Metaphor
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Editor’s notes

I love writing. I love the swirl and swing of words as they tangle with human emotions.

—James Michener

Buried in each story and painting, sleeping under sentences and snapshots, and tangled with a word or note lies the definition of humanity. There we find the memory of our fears and uncertainties. There we catch the odor of hope. And there, well within our grasp, but often beyond our understanding, we find ourselves. An image, a phrase, a melody…we are the culmination of those, bound together by expectation.

This journal is a history of us—the students of Weber State University in 2007. In all our balancing, preparing, and not-sleeping, we’ve come together to create this beautiful record of our humanity—our footprint in the shifting crust.

Cynthia Loveland
There are always a few who go above and beyond without protest—those who see a need and fill it—those who anticipate a need and cover it. Their genuine concern and passion for what they’re doing is invaluable and uncommon. I’ve been fortunate enough to have some of these rare ones on my staff this year. For this, I offer them my undying gratitude.

And to the true superheroes of this collection, my children, the most patient and unselfish people I know, I can never offer enough. But I’ll start with lunar eclipses, matinees, sushi, airplanes, religions of the world…and see where that takes them.

*Cynthia Loveland*
The best poems communicate beyond the words on a page. A poem should make use of rhythm, vivid imagery, tone, and other poetic devices, but it must also do something more. This something more encourages multiple readings of the poem, and it invites readers to go a little deeper. Ultimately, they are exercises in discovery.

We enjoyed reading the submissions to *Metaphor* this year. The poems we selected were those that impressed us most. They were the poems that seemed to do something more.

We appreciate the work that went into each of the submissions and are pleased to share the following work.

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*Editor*

*Ryikki Lynn Olson*

*Staff*

*Bonnie Russell*

*Rebecca Samford*

*Rachael Storey*
Beneath her frozen arrogance
And chain clad lucrative parts,
Beneath her defiant neon stare
And shrine of concrete, shriveled hearts.

Pausing for their tribute glance
The figures scurried to and fro.
Amid their broken and their dying
Engulfed in her pernicious glow.

Sleek combusion, silken sash—
Plastic youth and cold hard cash.
One link added to another,
Given sweetly by their mother.
Silver thoughts leave empty tables
watery twilight collapses on stark chairs and
incessant syllables spill across neglectful music

Listen to the broken snake hissing fixedly
at the infested night while
forgetful rapture is leaving

Number the morning hours before old darkness is consumed
and dusk seeps into ghost white ground
searching for a last wild hope
Sailors stand in yellow parkas
shivering on the deck
clutching the icy railing
as they brave the waves and spray.

They listen to the bang
as the deadly harpoon leaves
and feel the heavy thud
that cleaves the hide in two.

Cold steel burning flesh
spilling red blood out
deep into the ocean
where life once roamed about.

They all reach out to heave
the wailing creature in
waiting with blackened ropes
to bind the freedom down.

They smell the oil and blubber,
many thinking of perfume,
they capture twenty more and
some can’t breathe the air.

Welcomed home with cheers
many raise their heads with pride.
But, some do not smell
the joy and taste the victory.

Some scorn the brutal
slaughter of the
Spirit of the Sea.
Quiet Reaches

Andrew Blodgett

I am tired
of wandering
the expanse
between us.

How can I search
Your quiet reaches
with the lantern
I’ve been given,
through dry thorn,
and hollow seed?

How can I know
your wild light
if your trees never
untie their leaves?

As if Montana,
understood only
from car windows,
and an endless tick
of fence post,
would be enough.

Let the milkweed
burst with cotton,
let your crushed plains
gather open air,
let my eyes travel
your tired roads.
My want
and your isolation,
are bound together
like the grasses
chattering upon you.
We will ignore every yield
all the way to the sun,
light to yellow light, careful either to kiss
our knuckles to the ceiling of the car
or pray to Saint Christopher—
whatever ritual will comfort us
with the illusion of safety
as we pass urgently through each intersection.

It’s an escape from this hellish heat,
the sort that only air-conditioning can bring,
fan blasting on full, mocking the radiation outside.
The threat of being forever sealed
to the earth’s infant layer
of cement and tar and ground stone
gave way to unreasonable hope
that the white-hot steam of some imagined liftoff
would somehow propel them from the earth

but for now, the car won’t start
the air is sticky
and we are expanding,
forming some unholy union with our seats,
gelling in our perspiration
that must be evaporating faster than
it can cool us down.

It was this desperate heat that provoked
our hallucination of escape.
And instead of starting with cigarette smoke
and the neon lights
of crowded bars,
it starts outdoors
In cool winds on city streets
in a night that summer,
despite it’s better efforts,
could not refuse to allow.
It starts with a woman
or maybe a man
staring, screaming
at the daylight
laughing to stop themselves from crying.
until, beneath the boiling surface
of tar in the pavement,
all that sticky gravel
shakes loose
sending the world
in every direction
space can stretch.
Chart the Stars

Matthew Cranford

Chart the stars with the moles on my back
then move on to the freckles
followed closely by the pimples
(or zits, as you’d rather call them).
But let’s not get caught up in formality.
We need to focus on the basics.
This is important.

It’s something to study every day,
mapping your course so you can
make your way in the dark
the next time we fight and you lose your way.

I’ve been relying on your blemishes for years.
It’s not so difficult. You don’t have as many moles
and scabs and scars as I do.

The blotchy spots of skin are your best way
to get to know me as I am
and to discover maneuvers
that will eventually be the undoing of us both.
Landed a kiss on her neck
felt the fine hair recoil, stiffen;
a response to my touch
or to my halitosis
which is why I avoid kissing her lips...
the proximity to the nose is too dangerous
this early in the adventure.

Planted one a little further down
on her chest, where she keeps her heart.
the quickened palpitations were telling—
each beat egging on my continuing explorations
here, rested for a moment on her sternum
panic catches up. Where do I go now?

Flanked by her breasts, starboard and port,
southward lies uncharted seas;
to the north, the face and all the senses housed there.
Whichever way I navigate
I fear I’m steering wildly and have plotted the wrong course.
As I make my move, pressing through my doubt,
I hope she knows the saying
“it’s not the destination, it’s the journey.”
the problem is, we don’t know what we’re doing here, and we don’t know what we’re waiting for.

we’re talking loud just outside a dive bar and it’s cold enough to see our words form pictures in our breath.

i’m telling her exactly what I see in hers: two airborne squirrels with wings, flying from her chapped lips.

she stops herself from laughing out loud, stifling herself because people can get the wrong idea.

everything we’re saying is supposed to be cool and we’re supposed to look cool saying it.

inside the door another band we’ve never listened to is setting up. they seem bored or angry.

she takes off one of her rat-grey wool mittens so she can light what must be her fifth smoke more effectively.

everything we’re doing is supposed to be cool, and we’re supposed to look cool doing it.
she finishes the cigarette without a word;  
it’s then that I realize she might actually  
be happy.

I pretend not to notice.

we start looking too closely at all the bad  
tattoos walking past us and keep hoping for our  
easy cool.
tiptoe stacatto

Anica DeHart

ever so sly
ever so soft
tiptoeing lightly
staccato across
with adagio tempo
glissando to C
trying not to get caught
slide on to E
discomposed by a voice
sudden forte on A
a change to allegro
tremolo on D
is the finale
she pounds
with her feet
Reflections Through the Dust

Jennifer Georgi

blankets thick with flakes of sawdust
it lays heavy on saddles too
leather bridles cracked and tarnished
glow bright in the memory as new

old frayed and sweat stiffened halters
black curry combs whiskered with hair
hoof picks with worn broken edges
alfalfa sweetening the air

long lunge lines looped and bedraggled
stirrup irons discolored blue-green
dry cantles needing much oiling
liniment tingly warm and clean

dull thudding of nervous hoof beats
lulling rhythm of lope and trot
aching knees with blistered buttocks
endurance was prize that was bought

cold wind rumbling through the rafters
jumps silhouetted on the hill
wooden planked stalls dark and empty
heartfelt whinnies echoing still
Before the Subway

Kristin March

The coffee
was in its cup,
the flowers were
in their pot,
before you
smiled at her
on the subway.

The clothes hung
on their hangers,
the dishes sat on
their shelves,
before the flawless
peach of your hands
traced hers.

The cat settled
at the window,
the sheets lay smooth
across the bed,
before her hair
tangled in yours,
before your hips,
your feet,
your open mouth.

I was the keeper,
the maker,
and the lover,
before the number
six platform, and all
that is broken
between us.
Earth Drunk

Kristin March

Drink wine
sleep with your belly
to the stars.
River water
fills your mouth,
bramble tangles
in your brow.

Somewhere,
the earth lounges.
Naked and rosy,
with hair that so wildly
covers her eyes
at dusk.
Let her crickets
sing you songs,
let her sunset fall
around you.

Be breathless
under her fragrant
weight.
The city rests
on her side,
eyes bleary with the light
of a new day.
Fish kiss the tips of her toes,
the end of her nose,
and she rumbles
awake.
Her bed sheet of sea
falls around her.

Her hair, hangs,
tangling itself
in the lamp lit dawn.

Her streets tap
borders of brilliant red
and vibrant orange
as she hums
a tune of
coffee and liberation.

A song of
starfish and shell,
left as tiny postcards,
in her wake.
As the rich thread
of slumber messies
itself in our hair,
the moon in her
slow approach
reaches across walls
and linens to beauty
in such small form,
a blonde whisper
wrapped in flame.
You are an insatiable drink,
an inertia of doubt.

I make you simple things,
soup and bread.
We sing each other songs
at sleep.
But you are a dozen
ripening fruit trees
and the clock hands
within me
hold only a dozen
languid hours.

The overwakeful
morning unravels,
thread
by
thread,
as the nurturing
chamber of my heart
hums madly.
Having said what I have meant to said

Misty Moncur

I cannot see a way to unhave said it.
It shimmers in an irridescent maze above my head.
It reeks off me, an unwashable stink,
that dainty stink of boldness bar
minisculousity,
infinitiesimalism,
and the meaningless of
I have meant to said love.

Having said what I have meant to said
with my eyes, my feet, my fingers,
and all parts of my mouth save the vocal chords,
I cannot hear, not with hair or hips,
those unweighty words that left my lips
as if I’d never have meant to said at all
those weightless words you heard
so small.
in nights of glorious oblivion, sentiments in lines,
ideas caught and stoppd motionless in time,
powerless and unconquerable,
embryonic and aged,
broadminded and
focused

on one unrequited love.

I warned myself about myself
in lazy sun-filled days with glorious abstraction
apprehending wisdom from ages passed.
I am not the last nor first
to walk the lane of warning
and of mourning for the words that escape the grasp;
falling, falling
down to texts,
lists, articles, choppy prose
and the newspaper man.

I warned myself about myself
in glorious dusks, the nomadic relating of nights and days,
I warned myself about myself
in strange and silky solid sentiments making
photos of my mind,
in the brightness of abstraction,
a foreshadow of my unrequited life.
It’s like trying to peek through the cracks of a broken door—or squinting like crazy to make clear a dirty image on the other side of a soiled pane of glass. The effort useless. The urgency of curiosity and impatience pulsates, ripping through your veins. you’re scratching at an itch that refuses absence— Its leavings bloody fingernails and torn skin. Scars. It’s like washing your hands, but the black soaking darker— lining your creases and cuticles. You’re sweating out a nightmare that grasps and strangles— Awake viciously surreal. Crack open your chest and let it ooze. Run you dry. Bleed you empty. If you’re hollow it’s no longer there.
Leaves go in bursts of brittle gold,
perface to the season’s sighing, all
the warmth from living skin to
dying color, as hearts accept
the coming dark, and cold,

and the finisher rests her
burdened head upon your chest,
closure before the looming
lapse of life—her brother brings
upon the back of horses, white,
their exhalation thick, treading
on the hard-earned golds,
their cloak covering behind them—

The world, the work of one
whose chilling fingers lay
inside your palm, martyr
for the postscript.
We have could-have-beens for breakfast, with only a little jam—but don’t talk about it, maybe just mumble something on the edge of obvious, and go to work today, burning calories we consume together incognito, and someday we’ll stop these early morning meetings, but someday’s far as all the words in last week’s paper, while my silent smile is timely, knowing, and just across the table spread with everything we could want in secret, before that send-off kiss that gets us to midday, and the lunch we spend apart, thinking of dinner reservations made in fresher light, and evening comes indefinite, catching me unmoved in my darkening living room, too conscious of the clock, and you still as far as someday seemed this morning—and neither of us fulfill the sunshine plans we made.
Winter toiled through summer, disregarding the pattern and freezing whatever it was we needed to die, so that things would fall into place in autumn’s this-is-life way, but now—we can see the bloom we condemned to the frost, growing again like some perennial, and you’re rearranging my hours and swirling the sentiments of my day in your palm, looking over the miles with that here-I-am ease, and things stay in the air, and sometimes I think that you would love me—in your own complacent way but I don’t know what that means, and you’re careful enough, as we whet our tastes without rooting down.

We’ve never held on—you just left your palm open (whenever I came around), and watched me flutter there like some breeze-blown tree cotton.
Portland

Bonnie Russell

The city’s gray hair
flows over the sky.
River arms wrap,
crooked elbows peak,
turn,
long to reach the incomplete sea.
her eyelash bridges connect.
People freckle
a body of streets.
Trains scar shoulders,
trees wrinkle the horizon.
Her voice thunders,
tears unnoticed fall,
emotion umbrellaed.
the city of gray longing.
A lake spans wide curving
against broken land,
its green-blue womb
holding time.
Cattails gnarled in wind
tick again and again
against the seconds.
Pinks and reds
nights of endless day
envelope.
I watch and wait.

Come around,
caress the bend
with the guttural purr of a small boat.
Wind laces the trees,
wisping blonde hair into a wild halo.

Maybe it is the uninhibited,
maybe it is the glacial peaks,
the bed of pine.
Maybe it is you.

The clarity of air,
the solitude,
the untamed,
brings solace
desire.
Dance of Betrayal

Gail G. Schimmelpfennig

I saw her in the blackest black
holes gouged in the paper
oozing infected-green ink

I clench when I think of her
my fists tense enough to stab
my jaws a steel trap

my chest tightens like a metal strap
around lungs drawing thin sips of air
neck like wire cables

who is this strange hard me
this small tight heart
this angry face?

if I am peaceful, where did I go?
If I am loving, what poisoned me?
If I am patient, who chopped me up?

hating myself for hating
fighting myself for fighting
won’t stop this war

start with one slow deep breath
in an endless ocean of breath
still cradling me

yes she betrayed me
yes I am angry

and I am more.
Discoveries

Gail G. Schimmelpfennig

No sound holds more silence
than the fresh-fresh-fresh
of an August morning breeze
ruffling the eyelashes of Japanese maples,
blowing open petunia’s big red kisses,
shimmering aspen leaves like
soft tambourines.

