

# **INSCAPE**

---

**ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE 2011 EDITION**

---

---

## **IN-SCAPE (N.)**

The essential, distinctive, and revolutionary  
quality of a thing:

“Here is the inscape, the epiphany, the  
moment of truth.”

-Madison Smartt Bell

# Staff

## Faculty Advisors

George Eklund  
Chris Holbrook  
Rebecca Howell  
Elizabeth Mesa-Gaido  
Gary Mesa-Gaido  
Crystal Wilkinson

## Editors

Sean L Corbin  
Sosha Pinson

## Cover Design

Derek Holston

## Editorial Board

Brandon Ballard  
Charlotte J. Cain-Pigg  
Adam Doran  
Cody Evans  
Brandon Massengill  
Charles Maynard  
Cassandra Murphy  
Drew Pearson  
Sara Volpi  
Nathan Wellman  
Ben Whisman

## Special Thanks To

Morehead State University  
Department of Art and Design  
Department of English  
Office of Communications &  
Marketing  
Interdisciplinary Women's  
Studies Program  
Kentucky Philological  
Association

## POETRY

Ben Whisman	<i>A Dead Dog</i> ..... 7
	<i>A Sudden Rain Shatters Hot Tub Illusions</i> ..... 8
	<i>The Ending of a Five Year Conversation</i> ..... 10
Sara Volpi	<i>Thunderstorms</i> ..... 11
Kathryn O'Neil	<i>Daddy's Dreams</i> ..... 11
Jessica Herrington	<i>Army of the Morning Star</i> ..... 13
Matthew Haughton	<i>Picking a Hound Pup</i> ..... 13
	<i>Picking off a Squirrel</i> ..... 14
Lea Faske	<i>Salisbury Hill</i> ..... 14
Jeremy Armstrong	<i>The Smartest Gypsy I Ever Knew</i> ..... 17
Ralph Shelton	<i>Kaleidoscope</i> ..... 18
Stacey Greene	<i>Speaking to God</i> ..... 18
	<i>Teach a Woman to Swim</i> ..... 19
Christopher Prewitt	<i>A Fear of Cellars</i> ..... 20
	<i>At Historic Harlan Sanders Café and</i>
	<i>Museum in Corbin, Kentucky</i> ..... 21
	<i>Tiny Near Death Experiences</i> ..... 23
Blythe Hunt	<i>Aperitif</i> ..... 24
	<i>Petrified Nipple</i> ..... 24
Drew Pearson	<i>Wine Cellar</i> ..... 26
Cody Evans	<i>The Clinchman</i> ..... 26
	<i>The Earth</i> ..... 27

Sean L Corbin	<i>a meditation on Kentucky</i> .....	29
Christopher Knox	<i>Indians This Morning</i> .....	34
	<i>Powerline Man</i> .....	35
Julie Barbour	<i>Laundry Day</i> .....	37
	<i>Come To Me and Drink</i> .....	38
Sosha Pinson	<i>Penance</i> .....	40
	<i>How to Get Disowned in My Family</i> .....	40
	<i>Enlightenment</i> .....	41

## NONFICTION

Sean L Corbin	<i>Space Medicine</i> .....	42
Ben Whisman	<i>Limited Training on the Subject of Dog Fights</i> .....	46

## FICTION

Brandon Massengill	<i>Dinner Plans</i> .....	47
Brian Tucker	<i>The Coke Man, The Town Mortician, and the Lassie Dog</i> .....	52
Brandon Ballard	<i>I Love You, Mommy</i> .....	55
Brian Hawkins	<i>The Greystone Hotel</i> .....	59
	<i>Pizza Delivery</i> .....	64
Christopher Prewitt	<i>Making a Living</i> .....	66
Gary Smith	<i>Buried Alive</i> .....	70
Stacey Greene	<i>The Morning Call</i> .....	76

## VISUAL ART

Lea Faske	<i>Cyerce Elegans</i> .....	6
Derek Holston	<i>Fur</i> .....	9
Jonathan Nickles	<i>Legion</i> .....	12
Derek Holston	<i>Murophobia</i> .....	16
Gwen Long	<i>Serenity</i> .....	22
Annie Jo Peterson	<i>Dorm Life</i> .....	25
Joe Schubert	<i>Gulf of Texaco</i> .....	28
Tara Thompson	<i>Silence in Cycle</i> .....	36
Natasha Reader	<i>Agree to Disagree</i> .....	39
Marvin Puckett	<i>Plucked and Pulled</i> .....	45
Christopher J. Burton	<i>Daisy</i> .....	51
Lea Faske	<i>Pathos</i> .....	57
Rick Lewis	<i>former self.</i> .....	63
Justin Howell	<i>Audible Silence</i> .....	66
Kelsey Zachry	<i>Untitled</i> .....	75
Emily Katelyn Baldrige	<i>Still Life</i> .....	80



**Lea Faske**

*Cyerce Elegans*

Watercolor and Ink

First Place Art Award

## **Dead Dog** *Ben Whisman*

She lays there  
On the shoulder  
An empty vessel  
In the gravel  
And the broken glass  
Thick blood cooked in with the tar  
Painted brown over white lines  
And her stink will catch up to you  
Down the road  
Like thunder  
From lightning  
You've almost forgotten

Five days in sun  
Off-white maggots filing out  
Over a small twist of intestine  
Writhing on the ground beneath  
Eating every last thread  
Indifferent  
As she is stopped there  
Ended and vanishing  
Fucked proper

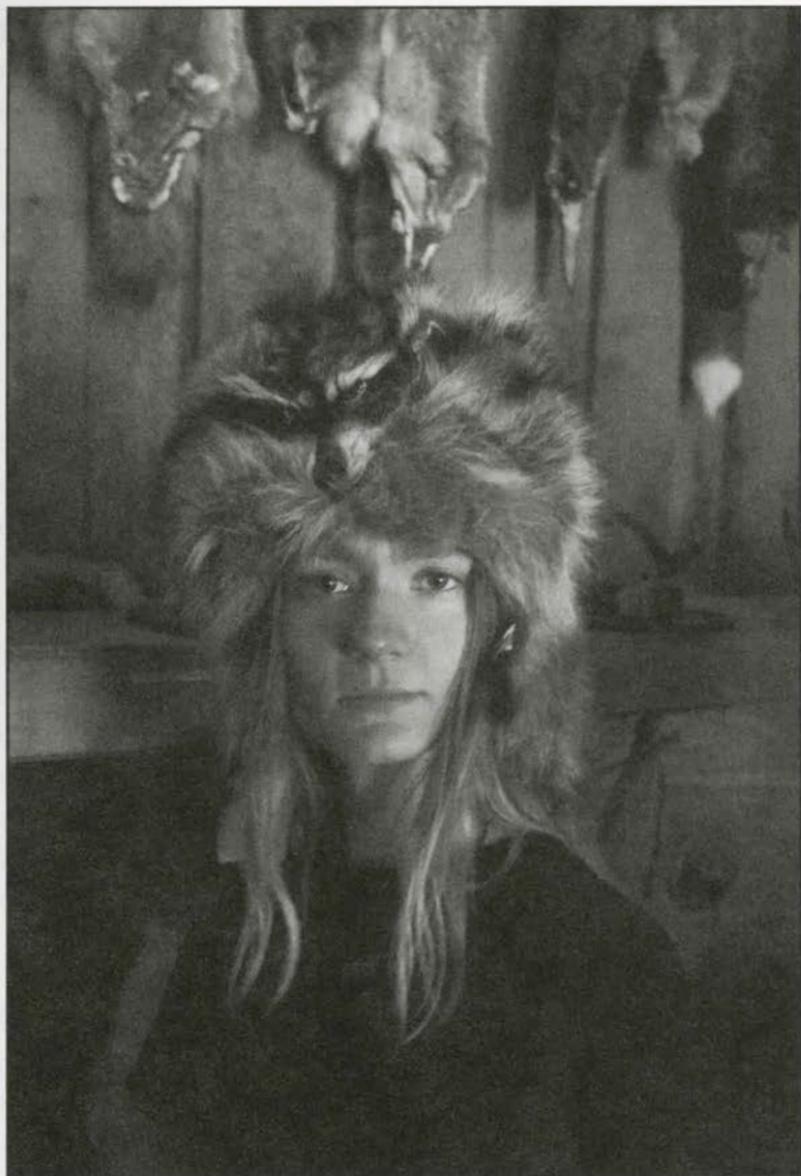
No rigored ride in the back of a pick up truck  
That would be enough wouldn't it  
Just to be hauled  
Through the field  
To an unmarked grave  
Limp tongue smacking  
Cold  
Against the lowered tailgate  
As the wheels bounce  
With the uneven earth  
Hidden  
Under untouched grass

