



NEW TRICKS

SIGMA TAU DELTA

2013

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Cover artwork by Cassie Edwards, a painting entitled "Cloud and Mountain."

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Contact us!

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New Tricks

The Man and the Monster

By: Tonee Ektnitphong

Here lies a tale
Not too far fetched
Written about a MAN
Who moved worlds
When he FLEXED

On the peak
Of a mountain
Like a king
On his throne
He challenged any beast
To make it their own

The villagers below
Saw the MAN as a GOD
The Monster however
Saw the MAN as a fraud

The Monster flew
So Gracefully
Around the globe
At Santa's speed

A magnificent creature
Magnificently misunderstood
Just like the man
For different reasons

Oh I forgot to mention
The girl
Beauty far beyond
Such a small village
Sheltered the Animals
Played with the Fishes

The MAN and The girl
Such a
Passionate love

Sent the Monster on a delivery
The mountain top empty
The girl left in misery
The End

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Dear HMD

By Asheley Geditz

You are the only person I can talk to with my mouth full of food,

That will still understand every word I say with ease.

You coax out my smile, when all it wants to do is

Cower and hide in sorrow.

I confide in you the darkest parts of my psyche,

And you hold every one of my fears upon your shoulders.

Our laughter is like when the sun shines, right after one of the darkest storms,

It cascades over a room like a waterfall.

You see the cracks in my iron mask,

And allow me to be vulnerable and weak,

But remind me of how strong I am.

I'm a train wreck, and sometimes a psychotic bitch,

But you see through all of that.

You are like the sister I never had,

And your kindness inspires me to become a better version of myself.

We sing together at the top of our lungs,

And swear that we sound amazing, even though we both know we're lying.

Lying to you breaks a piece of me,

And I only feel whole again after I've confessed my transgression.

I was there when your uncle died and saw you cry for the first time,

Really, truly, sobbing, snot running down your face crying.

I let you soak my shirt with your tears,

And was the well you could pour your sorrow into.

You give me hope, when I call you crying that I'll never find a man,

We have a pact to adopt children if we are both still single at 40-

(God let's hope that is not our fate)

I want to take away all of your insecurities and fears,

Make you into a blank canvas and paint you with only vibrant colors.

I want to wipe out the darkness and melancholy that has stained you.

You keep me sane, when I think I am going to finally succumb to my inner darkness.

You who I am honored to call my very best friend.

They say life is unpredictable and has many turns and twists,

But maybe one day, I'll be brave enough to let you read this.

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Apple

By: Anthonee Ektnitphong

Oh beautiful apple
Upon the tree
I'll admit, I'm smitten
As strange as it seems

I feel I should warn you
Of the dangers at hand
I know with great certainty
That's no benevolent branch

No other can contest it
Your bright red complexion
Your angular curves
Embody perfection

I write these words
To depict my affection
Sentence to sentence
Not far from obsession

Within lies a message
I consider a blessing
Under that skin
You rot in depression

No bruises to show it
But surely enfolded
And all oppressed feelings
Lead to implosion

But before the convulsion
And for all that's been stolen
With me lies a chance
A chance to feel golden

Oh beautiful apple
Upon the tree
I've fallen for you
When will you fall for me?

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Untitled Love Poem

by Ashley Gediz

You stare at me with your half-open eyes

And then your half-interested lips Ask me “what do you think love is?”

Knowing you only half-care and knowing that you’ll never really be mine,

I answer that Love for us women

is not just cheesy hallmark cards and caramel chocolates,

It is not helium filled balloons or boxes containing diamonds.

Love is seeing a mother hold her child for the first time,

It is the explosion of light in her eyes and the warmth of her smile.

It is a man being a father to children who are not his own,

And knowing without a doubt he would give up his life for them

because they have now become a part of him.

Love is not a word to be used to get us women to go all the way

Our virtue is something to be earned there is a price to pay.

Do not tarnish its value with your selfish tongue

You should fix your lips around it, It should caress the ear and ignite the heart.

Love is ecstasy meeting despair like darkness juxtaposing the sun.

It is a well of impenetrable certainty with ruptures of doubt,

Like a rollercoaster about to take its first drop,

It has a climax of anticipation and a tendency to fall.

It is being up until three a.m just waiting on that call

From the one person who cares about us the most,

We can be miles apart but still feel just as close.

Love is not resentful, it lets old grudges roll off of its back
like

Rain drops sliding off of a raincoat on a black stormy night.

It is war, fighting for the right to love whom we want regardless of gender.

Love is a head bowing in what may seem like submission,

But really a gesture of respect and understanding.

In a time where 1 out of 2 marriages fail, it is something to be cherished,

Like the eruption of reds and yellows that streaks across the sky at dawn.

You must take care of it and respect it,

And carry the word in your mouth as delicately as it deserves.

Love is not just an emotion, it is a life choice,

It sometimes blinds us of the imperfections and ugliness of life,

Causing us to see the very best in humanity.

Love is not deceiving it puts everything into perspective,

Focusing a picture that was once blurred and cracked.

It is the ability to give ourselves to another human being,

Not permitting fear to control us, and holding nothing back.

It is like walking in below zero degree weather and braving the cold

allowing yourself to be real, open, and exposed.

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Love is not just about a bouquet of red roses in a vase full of murky water,

It also lies in the subtlety of the handwritten poem,

And the love of a mother to a daughter.