No motion holds more stillness
than the whisper-slow skate
of snowflakes across a white lake,
the shiver of Blue Spruce
in February winds,
the brief sunset flush and fade
of dip-dyed coral skies.

And who expected I might find
this magnetic linking of eyes,
silent equivalent of geese honking,
flaring wings, dipping
and raising their heads,

finding each other, finding each other
after a long absence?
Wind fragrant as ripe plums
slaps my back, splashes
ginger up my sleeves.

Afternoons grow cool and slender,
shadow-blue like the undersides
of thunder-clouds

Soft darknesses seep
along the ground, thicken twilight,
grow heavy under pines.

Do you hear that distant creak
like the ache of arms under
a load of pumpkin and tomatoes?

And that smell, like all the leaves
joined hands in one deep chlorophyll-sigh
before parachuting to the scented ground?

Fall is heavy with memories and
something sweet that seems to linger

willfull, familiar,
almost haunting
in the air.
There is temptation in an autumn dawn, its golden bath of a hoarfrosted morning that begs me to denounce all the gods for this one day in favor of a lover that will have me if I but ask.

Temptation is in the pallor of the fallen girls who live in the tenement beside me, the welfare madonnas brought low. It is in their flush, their brazen admittance to being seventeen—unwed—mother of two, they seem to covet their own broken hearts, to hoard shattered hope like dreams.

“Find the world,” they tell me. “Fall in love. And when you are defeated and foolish or dead and dust, you will still have this autumn dawn.”

My life might be worth the risk because I am full of youth and hope and poor judgment Listen, I’m telling you it is frightening how much happiness I am willing to endure.
To Steve, My Lover’s First Lover

Adrian Stumpp

Yes, I know about you, I know who you are, that she chose you before she chose me. She told me about you, one night, through clear green eyes and nostalgia so thick I almost forgot I was there. I must confess I wanted you to be brutal to her, to leave her sacked and used. But as she remembers you, she did not lose her virginity—she gave it and it was received, and I fell asleep that night hating you for your sweetness.

I think about her now, in that moment with you, Eighteen—untouched—I envy you that girl that will never be again. I wonder if I would recognize the woman I love in the girl you loved. I picture her as yet unmade, her sexless scent of soap, filmy eyes, unstained body. I think about her, naïve, transitional and prostrate to bear gifts—the broken skin, scar tissue at the crest of her womb.

It occurs to me that you, a stranger, had drawn your hands through this same hair the color of autumn, like leaves gorged with blood a breath beneath the skin; your sweat had beaded clean as rain to roll over the curves of her body. I know that you, too, have been in her most secret places, that you discovered them, their mystery, that you brought this woman out of myth and into the world.

I feel close to you, as though we are brothers of a secret society, bound to each other through her, sons of the same woman. This woman shelters
me now, but I am keenly aware of you, in her, the part of you that will always belong to her. I want to say thank you for taking her in love, yes, thank you for pronouncing her precious, thank you, a thousand times, thank you, I inherit this gift.
Do you recall long hot humid nights
drinking Blue Vodka
porch audience
pink apple blossoms
ambience in ambivalence
Effortless celebration—
hung over as the over
sullen silence simmering
sultry
Long strolls solitary
on Salt Lake City sidewalks
and
bleached blonde beauties?
Sleep softly songs of summer
sparrows, sorrows and tomorrows
high hopes of heroes
sequential sacrilege—
Isis Muse Morphine melodies
mellow sighs and never ending coffee
Youth,
youthful yearnings younger
still than passion’s passing
Growing up
growth and going
Ever ebbing ending
Elsewhere...
Do you recall, Us?
Remember love,
Remember.
Standing on the shoe, the waves rush bubbling in,  
Then recede again; a crazy vacuum  
Sucking the ocean down again,  
Into the netherworld of the deep.  
The sunset splatters on the water, blue and orange  
Mauve and green, flashes of light and dark.  
Beyond the horizon, far away,  
The sun comes up again, trickling beams of yellow light,  
Sparkling brightly across the world.  
Many were lost in the foam, years and years of  
Splashing forth and sucking back:  
Bottles cast with words inside, sailors lost and found,  
Strewn like driftwood along the beach.  
Listen to the \textit{basso voce} of the sea.  
It rumbles loud and breathes in deeply.  
The message rolls across the blue expanse  
Until it reaches someone else, standing on another shore.
Lament for Darfur

Diana Velis

Whatever happened to Logic?
He got on his horse and rode away.
He wasn’t there when Paradox set the bomb.
And Irony started to weep.

Now who will save the children
Trapped in the desert?
The grinning Demons borrow deceit
And put on the masquerades.

Worry agitates for peace,
But no one enters. Some sneak out the back door.
When will the mindless freaks and perverts
Be drawn and quartered?

As Innocence dies and Mercy hides,
the pendulum swings to beg for Justice.
Will Time bring Change?
Chaos sits fat and feeds his face...

The drums of Time beat with the dying hearts.
The brightest up-and-coming writers are brought together from around the nation to share their poetry, fiction, and academic literature at the National Undergraduate Literature Conference (NULC). The conference is held each year here at Weber State University, where participants are given the opportunity to share their work with professionals and fellow students alike through workshops and public readings.

Compiled here is a selection of literature that is representative of the many thought-provoking submissions that make the conference such a success, year-in and year-out. This year’s selections span the array of human emotion and offer insight into the inner workings of the literary mind, and above all, are simply a pleasure to read.

Editor
Matthew Cranford

Staff
Andrew Blodgett
Daniel Potter
Chris Snoke
“Not until the hells are emptied will I become a Buddha; 
Not until all beings are saved will I certify to Bodhi.”
—Jizo Bodhisattva, 
Guardian of Children 
Who Die Prematurely

You started slowly to exist, flowing 
into every part of me. You

were a silver waterfall between the separate 
worlds of am and will be. I

felt your warm electric current 
rung between us like a river

Without form there is no content…. 

The “unborn child” can’t exist 
so I will call you what you are: fetus.

Still, for those two months you 
felt like life beginning

to fill up, your vibrant current 
transcending any language.

Then, in my eighth week, walking to the subway, I felt it snap…. 

It felt like falling, like something
sinking down inside of me. You

lost your grip and slipped back 
to the place you came from. 
In the place I come from, no one talks 
about the thing you have become. No one
can name you in my native tongue.
Can something like you have a name?

In Japanese it is “mizuko….”

“Water Child,” you were a dream.
How is it that you never were,

but still I feel this loss, like
the weight of heavy stones.

The statues were offerings to Jizo….

They say you cannot cross the river
on your own. I have asked the bodhisattva

with his staff that opens up the doors
of hell to find you on the riverbank,

to hide you in his robes. He will teach
you to recite the lotus sutra.

But there were so many things I couldn’t know….

I know that it is suffering, this place,
this sea that presses down on me

and you. I know that we
are here because we cling to one another.

Life clings to life like water clings to water
pouring from a pitcher to a glass.

The connection I felt was unanticipated….

□“Mizuko kuyo” means “water child memorial service.” It is a ceremony performed
for aborted and miscarried children. The italicized lines in the poem come from the
article “Mourning My Miscarriage” by Peggy Orenstein which appeared in The New
York Times Magazine on April 21, 2002. The full text of the article is available at
Father’s Day

A.R. Dutkowski
Harvard Extension School

Small desert animals play
leap-frog across the highway
five hours South of Reno,
five hours South of my
child-hood hero, who’s
falling to pieces like a tin
locomotive running at full
throttle: Papa’s tin parts rattle;
His tin heart rusts.

— — — — — — — — —

I am the daughter
of the least favorite daughter,
of the least favorite daughter,
of the least favorite daughter,
of Mary Monterro,
who came from Portugal and
bore ten children before becoming
fat and diabetic.

Her favorite daughter, Carrie,
made well at thirteen. Julia
fell in love with a red-headed
farmboy, but was made to marry
my Portugese great-grandfather,
who slept around and brandished
a shot-gun when her nagging
frayed his nerves.
Naïve

Kathleen DeSouza
Virginia Tech

You went there to pick up your sweater
Seemed like a good idea at the time

You told yourself it was over
Just going back to get that damn sweater,
Nothing more, nothing less

The world was gray
It had been raining for some time
The air was smoky and dim and hazy
Everything slowed way,

way,

down

As you walked to the bus stop
The world was quiet
Watching you turn, legs moving without volition
Mechanical, yet sapped

And
Everything smelled like worms and dirt
And horrible things rotting in the sewers

But

You told yourself it was over
Just going back to get that damn sweater
Nothing less, nothing more

You got onto that bus
It was dingy and dirty and cold
It was you and the driver, an old man
Her favorite daughter, Lorraine, contracted Scarlet Fever, a mastoid infection, and Tuberculosis, but it was the Cancer that did her in. Betty was beguiled by a handsome Italian man-whore; she survived the Nixon administration with sleeping pills and cigarettes—boasted the first divorced family on the block.

Her favorite daughter contracted a face-eating case of narcissism.

And my mother is sitting across the table from me, with her two-glass-of-wine fervancy. She has lost her tact in a bog of important things to say, and I fail to moderate. So she points to father’s paunch and kills our appetites with one well-intentioned remark. Now we are just pushing our forks around full plates, play-eating, Playing house.

—— — — —

I listen to country music passing through Lone Pine. Count roadside tumble weeds, smell the baked dirt of yard-less ‘reservation’ homes, and accelerate just enough to barely notice the small desert animals, exploded all over the highway.
And a young girl with a bag of books
Heaped in her lap like a litter of newborn kittens

Passing cars and trees and signs
The road dissolved out the window
As rain drizzled lightly
Misting and twisting the world
Into a blur of bent metal
Behind it

Remember what you were wearing
Because it was November
And the wind in this city
Blows in all directions
This way and that way and over there, too
In the winter

Your dark blue sweat pants puddled
Around thin ankles with no socks
And a white shirt tried to hide your ribs
But they stuck out in spite of it,
As if to say hello
But still, you covered again with
A brown jacket zipped all the way up
What a pretty picture you were
Sitting on that bus in November
Cheeks flushed to complement
The dark purple circles
Puffing up under your eyes which
Complemented the other
Dark purple circles, hidden;
Mouth drawn, lines of a 40-year old
On your 18-year old face
“5 more minutes,” you thought as

You told yourself it was over
Just going back to get that damn sweater,
Nothing more, nothing less.
Your bus stopped at the same old intersection
Where the stunted winter trees
Waved and whistled and shook
Their leaves at you in welcome
And the wind blew in from all directions
This way and that way and over there, too
As you walked across the overpass
And down
the
silent street

to his place

You never did move your arms
That much when you walked
“Do you have lung problems?”
The avid smoker you are was once asked
By someone’s blurry face, dimming out of your
Peripheral vision: you winced as your reply,
arms never moving,
Feet moving faster because you were almost there.

Your sockless shoes hit the asphalt
Of the driveway with a thud
No one was home but him
It seemed, how lucky you are
Maybe he’ll give you a ride home
Maybe not
Should you take something
To remember him by?...

You opened the door without knocking
He said he’d be in his room
And you crossed the empty kitchen
With the dirty windowsill
Where dead house flies
Were decaying in a pretty shimmer of green
Sickness shining off of wings like tiny fishing nets
And yet, you walked on,
One foot in front of the other,
Thinking and wishing and praying
Things you can’t remember now
But you do remember

You told yourself it was over
Just going back to get that damn sweater,
Nothing less, nothing more

Down
the
white hallway
you went

But not to chase the white rabbit-
Because he was chasing you.

You could hear him
Ticking and clicking and typing away
On that stupid mac computer
He loved that thing more than people—
Staring at it longingly like a lover,
Caressing its cold, hard plastic as if
It were priceless furs or silks of spun gold—
You could tell as he took one look at you
And snapped that laptop shut at once
Like a mouse trap on a dark brown tail
Hidden in some dark basement corner

The TV was on, too
He’s a funny comedian,
but not to you
no, never to you, now.
The name “Mitch” you recall
But only sounds and not pictures
Please, no pictures, please
You said something to him about that damn sweater
But he asked you to stay instead of listening
Of course you would
You did
Or did you forget?
How could you forget?
What a good girl you were as

You sat down
  on
that
  uncomfortable bed

And then you were lying beside him
Thinking and wishing and praying
Things you say you can’t remember now
But you do remember

You told yourself you wanted it to be over
And you just wanted that damn sweater,
Nothing more, nothing less

He whispered something to you
And of course you listened
You always did
Good girl
You tried to focus on the TV,
Didn’t you? On anything but him,
But you couldn’t
And I know why,
Shall I tell you?

“Mitch” made a joke about koala bears
But there’s no time for jokes now.
Not for you. Listen:
The world was quiet
You were quiet
You didn’t want to be.
You didn’t want to be there.
And
Everything smelled like worms and dirt
And horrible things rotting in the sewers
Because the window was right next to the bed
And it was open
And so were you

But

You just wanted it to be over
You just wanted that damn sweater
Nothing, nothing.

Hands.
Hurting.
Heavy.
Heavy hurting hands.
This is not happening.
Zone out.

Kiss.

No.
Please, Stop.
No.

No…
No.
No!

Rip.
Tear.
Choke.
Bend.
Break.

Pain.

Stop.
No.

Too late.
Finished.
You hear a faint ringing in your head
Almost slightly buzzing, as if those
House flies resurrected,
Shimmery green wings animated,
A bronze whirring sound
Ignited flashes of pain in your stomach,
Hands, chest, thighs, and everywhere in between.
The bed squeaks
Betraying his weight lifting up and away
From you,

Away from you,
As you lay there,
staring at a ceiling.

The ringing in your head gets louder
But it’s only his cell phone—
You continue to lie there,
Curl and twisted, yet silent
Listening to his phone conversation
With his “ex” girlfriend
As he nonchalantly zips up his pants
As he nonchalantly glances down at your naked body
As he nonchalantly asks you if you can handle being
“Just Friends” (?) Just friends…
As
You lay there,
Staring at a ceiling, listening, tears rolling down your swollen face.
Good girl.
What a good girl.

...

You went there to get your sweater.
Seemed like a good idea at the time.
You never did get your sweater back…
Did you?
Little City Trees

Edie Hitchcock
Chatham University

Boston brownstones and interstitial skyscrapers
Mark American history down slick brick roads
The cold kind of rain, unforgiving to newly-styled hair,
Blows across the street without waiting for the light to change
Walking steadfastly, through the wind, I look down,

Each step holds hundreds of little gold leaves
Dissipated in an irregular non-pattern
Flattened upon the bricks, the leaves
Pair themselves with the little trees,
Little spots of nature in a city

Planted in hard-packed clay
Barely fifteen feet tall,
These little city trees are constrained in their ironwork cages
Water gathers in their sunken little cavities of brickdom
And the ground grows harder, even in the rain
Partaking of the Eternal: 
The Ecofeminist Paradigm of Legacy in Louise Erdrich’s Luna

Edie Hitchcock
Chatham University

As a meditation upon nature, Louise Erdrich’s *Luna* is a traditional piece of nature writing, in that it leads author and audience to a more environmentally-aware paradigm, while inspiring existential self-reflexion. Tracing Erdrich’s journey from one perspective to another, we soon realize what an encounter with the Luna moth could mean for our own thought processes. Though humanity longs to leave some sort of legacy (often resulting in the destruction of nature), Erdrich, in a classic nature-writing moment, must realize her own mortality before learning to partake of the eternal from the ephemeral moth. Through Erdrich’s realization of mortality, the moth ultimately becomes a catalyst for self-reflexivity, reminding us to partake in the eternal by writing the small acts of our daily lives into single moments in nature.