## **A Sudden Rain Shatters Hot Tub Illusions**

*Ben Whisman*

I make deep contact with endless pale blue eyes  
Eyes that coil around my consciousness  
Constrict my thoughts into a singularity  
As we all are one under the flood lights  
Legs interlocked under murky water  
I have no words as I stare into her  
All I can do is lift my brow  
Pretending my wit has been melted away  
The vodka insists that I touch her there  
Beneath the water  
But as my hand moves across her thigh  
The alcohol induced illusion shatters  
I remember myself  
I pull away  
But she pulls me back to her  
And with all of my senses moved to my fingertips  
I can feel her feel me  
And her skin is refreshing in the terrible water  
Almost cool there  
In that blistering obscurity

But a drop crashes through the bare tree tops  
Then more  
Exponentially more  
And without a word  
Without a look she goes back inside  
Everyone goes back inside  
Leaving me in a half empty hot tub  
With the first drops of winter rain kissing  
My cracked lips  
Stinging the split ridges  
And its all I can do  
To keep my head above the filthy water



**Derek Holston**  
*Fur*  
Digital C Print

Second Place Art Award

## The Ending of a Five Year Conversation

*Ben Whisman*

She sits in the passenger seat  
Door open  
Knees folded  
Turned towards me, but looking away  
With no words left  
I watch as one tear  
Slides out from under her sunglasses  
Down her cheek  
Past lips that quiver just for a second  
And it falls from her chin  
Hitting worn asphalt  
Making it black

And I lean silent against my motorcycle  
Clinging to it  
Feeling heat from the exhaust pipe through my jeans  
Hoping it will make me seem better  
I toss a cigarette into the grass  
And light another  
Allowing the burn of the smoke  
To steal my attention  
As it passes down my throat

She catches one tear  
Before it can fall  
Rubbing it in  
Faking an itch  
Her brown eyes muted behind brown lenses meet mine  
And she smiles  
A gesture so false her entire body shakes

## **Thunderstorms** Sara Volpi

I stood beneath the eaves,  
bits of wood poking the undersides of my bare feet,  
while the storm blew me kisses of rain  
and pulled my hair with its wind.  
It lit up the sky with flashes of white  
that I felt go up and down my spine.  
My eyes wanted to close-  
stung by pellets of rain,  
but I wouldn't let them;  
I could see past it - still able  
To watch the world unfold in  
electric currents.  
My legs ached to sit,  
the goosebumps on my  
bare arms and legs wanted  
me to join my mother, inside watching  
TV. I wanted to be whisked away - to feel what  
it was like for lightning to strike me.  
All I could do was close my eyes and  
let the mist wet my lips and  
fall from my lashes.

## **Daddy's Dreams** Kathryn O'Neil

Trapped by your vision  
(In old spectacles)  
Living the image of you  
in your high school uniform.  
I am only a *mold*,  
Growing on 1970s sneakers,  
That never took you  
As far as you wanted to go.



**Jonathan Nickles**  
*Legion*  
Charcoal and Ink Drawing

Third Place Art Award

## **Army of the Morning Star**

*Jessica Herrington*

his beautiful foot  
crushes down  
grinding his booted heel  
into the primordial earth  
soldiers falling as they rise  
to stand in ranks  
across the quaking earth  
and smoking sky  
breathing liquid fire  
under raining soot  
he lifts his fist to God  
his echoing roar  
shouts defiance  
leading his followers  
to rebellion  
independence  
or hell

## **Picking a Hound Pup**

*Matthew Haughton*

Choose the only boy because his sisters  
have hen-pecked him near to death,  
having chewed on his ears.  
The breeders will say they named  
him Billy Ray Hubbard  
because his deep set freckles  
remind them of their daughter's  
young fiancée.  
During the ride home on the bed  
of a pick-up,  
give the pup a new name —  
one he can grow into as he squirms  
in your arms,  
leaning out his nose just far enough  
to take in smells of woods and roads.

## Picking off a Squirrel

Matthew Haughton

His wound rose up-out of his thigh  
like a dark red bud  
popping from a branch.  
He scarred me, limping  
away underneath  
an old doghouse.  
I'd shot him,  
thinking a child's aim  
could never be good.  
I cried, trying to lift  
that doghouse,  
just so I could put him  
out of his misery.  
I told myself he survived  
with a wound,  
but there was no way  
to get at him,  
except for maybe  
an old black snake —  
who I also cried for,  
rolling a copper bead  
in his belly,  
writhing in the dirt  
because I happened to fire.

## Salisbury Hill

Lea Faske

He met her on the edge of  
Salisbury Hill.  
Roasting a pile of letters  
And a new fur coat.

Her gloveless hands braved winter  
Beneath the undulating shadow  
Of early morning traffic.

Cigarettes.

Cigarettes and L'Oréal.

She breathed a vapor deeper

Than the mushroom smoke

Curling from that dragon's mouth.

"That looks horribly expensive," he said,

"To be burning."

Her emerald glare bit his eye

Like a granny smith; he

Wincing to feel them

Chomp, grind, swallow,

Peel off the stem,

Discard the core. She

Nibbled at the cold sore

Clinging to her bottom lip.

"I suppose."

Ember mixed with ember

When she flicked her cigarette.

"Why burn it then?" he asked

As she took another drag.