You can hate to love or love to hate, But either way it all is the same passion and energy,

You cannot have one without the other,

just like there would be no darkness without the light.

They are the ying to each other's yang,

Like day and night, a manifestation of electricity across the sky

Love does not bend its will to hatred,

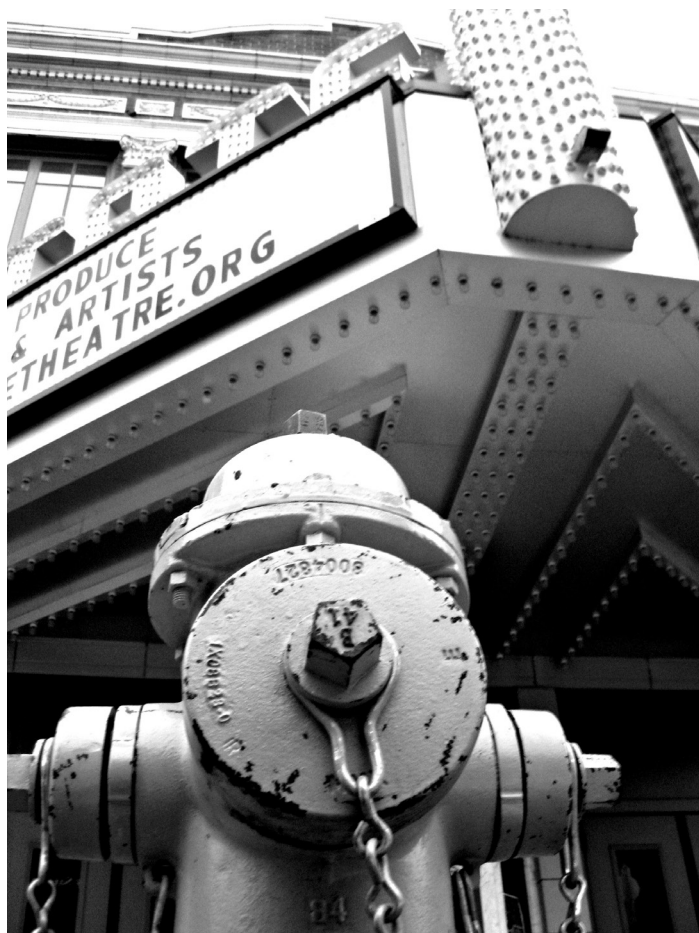
It stands strong like the weathered oak tree, tall and proud.

You ask me, what do I think of love.

I stare into your uncaring eyes say all of the above.

State Theatre Hydrant

by Laina Darger



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American Lit Wasteland Imitation

by Chelsea Kruse

Fresh blows the wind to my homeland. There is
nothing now but our country. Our country
right or wrong. Winter dawns upon unreal
cities as the storm approaches quickly.
Alcée passionately loves Calixta,
their passion a white flame, life's mystery
a borderland and fountain of delight.
While Désirée is wrongly accused, fate
turns upon Armand, revenge served coldly.
Rosicky's heart grows weak, "Come lovely and
soothing death." For I would rather have Death
by Water than have Jenny fall in love
with the wrong man and have to be rescued
by Slade's widow. Horace Ansely's widow
had been lovely but Madame Sosostiris
was clairvoyant and wise. Huckleberry,
full of trouble, takes up wickedness to
save runaway Jim. Winterbourne, who has
lived too long in foreign parts, shuns little
Daisy. Logic and sermons never will
convince Sylvia to tell the heron's
secret and give it's life away. Bonté!
What did Thunder say? It's howling crash fades
to a swampish hush like that of dazzling
Nebraska, home of the light blue Palace
Hotel where the Swede chooses his own fate.
Carrie gazes at the passing landscape
As Drouet charms her with flashy words and
Her thoughts turn to him and a better time
while a man leaves the Yukon main trail and
deserts his first fire,

“I was booked to make
a mistake.” “I’m afoot with my vision,”
now Huck sets out for Injun country and
driven by the Trades. Space and Time! Time and
eternity. Thoughts of a dry brain in
a dry season. Tenants of this country
listen to me I beg you, “There is no
honor above America with me.”

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Rhyming Is Not So Easy

By Chelsea Kruse

You think it is easy to rhyme?
I think you're crazy, so
Let's take some time
To discuss both before you say no.
If rhyming were easy,
Every fool could sing it.
So I'm forced to disagree
So shut up and take a sit
In that chair over there.
Let's hear you rhyme.
You can't? Be aware
Looks like I win in less time
Than it took for you to see
You ain't smarter than me.
If rhyming were easy,
More poems there would be
That sounded less cheesy
Than what comes out of the mind of me.
How does one become a master?
The truth is, no one ever does.
So smash through the plaster
Of the wall before off the edges
Of sanity you plunge.
Don't ever stop rhyming
Though because fear does lunge
While critics count your timing.
What do I care?
I'll just wait and stare.

Cloud and Mountain

By Cassie Marie Edwards



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The Lingering Past

Sarah Sproul

Gary Dean, a heavy, middle aged man with long, black hair and straggly bangs, was unhappy. He sat on the couch and stared at the picture in his hand of his ex, Sheri, and him from 14 years ago.

“I wish I could erase the memories of you,” Gary Dean confessed to the photo. With a sigh, he tore the picture in half, reached over and threw Sheri in the trash bin next to the couch. He slumped back and moped for several hours, playing back his last encounter with Sheri.