A social ecofeminist position postulates that all of humanity is complicit in the destruction of nature. Driven by a desire to partake in the eternal, we long to make a mark upon the world that will bear witness to our presence. Individuals leave legacies, empires leave ruins; whatever our mode of expression, we long to have someone remember us. In taking action towards this goal, we purportedly combat our mortality. For some, it becomes an obsession: while we are yet alive, “we lose ourselves…in tasks that partake of the eternal” (21), to leave any sort of record for those remaining. Unfortunately, this desire often makes its mark through the destruction of the natural world. *Luna* offers a different paradigm completely.

From an essentialist perspective, the patriarchal connection to Nature is traditionally a linear one; the patriarchal male moves in his relation to nature in a straight line: from discovery, to exploration, to destruction, finally ending in domination. In contrast, the feminine connection to Nature is often assumed to be more circular, appreciative, and “in-tune” with nature’s rhythms and cycles. Initially, Erdrich does not share this
perspective; instead, taking on the traditionally masculine linear model when she views the moth’s place in nature. Throughout the text, Erdrich speaks of her intellectualizing tendencies and chooses to distance herself from the mysticism of nature-writing: “the fireflies flash out a Morse code of desire. I will not read it” (21); later, she does not lose herself in woman/nature experience with the moth. Instead, coolly “watching her bathe her short life away” (21). We see above that even though, as a woman, she may be privy to the languages of nature (according to the essentialist Ecofeminist position), she chooses not to read and analyze them for similarities to her own cycles as a woman. She separates herself both emotionally and spiritually, as the moth simply exists within its life cycle.

In addition, Erdrich never gives up her agency in relation to the moth; her masculine perspective remains both distanced and able-to-cause-destruction in the moth’s short life. We almost feel the latent threat here: “I stretch my finger to the tufts of velvet on her back, look into her dark unknowing eyes. At my slightest touch, she arches” (22). As we know, even one brushing touch can disable a moth’s ability to fly, so Erdrich can, in a small way, disrupt even this small cycle through a power of domination. At this point of re-definition, the text remains ecofeminist because in her self-awareness, she chooses not to partake in destruction of the moth, but recognizes the possibility of her complicitness in the destruction of nature.

As a feminized symbol, the moth becomes a symbol for the spiritual connection to nature while Erdrich represents the intellectual perspective in her own desire to partake of the eternal. The moth is viewed as connected to the spiritual side of life, as shown through several different references: “I am visited by a spirit,” “she drifts, powerful and chaste,” “she rises, …whiter, whiter, into the trees,” and “her thick green fairy wings” (all of these are found on page 20). The actions here are serene, yet purposeful, while the colors and adjectives all support the feeling that this moth is otherworldly, yet powerful. In addition, the common name “Luna Moth” is a direct link to the moon and its cycles which calls up references to a cyclical interpretation of women’s bodies. We then have the more spiritual concept of visitation by a pure white messenger, as well as an emphasis upon both chastity and power. All of these associations support Erdrich’s view of the moth as some spiritual entity, as a symbol of the powerful feminine being. Perhaps there is a hidden link here, drawing our attention to the interrelation between
the spiritual and the eternal. The moth is portrayed as spiritual, while Erdrich’s construction of herself is striving to be eternal through writing. The possibility of these two being able to relate becomes a clue to Erdrich’s changing paradigm. Though the spiritual entity does not leave words or monuments to itself, it does make a mark—even from within its repetitive cycle.

Nonetheless, in contrast to this traditionally “feminine” approach, Erdrich next personally breaks away from this magical description to deconstruct the previous images with a linear perspective. She reminds herself of the realities of a moth’s life: “She will live for a week, mouthless, a being with one clear purpose. All of this ethereal complexity exists to mate and lay eggs, of course” (21). The moth, previously described as a spiritual messenger and representative of the female connection to nature, is unvoiced and silent while life is unbelievably brief—a mere seven days, and her only purpose is to “mate and lay eggs.” At this moment, we almost see Erdrich doubting the point of this “ethereal complexity.” Seven days, when compared with eternity, is not even a flash of brilliance; the moth is reduced to a meaningless element of a cycle. This first inspires pity in Erdrich, but then, we can almost hear the pause before the next sentence, Erdrich realizes that she too, is only “a function of her species life cycle.” She must realize her own ephemerality and mortality, and here, Erdrich reaches a moment integral to self-reflexive nature-writing. She recognizes that they are two creatures of a kind, who, whether seven days or seventy years from now, will ultimately leave little real mark of their presence.

Erdrich then puts the pen down (21) in a gesture of independence from personal disappointment, and chooses to call upon perhaps one of the most famous canonical male nature writers to aid in deconstruction: “Let us interrogate the great apparition, that shines so peacefully around us’ wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson” (21). The great spirit of shining beauty, here, the Luna moth, will be interrogated from a scientific, Enlightenment perspective. Nature will be analyzed and interpreted according to “male” ideas. From here, Erdrich uses Emerson’s quote to describe our life cycles in a detached, scientific, (let us just say, “male”) way—with a specifically linear perspective of humanity: “Sex is the apparition, the engine, the driven inner workings of all that shines and breathes. The need to write and to reproduce are both all-absorbing tasks that attempt to partake of the future” (italics mine, 21). In this moment, Erdrich employs the language of machinery and progress to
reveal that sex and our (read: her own) desire to write, reproduce, and leave a legacy reflect our self-absorbed desire to mark our territory without environmental awareness.

This drive to partake in the eternal is one that Erdrich initially rejects from her interpretation of the moth; however, she soon realizes that we can indeed fulfill our desire to participate in eternity, once we realize that our daily tasks each partake in a moment of eternity: “nothing really does, [so] anything can—pulling weeds, picking apples, putting children to bed” (21). This moment allows Erdrich to reconcile her human desires with her appreciation for the moth’s beautifully ephemeral life. Each moth’s life is a moment in nature, just as each daily task in Erdrich’s life is a moment of participation in the eternal. Each point within the cycle is a flash of life and experience. We do not need to leave behind the Colosseum to partake in the eternal.

This realization does not immediately allow Erdrich to fully accept this circular, all-accepting view of nature. She remains conflicted about her recognition that she is more similar to the moth than she might think. “I make a hieroglyph of my desires, assign grand meanings to my wishes, yet I’m miserably aware it’s all brain chemicals, moth pheromones, cravings that can be undone with more ease than I would to allow” (21) Here, Erdrich must face the idea of biological destiny. Of course, we often prefer to believe that we make our individual choices that direct our course of life, but along with the comparison between the moth and herself, Erdrich must realize that this is a constructed perspective. Again, the scientific perspective reminds us that the beauty of nature and spring is that of sex and the ceaseless cycles of nature. When this perspective is applied to human life, we are reminded of “the old futilities” and our glorification of ourselves and humanity loses its unjust power. In this moment, Erdrich’s approach to nature-writing becomes clear: to realize the human tendency to glorify itself, and then to bring herself and the reader to a second realization of our own inability to rise above mortality. This cyclical perspective enables the reader to come to a new place of self-knowledge, while also gently leading her to discover the similarities and interconnection between all living creatures.

Of course, we should realize for ourselves that Erdrich is very aware of the tendency to make a mark, and even though she reveals a deeper understanding of our desire to partake of eternity, the piece also exhibits her attempt at writing a particular moment in nature into the eternal record of literature. Right under our very eyes, she crafts the piece until
it reflects and literally writes the moment of her experience into the history of the written word—even though she realizes the complexities of both leaving a legacy and recognizing the reality of her mortality. This authorial game reveals Erdrich’s own sense of humor regarding such issues as mortality and the inability to escape our own biological cycles, and allows us apply such humor to our own lives as we begin to more fully understand nature, its cycles, and how we fit into those cycles.

The new perspective that Luna offers is not the stereotypical male or female connection to nature; instead, it blends a fuller realization with the truth of biological destiny. Erdrich is, of course, human, and she is no different than the rest of us in her desire to be remembered, but as she writes the layered meditation upon the moth, we can trace her perspective changing from one of frustration at her own mortality to a realization of both the comforting circularity of cyclical appreciation as well as the actual scientific similarities between herself and nature. In this blending of the “male” and “female” perspectives, we see a self-aware Ecofeminism emerging from both the text and our own lives as we learn to appreciate nature more fully.
While viewing these images, I struggled to arrive at a theme to link them. Ultimately, I could not do it. I thought about how these images were so scattered and then realized one possible explanation. They are all products of our mass consuming visual culture.

Currently, we communicate with each other, and share visual images through devices such as cell phones, the Internet, and television, and have created an amount of visual information the world has never known.

This art is a response to our multifarious visual culture. It is accomplished through varying eyes and minds with an array of mediums, techniques, and concepts.

The artists may use their work as a tool in exploring the world around them. They may at times set out to accomplish a specific message with their work, while at other times the work may become an exploration, informing them of self. We all bring our various questions and interpretations to the viewing of art.

As you view this collection of work, ask yourself how these images fit into the broader context of your life and what you may learn from them. The thoughts these works provoke, we as a staff hope will intrigue and inspire you.

Editor

Beau James Burgess

Staff

Evan Carlisle
Matt Glass
Tom Hughes
Chaise Payan
Angela Van Wagner
Self portrait

mixed media

Emily Wood
Say, Why Are You Pressing My Hand
from the "Don’t Explain" series
acrylic and pastel on canvas
Amanda Akebrand
The Boat Tree

oil on canvas
Thalia Parmley
Jugs

linoleum print

Andy Chase
Untitled

silkscreen
Monica Perez
Bun E

mixed media
Chaise Payan
Self portrait

oil on hardboard

Keisha Goeckeritz
Washing Machine
digital pigment print
Matt Glass
“i am tree”

digital pigment print

Matt Glass
Untitled
color pigment print
Ruth Silver
table

color pigment print
Shiela Stellick
Things that have to be learned

oil on birch plywood

Tyler Hackett
Trike Kid Rides Again
illustration heat transfer paper, digital
Zach Thompson

Greedy Tweety
illustration heat transfer paper, digital
Tim Odland
Selections from the Unfaithful Farmer Wife Series

color pigment print
Kristine McAllister
View Camera Still Lifes

black and white pigment print
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The History of the Color Wheel

acrylic and oil on canvas

Evan Carlisle
Medicated

black and white pigment print

Alex Knighton
Untitled

black and white pigment print
Ian Booth
Untitled

black and white pigment print
Ian Booth
“The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them.” —Mark Twain

Academic literature comes in many forms, but one thing is common among them all; it requires a lot of pondering, analyzing, and critiquing before it is able to be written. We live in a world of memos, emails, and text messages that would require an archaeologist to translate. Within this world we have more access to great literature that we have ever had before. With all of this great literature that surrounds us it is important to realize that there are many different stages to reading. We can either relate what we read to the world around us, read and ponder about the author’s intent, or we can read them and relate them to our own lives, hopes, and dreams.

The academic literature section of Metaphor portrays this progression in reading, critiquing, and relating. The entry, “Stuffed and Preserved: The Development of Ecological Crisis in ‘A White Heron,’’” provides us with an example of reading a piece of literature and pondering upon the world’s ecological crisis we are in and portraying that by using numerous current disasters from around the world and within the text.

The entry, “Hemingway’s Prose: Evolving Themes of Man and Nature,” shows a writer’s brilliance in analyzing themes used by Ernest Hemingway throughout his works.

The entry, “Suppression,” an analysis of Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy shows how much a piece of literature can move an individual. The author of the paper portrayed such anger and frustration about our current society and the pressure she feels as a real woman in a world of false expectations placed upon her gender. We hope these entries can provide you with a variety of critical techniques, but most importantly an avenue for you to ponder upon your life and your own struggles in today’s society.

Editor

Ryan Jessen
Leo Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina reveals a woman with a zest for living untapped by the common world surrounding her. Anna’s liveliness quickly impacts her peers, even without their consent. She has such an acute sensory understanding of her surroundings that she is subconsciously aware of the metaphor that her life creates. This metaphysical connection to the universe makes her life a breathing metaphor to which attracts all of her acquaintances.

Anna exhibits such a force for living, a barely suppressed vivacity that tugs the heart strings of other characters and the reader. She is a powerful symbol for divinity and, thus, Tolstoy endows her with characteristics which imply her loftier status, such as the grey eyes of Athena. Additionally a force of divinity cannot be bound by social constraints. Thus her heart is her guide, leading her to emotional justice. She does what is right based on her feelings rather than what society would have her do. She breaks out of the puppet barriers because her feelings extend far beyond this superficial level.

Initially, most of the characters surrounding her recognize a certain repression within her manner and physique. In her eyes lies a “restrained animation” (97) that she must subdue to keep from blinding the world. Her passions and emotions are unconquerable and serve as a natural attractant. For this hidden reason, most people fall in love with her. Kitty falls easily under her enchanting spell, attracted to the quiet wildness within Anna. Additionally, Anna persuades Dolly to forgive her husband, instantly falling under her good graces. Anna feeds on the attention and warmth she receives, a quality distinctly missing from her own marriage. It is amidst the joy of better company that she vividly sees the lack of it with her staunch husband, forever bent by the rules and idiosyncratic proprieties of society. Anna, on the other hand, was not meant for such a hushed life; she was meant to bend the rules to her will, scoffing all the while.

Despite her restraint, the exuberant emotions flow so freely from her that Vronsky is immediately taken with her upon meeting her at the train station. Words need not even be exchanged before he recognizes the quiet joy burst-
ing from her spirit. She affects him in such a powerful way as to inspire a second glance. From Vronsky’s view point, he sees nothing particularly striking about her beauty. He is not interested in the least in the superficial characteristics which would have set other men on fire; he gazes at her with an eye for the soul. He recognizes the hidden vivacity, seeing her as if her “being were brimming over with something that against her will expressed itself now in the sparkle of her eyes” (75). From the beginning, he is enamored of her internal divinity. Consequently, she notices his admiration and returns it. In this instance, she can truly see the stark contrast between Vronsky and her rule-oriented husband. Here stands a man, his looks pregnant with respect and submission, hardly comparable to the cold body by her side in the night. He is the light and joy she never received from her husband, and likewise, Anna sparks the best qualities of life and fire within Vronsky. Even in their brief exchange of glances and words, their fates have been sealed, their souls inexorably bound by the brief connection, their minds sent running over each other for the rest of time. She also has a connection to the metaphysical world as the reader meets her. When the woman is run over by the train, she is severely affected, revealing her subconscious understanding of her future fate.