She forced a cigarette

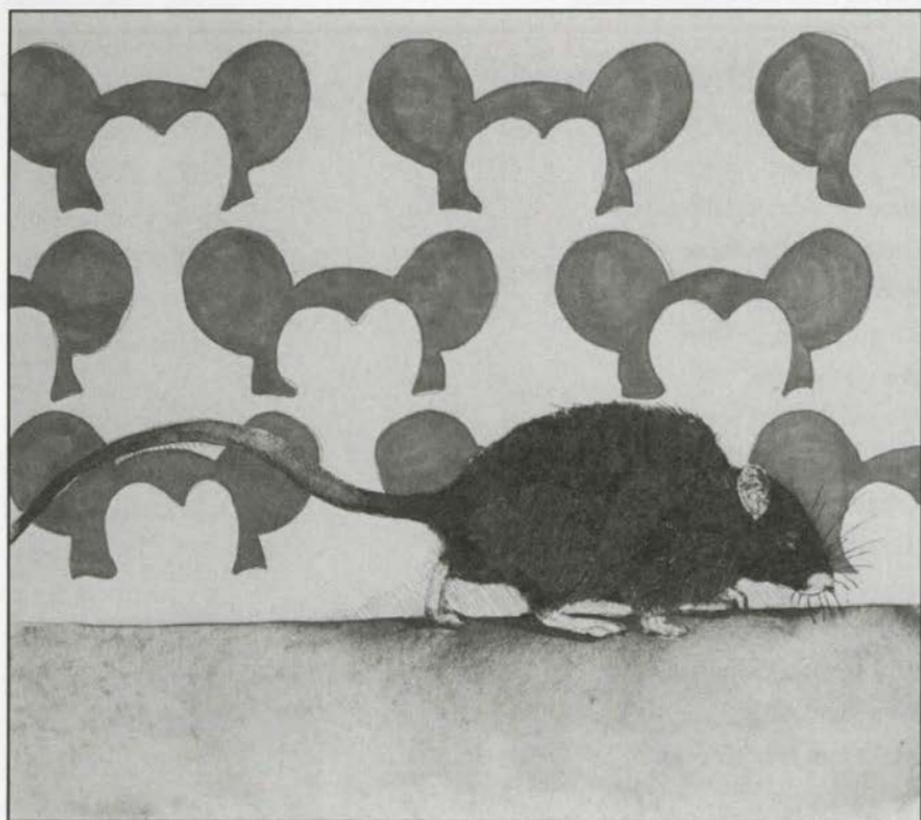
Between his speaking lips and

Dragged ash and ember along

Her trek through inferno.

"Because all that's worthwhile

Only makes it seem worthless."



**Derek Holston**  
*Murophobia*  
Intaglio Monoprint

Honorable Mention Art Award

## The Smartest Gypsy I Ever Knew

Jeremy Armstrong

The intelligible mystic  
Told me to ash my cigarette  
In the tea cup  
To spit my moist snuff  
In the vessel  
And to drain my whiskey shot  
In that same chalice  
So that she could read my fortune  
I obliged  
And she swirled that cancerous concoction  
Round  
Round  
And round  
Then tapped the cup's lip with her broomstick wand  
And told me  
I had no impending future  
To take nothing seriously  
And leave attachments  
To those better suited

## **Kaleidoscope**

*Ralph Shelton*

Kaleidoscope of History

Light just so

Blending facets,

Blending now.

With a turn of the eye-piece ...

A small child upon awakening

Drawn by the light

To the door glass

Drawn to the bright green

Drawn to the windowed trees

Bathed in Golden mid-morning May Sunshine

Hesitating,

Aware that to speak,

Is to break the spell,

Is to turn the eyepiece.

## **Speaking to God**

*Stacey Greene*

Afterwards,

we pretended it wasn't the sex that made her—

like the pollination she was here, right

on time and our hearts beat together long enough

to fill the void—

before she cut it open again.

Then Afterwards,

I had phantom womb

even though it had been ten years and

the doctor said it was just

my head.

After the first years

the curls in her hair faded away

with the blue in her eyes and I

felt like a part of the wallpaper

that needed glued down.  
She told me she had dreams that she would die.  
I had none.

And the doctors,  
if they could look me straight,  
would say I didn't deserve these kicks  
or even this ghost  
living in my head and I  
am too ashamed to speak to God.

## **Teach a Woman to Swim**

*Stacey Greene*

Say aloud, "I do not know,"  
and feel its heaviness instead of the eased, inner swelling  
of breath filling your ribcage up to bursting like  
you had imagined from girlhood. This  
is the way twigs are broken into kindling; this  
is the way children are broken into men; this  
is the way we spread ourselves thin  
like hanging, flayed skins  
for drying for winter coats and then curtains  
in summer.

That we forget so much

in so little ways—you will wish  
you had bottled the bad  
and thrown it into the river,  
and forgot the currents are too strong  
*for just a woman*—you will wish  
you had not asked your mother,  
—Can God swim?

Still you recall what your mother was told  
by her nurse on your birthing day and  
only in your lover's fingertips, you feel her whisper

in every strumming down  
shoulders, feet  
and try to whisper them back into words,  
transfer this heaviness to the bottoms of *his* feet  
so *he* can leave them in footsteps, in mud,  
but nothing ever comes  
but a moan.

It sounds like nothing  
you'll ever find  
bottled on the riverbank.

## **A Fear of Cellars**    *Christopher Prewitt*

*Keith Whitley to his wife*

Pestered by my mustache,  
I lick the corners of my mouth,  
tasting nail polish from the night before.  
A song is a thing you catch as it travels upstream,  
its orange scales glistening.  
If only I could come to you as a mare  
came to me at the wire fence  
without corn husks in my hands,  
the red diamonds of time might not crackle  
like pop bottles in a pile of burning trash.  
A song is hanging from a window,  
drooling into an empty coffee can.  
It was only intended to catch the rain,  
but not the brown rain, stout, running down the chin  
of a song, filling the can like dead leaves  
accumulating at the surface of a backyard pool.  
A callous in the throat, a patch  
of vanilla pumpkins' translucent vines  
curling around the radio's knobs,  
you tied yourself to me,

your knuckles wet from the fear of cellars.  
Love, you said, together we are each other.  
Then the moths dispersed, taking away your shape.  
The red diamonds of time crackling in my bones.

## **At Historic Harlan Sanders Café and Museum in Corbin, Kentucky**

*Christopher Prewitt*

Japanese tourists lick their fingers,  
and what became of you, Harland Sanders?

Here where the room you once laid  
the mass of your day's labor down

is preserved, here where a replica bust  
of the one your daughter Margaret made

that decorates your grave in Louisville  
beams with the flash of disposable cameras

clicked by fingers greasy with your legacy.  
Founder and mascot, all the spectral chickens

in the afterlife, a cyan yolk in which they reassemble,  
dream of you being dropped in the deep fryer

with its popping, plops essential and anonymous  
as drops of rain in a lake.