“I hate you!” Sheri gave a look that pierced his soul. He stared into her entrancing blue eyes and begged her not to go, but he knew it would do no good.

“I thought you wanted this! You can’t just walk out on me. We have to stay together for this child.”

“You knew all along that I didn’t want this. I said no, yet you forced me into bed anyway. What kind of sick, demented boyfriend does that? I can’t be with a scumbag like you!” She turned and slammed the door behind her, then waddled to her car where he watched her take off for the last time; never to return.

I hate you! Sheri’s voice repeated over and over in Gary Dean’s mind. He gazed at the TV, but he didn’t pay attention to what was playing; he just stared.

Hours rolled by, and Gary Dean sat motionless on the couch until the doorbell rang. He struggled to stand, and opened the door.

“Gary Dean you are a disgrace to the human race!”

“I’m sorry, lady, do I know you?” Gary Dean yawned and stared at the lady as he wondered if she knew she had yogurt smeared on her chin. He couldn’t help but chuckle quietly to himself. The elderly woman with short, curly blonde hair wearing an orange track suit and sporting an ancient-looking purse

walked into Gary Dean's house uninvited and shut the door behind her with a disapproving glare. A deep crease in Gary Dean's forehead appeared as he stood confused.

"Don't you know me, Mister Sim?" Her lips formed a pleasant smile, but her dark eyes turned it into something evil.

"Um...no. Should I?"

"I thought I liked you, but that all turned sour once you impregnated my daughter and ruined her life! I'm Doris, Sheri's mother." Gary Dean saw her vengeful grin grow wider.

"You see this picture?" Doris lifted a photograph of a young emo-looking girl out of her purse. Something about the girl's deep blue eyes looked familiar. "This is your daughter. She never smiles. Life for her has been miserable because she never knew her father." Gary Dean didn't know what to say or expect next.

Doris rummaged through her purse and pulled out a long-bladed knife.

"You should suffer for all the years of torment our family has been through."

She raised the knife over her head. Gary Dean screamed a long strand of obscenities and stumbled across the room trying to flee the crazy lady.

"Wait, wait! Oh dear God, please stop! I can change!"

"I'm afraid it's too late for that, dearie."

"No, I can change! I promise you! I can become a better man. I can do whatever you want!" Doris paused to think for a moment.

"Oh? Can you, now?"

"Yes, I'll do anything! Please, just don't kill me."

"You're willing to do anything for our family, Mister Sim?"

Gary Dean nodded frantically, and an evil smile yet again formed on Doris's face. She slipped the knife back into her purse and grabbed Gary Dean's arm as she led him out the front door.

"Where are you taking me?"

"To see your daughter, of course. It's time to face reality, Mister Sim. You're going to be part of our family, forever."

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In Medias Res

by Shane Whidby

So, here we start,
In medias res,
Midway upon the journey
Of my life.
And, indeed, I am lost.
Where is my poet?
Will you not send him to me,
To guide me
From this shadowed forest;
My inhuman existence?
Or am I to stray
From the beaten path,
Destined to blend
With the black and gray
Of my self-fulfilling darkness,
To fall to my own brutish
Lion, leopard, wolf?
Do you wish me paradise,
Or passage into the city of woe?
Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'entrate,
Etched into your headboard.
It was abandoned long ago.
So, I must consider my origins,
Contemplate my decisions,
Resolve my own conflicts.
*Io non sono nato per vivere come un bruto,
ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza.*
I must follow you,
My virtue, my knowledge,
My Beatrice.

Describe Purple

By Vanessa Carlson

Night sky after sunset,
Social outcast's locks, expressing her rockstar dreams,
Cotton candy melting on young tongues,
Young girl's eye hue, tears streaming down mournful face,
Sunlit morning dew,
Plump grapes hang lifelessly on tree limbs,
Rage and pain of unknown face,
Brewing thunderstorm lights midnight heavens,
Bruises—leftover pain,
Balloons floating above joyful carnival crowds,
Remains of grape flavored popsicle on child's face,
Lilacs' entrancing fragrance,
Dragonflies zipping through summer air,
Mystery—unknown,
Sparkling wine in the hands of elite,
Neatly woven spider webs shimmering in sun's rays,
Mist rising over cool mornings,
Mountains towering above nature,
Unique, yet deep personality of soul lost,
Purple.

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Flemoid 4 Red

by James Chattin

FLEMOIDS:
FLEMOIDUS
CYCLOPTIS



Crossroad

By Cassie Marie Edwards



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In the Attic

By Laina Darger

Every time she drove home that late at night, Kara was convinced she was going to die.

The thing is, her neighborhood was really creepy this late at night. It was a quiet, residential neighborhood, filled with small children who, during the day, filled the streets and the park a block over with their laughter and joyful screams. During the day, the tall trees that leaned over the street to mingle their leaves together were nice, beautiful even. During the day, it was hard to notice, or even care about the old, crickety fence that surrounded her backyard. But as soon as the clock struck 9:30 at night and the streetlight halfway down the block went out, the neighborhood was thrust into complete darkness and a calm that was maybe just a bit too calm. The wind picked up and the unexpectedly cool breeze was enough to send shivers down the spine.

That was why Kara hated driving home late at night. However, working at a movie theatre did not offer many options, especially on a weekend when the biggest horror movie of the year had just been released and everyone in town came to see it two, maybe three times. Kara had not seen it, but she heard the noises that came from the theatre while it played; the screams from the shocked audience, the music designed specifically to make your hair stand on its ends, the cackles of the murderer as he closes in on his prey. Kara did not particularly like realistic scary movies. Something about the fact that any of the scenarios in the movies could actually happen was just too creepy for her to be okay with.