At the ball, Anna continues her emotional influence over her peers. She is described in a beautiful black dress, low-cut and off the shoulder to drive the look upward to her hair and mind, holding the essence of her beauty. Additionally, her dress is very simple, for her beauty needs no frills or lavish presentation, she is the essential highlight of the evening. She is without jewelry, for she is the only jewel necessary. As Kitty jealously observes Anna’s actions and movements, she can’t help but pick up on the divinity within her. She gains a lightly magical quality with the constant repetition of the word “enchanting.” Everything about her exudes enchantment, and Tolstoy labels each part of her as such. The repetition overwhelms the reader with visual imagery and justifies Anna’s seemingly flaunting actions. Kitty is hurt, yet she can sense the justice in Vronsky’s attraction based on his apparent attitude of deference and wonder. He gazes at her “as if wishing to fall at her feet” (98). The greatness of her power is that it is wholly unpretentious. She doesn’t mean to inspire “submission and bewilderment” (99) in every look Vronsky gives her, yet she does. There is no falsity in her attitude, only love and tenderheartedness. Vronsky makes that joy and life within her rise beyond her power to contain it. Her inability to suppress and her untold capacity to feel both set her apart from the drab society that would have ladies always gossiping about this or that scandal and never knowing the joy of living one of their own. Anna belongs to a dead society in which she wants nothing more than to live, love, and be loved.
The horse race signifies the height of her metaphysical prowess. The myth of her relationship with Vronsky plays out metaphorically in the horse racing accident. The reader is presented with a description of Vronsky’s mare, which surprisingly looks like Anna. The mare and Anna are assigned the same physical descriptors: broad shoulders and a lean waist. The creature is automatically inundated with characteristics of that lovely, free woman whom Vronsky loves. Even the mare’s emotions are mimetic of Anna. As Vronsky approaches the “more nervous she [grows]” (215). Anna is irresistibly drawn to Vronsky, but she is wholly unable to quiet her apprehension. Her personal conscious and unconscious are battling fiercely within her for the power over her. The mare’s nervousness and eagerness to run reveal Anna’s anticipatory state. She is willing and ready to take the leap into their relationship, if even at her own mental, social, and emotional expense. When Vronsky’s gaze meets Frou Frou’s, the horse calms, just as Anna calms sufficiently when Vronsky, and only Vronsky, fills her physical and mental world. The world can fall away when he is near her, yet the sudden view of the callous world when he is absent is frightening to her.

The race itself mimics the volatile and precarious nature of their tryst. The race is nearly won; their strides and movements are perfectly in sync; the discrepancy between freedom and social constraint is balanced, and then comes the costly error. Vronsky becomes cocky, assuming that the mare can carry all of his weight, and he relaxes, moving down into the saddle. He has ceased to ride forward with her, expecting the mare to carry him without his support. Likewise, Vronsky has become lackadaisical in his relationship with Anna. The accident foreshadows things to come, as Vronsky attempts to avoid the pressure of a full commitment to Anna. He expects the relationship to progress without his attentive care, without a pronounced effort on the part of both members. This simple shift breaks Anna’s back. The mare and Anna are one in this instance, both strained to a racing mentality. She can’t uphold the relationship alone, thus falling so awkwardly. Vronsky realizes the symbolism of the accident, revealed by his laments about his steed: “And it was my own shameful, unforgiveable fault! And this dear, unhappy mare ruined!” (235). These exclamations sound like they concern relationships, especially since Anna has been socially ruined at his hands. He has subconsciously acknowledged just what he has done to Anna by bringing her under such social condemnation and mentally abandoning her. Anna willfully set out on the race with him. In return, he has shattered her very center of control and power, even her center of humanity, the back, bringing her low and alone in her disgrace, unable to lift her head, unable to stagger to her feet, and all because the man standing over her slackened his exertion when the end is in sight. The mare, Anna, is so much wiser than he,
knowing that the pace must never slack. He knows his fault, shown in the self-proclaimed mark of guilt: “Oh, what have I done!” (235). No questioning attitude exists, but a lament of great suffering bleeds out from his heart. He knows the symbolic effect of his crime all too well.

The horse race shakes Anna to her very core as she grasps the symbolic meaning behind the action. The accident is so pivotal Tolstoy relates it twice, secondly through Anna’s perspective. The race captivates Anna, and her eyes and expressions reveal the volatile state of her soul as if she senses the importance of this moment. The falls and accidents of other rides hold no power over her expressions, even as she feels her husband judging her by those telling glances. She is out in the thick of the race pounding out the miles with Vronsky. The fall is devastating. Anna completely forgets the social world surrounding her, and her emotions usurp her of common decency and decorum. A change comes over her which is “positively indecent” while she “[flutters] like a captured bird” (247). In saying that she has “completely lost her head” (247), Tolstoy is implying that she has lost her sense of propriety in giving way completely to the surging emotions within her. The accident brings these perturbations of the soul from within her, since subconsciously she is pained by the metaphor it creates. The news of what has actually transpired is phrased interestingly. A messenger informs her that “the rider [is] unhurt but the horse [has] broken its back” (248). Were Anna not so in tune with the subconscious meaning of this news, she would have given a sigh of relief and gained her composure based on the portrayal of her strong character so far. Once she discovers the fate of the animal which so resembles her, “she [is] unable to keep back either the tears or the sobs that were shaking her bosom” (248). In a moment of subliminal truth, she sees her fate in the mangled entanglement strewn across the field, in the mare’s vain attempts to rise and in the forlorn knowledge swimming in the eyes of her lover. It’s safe to assume that she felt an intense, sudden pain in her back.

Something of her restraint and composure snaps within her, for she confesses unabashedly to her husband the torrid affair she has gone through. She goes so far as to reveal her true feelings for her husband in crisp, biting phrases: “I cannot endure you. I’m afraid of you. I hate you” (250). She has been pushed to the very limits of her control, which breaks in the accident. She can no longer keep back the flooding of her emotions as tense and strained as they have been thus far. Anna is such a metaphysical, emotional woman that she ties herself into the metaphorical meaning of the world around her, effecting great love and admiration in all those she meets. Her zest for life and beauty surpass the stringent, antiseptic code of society. Anna wisely examines the world through the scope of truth and beauty and
asks if it is right to chain the heart. Her soul can not be captured; further-
more she realizes that her attempts at restraint are futile and self-deceptive. She lives by the heart, and who can blame her? Her standards are set upon feelings though society would have her hemmed in at all sides. Her boister-
ous vivacity lifts her to a higher plane of living far above the grayed masses, and the readers as well as the other characters fall under her enchanting spell.
Much criticism of Hemingway’s prose derives from “Nightmare and Ritual in Hemingway” by Malcolm Cowley. In that essay, Cowley noted how “going back to Hemingway’s work” was “like going back to a brook where you had often fished,” and upon going back you find “the woods as deep and cool as they used to be” (40). Cowley went on to say that upon returning to these same scenes we notice something different, more dark; a shadow we might have missed, and the woods seem haunted (40). Most critics have praised Cowley for his fitting description of Hemingway’s work as “nightmares at noonday, accurately described, pictured without blur, but having the nature of obsessions or hypnagogic visions between sleep and waking,” (40) but just as important—and often missed—is the way Cowley used Hemingway’s latter works to understand the preceding dilemmas and themes.

Cowley’s method identifies the interconnectedness of recurring themes in Hemingway’s short stories and novels; however, by starting with the latter works and then returning to earlier pieces, the intensity and expounding of certain themes, such as man and his evolving relationship to nature, is missed. Order is important because each subsequent novel or short story establishes Hemingway’s reshaping of nature and man’s current relationship.

Attention to the imagery in Hemingway’s early story, “Big Two-Hearted River” (1925), reveals the inner struggle of his character and portrays it outwardly. Returning from the war, Nick Adams hopes that the ritual of fishing will calm his fragile mind, but he finds that the nature he returns to mirrors his own psychological state; it no longer resembles what it once was. The town is no longer there, the mountains are burned, and the effect of the fire of a year before has left soot all over the grasshoppers.

Hemingway’s use of fire helps establish Adam’s psyche. What starts out as a ravished land, turns into a bounteous and beautiful land once Adams reaches the river, marking a change in his emotions; however, even this peaceful river has its swamp. Just as Adams was able to remember the serenity of the river during the war (Now I Lay Me), so too, could he now recall the ghastliness of the war while at the river. Whether the swamp actually symbolizes the place where Hemingway was wounded as critics suggest, Hemingway never
said, but it is reasonable to assume that the foreboding swamp represents a psychological hurdle that the recently returned soldier must face in order to overcome the trauma of war. The last line of the story, “[t]here were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp,” (156) is not exultant. Adams’ attempt to reestablish his past psyche means trudging through the swamp of bad memories.

William Adair’s essay, “Landscapes of the Mind: ‘Big Two-Hearted River,’” suggests that these scenes “are so often interior” (260). He goes on to say that from “story to story” the landscape has the “same emotive and symbolic value” (260). The “emotive and symbolic value” Adair mentions is discernible throughout Hemingway’s work. The difference from work to work lies in what certain emotions and symbolism Hemingway places on landscape. For instance, in A Farewell to Arms, nature no longer functions solely to mirror the psychological state of the characters as in “Big Two-Hearted River;” it assumes a much more complex and active role in the text.

At the beginning of almost every chapter of A Farewell to Arms (1929), either seasons, landscape, or weather are mentioned. From the opening line, “In the late Summer…” (3), to the concluding, “…I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain” (332)—nature is present to establish or indicate the emotional mood of the characters; however, weather and landscape also function as outside forces which enable or impede the protagonists in their efforts to find love in a time of war, while at the same time, foreshadowing the hopelessness of Lieutenant Henry and Catherine Barkley’s love affair, or as Carlos Baker refers to their affair, “a study of doom” (94).

The weather patterns map out this “study of doom.” Brighter weather allows Catherine and Henry to pursue love, but the abhorrent war and the eventual wounding of Lieutenant Henry disrupts their pursuit. Their relationship resumes where it left off when they meet in a hospital in Milan. The chapter where they meet again begins, “It was bright sunlight in the room when I woke” (89). The warm and illuminating light signifies Henry’s disposition away from the war, and is a prime condition for their love affair to continue, and it does.

Throughout the novel, but especially during the second half, the rain functions as a disruption to their love affair. On the night of their desertion—Catherine from her duties at the hospital, and Henry from the army—the rain awakens Henry. Later that night, the impeding rain and wind slow Henry as he rows them towards their anticipated freedom. When they reach the Swiss Alps, the late snow and the neutral site allow the two lovers a brief reprieve from life’s vicissitudes. But once the winter snow starts melting, the rains come, the mountainside becomes “dismal,” and it drives the two lovers away from their transitory peace and on to face the harsh realities of life (306).
Henry knows the two could stay in the mountains, but he also knows “If the winter is over and the rain keeps up it won’t be fun up [t]here” (306). The night Catherine goes into labor “was clear and the stars were out” (313), but by the time Catherine dies, Henry leaves the hospital “and walks back to the hotel in the rain” (332). The death of Catherine destroys Henry’s faith in love and a conventional life. In the end, and the final word in the book is “rain,” weather mirrors the somber mood of the disconsolate Lieutenant Henry, like it did Nick Adams earlier, but it also acted as an outside force of fate that predicted and sped along the doom that awaited him.

Within the two works, a period that spanned four years, Hemingway has gone from initiating Nick Adams into the cruel world to completely obliterating Lieutenant Henry’s world through the machinations of an indifferent nature. In “Big Two-Hearted River,” there was a slim hope that by returning to nature man could reestablish an inner peace. Nature provides no such hope for Lieutenant Henry.

In a similar cycle, Hemingway continued to add to the theme of man and his relationship to nature by showing that an existential man finds meaning in nature through death in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” but then he destroys even this comfortable idea by his harsher use of nature in For Whom the Bell Tolls; where it is life alone that counts, and death is meaningless, and the only way one lives on is through the memory of others. Following this cycle chronologically reveals the increasing importance Hemingway placed on valuing the humanistic.

“The Snows of Kilimanjaro” (1938) is perhaps Hemingway’s most written about short story. The numerous criticisms stem from a “disagreement on the meaning of the symbols” (Evans 601), and more specifically, the ambiguous symbolism of the snow. Attention to Hemingway’s use of Nature in his earlier fiction can help decode these symbols and prepares the reader for the progression. Sam Bluefarb compellingly argues that in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”: …Harry the writer, though he does not explicitly think of God, seems to have a need, as he lies dying of a gangrenous leg on the African plain, for an absolute value that would replace a God that may or may not have failed him, but which in any event has become irrelevant for him. That Absolute, for Harry, is the need—never fulfilled—to perfect himself as a writer.[…] we see a longing for a way out of this impasse, the need to break through to some transcendent purpose—esthetic or religious—without which life seems to have little or no meaning. (3-4)

The absolute value, after love and God are subtracted from the equation, becomes writing, and only through this medium can Harry truly transcend. Harry’s need to find the absolute and his hope to transcend through writing is, in essence, what Hemingway sought all his life. The pinnacle of achievement
for Harry is encapsulated in the snow-covered peak of Kilimanjaro. Only there, in the petrified cold, do things die immortalized. The snows represent a type of transcendence that occurs not for what has been accomplished, but rather for what was sought.

The story also affirms the possibility for man to find meaning in nature through aesthetic pleasure. In “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” nature symbolizes meaning for man when religion has failed, and what was cruel about nature in A Farewell to Arms—the rain and snow—represent something beautiful for man once he recognizes his role in life. Harry’s transcendence came, but it came at the cost of a life of regrets for all the things not done. In a sense, Hemingway’s protagonist is again ousted by nature because death is the cost of idealism, but at the same time, seeking those unobtainable ideals is what makes his life worth living.

If nature and death represent transcendence and something permanent in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” the outcome of that theme in For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940) is strikingly different. In this novel, death is nothing more than the end of existence, and life only continues through the memories one has left others. In some aspects this novel is retrogressive or cyclical in theme. Hemingway returns to the futility of love in a time of war, and Robert Jordan and Maria’s fleeting affair resembles Lieutenant Henry’s and Catherine’s. There are differences in nature and life; however, Hemingway addresses these comprehensive themes more cynically and places import on life alone.