**Gwen Long**  
*Serenity*  
Ink Drawing

## Tiny Near Death Experiences *Christopher Prewitt*

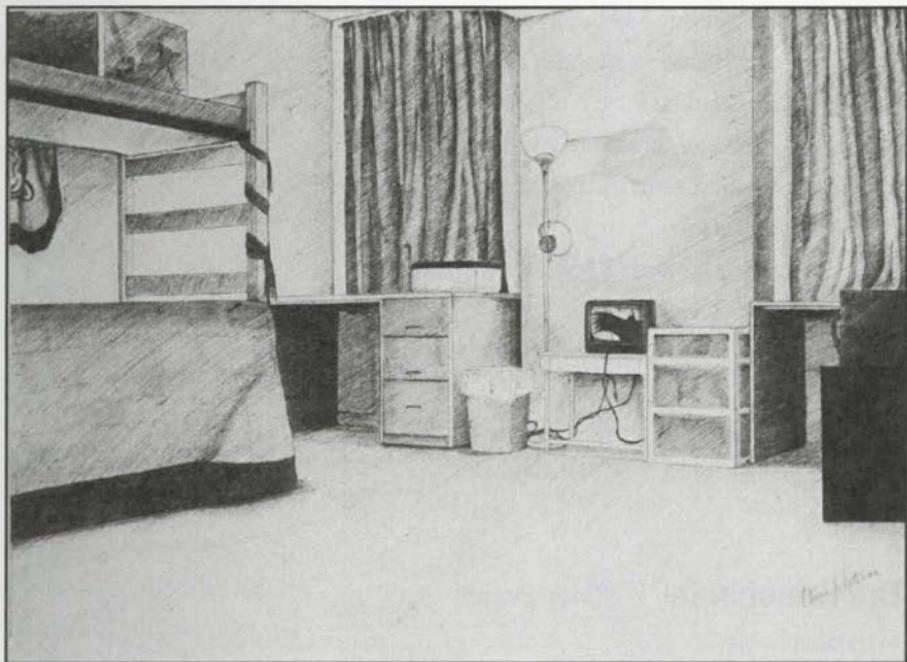
Whatever upsets her, I hold  
Myself accountable. Even if I won't  
Naked the moles or take photos of my penis  
Envy for deceptions that look great,  
Which is not the same the encyclopedia can say  
About fruit flies that have lived  
For over a month. However I love her,  
I gain weight to be healthy. I gained too much;  
I'll probably live forever. She called dibs on the inaugural  
Voyage of dirt. At this point, she draws the  
Only-smallest-longest straw. The penis is a great supplement  
To love, like Styrofoam cups to wine  
From Rite Aid a friend was drinking alone in Motel 6  
In Hazard when he called me, leaning against his bed  
Surrounded by teeth falling out of his mouth when  
He said, "Help, I have a problem." But  
I had to write a paper about Beloved  
For a grad lit. class where we weren't allowed to talk  
About love. I didn't betray my education. I stayed objective.  
"Call A.A. I'm not certified to help you."  
He either sobered up or bled out in the bathtub.  
Either way I haven't heard from him since.  
An R.S.V.P. to an invitation to a wedding I already had  
Is among the whole notes of silence in the sheet music  
Of human noise that he's played so well,  
Like my wife,  
Who pretended to be asleep  
When someone showed a porn during my N.D.E.  
Where I felt the birds' silence as my body  
Heard their beaks beaking my bones.

**Aperitif**      *Blythe Hunt*

Driving home from work  
I wonder if you'll meet me  
at the door  
or if you've found someone  
else's lips to taste  
the high you offer  
through the wetness of your fruit  
that I dream of sucking  
dry  
as the ice cubes  
clink in your glass.

**Petrified Nipple**      *Blythe Hunt*

The boys were laughing  
at the idea  
while I touched my soft  
skin there  
wondering how long  
the supple sweetness  
of sugared femininity  
would last.



**Annie Jo Peterson**  
*Dorm Life*  
Ink Drawing

## **Wine Cellar**

*Drew Pearson*

In my head there is a house  
with white shutters and green front yard grass.  
Inside are many rooms,  
One of which is a basement.  
Inside the basement is a wine cellar.  
Inside the wine cellar are 539 bottles of wine.  
Every single night, I take an armful of these bottles  
and have them with dinner.  
Each bottle is delicately manicured with calligraphy  
giving its description, time, and place.  
"Neuroticism" says one.  
"Yesterday evening between 5:36 and 5:40"  
After all the bottles are empty,  
I wander drunken and happy throughout the house  
only to find  
another basement  
and another wine cellar.

## **The Clinchman**

*Cody Evans*

To the shepherds  
He is a melancholy fable.  
To the villagers  
He is called the Clinchman.

The raider of mausoleums,  
The collector of broken homes.

The very stones that compose the drifting pavement,  
Doused and lulled to sleep by warm summer rain,  
Wake and take flight  
From his cart's creaking wheels.

His cargo is not the living  
For he knows of a gate at town's edge  
Where one may seek a trade with the creator:

He offers his treasure,  
—our refuse—  
And receives the torch  
To the unknowable.

Each night the alleys spring to life  
With a wildness and fear  
Matched only by the wide eyes  
Of the Clinchman's jet-black companion,  
His workhorse slave  
Whose hooves have been worn to the bone  
On streets and cemetery roads.

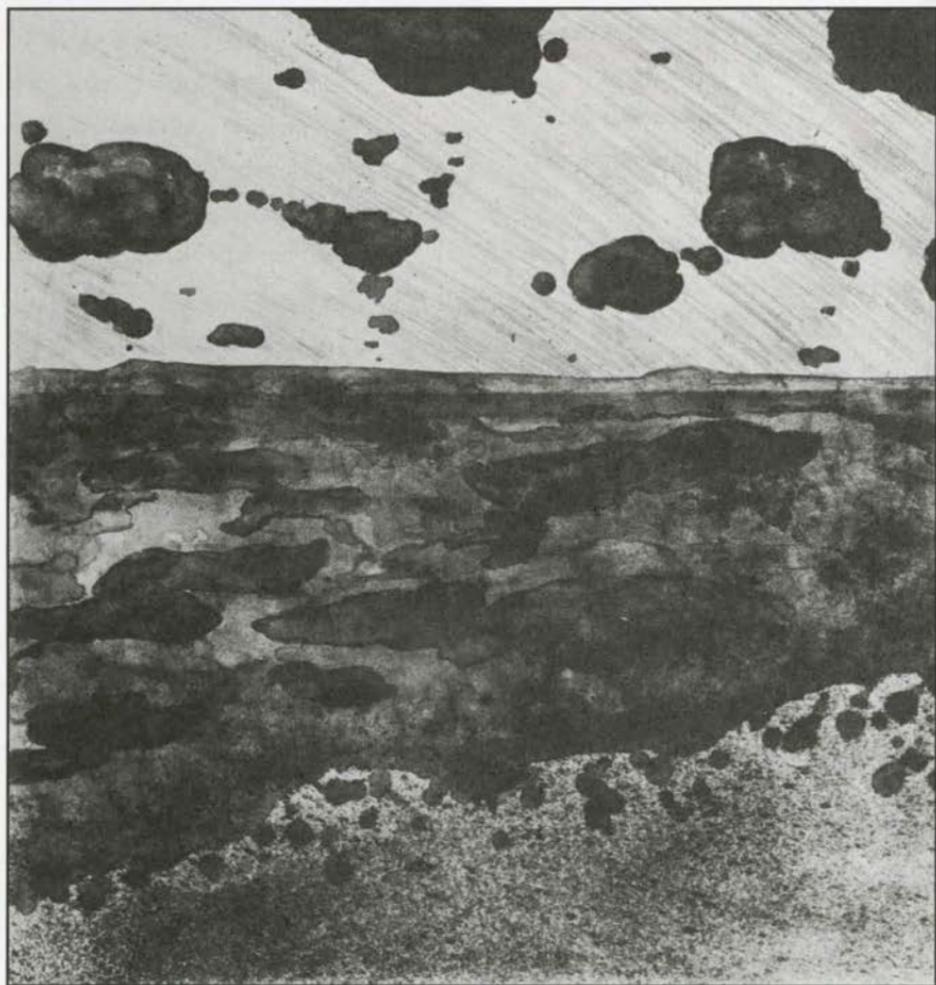
## **The Earth**     *Cody Evans*

Those who keep the book  
Of society's perversions  
Don't have a name for this yet  
And they probably never will  
And it's probably better that way