Kara's keychains and keepsakes she had on the key ring of her car key's jangled and hit the dashboard as she took the last turn into her neighborhood. There was a cheap, 50 cent ring that she had gotten out of the vending machine at work, a tiny, green, stuffed bear with her birthstone in its tummy – peridot, she was proud of being born in August, and an old guitar pick. The guitar pick was from her dad. He and her

mother had never been married, and when Kara was a baby, he had been in a band with his closest friends. They were convinced that they were going to be the next big thing, and Kara's dad was more interested in garage practice sessions than spending time with his family, so Kara's mother broke things off with him, claiming that he "loved the band more than their family". The only thing he left behind was his guitar pick, and Kara took it, as her mom wanted nothing that reminded her of him.

Kara shuddered involuntarily when she saw how dark the block looked; that one streetlamp halfway down the block, covered by tree leaves, really did nothing in the way of illuminating the street, as much as it made the leaves glow a pretty green color. Though, the neighborhood was, somehow, creepier that night. Kara parked her car in front of her house and sighed, prepping herself to get out of the car and walk into her house.

There was this ongoing daydream, Kara supposed it was, that she had. In the daydream, Kara would come home from work late at night and be halfway between her car and her front door when someone would drop down from the tree in her front yard and land on her back, prepared to mug her. Sometimes in the daydream, she would be distracted by her ringing cellphone as she got a call from Jordan, or maybe Erica, and a serial killer would pop out of the bush by her front door and stab her in the gut, running off cackling into the night. And on the more outrageous occasions, even though Kara was a rational girl and did *not* believe in anything supernatural, she imagined that a ghost would follow her into her house, just behind her as she closed the front door.

After taking a few deep breaths, Kara leaned over and locked her passenger side door. She noticed that the light in her mother's room was on, and the small window by her bookshelf that faced the front of the house had an oddly shaped shadow, just beyond the glass. A bit too odd to just be books. Kara squinted. She tilted her head to one side, then the other. But she absolutely could not get it out of her head.

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There was definitely a figure in the window that looked like a person. The person-shaped shadow seemed to be staring at Kara (the back of her neck prickled, like necks tend to do when someone is staring in class), and she was sufficiently creeped out.

She leaned back into her seat, eyes squeezed tight and head in her hands. Kara looked at the clock on her dashboard. It was just past 1:30 in the morning, and Kara knew that she was in the witching hour. She contemplated her options. Maybe she should go for a short drive. Just to clear her head. And maybe she will call Jordan. Yeah, talking to Jordan will calm her down.

So Kara started her car and drove the long way down the block, passing the lonely streetlight at the corner of the block and turning out of her neighborhood.

At the stop sign a couple blocks over, she pulled out her phone and dialed a number she had known by heart for years now.

“Kara, it’s like...” Jordan paused and Kara assumed he was looking for a clock. “It’s 1:38. Why are you calling me?” His voice was thick with sleep and Kara almost felt a little bad for waking him up this late at night.

Kara’s eyes flicked left and right before she started driving again. “I just got off work, so I went home and I was trying to calm myself down to get out of my car, right?” Jordan hummed in the affirmative. “Well I went to lock my passenger door and there was this... thing looking at me from my mom’s window.” Kara tried to keep calm as she was re-telling the story, but she knew that it would sound crazy, even to her best friend.

“A thing?” Jordan sounded unamused.

“Yes! Like, a person. It was, like, staring at me, and it was really creepy, so I freaked out and drove away.”

A laugh was stifled on the other end and Kara sighed. Talking to Jordan was calming her down a bit, but his inability to see how serious she was about this was frustrating. She looked out the window and saw a cat run across the driveway of its' house before disappearing, a white blur running into the backyard.

"You're laughing at me, aren't you?"

"Yeah, I am," Jordan admitted. "You've always been so scared of your neighborhood, Kara. I'm sure it's all just in your head."

"I know, I know. I'm probably imagining things, but I'm really freaked out right now."

"Just go back home. It's late and you're tired from work, and that's making you go crazy. Get some sleep."

On the ride back home, Kara thought about how sure Jordan sounded. He never understood how creepy Kara's neighborhood was, and therefore never sympathized with her when she got scared. She turned the corner and groaned as she saw her house approaching, creaky fence growing bigger by the second.

She parked her car in the same spot she had before and closed her eyes tightly, taking deep breaths. "Don't panic," she muttered to herself. "There's nothing there. You were just imagining things, Kara. Everything is perfectly normal." Hesitantly, she opened her eyes and looked out of the passenger window.

The shadow was gone.

Kara scrambled out of the car and to the front door. She tried to turn the handle, but it would not budge. Her first thought was that she had been locked out, but then she remembered that the door handle had been stuck for a couple days now, and she went around to the garage, quickly but quietly running up the stairs to her mother's room. The first thing

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she noticed was that the light was off, though the light from the television set filled the room with a soft glow. She could see that her mom was asleep, but her blankets were tangle around her legs. Kara frowned, fixed the blankets, and went downstairs to get ready for bed.

Later that night, after Kara had showered, brushed her hair and her teeth, and gotten settled into bed, she heard the floor in the hallway creak, like it does when someone leaves the bathroom to go back upstairs. It was just her mom, she decided, before she turned over in her bed and fell asleep.