At the end of the novel all these themes converge in overwhelming fashion, making it difficult to recognize everything taking place. There is death, in which Jordan proclaims about Anselmo, “He was dead and that was all” (446). There is the recognition that snow brought on the ending of life, “Sure, the snow. That had done it. The snow” (447). There is the realization that life is all, “What you have with Maria, whether it lasts just through today…is the most important thing that can happen to a human being” (305). This novel demonstrates that when there is no afterlife and no possible transcendence, man must become a hero by his own standards, and most of this novel describes the standards that Hemingway set for his protagonist. Robert Jordan places importance on moments and memory because he realizes that when he dies, remembrance is the only way he will live on. In the end, all man can hope for is an honorable death. “Who do you suppose has it easier? Ones with religion or just taking it straight?...Dying is only bad when it takes a long time and hurts so much that it humiliates you” (468). Hemingway’s novel probes the fundamental questions on life and death and concludes that life is all man has and must be lived according to the strict existential code of the hero.

In lieu of such discoveries, the title, For Whom the Bell Tolls, takes on added significance. Taken from John Donne’s “Meditation,” which refers to
the metaphysical connectedness of each life, the title affirms that man must strive to overcome self and work for the good of the whole. When life ends, man’s only consolation is to become part of the continent again. Donne’s “Meditation” supports the humanistic view that Hemingway takes in this novel. Hemingway reiterated this humanistic view of life in a piece entitled, “On the American Dead in Spain” (1939), composed around the same time as For Whom the Bell Tolls. In it he states:

Our dead live in the hearts and the minds of the Spanish peasants, of the Spanish workers, of all the good simple honest people who believed in and fought for the Spanish republic….The dead do not need to rise….For the earth endureth forever….Those who have entered it honorably, and no man ever entered earth more honorably than those who died in Spain, already have achieved immortality.

A similar statement spoken by Robert Jordan near the end of For Whom the Bell Tolls resounds with the same sentiments. Approaching death, Jordan reminds Maria that she is him now. All that is left of him is carried in the hearts of those lives he influenced for good. After they are gone, Jordan says, “Try to believe what you told her. That is the best” (466). Jordan grapples with the nothingness that is to come if even the living forget the dead. Robert Jordan realizes that nature hastens death, and life fades away if we do not make our memory mean something to the living.

As we survey the relationship between man and nature in the order it appears in Hemingway’s novels and short stories, we notice the pattern of hope and despair, of possibility and defeat. It would be simple, and most comforting, to say that this pattern is only typical of a person who suffers from depression, but the pattern is more typical of existentialism. Nature initiates man into the cruel world; it next acts as an agent against him, crushing his faith in convention. Then Man seeks to find a new type of transcendence through the aesthetic in nature, and when that fails, indifferent nature represents the end of life, and this brutal reality forces man to realize that humanity must depend upon humanity for meaning in life. This final realization places importance on life and challenges man to resolve things by himself.

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Stuffed and Preserved:
The Development of Ecological Crisis in “A White Heron.”

Brittanie Stumpp

This is the way the world ends,
This is the way the world ends,
This is the way the world ends,
Not with a bang, but a whimper.
— T.S. Eliot, “The Hollow Men”

As humanity moves forward into the twenty-first century, we revel in the progress of the past which has improved worldwide economic standards, civil rights for women, minorities, religions, education, etc. Yet, while we congratulate ourselves in our endeavors to enrich the human race, we have ignored a vast global issue; the earth itself. The growing environmental crisis can no longer go unnoticed. “Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe” (Intro xx). However, to fully understand the crisis, we must look to its roots in order to stop its growth. Sarah Orne Jewett’s short story, “A White Heron,” gives us clues to the burgeoning ecological disaster that is our modern world.

The physical setting in “A White Heron” plays an important role. More than just location, the forest, marshes, and woodland creatures are characters in and of themselves, with lives and histories too often overlooked in literature. “There was a stirring in the great boughs overhead. They were full of little birds and beasts that seemed to be wide awake, and going about their world, or else saying goodnight to each other in sleepy twitters” (Heron 598).

The heron has long been a symbol to many ecologically friendly cultures, like the Native Americans, for wisdom and self-reflection. “Heron medicine is the knowledge obtained through the journey of self” (Totems 217). “The mythical Egyptian bird-god, Benu, revered as the creator of life was based on the heron as an emblem of the rising sun – it is also an ascensional bird, like the Phoenix, in China and Japan” (Symbols 73). “Shamans have long used heron feathers in ceremony as its freedom of flight between
earth and sky symbolizes wisdom. The expression, ‘A little bird told me,’ echoes ancient ideas” (Symbols 68). Thus, the heron as the keeper of sacred wisdom is made apparent when Sylvia decides to remain silent about its location because, “she cannot tell the heron’s secret and give its life away” (Heron 603).

The unnatural state of industrial cities is present in Jewett’s nineteenth century Maine. Sylvia was not growing up in a relaxed manner in the city. Consequently, she was sent to live with her grandmother on the farmstead. “Everybody said that it was a good change for a little maid who had tried to grow for eight years in a crowded manufacturing town, but, as for Sylvia herself, it seemed as if she had never been alive at all before she came to live at the farm” (Heron 598). Overpopulation and crowding is plausibly a major source of modern social disorders like anxiety and schizophrenia. Sylvia could have been suffering from social paranoia in the city; “‘Afraid of folks,’ they said! I guess she won’t be troubled no great with ‘em up to the old place!’” (Heron 598). However, once transplanted from the industrial environment to the organic surroundings of the farm, she began to improve inwardly; “Sylvia whispered that this was a beautiful place to live in, and she wished never to go home” (Heron 598).

The ornithologist gives us the best clue to our present predicament. Rather than observing and leaving nature in its natural state, like Sylvia, he attempts to categorize and bring it to order. “I am making a collection of birds…there are two or three very rare ones I have been hunting for these five years. I mean to go get them on my own ground if they can be found…they’re stuffed and preserved, dozens and dozens of them”’ (Heron 600). Rather than assisting the continuation of these very rare birds by allowing them to live, his goal is to kill and preserve them. This brand of backwards, Western thinking has attributed to the extinction of hundreds upon thousands of genus on this planet. Think what a difference dozens and dozens of living herons would make in keeping the species healthy.

The effects of the logging industry on the forest are presented also; “…at the farther edge of the woods, where the land was highest, a great pine-tree stood, the last of its generation…the woodchoppers who had felled its mates were dead and gone long ago” (Heron 601). Presently, acres of forest continue to be cut down. How many species of trees vanish daily due to human consumption? Sylvia, appreciative of the comfort of undisturbed ecosystems, views the tree as a living being, “asleep yet in the paling moonlight” (Heron 601). Her ensuing climb of the great tree awakens a spark in her determined human spirit and her observation of the dawn, the habitat,
and the creatures living within it, leaves her “well satisfied” (Heron 603).

The tree as the symbol of life predates recorded history in nearly all human civilizations. “Trees are the supreme natural symbols of dynamic growth, and seasonal regeneration” (Symbols 76). “The Tree of Life often becomes a metaphor for the whole of creation. Through the Tree of Life, humanity ascends from its lower nature toward spiritual illumination, salvation or release from the cycle of being. Alternatively, the Cosmic Tree is reversed to show its roots drawing strength from the sky – a favorite image in Kabbalism and other forms of mysticism” (Symbols 77). Perhaps Sylvia, living close to the natural world, understands the mythic importance of the ecosystem to the human psyche. Myth aside, trees are vitally important to human beings. The very air we breathe comes directly from trees. Without them we would perish indefinitely.

Trees produce not only our precious oxygen, but also help form the atmosphere’s ozone layer. “Without it, life would be a lifeless ice planet with an average temperature of minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit” (History 255). “Ozone is a form of oxygen in which each molecule bears three atoms of oxygen instead of two. While in the stratosphere it is beneficial, since it soaks up dangerous ultraviolet radiation” (History 151). Ultraviolet rays are the leading cause for most melanomas and skin cancer. The layer of the atmospheric ozone which is crucially important to us is called the troposphere. “It alone contains enough warmth and oxygen to allow us to function” (History 256).

The actual height of the troposphere is about 12 miles from the Earth’s surface to the stratosphere, which starts above 25,000 feet (commonly known to climbers as the Death Zone). The troposphere is a very fragile layer. Offsetting its chemical balance would result in horrific human catastrophes. The extinction of the dinosaurs and the consequent Ice Age are models of such a counterbalance, but the most recent event in recorded human history took place in 1815 on the island of Sumbawa in Indonesia.

A volcanic eruption burst out of Sumbawa’s neighboring mountain range, called Tambora, with a force 150 times stronger that Mount St. Helens. Worldwide, Tambora’s effects were felt:

Thirty-six cubic miles of smoky ash, dust, and grit had diffused through the troposphere, obscuring the sun’s rays and causing the Earth to cool. Spring never came and summer never warmed; 1816 became known as the year without summer. Crops everywhere failed to grow. In Ireland a famine and associated typhoid epidemic killed sixty-five thousand people. In New England, the year became known
as Eighteen Hundred and froze to Death. Livestock died or had to be prematurely slaughtered. Yet, globally the temperature fell by only about 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit. Earth’s natural thermostat, as scientists would learn, is an exceedingly delicate instrument. (History 419-420)

Tambora’s effects were caused by natural chemicals: ash, dust, and grit. Think of all the deadly emissions human beings pollute the troposphere with daily; carbon dioxide, thermohaline, chlorofluorocarbons, etc., each adding to the already dangerous levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Though the hole in the ozone layer is not growing at an alarming rate, Tambora teaches us it does not take much to affect the troposphere and when the troposphere is disturbed, it can be deadly.

Sylvia represents the innocence of nature’s cultures. Rather than warp the environment or bend it to her will, she lives in it and alongside it. This mentality has been lost in our contemporary world. Our so-called progress may actually be rushing mankind into early extinction. Yet it was not always so. Cultures of the past lived very near to nature, and had a deep respect for the earth. Who is to blame for our apparent disconnection from the planet? Religion? Perhaps. Science? Possibly.

Lynn White, Jr. argues in his essay, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecol ogic Crisis,” “that the environmental crisis is fundamentally a matter of the beliefs and values that direct science and technology; he censures the Judeo-Christian religion for its anthropocentric arrogance and dominating attitude towards nature” (Intro xxvii). Harold Fromm in “From Transcendence to Obsolesce: a Route Map” speculates on how the Industrial Revolution affected humanity’s conception of its relationship to nature, warning that technology has created the false illusion that we control nature, allowing us to forget that our ‘unconquerable minds’ are vitally dependent upon the natural systems (Intro xxvii).

Whether the culprit is science or god is irrelevant. The fact remains, human mindsets must change. Should we revert back to our agrarian ancestry, forsaking our modern advances? Of course not. If history teaches us anything, it is that time does not move backwards. However, the integration of old traditions and new concepts can and must occur. The ecological crisis affects every race, sex, and creed upon this earth and should therefore be viewed as the most pressing issue in our world. The negative qualities of inflexibility, vacillation and the pursuit of selfish desires brought on by the Industrial Age have presented grave problems. We are using up our natural resources at an alarming rate, stripping our planet bare of its ability to sustain life. There is a terrible danger of so overpopulating our world that only
global war, disease and famine will reduce our numbers.

In Jared Diamond’s account of the people of Easter Island, we see how the effects of overpopulation and disconnection from the environment came to catastrophic ends: “In just a few centuries, the people of Easter Island wiped out their forest, drove their plants and animals into extinction, and saw their complex society spiral into chaos and cannibalism” (Easter 1). “Eventually Easter’s growing population was cutting the forest more rapidly than the forest was regenerating” (Easter 5). Shall the global community meet the same end?

Today, again, a rising population confronts shrinking resources.... If we continue to follow our present course, we shall have exhausted the world’s major fisheries, tropical rain forests, fossil fuels, and much of our soil.... Every day newspapers report details of famished countries—Afghanistan, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Zaire—where soldiers have appropriated the wealth or where central government is yielding to local gangs or thugs. Our risk now is of winding down, slowly, in a whimper. Corrective action is blocked by vested interests, by well-intentioned political and business leaders, and by their electorates, all of whom are perfectly correct in not noticing big changes from year to year. Instead, each year there are just somewhat more people, and somewhat fewer resources on Earth. (Easter 6-7)

Our present situation in Iraq is another example. All ethical excuses aside, the United States invaded Iraq because of its vested interest in foreign oil which, though it may be morally deplorable, is logical from a purely survivalist point of view. Americans consume mass quantities of oil for various different purposes in their everyday existence. Thus, the country requires control of the oil resources to sustain its way of life. Animals go to war for the very same reasons; wolves will kill other wolf packs when their food sources are low, lion prides attack other lions over a kill, etc. As the earth’s resources continue to diminish, we can expect more hostilities like the war in Iraq to follow, if not increase.

Still, a promise is held out to us; we can choose to change our mindsets about the ecological world and our place in it, or we can lose all that we have. By becoming more eco-conscious and drawing upon the lessons of the past, humanity can save itself and the planet. Like Sylvia, we must realize, “this is a beautiful place to live in,” and well worth fighting for.
Works Cited


The following works are a sampling of the best submissions in the area of creative prose that Weber State has to offer. Each chosen piece is a demonstration of the fundamental merits in writing; consistency, voice, character, tone, originality. Each selected work was discussed and debated until a final consensus was reached. These works are the best of the best.

Editor
Louis deSully

Staff
Rachel Boddy
Maria Cruz
How to be an auspicious time traveler

Ryan Bowen

Hello and welcome to Light Cubed conglomerate’s ‘How to be an Auspicious Time Traveler!’ You have chosen the text option but remember, the spoken word version is available at your convenience. Just say ‘Jabberwocky’ to activate it.

Have you been looking for a way to rockercize your same boring time travel vacations? Well here’s your chance! By agreeing to buy the first 400 word-forms of this guide you’ve also agreed to say ‘NO!’ to Negative Nancy’s more expensive word-form guide of the same subject matter and will get 44 extra words for free! That’s our thanks to you. Now let’s get started!

The first thing to remember about successful time travel vacations is how similar they are to cooking. Yes, that’s right, the ancient form of food preparation. Back then, a dish couldn’t simply be edible, it had to have some kick in it as well. Yes, spice really did wonders to some of their less appetizing concoctions so imagine what it could do to your vacation. If your family time machine is the cost effective spinning-top whirligig, close the top and throw in some balloons that can float while you spin through time. Talk about eye catching! If you have the smaller, more expensive Time-Ring 5000, paste some small magnetized gem stones to it and voila! you’ve got yourself an engagement ring that is bound to attract members of the opposite sex! As you read, brainstorm and express your creativity by finding fun new ways to spice things up.

Having gotten that out of the way, let’s go over the basic standards and practices of time traveling. While common knowledge, recent events involving Henry Chan have shown that SOME people think they can still get away with changing the past. Well just remember, whoever you are, that changing the past is a crime with punishments ranging from serious fine to brief imprisonment.

Many experiments over the years have shown that despite changes in the time-line, events more or less unfold in generally the same way at
around the same time. That being said, studies have ALSO shown that ‘in most cases’ the discovery of time travel occurs at around the same time in most timelines. Sound confusing? Well it is but keep in mind that time travel involves a lot of quantum theory. And quantum theory is pretty much all percentages. For example, instead of saying water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level. Quantum theory would be able to predict at about when water boiled. So there is a 90% chance that water would boil at 200 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level.