Naked in the snow  
The body adorned only  
With a rope around the neck  
And the moon's reflection in his eyes

A karst face  
Pleasure and pain compete

He releases himself to the Earth  
And in return  
Asks only for salvation



**Joe Schubert**  
*Gulf of Texaco*  
Lithographic Print

## **a meditation on kentucky**

*Sean L Corbin*

I

staring at the frozen brick of neighbors with faint winter mist softening the view and  
snow crystals dancing in bright lights of the street,  
hands shake from the cold with burning cigarette between first and second fingers  
dangling in the air for four brief moments of life importance,  
smoke drifts in the air from my mouth from the cigarette from both mixing combining  
sex in my lungs leaving black children and fading from sight,  
dead trees surrounding the yard dead meat preserved in ice box for months just sitting  
preserved frozen monuments for the meat grinder and public consumption,  
fried hamburgers grilled hamburgers hamburger in chili in spaghetti and stews imported  
lasagnas consumed beef gristle sticks in rural teeth,  
spin the wheel spin the wheel spin the grinder grinding grind steel teeth shredding  
corpses of natural evolution shredding spinning spitting native ground chuck,  
devour children between bread american cheese mayo sliced tomato no lettuce feed  
them feed us feed our stomachs with death cover our tongues in blood and liquid  
fat,  
clean the plate grateful for your feast make china sparkle like dishwasher clean plates show  
respect honor ancestors clean your plate young man bow to tradition bow to fool's  
gold bow to kentucky

II

remember family dinners communion with like blood traditional values family values  
white potatoes white wine white skins darkened by august sun in fields that paid for  
banquet table,  
poked fun for years poked fun at fat at bandana tied around my head like hoodlum  
poked fun at hours spent in the swing back and forth gently staring off into fields of  
imagination,  
constant support new winter coats with thick hoods to protect from winter chill new  
corduroys irritating to touch around thick thighs fresh treats every day after school  
cookies ice cream milk tall milk frosted milk in glass,  
protection from tetralogy scars still stitched together shielding bruised patched heart  
from harsh elements don't run too fast don't lift too much stay in the shade beside  
gray farm truck stay cool stay hydrated stay healthy,

what's best for me is deep tanned skin on my chest put the belly to the sun absent minds  
forget antibiotics the belly is in the sun back pressed against sticking rubber lawn  
chair in the middle of wide open hill no clouds,  
tears blinding tears shirt sleeves full of tears rubbing ointment on open sores popped  
blisters surrounding nipples fried skin fresh meat open wounds screaming against  
the ocean you only wanted what's best what's best is forgiveness,  
good intentions leave scars pink scars on the chest the ass the brain but fade against  
backdrop of years and bring laughter from stories and understanding and warmth in  
seasonal embraces,  
now wrinkled bloated skin drifting slowly down waters of time towards the white  
horizon but it's not yet time stop drifting don't leave with so much still unsaid mind  
cracking like broken sternum don't leave before i can return every i love you,  
smother me again in compassion just burn me again with good intentions fill me with  
diet rite fill me with pancakes soft buttery crisp edges homemade syrup fill me with  
childhood fill me with hope in family structure fill me with kentucky

### III

walk in to sample fine wines table wines sweet white wines merlot white zinfandel  
chardonnay wines chilled red cabernet organic wines in a box or bottle or bare  
lacerated hands search towering shadowed shelves for high spirits,  
run in and grab diamonds of bluegrass whiskey bourbon heaven hill charcoal filtered  
vodka milkshakes just a little juice for your morning coffee irish cream promises  
tequila sunrises long island iced tea refreshing to drink bottled smiles,  
stagger in and gorge on resources precious bud bud light bud extra bud select bud dry  
wet lips searing for two hundred varieties of liquid hopes and barley domestic  
imports corona dos equis miller coors silver bullet kills pain,  
crawl in be denied access to only prescription for cold chills hot flashes shaking quaking  
limbs waking cotton mouth fanged desires beg and plead from hands and knees  
and be denied chance at assisted suicide in this liquor nirvana,  
delivered into dirt covered panel walls bubbling bathtubs crushed snow oxycontin  
nosebleed power trips fumes floating bending air invading sinuses clouding mind  
for lateral movement from diamond to crystal breathe in burn of cheap expenses  
breathe in methods of rural madness breathe in kentucky

muscles like the rocky mountains beneath the epidermis wrinkled stone invincible  
 unbreakable twisted steel with leather in hand and futurity between cheek and jaw,  
 ale 8 bottles tobacco incognito tabasco sliding onto the tongue burning taste buds  
 activating gag reflex cough hack vomit into garbage can and learn looks can be  
 deceiving,  
 a man of fierce regimen eggs in the morning over easy with dead pig on the side and  
 biscuits floating fluffed biscuits waiting to be crumbled into half mug of coffee and  
 eaten with sugar to hide bitterness,  
 from the leather shop smoke curls from stovepipe floorboards creak everything smells  
 like tanning like clutter with threads needles ancient machinery everything smells  
 like manhood,  
 early morning meetings with uncles on shedding dirt floor of splintered barn with wide  
 alley for horse training and spit flies kills dust storms and crude jokes fly one after  
 another the occasional belch fart racial sexist remark orders given lessons taught,  
 hay rushes into lungs on the back of hay wagons behind blue tractors spitting bale after  
 bale twenty bales forty bales hundreds of bales thousands of bales every one stacked  
 by crying biceps smothering under city fat,  
 keep up with choppers chopping weeds away from weeds in row after row mile long  
 rows to horizon to infinity infinitely longer with talk of coon hunting rabbit hunting  
 and troubles with law hired help that speak doggerel through brown teeth,  
 rusted gray truck standard stick shift shifted easily fluidly tough but gentle by calloused  
 seasoned hands silence between driver and passenger no need to speak just  
 drinking in experience and dealing with nerves,  
 silence speaks volumes speaks years of frustrations anger over beaten path of life over  
 progression of crops shallow roots discolored leaves tainted harvests over loss of  
 control and rising speed limits on life highway with society passing by in a rush,  
 a mouth shut is a shut grill on cast iron stove clogged release valve pressure rising  
 ruptures bursting through twisted steel reddened surface flames escaping burning  
 closest companions making temperatures unbearable,  
 cool the coals stop burning against world don't lose control don't lose drive to clear fields  
 don't wilt and scorch what remains at your side keep digging through fields of rocks  
 and harvesting perfection harvesting rich soil harvesting kentucky

