis felt uncomfortable trading showman for counselor, especially on a Sunday morning, in front of all these people. But the boy seemed troubled. The two were face-to-face in front of the entire church. The boy's mother stood nearby, uncertain of where to go. She held her daughter and glanced around nervously.

"What is it, son?" the pastor whispered, attempting to make the public encounter private.

The boy did not hesitate to reply.

"There's something I keep thinking on lately. It's been bothering me."

"You can tell me. What is it?"

The boy looked fearlessly, innocently, into Reverend Davis's eyes.

"How come God lets everything go bad?"

As each word left the boy's mouth, the weight of it pressed down on the reverend's head. Reverend Davis rested his chin on his hand and studied the carpeting. Such a loaded question. A common ques-

Brad Dubos

tion. *Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do hurricanes sweep away entire cities? Why doesn't God ever intervene?* His normal response to such a question would be simple: something along the lines of, "God works in mysterious ways. I can't claim to understand the mystery." But he couldn't say just that. He knew the boy wouldn't accept this stock answer. His persistence warranted something more.

The congregation, still silent, watched as the preacher considered his answer. Only those seated closest could actually hear the exchange, but the whole building could sense its importance. Even the wind had desisted in reverence. Finally, following several minutes of deliberation, the kneeling pastor spoke.

"I can't tell you I know the answer. No one does."

Usually, he would leave it at that, but to this boy, he wanted to offer more.

He continued, "But I *can* tell you what I believe. Would you like to hear it?"

Reverend Davis placed his hand on the boy's shoulder and smiled warmly. He knew that with just a few encouraging words, he would soon ease his charge's heavy heart. The boy considered the man's offer before replying.

"No, thank you," he said, disappointed.

The boy, followed by his family, returned to the back pew and sat down.

This wasn't what he'd hoped for. He was twelve years old, so he'd already had Santa Claus spoiled for him. The Tooth Fairy had been unmasked long ago. He wasn't scared of shadows anymore, or shirt sleeves in his bedroom at night. He no longer sat in the driveway, waiting anxiously, hoping his father might come back.

He was only twelve years old, but he recognized the reverend for

Brad Dubos

what he was. Reverend Dean Davis was just a man in a suit believing in something. The boy was an expert on believing; he'd believed over and over and had been disappointed over and over. He hadn't come to the reverend for a belief. He probably had more experience at believing than the pastor did, anyways. He'd come for an answer. But Reverend Dean Davis couldn't provide an answer, so the boy couldn't justify supplying the belief. Twelve years old and already out of things to believe in.

The reverend, composed once again, proceeded to deliver his third point of five. The boy rested his head on his mother's shoulder, wondering whether the currents shaking the windowpanes meant to mock them or to free them.

Into the Night

Richard hears the soft click of her heel against the wall, even through the depths of sleep. Groaning, he rolls over to check his clock. His eyes aren't awake enough to actually read the LED numbers, but no matter. He knows it's balls a.m.

What little energy left in his body from the night before flies across the room with his pillow.

"Can't I have just one night of peace?" The words echo loud and angry in the silence of the apartment.

She doesn't answer; she never does. Richard isn't sure if she just doesn't hear him or if she just ignores him to be irksome. But he has strong suspicions about the latter.

He stumbles in the dark to the bathroom. A path well-worn and memorized. His hands find the cold porcelain of the sink, instantly supporting his weight as he fights consciousness.

"It is way too early for this."

The artificial lighting is harsh and Richard keeps it off while he splashes his face with water. Ice cold shards create a vicious inhale of breath and vigor. Coffee is gentler, but he doesn't have the time for that.

When she shows up, it's time to go.

He kicks the shadowy lump sitting outside the bathroom door. The laundry is a few days past its expiration date. Richard's nose involuntarily wrinkles as he pulls a black shirt over his head.

He hops through the kitchen, one foot boot-clad, the other struggling to match. What he wouldn't do for a warm cup of caffeine right now. The coffee maker mocks him as he passes.

"Oh, shut up," he mumbles at it.