--

The week went by and Kara kept looking for the shadow-like figure. Every night when she came home from work, she made sure to glance up at her mom's window, but every night she saw nothing. She had even taken to making irregular trips to her mom's room during the day, to see if anything irregular was going on, but nothing looked out of place and when she asked her mom about it, she was confused by Kara's questions.

One morning, Kara had poured herself a bowl of cereal as her mom was eating toast at the table. Her mother hadn't brought up anything strange going on around the house, so she decided to ask.

"Hey, mom?" she called over her shoulder, pouring the milk carefully into the bowl.

Her mother hummed in acknowledgement as she took a sip of coffee, wincing slightly as she swallowed the bitter drink.

"Have you noticed anything... weird in your room? Like, lights on when they should be off? Or maybe a, um," Kara paused and cleared her throat. "A shadow that... looks like a person?"

Cocking her head, her mom shot her a confused look. “No, I haven’t. Have you been seeing anything weird?”

Kara knew that if she told her mom what she’d been seeing, she would not be taken seriously. “No, no, of course not.”

--

At the end of the week, Kara drove home late from the theatre. She had been stuck mostly on clean-up duty, and felt like she was covered in popcorn butter and sticky, syrupy soda. Not to mention Erica, who worked with her and knew of her distaste for scary movies, had been sneaking up on her all night, finding the most inopportune times to scare her. Kara had banged her head on the underside of too many seats to count and was surprised she did not have more than a minorly irritating headache.

Kara locked her car doors and made her way up the driveway, wiping a newly discovered patch of sticky skin with a moist towlette she had found in her purse, causing goosebumps to rise on the now damp patch of skin. As she stuck the towlette back into its package, and then into her pocket, she reached the garage and pulled the door open.

Something seemed... off in the garage. Kara looked around and saw that her bikes from when she was younger had fallen over and were lying in a pile by the back door. And not only that, but her bat from when she played softball was no longer by her sports’ equipment. Instead, it was by the dog kennel (Kara was once again confused as to why her mother had bought a house that came with a dog kennel, when they had never owned a dog).

But what was probably the weirdest development was the entrance to the attic – it was open. The normally tightly closed door was open, and the pull down ladder was halfway down, like whoever had last been in the attic was not finished with what they had been doing and were going to come back later. Kara shrugged, thought that maybe her mom had been

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going through their older things, and went inside quietly, wary of the fact that her mother was sleeping.

Kara went around her room, putting her uniform away and plugging in her phone, when –

Creeeeeaaaaak.

It was the first creak she had heard since she first saw the shadow. She frowned to herself.

Creeeeeaaaaak.

There was a pause and Kara tilted her head, straining her ears to hear the next, long *creeeeeaaaaak* that followed.

What was her mother doing up this late?

Creeeeeaaaaak.

Kara listened to the footsteps more closely. They did not sound like her mother's footsteps. Her mother walked lightly and with intent – she knew where she was going and she wanted to get there as quickly as possible. These footsteps were heavier, almost stomping, and seemed hesitant, cautious, like someone was trying to sneak around. A shiver ran down Kara's spine as she realized that someone was in there house, someone who was not supposed to be there. But who was in her house, and where were they?

Scanning her room, Kara realized that she had no weapons to defend herself against the intruder, so she tip toed out of her room, snuck into the garage, and picked up one of the bats that had been knocked out of her sports bag. It was an aluminum bat, cool to the touch and the weight was surprisingly familiar in her hand. She hoped that she wouldn't have to use it, but knew that if the intruder tried to attack, she would have no hesitations in employing her skills from the years she was in softball.

Kara pulled out her phone and called Jordan, once again.

This time, Jordan answered with a sigh. “Did the big, scary shadow frighten you again?”

“That’s not funny, Jordan!” Kara snapped. “There’s someone in my house and I’m really scared.”

“Whoa, what?” Kara had little time to feel smug, as she was sure she heard more movement from inside the house.

“Someone is in my house. Please come over, I’m scared.”

“Okay, I’ll be there soon. Don’t do anything stupid.” With that, Jordan hung up.

Once back in the house, Kara listened for any more unfamiliar footsteps or unexplainable creaks. There was nothing out of the ordinary, but she was not about to let her guard down. She crept up the stairs towards her mother’s room and upon reaching the landing, she stopped. The door to their storage room was open, just the tiniest bit, and a small sliver of light was peeking out from behind the door. Taking a deep breath, Kara pushed the door lightly, wincing as it creaked open.

The room was in complete disarray. Boxes of things to put in the attic, old toys and keepsakes that couldn’t be stored anywhere else, were open, tipped on their sides with the contents spilling out onto the floor. Bags of clothes to bring to Goodwill had been upended in a pile on the floor, and old shoes were strewn around the room like they’d been carelessly tossed aside. Kara stepped into the room and approached the small table in the far corner, where the lamp was set up. The dust on the table had been disturbed, wiped clean in some places, and shapes that looked like handprints and fingers were vaguely able to be made out. A breeze drifted through the room and Kara glanced over her shoulder. Not only was the window cracked open, but the closet door was open as well, so wide that she was surprised had not noticed it until then.

New Tricks

Kara closed the window and latched it with one hand, holding her bat tightly in the other. Then she slowly turned to face the closet and a feeling of dread settled on her shoulders. Did she want to see what was in the closet? Or, maybe even who?