## V

flashes of fayette mall sweating heavy crowds rushing for khakis chocolate chip cookie  
 sandwiches plastic helicopters with two day half lives everyone rushing from store  
 to store sale to sale with debit cards melting in thin wallets,  
 horse shows in owingsville stallions trotting along oval ring straining to pull cinder  
 blocks to win trophies proudly displayed in stalls while studs past their prime sit in  
 lawn chairs along the wall chewing on horse fat with hours to burn,  
 green leaf patterns on jackets overalls ballcaps pickup trucks tree stand nets boots  
 shoestrings gun muzzles telescopic lenses sniper rifles guided towards hearts  
 patiently waiting to spill warm blood invisible to the world,  
 littered yards knees in grass blackface ornamental jockeys praying angels virgin marys  
 keeping vigil over tulips sunflowers lilacs dead since childhood crumbling under  
 the paws of ghosts of long past canines,  
 roadside ditches strewn with empty alcohol cases brown paper bags shredded plastic  
 sacks spilling rotted tissues cans of spaghetti cracked red cups discarded snuff  
 containers forgotten tennis shoes flat tires,  
 coalmine soup bulging from reservoirs lined with thin tarp inches of sod seeping into  
 underground wells creeks tree roots poisoned to light america wasted farmlands  
 killing livestock wasted communities slowly rotting wasted kentucky

## VI

crumbling tan trailer leaning back against gravity of the deep endless slope of a bath  
 county holler eternally dimmed by towering trees like towering memories casting  
 long shadows,  
 slowly gingerly stepping on sidewalk always wet sometimes frozen steep with a handrail  
 added during later years struggling to stay balanced don't tumble down path and  
 crash into porcelain shelter bringing comfort crashing on our heads,  
 bringing you your mail medicine golden butterscotch candies to suck on bringing you  
 rare weekly company with the son still here while hearing about your cowardly  
 prodigy who scuttled off for greener pastures with empty checks overflowing  
 expenses hatred filled children my cousins,  
 breathing in stale mausoleum air inside your living room seeing antique keepsakes faded  
 black-and-white photos of old friends unnamed children image after image of my  
 grandfather long since gone long since faded into ethereal plane,

we carried your possessions stuffed them into the truck packed them tight to keep from  
flying off on drive from owingsville to sterling all the way to the nursing home  
with stories old stories the same old stories of how you walked underneath his  
outstretched arms everyone laughed,  
new home hospitalized bright sterile halogen light bouncing off waxed tiles sounds of  
oxygen machines purring short harried nurses walking jogging sprinting down halls  
patients screaming at german soldiers sixty years dead,  
now dad visits every week sometimes twice brings you golden butterscotch candies  
still loyal to you still willing to see you during depressions passive aggressive  
thunderstorms still matching the portrait of my grandfather even if you refuse to  
see,  
i was there when they took your leg after years of apathy decay all you had to do was  
rise creaking from recliner and walk up the sidewalk once a day but you were  
preoccupied with perry mason and years of stockings green veins protruding  
through skin led you to sacrifice a part of yourself to your own resignation,  
i was there at the emptiness of your bed to see the sheets settle awkwardly two feet too  
soon i stayed with you that night no sleep from all your snoring moaning memories  
of him desperate gasps for air like accepting death,  
that stump drew tears when nothing else about you could couldn't handle graphic  
mutilation couldn't believe you chose amputation over me never enough to replace  
my grandfather never enough to bring true smile to your face,  
now in hospital bed all day with hair long and stringy wide glasses covered in grease  
drifting off into gentle madness refusing rescue just waiting for the next meal for  
a cool wind to carry you away from unworthy grandchildren away from pull of  
gravity away from kentucky

## VII

kentucky is found in outskirts of montgomery county jeffersonville camargo out u.s. 60  
on route 11 in judy down maysville road down fogg pike down main street high  
street antwerp avenue commerce circle,  
kentucky is rolling hills green from spring rains or brown from autumn slaughters cows  
perched sporadically chewing cud standing in shit swatting flies crops stretching  
against gravity trying to find stars,

kentucky is every teacher working twelve hours daily at crowded desk confiscating toys  
from seniors lecturing on algorithms holocausts iambic pentameters receiving  
heavy headaches and light checks without enough zeroes for dinner and movie,  
kentucky is miles of court day flags along city streets green signs by interstate celebrating  
girls basketball player ten years gone proclamations of awards as best city for young  
people no signs for record teenage pregnancy rates,  
kentucky is high school poetry slams high school musicals talent shows with break  
dancing thrashing metal emo punks country ballads interpretive dances with  
glowing white gloves clapping cheers cries laughter celebrations,  
kentucky is new high school buildings state of the art football stadiums basketball  
warehouses with second level track surfaces and no funds for guest speakers  
enriching student souls with words,  
kentucky is new york and old frontier in one mile radius fifty story steel banks blocking  
sun from thousand acre horse farms rows of black fences dry vegetation yellowed  
from pissing contests between businessmen and farmers,  
kentucky is kentucky only kentucky can claim kentucky kentucky is not indiana ohio  
illinois kentucky is not tennessee arkansas georgia kentucky is old and new up and  
down kentucky is kentucky is kentucky here on this sofa is kentucky here in my eyes  
is kentucky here in my blood is kentucky

## **Indians This Morning**      *Christopher Knox*

A morning suicide I thought  
Might be fun  
My warm breath in front of me  
In the cold basement  
The light stifled by shadows in  
That humid place as the blankets  
Turned inside the dryer

As I remember  
The army sent diseased blankets  
To the Indians hoping that  
Nature would take its course

Ah, the musty lonesome of this place  
The Indians in their underground world  
Me in mine of cold stone and mold  
The bound blue morning diving at the window  
Looking for a place to hide

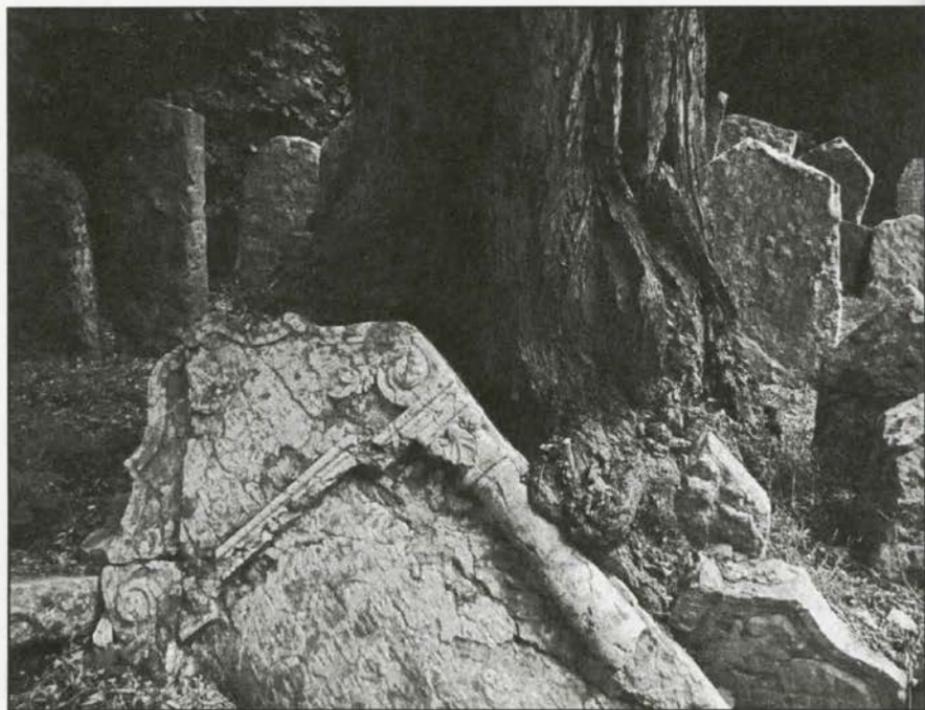
I remember the  
Indians dying in their lodges  
All my life falls through  
Their fevers and visions