Since ‘in most cases’ our history follows a fairly straight path it is the job of Global Time Corp (GloTiCo), the time administrators, to compare current history with any deviations that may have occurred at some point in the past. “But how can they compare histories if history itself has changed as well?” you might ask. Well not to get too technical but it is possible to sub-atomically transmit our standard history through space and time so that regardless of how the timestream may have changed, they can still pick up on where those changes are by continuously monitoring the sub-atomically transmitted history (Chrono-History), using it as a template and comparing it to current history.

If there is a discrepancy between our history and the Chrono-History, GloTiCo is able to pinpoint when and where the discrepancy was to have occurred and send agents to the scene of the crime. That’s right! They can stop you from committing a crime before you even do it! So the lesson here is don’t think!

How does Henry Chan fit into all this? Good question interactive reader! Henry Chan was the first (known) person to impersonate a famous figure, in this case, Confucius. However, the word impersonate is used loosely because Henry Chan WAS Confucius. But, as he traveled from
our present day, he obviously knew enough about Confucius to create a new yet established identity in the past. Was there ever a real Confucius? How should we know?

GloTiCo was able to finally close the case with the recent discovery of the grave of Confucius. Microbial evidence confirmed that Confucius was indeed Henry Chan. Don’t congratulate Henry too soon though because apparently when deciding to become Confucius he forgot that Confucius spent most of the last 15 years of his life in exile. Nice try Henry. Maybe next time, haha! Since the revelation of Henry Chan, GloTiCo has inserted time monitors into ALL legal market time machines allowing surveillance of any and all time travelers for possible violations of the time stream.

Hello ladies! Tired of all the laser burns associated with a close shave? Well now with our NEWLY(!) patented design instead of burning off all that annoying leg hair you can cut it off! That’s right, the EconoRazor saves you that meddlesome trip to the burn ward and for only half the cost! Just glide invented razor blade across your leg for a

Will these monitors invade your family’s privacy? To some degree the answer is yes but keep in mind these monitors also act as a homing beacon should trouble arise. What kinds of trouble? Let’s remember the incident involving David and Claire Beasley. After incorrectly programming their spinning-top whirligig time machine they arrived some 64 million years further back in time than they wanted. Surrounded by swampland, the couple immediately realized they were in the wrong time. From this point, according to Mrs. Beasley’s testimony, she proceeded to verbally abuse Mr. Beasley. Disgusted, Mr. Beasley opened the time machine top stumbled out, needing to “clear his head.” Apparently attracted to the loud screeching sounds emanating from Mrs. Beasley, some 50 yards from the time machine, the giant bid-like raptor Hagyphus giganteus, swooped down “from the trees” and swiftly devoured Mr. Beasley while Mrs. Beasley looked on. Unfortunately, David Beasley won’t have a second chance to try and fix his grasp of simple arithmetic, haha!
This is only one instance but there are many others.

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******You have chosen not to continue reading our guide on How to be an Auspicious Time Traveler. Your lack of interest has been noted. Thanks!******
The Snake taunted the travelers. Whip. Flick. Ker-plunk. Tension – a big one – another snag. Someone suggested taking a ride into town to check for better spots. The four piled into the SUV and merged eastbound en route to American Falls.

“We’re stopping here. We need gas.” The driver pulled in next to a pump beneath an enormous glowing seashell. He filled the tank and went inside to pay. One of the passengers suggested asking the clerk for insights into the local terrain.

“Oh jeez. I dunno, s’been a number of years since I’ve done any myself,” said the clerk. “Hey, Kevin, this guy’s wonderin’ if there’s any good spots around here.”

A dark-haired man in maroon pants swiveled his gaze from the magazine rack to the young man standing at the counter. The man’s skin was dirt-darkened, with faded tattoos on both arms. He wore black leather gloves, cut off at the first knuckle.

“Yeah, you wanna take the road down to the old fish hatchery. There’s some great places to put in down there. Stay away from the other side of the river, you’ll be hitting too much growth, you’ll spend all your time retying your line.” He didn’t turn back to the magazines.

“The old fish hatchery,” the younger man repeated. “How do we get there?”

“Well, you go out on this road here, and follow it til you come to a traffic light, then turn left. When you see signs for the reservoir, go ‘cross to the other side. Then turn left and follow it on down.”

“Oh, okay,” said the younger man weakly. He had forgotten most of the man’s directions already. Eager to get back on the road, he did not ask him to repeat himself.

“It’s really not that hard to find. Ya can’t miss it.”

“Okay, thank you. I really appreciate your pointing us in the right direction.”
“No problem. None at all.”
Both men started toward the door at the same time. The older man ambled toward his blue pickup truck. The younger man jogged back toward his vehicle.
“Y’all got bait?” asked the older man.
“Yeah, some power bait.”
“Here. Come here. They go crazy for this stuff.” He reached into a tackle box in the weathered truck bed, and pulled out a bottle of marshmallow bait.
“You can have this. Go ahead.”
“I… thank you. I appreciate it.”
“Yeah, have this too. They love it.” He handed the young man a milky gray substance in a small greasy jar. “It’s WD40 scent. The fish just go nuts for it. You put a ‘lil bit of this on your bait, and you’ll get a bite every time you cast.”
“Th-thank you.”
“Just remember – never, never use WD40. It’s illegal. If you use it, you will get fined 3,000 dollars, and you will go to prison for two years.”
“Okay. We won’t use it.”
“Remember – if you get a sturgeon on your line, do not pull it out of the water. You will get fined.”
“I guess we’ll have to be sure to keep an eye out,” said the younger man, wondering what a sturgeon was. “Thanks again for all the tips and the bait.”
“You’re welcome. Y’all have fun.”
Both men got in their vehicles. As they were about to leave, the older man leaned his head out the window and shouted, “Y’all want me to show you how to get there?”
After a moment of deliberation, the young driver called, “Sure!” They pulled out behind the blue pickup truck.
“Are you sure this is a good idea?” asked the young woman in the passenger seat.
“I don’t know, but I didn’t want to sound rude.”
“Great. Now we’re following a complete stranger we met at a gas station.”
“He could just be a friendly guy, or he could be a psycho killer, leading us down to his raping shack.”
“Don’t even say that. It’s not funny. Now we’re all in danger.”
“We are not in danger.”
“You don’t know.”
“Well, I guess he was kind of a creepy looking guy.”
“And that doesn’t worry you at all?”
“Maybe a little, but there’s more of us. Strength in numbers, right?”

The SUV followed the pickup along the narrow rural town road for three quarters of a mile, shadowed it left at the town’s lone traffic light, and onto a bridge spanning the dam.

They turned left after the bridge and followed the road as it banked sharply down to the left. A faded sign read, “Fish Hatchery.” The road opened into a small, vacant parking lot. The blue pickup pulled into a spot near a nine-foot barbed wire fence that separated the parking lot from a steep bank leading to the bottom of the dam. The older man cut his engine as the SUV crunched to a stop.

“We need a plan,” said the male passenger in the back seat. “Quick.”
“What are you talking about?” said the driver.
“Well, we need to figure out how we’re going to get away from this guy. In case he turns out to be some kind of weirdo. These small towns freak the shit out of me.”
“Alright, fine, fine. What are we going to say to him?”
“The girls should stay in the car, and we’ll just tell him this looks like a great spot, but we have to go get the girls something for lunch, and we’ll come back after.”
“Alright, sounds good. Let’s go, he’s getting out of his truck.”
“The closer you get to the dam, the bigger the fish you gonna catch. I know a guy, caught a 15-pound bass right here in this spot.”
“Wow.”
“I know some good spots down there by the river. I could show ‘em to ya if ya like.”
“Well… yeah, sure. That’d be great.”

The three men descended the enormous metal staircase that lead to a dirt trail that followed the water’s edge. The local man lead the way, the two others silently tracing his footsteps as his heavy boots clanked on the metal steps.

“See that clearing in the trees, by those white rocks? I caught me a 12-pound trout right there, just last week.”
“Oh yeah?”
“Yeah, it’s just up ahead, through these trees.”
They continued along the path, ducking under a low-growing branch,
and coming out in a flat rocky crescent on the edge of the river.
“Well, this looks like a great spot, thanks.”
“S’nothing. If somebody comes into my town, and I can help ‘em
have a good day fishin’, all the better.”
“We were lucky to find you.”
“Yeah, I know over 200 fishin’ spots up and down this stretch of the
river. Over 4,000 in the state of Idaho.”
“Well, we’d better go get those girls some lunch so we can get back
here and get some time in.”
The man didn’t move.
“What do y’all feel like eatin’? There’s a great burger place just up
by the market.”
“Actually, we were thinking we’d head back to the campsite and have
some sandwiches.”
“Oh? Where y’all stayin’ at?”
“We’ve got a site up in Massacre Rocks State Park.”
Just when they were sure the man was about to suggest they follow
him on a shortcut back to their campground, he said, “Alright then, you
better get a move on if you want to get some time in on the water this
afternoon.”
“We will. Thank you.”
As the SUV kicked up dust on its way out of the parking lot, the man
in the back seat said, “Can you believe that guy?”
“What?” said the driver.
“What a crazy nutjob.”
“I don’t know.” He smiled. “It looks like there are some good spots
down there.”
Walking down this road gets harder each time I make the trip. The trees get a little taller; the path gets a little more worn. The walk is about two miles, but it feels so much longer. During the summer it gets hot, and sweat pools in the little hairs on the back of my neck. But then again, during the winter, when the snow falls and the winds blow drifts, it gets harder to climb up the hill. It is awfully cold then too. So I prefer the spring. Then it is warm, but not too warm, but it isn’t cold either. I can wear my jeans cutoff, and go barefoot if I want. Except then I have to watch for the sharp rocks, and the biting ants. I usually stop along the side of the road, and pick some wild flowers. Those bullies that hang out with Billy Thompson try to steal my flowers when they see I have picked a bunch. Sometimes though, I stop and I go swimming in the water hole. It’s about half way there. I taught myself how to dive there. Once Billy Thompson and his friends got there before I did, and they were swimming naked! I laughed and laughed because those boys just went crazy. Craaazy! Then Billy climbed up over to me, and told me that I was a dork, and should have just jumped in with them. Like I would want to go swimming with those stinky naked boys. They don’t even wash their feet every night! But Billy can be kinda cute sometimes. When he is trying to be kind. He walked part of the way with me that day. He was really nice too! He asked me about why I walk that way so often. That was when I told him about my mom. That was the first time I had ever talked to anybody about my mom. Other than Daddy and Marilee.

I am named after my Mom. Dixie Lee. Daddy says that I look like her. Sometimes I get scared I am going to be like her, but Marilee says that won’t happen, she won’t let it. My momma and Daddy divorced when I was three. A divorce is when a mom and a dad love you, but can’t love each other. So they live apart. Daddy took me to live with him and Marilee, ‘cause Mom had some problems. When I was little, Daddy just said that Mom was forgetful, and he didn’t want her to forget to pick me up.
Mom had a bad problem with sleeping. Sometimes she couldn’t sleep. She had to take all these pills to go to sleep, and then she would say “The pills only work with some wine”, so she would drink a bottle every time she has to sleep. Then sometimes, she just couldn’t wake up so well. A couple years ago, when I was still young, maybe seven, and I stayed the night, Mom had trouble waking up then. I called Daddy, and him and Marilee came to Mom’s. Marilee took me home right away, and Daddy stayed to wake Mom up. After that I didn’t see Mom for a while. Daddy said she was “Trying to get on a wagon somewhere.” Whatever that means.

When Mom finally got back, she was sooooo excited. She talked about how her and me were going to go to the city and get me some clothes, cause I was growing up so fast. I was excited, Mom was going to buy me a pretty blue dress with a lacy collar, and we was talking about going to my favorite restaurant. The restaurant is in a fancy hotel, but we don’t have to wear a dress to go there. I tried to not get too excited though. Mom says things sometimes, and then they don’t happen, so imagine my surprise when Daddy said that she really was taking me into the city. He gave me fifty dollars to buy some clothes! I was so excited, and I showed it to my Mom on the bus. She told me that fifty dollars wasn’t a lot of money, so we would have to shop smart.

When we got to the city, we went to this store. Mom called it a thrift shop, and said all the stars shopped there. I thought it stank, and all the clothes were ugly, no stars I ever saw wore that stuff! Mom found a skirt and top though for me. Man, but those things were UGLY! The skirt was brown, with red flower print, and the top was red with brown edging. She was so excited though, so I pretended to like it. When I paid the lady, she gave me back a fistful of bills. Mom said that she better take it, so I wouldn’t lose it. Then she said that she was hungry, and we needed to go. We walked and walked and walked. We passed all kinds of restaurants and deli’s, and I kept telling Mom that she could eat in one of them. She called me a silly girl, and told me she wasn’t hungry for any of that.

She finally stopped in front of this run-down house, and told me to wait outside when she ran in. There was a stinky old man sitting on the steps, sleepin’! In the middle of this big loud city this man was sleepin’ on the steps. So I couldn’t talk to him. Down the street on the corner was a lady in a red skirt. Boy, oh boy! That red skirt was so shiny! So I
walked down to try and ask her name, and where she got that great skirt. She wasn’t very nice, and she was telling me to beat it when Mom finally came back out, looking really happy. I asked her what she got in there, and she said that she would feel better than ever now. I asked if she had ate without me, because that wouldn’t be very nice. She laughed and said that we could go eat now so we did. We got hot dogs from a cart by the bus station. On the bus ride home I remembered my money. When I asked about it, Mom said that we had spent it on my clothes and the hotdogs. I guess ugly clothes just cost more than pretty ones!

When we got back to town, Mom and I got into her car. She began to talk to me about special secrets that mommies share with their kids, and how I shouldn’t tell Daddy about the house we had stopped at. I said okay, but that Daddy could probably help the poor tired old man. Get him a bed to sleep in so he wouldn’t have to sleep on steps. Mom just laughed and started the car. I must have fallen asleep because when I woke up I heard Mom telling Daddy that I couldn’t stay the night, he would have to come and pick me up, she wasn’t feeling well. When I walked into the kitchen, she was standing on the phone, and was playing with a baggie full of white stuff. When she saw me, she put the bag into the drawer by the stove. She told me to get my stuff together, and that Daddy would be picking me up soon. That night when Daddy was driving me home, he asked me if I had fun. I said yes, that I found a skirt even better than the blue dress I wanted. He just laughed and messed my hair. I didn’t tell him that we didn’t even get to go to the restaurant in the hotel or about the man at the house.

I didn’t see Mom for a while after that. She said she was busy figuring out her life. When I saw her next, that was when I told her about my part in the school play. I was going to be a fairy, not the main one, but I still had twenty lines to learn! I asked her if she would make me my costume, a blue fairy outfit. Mom said to ask Marilee, that she was a better sewer. So I asked Mom if she would come and sit in the front row, one month from now when I went on stage. She promised and said she would bring me a flower! I called Mom every night to remind her, and since she promised, I knew she would come.