She decided that the answer was yes, and Kara walked into the closet. She could see that the door at the top of the closet that lead to the attic was open; her mother made sure to always keep the door closed and locked, as it created a draft. There was also a sturdy-looking, wooden chair, directly underneath the door. Kara set the bat down, stood on the chair and was just about to try to pull herself up through the door when she heard footsteps on the stairs. As a precaution, she picked up the bat again as she stepped down from the chair.

“Kara!” Jordan’s voice hissed. He stepped onto the landing outside the door to the storage room and Kara peeked her head around the corner. As she spotted his unruly dark hair, she let her arm that was holding the bat relax at her side. Jordan’s face fell into a more relieved expression when he saw Kara, and he joined her in the room. “What are you doing up here?”

“Someone’s been in here,” Kara answered frantically, gesturing towards the mess in the room. “This place is normally perfectly organized! And there are fingerprints over on that table, and places where dust has been cleared away. Someone’s been in my house, Jordan!”

“Have you seen anything else?”

Kara shook her head. “No, but I heard footsteps earlier that I know weren’t my mom’s.”

Jordan nodded. “Okay. Where do you think the intruder is?”

She pointed to the closet. “I think they’re in the attic.”

Suddenly, Kara heard footsteps again, the same footsteps

she'd heard when she was in her room. But now they sounded like they were coming from the attic. Before she could fully register what had happened, Jordan had climbed onto the chair and pulled himself up into the attic, out of Kara's sight.

"Jordan!" Kara whisper-shouted. "Help me up!"

She got onto the chair and held up her hands when Jordan's torso reappeared through the door, and he pulled first the bat, then her up with almost no trouble.

In the attic, Kara couldn't see anything. It was completely dark and she had difficulty making out even Jordan's form in front of her. He grabbed her hand and lead her away from the hole in the floor of the attic that would bring them back into the house.

There were more footsteps, closer this time, but still far away, and the entrance from the attic to the garage shot open as if the door was ripped from its' hinges. In the brief moments before the figure disappeared, Kara caught a clear view of his face. It was a face that she could only remember seeing in old photographs with frayed edges and discoloring, and face was also considerably older than in the photos, but recognizable nonetheless. The dark hair, crooked jaw, and dark eyes before her were the same that belonged to her father, the same dark hair that had been passed on to Kara herself.

"Dad?"

And before her eyes, the man descended the ladder, slamming the door shut behind him and sending the attic into inky darkness once again.

"Kara? What's going on up there?" Her mother called from the hallway below, and Kara looked back, wide-eyed at Jordan who had pulled his phone out of his pocket and was staring back at Kara, looking just as shocked.

"Nothing, mom."

New Tricks

The Wilted Daisy

By Tami Jo Redinger

As I was walkin' all alone
In the meadow, near my home
I found a daisy, a single daisy
No other flower was around.

That daisy, that single daisy
Was beginning to wilt and fade
It looked as though it would soon die
And I just couldn't pass it by.

For some reason, I picked that daisy,
The reason I may never know
I picked the daisy, the single daisy,
I just couldn't let it go.

I brought the daisy, the single daisy,
With the single petal home
I put the daisy in a vase
I just couldn't let it roam.

I put some water, some special water
In the vase with the flower of mine
Then the daisy, the dying daisy
Soon began to turn divine.

It looked as though an angel held her
And when I asked the flower why
She told me that an angel did
And she began to cry.

She told me that an angel picked her
From the lonely meadow that day
"If it wasn't for that angel
I wouldn't be here with you today."

Told her that she was mistaken
That no angel picked her that day
But, she told me, she's not mistaken
"If an angel hadn't, on the ground, dead, I would lay."

Now that daisy is in my kitchen
And she brightens up my home
I am glad I picked that daisy
On that cool September morn.

When I get home from work each day
And when I'm feeling very down
All I do is smell the daisy
To wear a smile instead of a frown.

New Tricks

Waking up

by Katie Miller

I wake to kneading against my head,
My ears tugged and my lobes pierced.
Soft humming floods my ear drums.
Chunks of hair lift up and become matted.
My face suffocates under enormous force.
I greet the dawn to a pair of green eyes
My kitten, Callie is the perfect alarm clock

Dear Beloved Book

by Laina Darger

Dear, beloved book
Your pages are frayed, soft as a feather
Cheeto fingerprints linger
Kool-aid splashes remain
Water has spilled, made your pages warp
Looking at you makes me wince
You were once clean, pristine,
all hard edges and white pages
dark, contrasting font
But I have made you into this shamble of a thing
Your binding is broken and when I move you I fear pages will
fall out
I'm truly sorry for this,
But you have never looked more beautiful

New Tricks

Hate Kills

by Katie Miller

The locker room filled up with men as soon as the game ended. Cheerful shouts vibrated off the walls. The winning of the basketball game led the Buffalo to the finals. Men fist bumped and patted one another on the back. The victory was to be celebrated at a house party thrown by the team captain, Lucas. Guys filed out of the locker room in a rush for the party; however, Kevin stayed behind trying to be the last to leave.

Locker doors slammed shut and Kevin waited until his locker neighbor left before digging through his bag. Kevin's brows knitted towards the center in confusion. He continued muddling through his bag looking for his inhaler. His keys scratched his palms which made him drop his duffle bag onto the floor. Contents from the bag scattered everywhere.