The dark starry skies of their dreams  
The cold rattles under their blankets  
Their shaman chanting  
Holding a turtle shell rattle passed down to him  
By his father from his grandfather  
The first astronaut

The first time he went to the moon  
He looked back at earth  
And felt that cold  
Standing atop the first skyscraper  
He saw me through a window  
Half covered with dirt  
He saw what I was thinking  
And gave me the suicide that he  
Wished he could have had

## **Powerline Man**     *Christopher Knox*

I wish I could have seen him, grinning  
As he walked  
He was strong and straight then  
Black hair combed and greased



**Tara Thompson**  
*Silence in Cycle*  
Black & White Photograph

He could outwork any man they said,  
Working at his pace  
When other men could no longer think  
Of their task for the thought of home  
He did not work just because it was expected or  
Required to make a living, no,  
He loved to work the way a racehorse loves to run

I wish I could have seen him  
Grinning as he walked with his news  
The powerline construction company had just hired him  
The best job he had ever had

## **Laundry Day**      *Julie Barbour*

Corner by corner I hang the sheets:  
dark blue, red, a floral print tattered at the edges.  
They whip themselves into one another  
with the breeze, sometimes twisting

into a snarl. My mother would drape her white sheets  
one over two lines, a tent I would run through.  
I show my daughter what I used to do.

She follows with mud under her fingernails,  
hair hanging in her face, her smile the same  
as any child dirty among the wash.

Next door my neighbor's white shirts  
flap like sails, armpits stained yellow.  
Across the street the widow hangs her briefs to dry.  
It is a bright, clear day among the houses.

## **Come To Me and Drink** *Julie Barbour*

I know what she tastes:  
the ambrosia  
that one morning fell in drops  
from my breast to my arm.  
Tasting it, my tongue recalled  
the white and yellow blossoms  
of honeysuckle sprouting wild  
along a field's edge.  
Collecting vine upon vine,  
I'd pluck each sweet blossom,  
pull out each green stamen,  
careful not to lose the drop of nectar  
at its tip, delighting my tongue  
with the watery sugar.

Now the gods put me on the vine.  
The buds of my nipples  
are pink and dripping.  
An infant plucks me dry,  
a sweet smell on her breath.  
This liquid: a heal-all  
for a stomach-ache,  
a sedative for the sleepless child  
now making her bed  
in the field's tall grass.  
Her lips suckle in sleep.  
Her tongue clicks in her mouth,  
an exercise.  
The passing breeze my voice,  
whispering around her ear.  
My arms vines coaxing her  
to come to me and drink.



**Natasha Reader**  
*Agree to Disagree*  
Pencil Drawing

## **Penance**     *Sosha Pinson*

I remember the way I stuck my fingernails  
into the bark of the tree in my back yard  
and wrenched away its wrinkled exterior  
exposing a creamy buttermilk spine  
I thought it was beautiful  
kept tugging at the rough bark  
until it fell away in slabs around my feet

Now I look through the hole in its rotting trunk

I've become the peeling paint off an old whitewashed barn  
sunken in like the hollow of my chest  
that burns so easy in summertime  
and my skin comes off in flakes, in thin sheets of wax paper  
I can't leave it alone.

## **How to Get Disowned in My Family**     *Sosha Pinson*

My mom told me I should never bring home a black boy,  
or God forbid a girl: questions,  
You ain't been experimentin have you?  
She doesn't believe me when I say no.

But I've never known what it feels like  
for mirrored bodies to complement each other  
never even hugged another girl close enough  
to feel the curves of her body against my own  
never done more than envy  
the way certain parts of their bodies flare out  
full and firm in places  
the lines of hips, breasts, flat bellies  
Is it wrong to admire beauty

Is it any different than the feeling I get  
a queasy ache deep in my stomach  
when my eyes trace the strength in broad shoulders  
and the line of the spine just delicate enough  
for my hands to want  
to reach out and  
slide down

She squeezes my hands  
studies my fingernails  
for a confirmation of her suspicions  
white shadows behind the beds  
that old wives say show your lies  
and my sister celebrates the release of Lil Wayne from prison  
says she's gonna marry him someday  
my mom says to me, You may not be lyin about this  
but you're not tellin the truth about something.

## **Enlightenment**

*Sosha Pinson*

I grew up in a church  
that preaches against  
sins of the flesh tells us  
our bodies are sacred temples  
to God  
so I bend my neck  
in worship and lace the line  
of your collar bone with kisses  
offer my naked body to yours  
in praise of the miracle  
of creation whisper  
into your chest how I've found  
what God meant for us  
to be

And you cover my mouth  
with yours grope  
with your hands  
massaging away my beliefs  
that love is its own religion

And I cover my body.

## **Space Medicine**

*nonfiction by Sean L Corbin*

She rode in my backseat as I argued with another girlfriend, and she was all I wanted then, the only star in the universe.

And she sat beside me, legs crossed, in the gym of my elementary alma mater, watching her brother play bass, laughing as my best friend shredded his guitar behind his head and ten year olds screamed, her hair a little curly, I liked that.

A rose petal drifts to the ground, ripped through the window of a van, wilting. It curls through the air like a paper airplane poorly made, arching towards February clouds then diving to the pavement.

I stuttered something, something resembling a request for numbers in a shadowy atrium full of peers, she gave them to me, my heart skipped.

A movie blared in the background, huddled together with a foreign youth group, our first kiss broke an elder's heart, destined for weightlessness, only a wet warm vacuum without light.

My stomach rumbles, bones ache, muscles bubble.

*Pippi Longstocking* played on her faded basement television. We made our initial explorations. We charted the uncharted, floated through a thick atmosphere beneath blankets, together for eight hours now, a good start.

I shook her father's hand, *nice to meet you*.

My heart skips, beats, flutters, skips against a bone cage.

I held her on my waist, the steering wheel digging into her back, my mouth on her neck, her bare chest, the sun crept past the horizon, the church parking lot grew dark, Jesus wept.

Drifting back and forth in a swing, Freed-Hardman University, our first *I love you*.

My skull is pulling apart, trying to escape, my mind leaking from the schism, sliding down my neck.

We sang together, alto and baritone, music in a sanctuary, fingers interlocked, a week from graduation, my hair against my shoulders, hiding slouches.

I joined the church, marched middle school kids down a campground hill, refused to let her have lunch with her best friend, bowed my head at a crowd of anger, a diploma in my pocket, the air was lighter.

No gravity.

A panel wall in a church basement exploded with cracked sterling silver ringlets, thick bands, ground teeth, rejection, my stammering tears.

We were sitting in my car, my yelling confined to my head, her patient explanations a sharp stick in my throat, away with the second chance, I had to get ready to transfer, I had to move on to late-night deep dish and twelve-packs, pills and spinning lights.

There's atrophy in my legs, the anti-bends, call the doctor, cut the gravity away.