In one fluid motion, he swings his dark jacket off the hook and onto his shoulders. The doorknob is icy to the touch and the cold hinges complain as the door is pulled open.

There she stands — foot propped, back against the wall. Combat boots, leather jacket, black skinny jeans. She blends into the dark hallway. Her eyes are bright and too alert for the hour. Her face is expressionless, but he can see the excitement and adrenaline in her gaze — in the way she bounces slightly where she stands.

"You ready?"

He sighs and pulls the door shut. The click resonates through the quiet hall.

"Let's go."

During Tea in the Garden at Noon

My mother expected me to go
to a prestigious school,
and especially not
a state school.

She is quick to remind me
that Jon is at Columbia and Elisabeth
is at William and Mary,
and how *is* school going for *you*, dear?

Shut up.
I think wearily.
Shut the fuck up.

Shit.
Shit.
Wait.
Polite women do not say fuck.
Fuck is the reason I go to state school,
or fucking,
or lack thereof.
Shit.

Jesus Christ, if only you could find a good husband,
she drones on.
I swear, every night I pray, dear God
just let her find a good husband.

And I'm sure she does
when she doesn't fall asleep
in front of the TV instead.

I wish I could tell her about Ben
and his sweet, sad eyes, and how
he is impossibly too cool for me.

I would tell her that I would love anyone
that loved me
but no one does, so I just tell her
some people never settle down,
and she cries when I leave.

Jon is going to Columbia,
but I wear too much makeup
and show too much cleavage
and fuck
and say fuck,
and I make my mother cry,
so I deserve to go to state school
probably.

Jon is going to Columbia,
she says again, and this time I say,
Maybe today everyone will be happy
because the cherry blossoms are starting to show

and I would like to be happy
instead of thinking about school
and boys
and sweet, sad eyes.

And my mother stares at me
like I have gone crazy at state school and says
Jon is going to Columbia
like I am the one
who doesn't understand.

Pomegranate Seeds and Wedding Rings

I once had a dream
of a womanly silhouette lead by a man
walking through a field of wheat.
With every step she sullenly took
vegetation she passed dropped dead to her feet.
A dark veil hung over her face,
possible beauty smothered by sorrow,
as if she was a corpse mourning her own demise.
A black robe clung to her curves
choking and constricting her
like the sobs she learned to suppress long ago.
Come my wife. It is time to be with me,
said the man as they descended,
into depths unknown to mortals
whose clocks have yet to run out.
I was shaken awake by my father's hand
who was beaming with pride and delight.
They got me cleaned,
primed, and polished,
to force me into a flashy frock.
Guided to the yard under the hot blazing sun,
a cold breeze blew when he saw me.
I swear I could feel snow when he smirked.
The growth of my soul was forever stunted
when we said *I do*.

Driver's Ed

They don't talk about
the glass shards.

They show all the blood and guts, but
they don't talk about the way
the glass is everywhere,
floating.

They don't say you can almost get cut,
just looking at it. They don't say
how beautiful it is

(or the windshield when it shatters
at sixty miles an hour).

They don't talk about flying
or sliding
or glass shards.

They don't talk about the glass shards
you still pull out of your skin
three months later.

They don't talk about the last two times
you called your dad, breathless, scared

(you were locked out and there were shards then,
too).

They don't say anything
about the back of the cop car and
the way you couldn't breathe and
really sir I'm sorry.

They don't tell you how many other people
have screamed back there,
there where you are gasping.

They don't talk about the dust
that settles in your lungs
so that every breath is drawn against
glass shards, scraping.

They don't talk about pain,

the kind that settles in your bones,
a reminder of your failure to fly.

They don't talk about the glass
and the way you can see it, floating,
every time you close your eyes.

They never say anything

about driving again
when you can hardly get out of bed.

They don't talk about flying.

B. A. Alexander, also known as Alexandra Stanislaw-Bennett, is an undergraduate student of English literature. She considers herself more of a story-teller than a writer, for the art of story-telling transcends any one medium.

Phillip Ault, who once served as a rehabilitation counselor, is now studying Social Work. He is a U.S. Navy Veteran, 1983-85, and the father of two wonderful children. His brother, Frank Ault, has been previously published in the Penguin Review.