Kevin knelt beside the wooden bench and began gathering his items. Frustrated, he jammed his gym clothes, and other items into the duffle. His hands grasped a nail clipper kit but was crushed under a tennis shoe. Looking up, Kevin spotted Lucas. "What you got there Kevin?" sneered Lucas. Kevin ignored Lucas and pulled the nail clipper kit out from under his shoes. He continued shoving items into his bag and proceeded towards the door. "Cute nail kit. Are you going to go paint your nails faggot?" Before Kevin had time to respond, he was slammed into the lockers.

A blow to the stomach left Kevin gasping for air. Lucas continued punching him. Blood drained from his nose and onto the floor. While crouched down, Lucas kned him in the stomach. The impact resulted in Kevin lying on the ground begging for the blows to stop. Lucas kicked Kevin causing his head to ricochet against the lockers. The dent left behind on the locker door was humorous to Lucas. Seeing Kevin in pain felt like a trophy to him.

Kevin begged for Lucas to stop. Tears cascaded down his face mixing with blood. He screamed for help but his fellow teammates cheered Lucas on. They chorused the phrase “kill the faggot.” Banging from their fists against the lockers and benches echoed throughout the room. Not one person aided to Kevin’s side although he screamed for someone to help. His pleas came out in small gasping spurts.

He vomited blood onto the floor. Lucas knelt down beside him. He grabbed a chunk of Kevin’s hair and he slammed his head against the locker. “Tomorrow you are going to quit the team or the next time I have to tell you I will kill your faggot ass,” whispered Lucas threateningly.

The guys began to disperse out of the locker room. One by one they each took their chance kicking Kevin. Each kick became more aggressive. His fellow teammates degraded him in any way possible. The bullying ranged from spiting on him to violently beating him. Each person took their shot at degrading his sexuality in every way possible.

Three minutes passed in complete silence. Trying to sit up, Kevin felt the sudden urge to use his inhaler. His head snapped towards every direction but he could not spot the inhaler. Suddenly breathing became an obstacle. Doctors had warned him about panic attacks and how to get through them but without assistance, Kevin was unaware of what to do. Panic flooded through him. He gasped for breath but air was escaping his body at a rapid pace. His body was limp and he could not muster the energy to get up on all fours. Kevin’s bones collapsed underneath him and he lost all control of his body. His eyes rolled in the back of his head and he began to seize.

His seizure lasted all of five minutes but was more than he could handle. If it weren’t from the wounds he has received prior to the seizure, he would have survived; however, because of his teammate’s harassment, Kevin died which is what they wanted, to “kill the faggot.”

New Tricks

The Rock

By Dillon Dwyer

I have been here for ages
older than the oldest of Earth bound sages

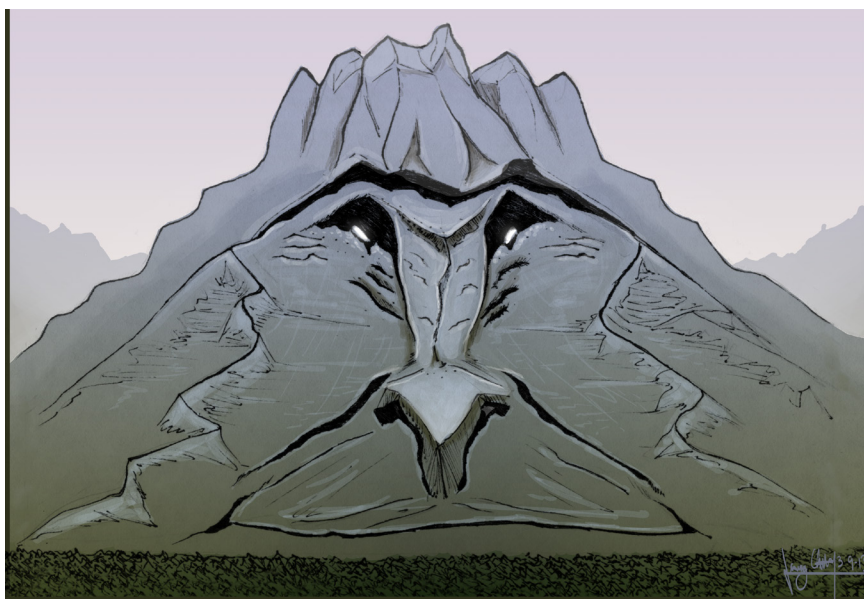
it is hard to shape something like me
from the Earth I grow free

time will always have its way
wearing at me every day

for all the erosion I have endured
I will become polished smooth and finely matured