Mrs. Jensen was my teacher that year, and she was in charge of the whole play. She was mean, so when she told us we could not peek out at the audience until we were on stage, I knew she meant business. So unlike all the other kids in the play, the ones who don’t have Mrs. Jensen, the ones peeking around the curtain I just practiced my lines, and thought
about how proud Mom would be of me.

Half way through my first line, I looked out into the audience. I saw Dad and Marilee right away, in the second row. But Mom wasn’t there. All through the rest of the show, I kept hoping Mom would show up, but when the curtain closed, and it was time to go home, she still hadn’t come.

I tried not to cry, really. But you know how sometimes you get that lump, and it hurts? That is how I felt. Marilee came in that night to tuck me in, and told me that my mom just forgets things sometimes. But that only made it worse. Marilee doesn’t forget about me, and she is only my stepmother, not even real flesh and blood. So I told her that. And she said she loves me more than if I was her own blood. So I told her that she was more like my real mom, cause Mom just messes stuff up. Then Marilee cried and then we hugged for a long time.

When I went in the kitchen for breakfast the next morning, Daddy was still there. He hadn’t gone to work yet. I was surprised because it was late, and he usually went to work early, like at six. He had one of those faces. You know, when adults have to say something, and they don’t know how. That was when I found out why Mom hadn’t come to see my play. She was dead. She had been dead since yesterday morning, except nobody knew till Daddy went to her house this morning. When I asked Daddy how she died, he told me that she was sick, and she just couldn’t handle it anymore. That was when I had my first fight with Daddy. I hollered at him and told him my Mom never got sick. She never even had a cold! Daddy was trying to tell me that Mom was sick in her head, and that was her problem, but I was angry. I ran out the door and tried to get to Mom’s, but she lived really far from Daddy at that time. Daddy caught up with me really quick. It must be because he is so tall. I started to cry and Daddy just picked me up and took me home. I didn’t have to go to school for a few days, not until after Mom’s funeral.

It rained the day of the funeral. Old Miss Maddie down the street says that if it rains when someone dies, that it is “God and his angels crying for the dear departed.” I told her that I didn’t think God would cry over my mother. She didn’t believe in him. Miss Maddie said that God cries for all of his children. I guess she didn’t know that Mom wasn’t God’s child. Mom was the child of Gramma Jenkins and Grandfather. I hadn’t ever seen much of them before the funeral, only once at the airport before Mom took a trip. But there they were, dressed up all in black at the funeral. After we went to the church, I rode with them back to Daddy’s house.
They thought I wasn’t paying attention, so they started to talk about Mom. When they were talking about her, they mentioned something called “re-habitation” or something like that, and why hadn’t it worked. Apparently it was expensive. Grandfather was talking about lots of money down a drain. I wanted to tell him that money doesn’t go down a drain, so that would be a waste. Grandmother said something about an overdose and Mom, and I got confused because Mom hadn’t died from an overdose, she had been sick. I didn’t want them to know that I had been listening to their conversation though, so I didn’t say anything. So I waited until they went back to California, and then I asked Daddy about it.

That was when he told me it was RE-HAB-IL-IT-AT-ION, and it was a place people went to when they needed to get clean. I asked Daddy why Mom couldn’t have just showered at home. He told me that it was a place to clean your soul, when people have problems with drugs and alcohol. That was when he told me Mom really had died of an overdose. He asked me if I knew what drugs were, and what an alcoholic was. I told him that drugs fried your brain, and an alcoholic beats you. Daddy just smiled at me and told me an alcoholic wasn’t somebody that beat you, although they could do that. He said an alcoholic was someone who can’t control their drinking anymore. I asked him if Mom had been one of those and he smiled, all sad like, and said yes. My Mom had been an alcoholic and she had died of an overdose of drugs. Daddy said that it wasn’t my fault she was like that, she had been like that since she was a little girl. I asked him if it was going to happen to me. He said no, not if he had anything to do with it.

That was two years ago. Every Saturday, I walk this way, and go sit by her gravestone. The cemetery is kind of creepy, but I like to tell her what I am doing. That way she won’t worry ‘bout me as much. I tell her about school, and Daddy, and how Marilee is having a baby, and I am going to be a big sister. I also tell her that I am sorry she was so sick, and that she couldn’t handle it anymore, but that I won’t let it happen to me. You know, other than Billy you are the only person I have told this to. Billy said he felt bad for me, and now sometimes he walks with me, and he won’t let the other boys steal my flowers anymore.

At night, I wake up afraid. I don’t like the dark because it reminds me of Mom. And I don’t want to be like her. I can’t be like her. I decided that I can only be one person. I am going to be me, and my name is Lee.
How to Succeed at Unemployment:
without really trying

Adrian Stumpp

Well, I’m not Mormon—let’s get that out of the way. But I am honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and of good report, so long as you don’t call the references on my resume. I’m punctual and hardworking. I pretty much keep to myself unless you want me to be outgoing, professional unless you want me to be casual. My loyalty is the best interest of the company unless you want it to be the customer’s satisfaction. I’m basically a labor whore—I’ll be whatever you want and do whatever you want. Don’t ask what I am; tell me what you want, and I’ll be that for forty hours a week.

What are my goals? I know I’m not getting out of this world alive. I have no material ambition so bonuses won’t entice me to do any more than the bare minimum. What do I expect from an employer? A paycheck. That’s all. I want my bills paid and maybe a little extra to take my girlfriend out on Friday night. I don’t want benefits, discounts, friendship, or a sense of satisfaction with a job well done. I want to show up, do my job, clock out, go home, and actually live my life for a few hours—the one that has to be justified by selling myself to you.

I didn’t get the job.

I don’t interview well. I’m comfortable with that.

I haven’t had a job for three months now. That’s fine; I don’t really want a job. I want to live. I’ve decided these two institutions are diametrically opposed to one another. Greta, my girlfriend, says the problem is I don’t play well with others. She’s getting restless. She says she has anxiety and cannot make love to me with a clear conscience knowing I’m pretty much worthless to society. She says her mother taught her to expect more. She’s a hypochondriac and has been consulting an alternative healing expert who has decided the fact she has sex with a loser is the reason for her chronic urinary tract infections. I am beside myself. I’m essentially committing the spiritual rape of a willing body without even knowing it.

Yesterday I had an interview with a multi-media company doing internet tech-support. The unofficial first interview, they say, is appearance. This is
very superficial, Greta tells me, which is why it’s so important. A successful
person must maintain the appearance of success. I show up clean to show
I’ve put time into this event. “Yes,” cleanliness says to the potential employ-
er, “this interview has occupied much more of my time than our appoint-
ment.” For me, this job isn’t just a job—it’s a lifestyle. I like that Big Brother
is watching. I’m wearing a freshly ironed white shirt with a tie and black
slacks. I own clothes that I may or may not wear to church. It’s illegal for my
potential employer to ask if I go to church so this is all he has to go by: that
I can tie a neck-tie. I answer all the questions. I know all the answers. But
my potential employer needs to see me read my lines. He needs to see me
commit treason against myself. He needs to know I’m a moral person.

And I say, “You are the reason for all suffering, ever. You’re the reason
women drown their infants and men beat their wives. Your entire life is
dedicated to polishing a politically correct form of bigotry.”

I didn’t get the job.

Upon reevaluating my strategy I find that I have sabotaged myself. If you
live in Utah and want a new job, you can’t have long hair and you can’t have
earrings. Greta can’t figure out why no one is hiring me and suggests I wear
a CTR ring to my next interview. She says that’s how she got her job. She
works for a bill collecting agency. She says she doesn’t feel bad for people
who write a bad check for cigarettes—it’s the ones who’re fifty-thousand
dollars in debt because they had a heart attack and the insurance company
doesn’t see why they should have to provide their clients with insurance—
those ones bother her. I tell her about the interview. She admires my idealism
and is saddened by my disillusionment. I am grateful for her compassion, so
I say I love her. She loves me too, she wants me to know, but makes sure I
understand our love will not pay the rent.

I wonder if it’s just Utah and consider asking Greta how she’d feel about
moving out of state. Then I talk to my friend Matt. He’s a graduate of several
certificated technical programs, and a computer genius, he tells me. He re-
cently moved back to Utah from Oregon because the only job he could find
was at Subway. He says in Portland, in order to create more jobs, they’ve
started hiring gas pump attendants and made it illegal to pump your own
gas.

Greta says the bill collecting agency is hiring. This wouldn’t work be-
cause I can’t handle outbound telephone jobs. A month ago I worked for one
day calling people to manipulate them into buying cellular phones whether
they wanted one or not. The trick is not to ask if they want one; you tell
them they need one. The reality of it is the cell-phone company needs them
to want one. It’s a very laissez-faire philosophy: create a supply and make your demands.

“But it’s not really pressure sales,” my supervisor said, turning the CTR ring on his index finger. “We just have a superior product and believe in it strongly. We want our customers to understand what’s available. We rebuttal their reasons for saying ‘no’ because they usually want one, they just need that extra push before they’ll commit.”

In the early days of my job hunting I had a very virtuous approach. I wasn’t willing to do anything that wouldn’t let me sleep with a clear conscience, but I didn’t find anything. Where there isn’t a demand there isn’t a supply. My moral fiber is weakening, though. Now I think of myself as Judas and not Jesus. I wonder how much thirty pieces of silver would be worth in U.S. currency. I sit at the kitchen table drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes, reading and rereading my auto insurance statement. It was due today. Tomorrow I will wake up with nowhere to go and look for a job in an uninsured car. Every time I pass a cop I’ll hold my breath. I’ll drive five miles-per-hour below the speed limit—I can’t afford a violation for driving an uninsured vehicle—I can’t even afford groceries. I have eighty dollars in cash and a credit card that’s been cut off because I haven’t made a payment in four months. I’ve had that money going on three months now because I’m afraid to spend it, that I’ll spend it on the wrong thing. My car’s six months overdue for an oil change and probably a tune-up and I doubt it has another six months left in it. I want a job. I want thirty pieces of silver.

Matt tells me his brother just got his Master’s Degree in Psychology. He’s working at DirecTV for six-fifty an hour and his student loans are starting to come due. I tell him I just want to earn a living without hating my life in the process. I tell him I just want Greta to be proud of me. He says human beings shouldn’t have to “earn” their right to live. I wonder if there was ever a difference between democracy and capitalism. Matt thinks our situation is similar to France’s shortly before the revolution. He’s frustrated because he still hasn’t found a job. For the first time since Elementary school, I pray before going to bed—to Kali.

Greta wakes up in the middle of the night. She had a nightmare. She says it doesn’t hurt to pee as much as it did last week. We have oral sex and I feel guilty, like I’m getting something I don’t deserve, that I haven’t earned it. Oral sex is still technically illegal in Utah, and I’m thrilled to be getting away with something. I wonder if the founding fathers felt the same way when they declared their independence, what that must’ve been like. I want to declare sovereign of state. I want to be the first American refugee to
Cuba. I tell Greta about my revolutionary fantasies and ask if it’s anything I should be concerned with, as if it were a cold or a rash. She says America won’t fall like France; it’ll fall like Rome—it’ll just slowly dissolve. The wonders of apathy. To forget about an entire nation and when you go back for it, it’s gone. I tell her I finally broke down and lied on my resume. I made up a company as my current employer hoping that would improve my chances. I don’t tell her that I broke, though, that I couldn’t play it all the way out. I don’t tell her when the manager asked me to tell him something about myself, I said I was an ethical catastrophe. She says my credit card company called while I was out looking for a job. I ask what her nightmare was about.

“Work,” she said.
“What happened?”

“Nothing, really, it was just a normal day. But I’m there forty hours a week. I don’t want to be there any more than I have to.”

Eventually Greta goes back to sleep, pulling a double shift she won’t get paid for. I lie wide awake, terrified I might dream about filling out another job application. Sometime during the night I get up to surf the internet and learn that in Minnesota it is illegal to cross county lines with a duck on your head.

The next day my dad says I should go back to school. I tell him about Matt’s brother. My dad dropped out of the eighth grade to work on a farm to help support his mom and four sisters. Today he makes nineteen dollars an hour as a steelworker. My last real job was working with him out in the industrial park laying rivets for jet-walks. He made me promise if he got me a job it wouldn’t stop me from going back to school. I had worked there a year when I mentioned to him I’d like to get my CDL so I could learn to operate the forklift. The next day the foreman called me into his office and told me he had to fire me or else my dad would quit. When I asked Dad about it he said he couldn’t stand watching me waste my life at a dead end job. So now I waste my life with no job. Dad says in some ways things are better these days, but in a lot of ways, they’re worse. He’s impressed Greta has sex with me outside of wedlock. Oscar Wilde: democracy is nothing more than the bludgeoning of the people, by the people, for the people. Dad says America is the greatest country in the world. I tell him that’s not enough.

I start looking on the internet for revolution stories. The Spanish Revolution, Mexican Revolution, French Revolution, American Revolution. My new heroes are William Wallace and Pancho Villa. I know it doesn’t matter. As soon as I get a job I’ll be contented and won’t think about it anymore.
I explain it to Greta like this: I see myself as an invested and productive member of society. I repeatedly ask for employment and because of my unseemly honesty I am repeatedly rejected. I see that society rejects me, and assume an oppressive complex. Undesirable and spurned for it. I perceive the establishment to be against me. I label myself insubordinate and identify with other untouchables. She listens patiently, her arms folded, the electric bill hanging limply from one hand. When I finish she stares back at me appalled, sets her jaw, and takes a deep breath, as if enduring something. “Oh, honey,” is all she can say, no doubt in awe of my deep socio-psychological insight.

My days are spent filling out applications at retail shops, department stores, and supply warehouses. None of them are currently hiring. They will keep my application on file and call if any positions become open. I am gracious in spite of my despair. At home I overhear Greta speaking to her mother on the telephone. She is crying softly and making up excuses for my disgrace. After hanging up she comes to me for comfort. She begs me to take a job, any job. I tell her I just want a job that won’t make my life a living nightmare. She assures me no such job exists.

That night while lying in bed something frightful occurs to me: I love Greta more than dignity. It sweeps over me and my whole inner-landscape is changed as if transmogrified. I have been suffering under a false ethic. I believed that I should be honest, and somewhere an employer would appreciate it and give me a job I could tolerate peaceably. I have been faithful to the wrong ideal, though: it is Greta who loves me even though I am unemployed. It is Greta who stands bravely beside me despite the great violence done to her relationship with her mother. My ideals seem cold, suspect in this new light. My body shakes all over beneath the blankets and I understand as of now to continue this way will be to take Greta for granted. It is to she, who has never doubted me aloud, that my moral compass aligns.

I rock her softly to wake her. She asks what’s wrong and I tell her I’m sorry, I’ve been petty, I’ll get a job tomorrow. She throws her arms around me in renewed fidelity, her love moved by my newly unprincipled spirit to the happy precipice of lust.