Vince Butka is a 22 year old Interdisciplinary Studio Arts undergraduate, and is also obtaining a minor in Communications. He's been interested in art his whole life, but comic books were what helped him discover his dream to become an artist. He hopes to have a career as a comic book artist and illustrator in the future.

Brielle Campos is a 23 year old, Fourth Degree Black Belt, who lives in the Boardman area. She usually writes in the science fiction or fantasy genres, although she has done some experimenting in realistic fiction. She is currently a senior at YSU, working towards a degree in English Studies.

Clay Colley is a first year graduate student at Dana School of Music, pursuing a Master's degree in Jazz Composition. He is primarily a composer and pianist, leading and playing in numerous bands throughout the years. When not practicing his art as a musician, he spends a large portion of his time reading books and writing poetry.

Joshua Colwell works for and has been previously published in *Every Day Poets*, where he is a slush reader. He has been published in *Every Day Poets*, *The Story Shack*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, and *The Raw Alternative*.

Jamie Davey ingests her weight in coffee daily. She currently attends YSU for English and Creative Writing. Jamie has previously had work published in Jenny Magazine.

Brad Dubos is a junior pursuing an Integrated Language Arts degree with a minor in Sociology. He is active on YSU's campus as a University Scholar and a Writing Center tutor. After graduating, Brad plans to continue studying English and to eventually teach at the high school or college level.

Marcus Durig

Lauren Ashley Ruth Eckelberger is a young woman with a passion for life and nature. Her art is mainly nature related, and she enjoys photographing and drawing. She feels that the life around us is indescribable and needs to be captured by our imagination.

Claudia Gage is a Theater Studies major with minors in Creative Writing and Photography. She is in her second year at YSU and has just spent a semester studying abroad in Winchester, England. She has been writing ever since she can remember and is honored to be published in this year's Penguin Review.

Julia Illich is a Professional and Technical Writing student who enjoys drinking too much coffee. She never writes anything unless her cat approves it first.

Craig Marks is almost a YSU graduate and almost a NEOMFA graduate student, living life in a constant state of almost. This is the third time he has been published in the Penguin Review, and he is eternally grateful.

Jordan McNeil has been writing since the 5th grade. Growing up, her dream was to become a published novelist — and today her dream is the same. She's currently a third year student at Youngstown State University, majoring in Professional and Technical Writing with a minor in creative writing. She hopes to work in the publishing industry upon graduation.

Brielle Pritchard is a senior majoring in English Studies and minoring in Creative Writing. When she isn't writing poetry or short stories, she likes to draw comics, read manga, play video games, blog, and spend time with her cat. Brielle hopes to go on to pursue fiction and technical writing.

A.I. Rendón is a young writer who favors short fiction. Writing has been a love of hers for many years. She has a few novels in the works, and she hopes someone other than her closest friends will see them. She is honored to be published in this year's Penguin Review.

Dan Rosen is a freshman at YSU. His future is currently undecided but he leans toward a field related to professional writing. He also enjoys film, from directing to cinematography. His goal one day is to become a screenwriter and eventually a director/producer.

Mary Smrek is an English Education major at YSU. She loves all the arts, and has been involved in them for many years. She is primarily involved with music, but recently has found a passion for drama. She hopes to continue writing in her spare time.

Stephanie Woon is a 21 year old junior at Youngstown State University, and is pursuing an English major as well as a minor in Journalism. She started writing when she became interested in poetry at the age of 12. This is her first time submitting one of her pieces. Stephanie often describes herself as soft spoken, and writing is her way out of her shell. She loves writing and plans on writing a few books after graduation.

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Submission Information 2015

Penguin Review accepts submissions from YSU undergraduates September 1st through December 7th. Submissions should be emailed to penguinreview@gmail.com along with a cover letter stating your name, a short biography, email, home address, phone number, and the genre in which you are submitting. We accept up to 1,500 words of fiction, nonfiction or of a screenplay; or three pages of poetry. We also accept up to three art submissions. Art submission should be sent in at 300 ppi.