Mountain Face

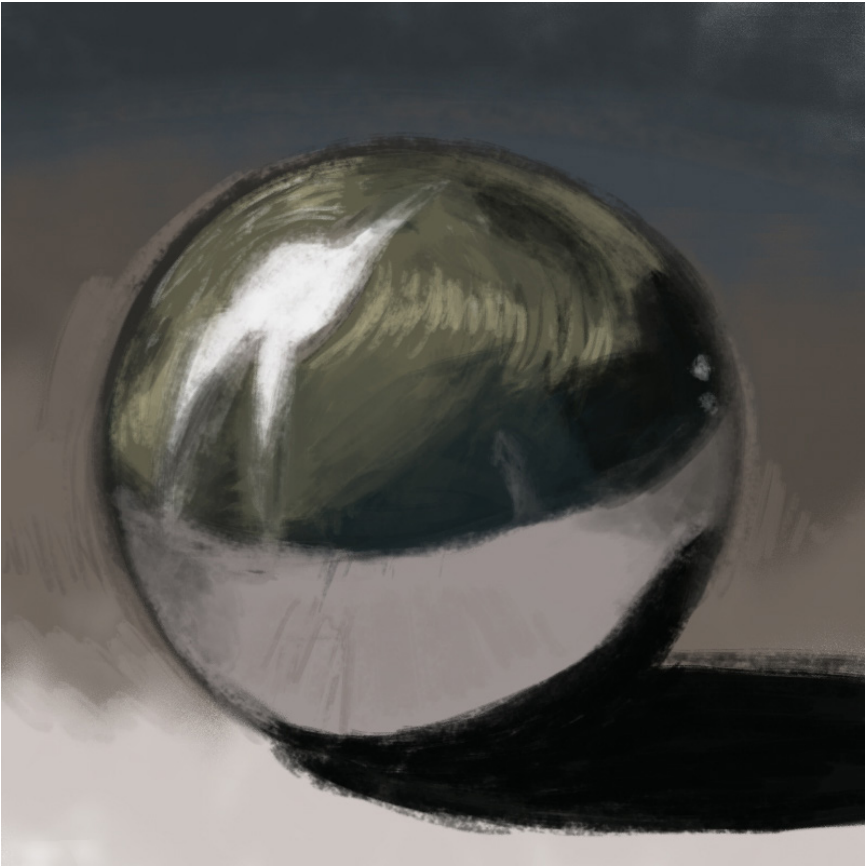
By James Chattin



New Tricks

Practice

by James Chattin



Forest Fire

by Dillon Dwyer

like a forest fire
we must burn down what we were
to grow new again

New Tricks

Cotributors Notes:

Angela Behrends is a mixed-media sculptor and installation artist who teaches art classes at DSU. She believes that life is better when you create things, that learning should be enjoyable, and that cats are people too.

Vanessa Carlson, originally from the small town of Britton, South Dakota, is a senior English for New Media major at DSU. She aspires to be either a magazine journalist or a digital strategist for a humane society. When her nose is not inside a book, she enjoys a good laugh while spending time with friends, family, and her two beagles.

James Chattin likes doing artsy things but can do nearly everything else, too. Please visit rowmansailor.deviantart.com or gamesoftaste.blogspot.com for a glimpse at what he does.

Dan Crisler is graduating with a degree in English for New Media. He hails from Arlington, South Dakota, and will probably be on the move to some town or city or wherever the Fates lead him. He is just hoping the Fates don't lead him to living in a box.

Laina Darger is majoring in English for New Media at Dakota State University, in Madison, SD. She has lived in Sioux Falls, SD for most of her life, and considers it home. She is a creative writer with a wonderful sense of humor. Laina enjoys writing and one day she hopes to publish a book of her writing.

Dillon Dwyer is majoring in English for New Media. He considers the Whetstone Valley and the town of Milbank, SD to be his homeland. Being blessed with a knack for pulling ideas out of his hat and setting the ball in motion, he considers himself a doer of work.

Cassie Marie Edwards is an artist and a part-time professor. She teaches Art, Art History, and Social Media classes at DSU. Cassie is always thinking about painting, but she also enjoys knitting, sewing, crocheting, spinning yarn, dying yarn, and other crafty things.

Anthonee “Tonee” Ektnitphong is a friend of Andrew Ryan and was personally invited to be a writer in the hidden city of Rapture. He is currently studying Elementary Education, so that he may condition the younglings into perfect humans. He will do anything you ask, as so long as you preface it with “Would you kindly”.

Derik Everett is from Jasper, Minnesota. He has always loved to draw and create stories. His passion pushed him toward a Bachelor’s Degree in Animation at Dakota State University. Derik practices dedication in all aspects of his life and is constantly trying to achieve more efficient ways of animating.

Mary Francis is a Reference Instruction Librarian. Currently a Madison resident, she spent her formative years in eastern Iowa. Her strongest strength is responsibility and getting things done.

Ashley Geditz is from the good old town of Madison, SD. She is majoring in English Education with a minor in speech communication/theater, and will be getting her coaching certificate for volleyball. She considers herself a bit of a movie buff and has watched the Lord of the Rings trilogy over 50 times!

Abbie Graham is a part-time grad student and staff member at DSU.

New Tricks

Chelsea Kruse is majoring in English Education. She was born in K.I. Sawyer, Michigan. But after years of moving around as part of a military family, she considers White, SD her home. Having a passion for writing, she hopes to one day publish a book.

Tami Jo Redinger is majoring in Elementary and Special Education with a minor in Art. She originally comes from Naples, SD but graduated from high school in Henry, SD. Tami is an active member of CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) and SDEA (South Dakota Education Association). She enjoys writing, taking pictures, knitting, scrapbooking, and baking.

Sarah Sproul is majoring in English for New Media. Her hometown is Harrisburg, SD, and she is currently involved with Sigma Tau Delta, Phi Eta Sigma, and Kappa Sigma Iota honor societies. She enjoys reading and writing in her free time. A little known fact is that she has a knack for origami.

Shane Whidby is a Secondary English Education major from Sturgis, South Dakota. He spends his free time reading, writing, and hanging with friends. Just kidding, he spends most of his time playing video games and watching Netflix. In the future, Shane plans on teaching and coaching football and track in South Dakota.

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