The next day Matt calls to let me know he got a job and I should come aboard. He’s delivering pizzas at a franchised pizza parlor for six bucks an hour plus tips. I go down there and have an interview as soon as I finish the application. It catches me off guard, the quickness of it, so I don’t have a chance to screw up. “You got a car? The job requires a car,” the manager tells me. He’s about five years younger than I am.
“Yeah,” I say.
“It insured?”
“No,” I say and something in me sinks. I feel sick. I think of Greta, the hopeful solidity around her mouth when I come home from an interview and she asks how it went, already knowing. I promise from now on I will never tell the truth again, for Greta’s sake. I remind myself it is Greta who pays all our bills while only I enjoy the luxury of moral dilemma. The manager rolls his shoulders and clears his throat and I know that was it; I lost because I couldn’t tell one stupid lie.

“Well,” he says, “you’ll want to insure it right away. Can you do it fast? Today?”

My eyes sting. I want to cry, and I don’t know if it’s out of relief or terror. The poorly lit pizzeria strikes me suddenly as ominous. I am surrounded by greasy teenagers, and the mingling scents of tomato paste and insecticide are so thick I convince myself the starchy film in the back of my throat is the result of their build up. I count the raggedy bills in my wallet. “Yeah, I can do it right now,” I say, and he hires me. He wants me to come in tomorrow to be sized for my uniform. I’ll also have to bring a statement of insurance so they can photocopy it for my file. Greta will be so happy with me; I’m as happy for her as for myself; that she can believe her faith in me wasn’t so foolish, that she can finally justify me to her bitch of a mother, that love counts for something sometimes.

The insurance company wants a down-payment of eighty bucks to insure me again, and I hesitate. I was expecting it to be sixty, which is what my preremium was before. They tell me I’m considered high risk due to my history of lapsed payment. I was planning on renting a movie and getting take-out with Greta to celebrate, but in the next instant I hand over every bill in my wallet and swear an oath I’ll buy her something really nice when I get paid.

I take I-15 home, excited as hell for her to get off work so I can tell her the news. Halfway to my exit the engine lurches once, twice, something knocks deep inside. I hear a sharp smack like an infant slammed against a wall, and the car sputters and coasts, no longer propelling itself forward. I turn on the emergency flashers and guide it onto the shoulder where it slowly rolls to an insolent halt, a long stream of fluids painting the blacktop behind me. I curse myself for not having the oil changed, and walk down the freeway to the next off ramp. Some jackass in a white Trans Am hangs out the window to yell something obscene at me, and throws an empty Coke can.

At home I get a phone call from a telemarketer trying to sell me a cell phone. The only thing I’ve dreaded more than this is a call from Greta while
she was at work. I tell him his company should pay my phone bill for the privilege of calling me uninvited, and hang up. Then I curse myself for not asking to be put on the Do Not Call List.
“Mom, Mom, hurry come here, something’s wrong with the dogs,” Erica yells. 

Here we go again, more drama.

As the mother of three teenage daughters, I am familiar with “overreactions,” and don’t flinch. The leather chair hugs my tired body and pulls me back to the task at hand. Without thinking, I separate another section of my daughter Olivia’s hair and grab it with the curling iron. Oblivious to the shouting, Olivia sits hypnotized at the television. For a second the scene claims my attention. (Mary Kate and Ashley running through New York)

Curling hair is easier with entertainment—a typical Friday morning.

“Help Mom… I can’t help them…I think Shelby’s dying,” Erica screams. Suddenly, I can’t move fast enough. I jump out of the chair, slam the curling iron on the side table and run towards my daughter’s screams. The nightmare begins when I enter the garage.

It’s hard to describe what it feels like to go from a relaxed state to one where a life hangs in the balance. It’s like a bomb. Before it goes off, everything is together. After detonation, one can only react.

At first glance everything looks normal. Our two golden retriever/labs, Roxy and Shelby, lie in their large cage inside the garage. Erica is bending over, and she is trying to separate them.

They are fine. Everything is okay.

I walk toward the cage.

“Mom, Roxy’s foot is stuck in Shelby’s collar…and I can’t get it out. Shelby can’t breathe,” Erica says. In one swift movement my sixteen-year-old pulls the 100 pound dogs from the cage onto the cement floor.

Once in the open, I discover the dogs’ predicament and terror takes hold. Things slow down; my senses heighten. Things slow...
down; my senses heighten. Then the bomb explodes and chaos envelopes me.

“Oh my Gosh, how did this happen? How could Roxy’s foot get tangled in Shelby’s collar like this? Help me get it out, Erica, help me, help me, help me!” I shriek and pull at the dog’s leg. Erica’s anxiety heightens, as I lose control.

“I tried, Mom, her foot is stuck,” she says backing away. “Mom, help her, please help her,” she cries. By this time Olivia is up from her spot on the floor and I hear my twelve-year-old daughter, Ally bounding downstairs.

“What’s going on, what’s wrong—you guys woke me up,” she yells as she joins her sisters at the doorway. She catches a glimpse of Shelby lying on the floor, pushes her way through and slips behind me. “Oh, Mommy, oh no, look at Shelby,” she cries. I glance back.

“Come on Ally, let Mom think. Let her take care of it,” Erica replies, guiding Ally away from the scene. From the corner of my eye I see the three girls in the doorway as if behind a glass window. It is up to me.

I can do this.

I stop pulling and my hands yank the twisted chain.

If I can undo it, twist it back.

As I try to work apart the steel links, Roxy nips at me. Her foot is swollen, making it impossible to work with the chain.

Could I chop off Roxy’s foot to save Shelby?

I can’t. The steel chain is locked in place. It is a vise tightening around Shelby’s neck. The only way to save her is to cut the chain. I need help.


“But, Mom,” she answers. “Dad just got home from work. Will he wake up?”

“DO IT!” I yell.

All three girls dash downstairs and shout at Kevin. For a moment I am alone in the nightmare. Shelby’s situation looks dreadful. Her mouth stretches open from ear to ear. Though my breath fogs the air, hers is barely noticeable. Saliva seeps out of her mouth. I notice it on my arms and pajama pants. It is thick, a sign of her struggle. I try to force my finger between the collar and her neck to ease the constriction. It doesn’t work. She doesn’t have much time.

When Kevin bursts into the garage, I abandon my position of “rescuer.”

He will save her. He can do it.

He tugs Roxy’s leg. “How did this happen, Anita?” he asks.
"You have to cut the chain. Get your wire cutters," I say.

All he has to do is find them.

He rummages through his tool box. First, he is methodical and controlled, but when he can’t find them, he yells at himself. He jerks the drawers, fumbles through them and slams them shut.

"WHERE ARE MY GOD DAMN WIRE CUTTERS, ANITA, HELP ME, FIND THEM!" I look in the tool box as he opens the door to his carpet-cleaning van. “I can’t find them, Anita, how did this happen, what happened?”

His words are big, angry, and fill the garage.

“We need help….Kevin, who can we call?” I ask.

Can we call 911?

We are on our own. The realization squeezes my chest. I’m suffocating. My daughters huddle behind me, tears streaming down their faces.

Have they been here all this time?

Kevin finds the bolt cutters and I fight to gain control.

“Help me, Anita,” he pleads. I run over, but there is nothing I can do. “I can’t get the bolt cutters around the chain,” he gasps. The chain is disappearing into Shelby’s neck. She barely breathes.

“Mommy, why can’t Dad cut it?” Ally calls from the door way. I look and realize my children will see their beloved pet die.

“Please help Shelby, Daddy,” Ally pleads.

“I need my dykes, where are my dykes?” Kevin asks. As Kevin looks for the dykes, I order Olivia and Erica to pray. Through the garage door, I see them kneeling. The glint of the curling iron screams at me. Our lives changed in an instant.

I turn to see Kevin cut the chain. Both Ally and I watch as Shelby’s head falls lifeless onto the cement.

Oh God, oh no, is she dead?

Silence fills the room and accentuates the details. Everything freezes. The floor is cold, gray, and greasy. Shelby lies on her side, her body deflated.

There’s no movement.

A smell wafts up. She is lying in her own filth.

This is it. She’s gone.

Suddenly, Ally is on her knees next to her dog. “Shelby, please, Shelby, you need to come back, I need you Shelby. I need you, pleeeese, please, plleeese, “Ally cries. She wraps her arms around Shelby’s lifeless body and burrows her face into Shelby’s fur. The words, though beautiful, are sharp.

“Shelby, please, please be okay, “Ally continues.

Oh God help me.

“She needs air,” I say. I have to believe.
That’s what mothers do, right?

Ally grabs Shelby’s head and closes Shelby’s jaw with her hand. She places her mouth over Shelby’s nose and forces air into her lungs. Time stops. Erica and Olivia freeze behind me. We watch, suspended between life and death.

Kevin kneels beside Shelby. As Ally breathes into her dog’s nose, Kevin rubs Shelby’s chest and body.

“Come on Shelby, come back,” he says. After two minutes, Ally is out of breath and Kevin takes over.

“Is she breathing yet?” I ask.

Could this work?

When Ally recovers, she begins the breathing again. “I can do it,” she says. After another minute, Kevin interrupts. “Ally, stop, I think she’s breathing.” Ally lifts Shelby’s head and holds it close to hers.

“She’s sort of breathing, Dad. I think.”

“You’re right,” Kevin says, leaning in.

At first Shelby’s breathing is shallow. In ten minutes, it is hard, fast, exaggerated. “Mom, she looks like she just ran 100 miles,” Ally says.

“Yeah, she looks weird, Mom. Is she going to be okay?” Erica asks. A look of horror spreads over Shelby’s face. Her eyes are wide and glazed; her mouth is open and distorted. Her chest and diaphragm pump vigorously.

“She doesn’t look normal,” Olivia whispers.

You’re right about that.

We freeze, waiting and wondering. In an hour Shelby is walking. A large blood vessel bulges from one eye. The result of strangulation, the veterinarian informs us.

She is alive—Ally saved her.

The day Shelby died Ally brought her back to life. Shelby suffers no ill-effects from her ordeal. Ten-weeks ago, she became a grandmother when Roxy, her daughter, gave birth to a litter of eight puppies. But that is another story.
The face of dreams

Anita Wahlstrom

Ana Menéndez glides to the front of the room. Her dark, wavy, hair accentuates her Cuban features and her colorful blouse shouts boldness. The seating at this year’s National Undergraduate Literature Conference is stadium style, so I’m looking down on her. Yet, I feel dwarfed by her presence. She is larger than life—an icon towering over me.

I’ve always romanticized authors. When I was young, they were figments of my imagination. Greek Gods, with power to manipulate my thoughts and feelings. Now that I’m in college and writing again, they are tangible. They float in and out of classrooms or conferences—so close, yet untouchable. They have crossed to the other side. They live what I dream.

Menéndez introduces herself and her fictional short story. Envy gnaws at me. Other than what I wrote as a child—I have completed two short stories. In the first, I chose to write about my mother-in-law’s taste in gifts. This incurred the wrath of God! I forgot to change two names, and the story fell into the wrong hands. Lesson learned. Always change the names! My second short story, “The Visitor,” brought my first rejection letter. Need I say more? I shift my focus to Menéndez—and her story.

“Traveling Fools” begins with a tale about the author’s great uncle and the communist party in Cuba. Next, the story describes the author’s Grandpa Solomon digging a tunnel to Havana. At eight years old she shovels alongside him. When the story shifts to the last character, Menéndez’s ancestral cousin, my mind wanders.

I think about the author. How did she get from there to here? Mikel Vause, a Weber State University professor, in his introduction of Menéndez, mentioned she earned her master’s degree in creative writing at NYU and attained the New York Times fellow. She pushes her way through the crowded streets of New York; her cheeks flush red from the brisk autumn air and her long hair lifts behind her. Each stride exudes confidence; each heel click shouts determination. A smile compresses a triumphant scream. Her hand grips her first magazine publication.
Her story continues. The cousin character, Mathias, is a postmaster in Santiago, Chile. To escape his life and country, Mathias ties four weather balloons to his chair and flies away—interesting stuff. The story twists from the past to the present and lingers on the author’s connections to her family and travel. My mind strays.

Vause mentioned she’s an award-winning journalist who’s traveled around the world. Menéndez jostles through an airport in Tel Aviv. She’s older. Her hair is pulled back and an Associated Press pass dangles from her neck. When she plops onto a chair, dust encircles her and hangs in the sunlight. A look of pride flashes across her face. She fingers the worn strap of her fat briefcase. It is stuffed with meaningful, political articles; and the novel she is working on. I am pulled from my reverie as Menéndez finishes her reading.

My favorite part of any conference is the question and answer period. Here, I feel the intimate connections that fuel my desires and dreams. I marvel at how I connect with Menéndez. We share writing habits and love literature. I understand when she says how characters and stories take on a life of their own.

I don’t ask any questions, but others do. They prod Menéndez, trying to uncover her secrets. Commonalities thread themselves through all of the authors I have met. They read religiously and follow strict writing schedules. During a writer’s workshop, Brett Anthony Johnston, author and Harvard Professor, talked about his writing routine. He reads two hours each morning and then writes for four hours. Jonathon Waterman, nature and adventure writer, stated during a class lecture, “Read, Read, Read! And do it with a critical eye.” Today I learn that Menéndez writes from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day. They all say that, “to succeed one has to keep writing,” and that “persistence” is the key.

I still romanticize authors—maybe that is the writer in me. I love readings, seminars and college classes, because meeting or being in the same room with a dream perpetuates it. When I leave, though I am walking away from my dream, I am sustained and elevated. I follow the author’s urgings. I go home, to read, to write, to persist.
A Note on the Design

This text is set in Utopia:

Utopia is an Adobe Originals text face designed by Robert Slimbach in 1989. It combines the vertical stress and pronounced stroke contrast of eighteenth-century Transitional types like Baskerville and Walbaum with contemporary innovations in character shapes and stroke details. Utopia has four weights, plus a titling font and an Expert Collection, all of which combine to make a flexible family of types that is excellent for a range of applications from corporate communications and advertising to book and newspaper publishing.

The titles and headers are set in Zapfino:

Zapfino is a calligraphic typeface designed for Linotype by renowned typeface designer Hermann Zapf in 1998. It is based on an alphabet Zapf originally penned in 1944 In 1983, Zapf had completed the typeface AMS Euler with Donald Knuth and David Siegel of Stanford University for the American Mathematical Society, a typeface for mathematical composition including fraktur and Greek letters. David Siegel had recently finished his studies at Stanford and was interested in entering the field of typography. He told Zapf his idea of making a typeface with a large number of glyph variations, and wanted to start with an example of Zapf’s calligraphy, that was reproduced in a publication by the Society of Typographical Arts in Chicago.

This volume of Metaphor was designed with Adobe InDesign CS2.

Layout & design: Cynthia Loveland and Brittanie Stumpp
Utopia

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