She was behind me, a few steps higher on the staircase after surprising me on the cold hill, her voice gentle six months removed from my passenger seat, my posture strained on the cold stone, straining not to look back, knowing I wouldn't be able to stop, her hand on my back, new boyfriend nowhere in sight.

My broken secondhand futon shook beneath us, my dorm room frozen, littered with soda cans, the television buzzing snow. My muscles bubbled.

The pressure presses down, down into my shoulders against a jewelry case, down into my bank account, down, down into my feet, unable to run.

We danced at my sister's wedding, surrounded by neon, her head on my shoulder,  
dark.

Floating, exposed to radiation, the pressure.

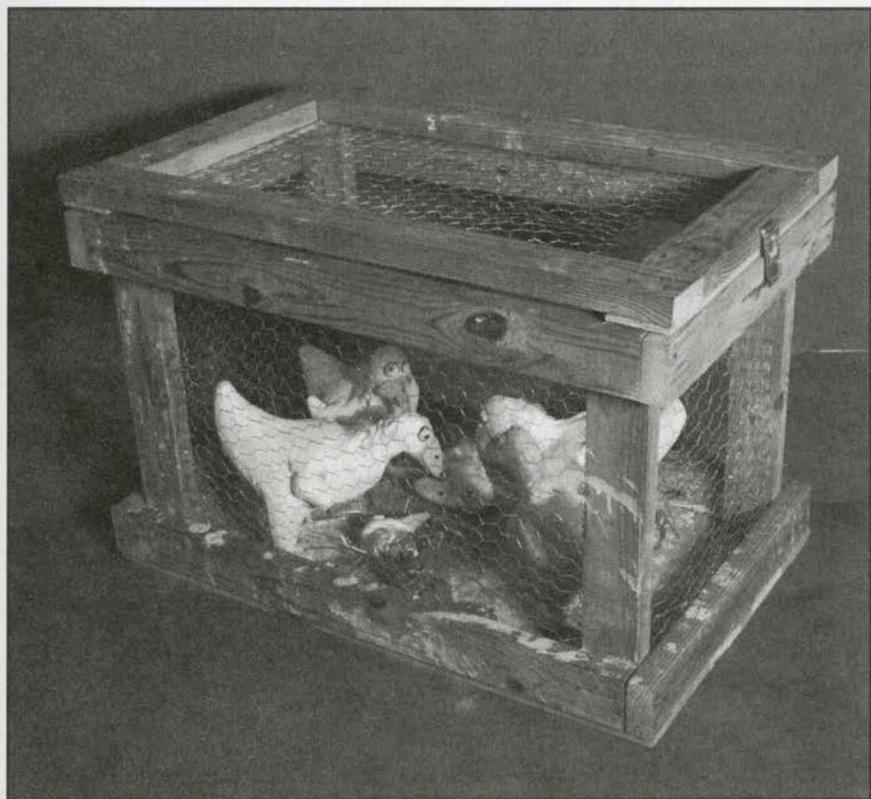
Screams through a cell phone, her disgust at a homemade meal on a night of  
romance, no need for a balanced checkbook, sustenance through our lips, she sounds  
fifteen again, I sound decaying, my eyes nearly at capacity, the pressure changes. I yell  
bitch into the receiver, crows scatter, dead weeds sway in a photographer's background, I  
feel nothing.

I need space medicine.

All I do is drift, ice forming on my fingers, a warmth on my scalp from a star too  
distant to bathe in now, maybe later, after treatment, after a fifth of orange nutrients,  
pawning my rings from her fingers, delirium.

*Can I have one last hug* she asks in the parking lot of my office, holding a box of her  
shirts from my room, I cave in one last time, twitching, not recognizing the release valve.

I drop my phone into my pocket, see a van through salt lenses driving down the  
highway, shedding flowers.



**Marvin Puckett**  
*Plucked and Pulled*  
Mixed Media Sculpture

## Limited Training on the Subject of Dog Fights

*nonfiction by Ben Whisman*

The sky appears to only be about fifty feet high as the clouds crumble up and fall ever so gracefully to the earth. The pieces descend in small white heaps as I try to shovel what has already fallen off of my driveway. I am shoveling out two tracks, doing just enough so I can get up it and make it to work. It's going to be covered again in thirty minutes anyway.

The dog runs around and takes in the new snow poking her nose down in deep and sniffing what's lying underneath. She checks everything to make sure it's the same as it's always been. Other neighborhood dogs appear on similar missions and soon they all get off task saying good morning to one another.

I light a cigarette taking an unjustifiable break to watch them run back and forth smiling the best they can through threatening teeth. My hands are in my pockets warming as I watch them converge behind the storage shed in the back yard out of sight. Boredom sends me wondering in their direction, and as I get closer I notice what the dogs are interested in.

Making my way towards them through the deepening snow I get there just in time for a fight to break out between two of the dogs over who has claim on what they've found. My friend, the little spotted Australian Shepherd, trades bite for bite with a yellow lab twice her size that I had never seen before while a long haired golden retriever watches them.

I stand there shouting, but they ignore all my firmly stated advice rolling under each other and snapping their teeth biting into one another as I try to reason with them in vain. I bite down on my cigarette to free both of my hands ignoring all the limited training I have on the subject of dog fights, grabbing the dog that lives with me and kicking the yellow lab I have never seen before in the neck, cussing them both and carrying the one who sleeps in my bed away. As I carry her the fifty some feet back to the house I check for injuries and find nothing more than a split ear, breathing in mostly smoke as I tread through the covered yard. I open the back door and toss her in basement slamming the door behind me.

I walk back to the messed up place in the snow around the shed. The rest of the dogs have oddly enough vanished and all that is left of them is their handy work in the white powder. A dead rabbit lay mangled and opened up in a concave bowl of dog tracks, splotches of bloody snow lay around it in a chaotic order, its face hidden, contorted unnaturally underneath its body. I take a long draw and flick the cigarette away from the scene, staring at the wasted, dead thing perplexed by a disappointment with the dogs for being dogs.

## Dinner Plans

*fiction by Brandon Massengill*

In all actuality, Adam does not want to go, but he wasn't about to confess that to Lillith. Chances are she knows already anyway. They delicately maneuver around each other in the bathroom, careful not to bump into the other, as if that act would force them both to start their routines over again. Neither one has spoken to the other since Lillith announced earlier that she was getting ready. Adam had exhaled forcefully through his nostrils, as if forcibly removing an offensive smell, but turned off the Lakers game and followed suit nonetheless. He'd brushed his teeth slowly while Lillith showered and was already nude when she stepped out. Adam considered gently grazing against her body with his as he moved past her into the bathtub, but he refrained at the last minute. Now, showered and dried, he pulls on a pair of jeans, a T-shirt, and a button-down oxford. *'This dinner is going to end me,'* he thinks gravely, working the snaps of his shirt. He leaves the top two undone.

Lillith walks out of the bathroom, into the bedroom, wearing a black cocktail dress that makes her look older than twenty-three. He looks over to the bedroom mirror to double-check twenty years hadn't passed in the bathroom. Putting on a pair of earrings, Lillith looks at him and frowns.

"*That's* not what you're wearing." It's not a question. Adam looks down at himself then back at her.

"What's wrong?" he sighs.

"You look like a frat boy on vacation. We're going to a nice place in the city, not a fucking In-N-Out Burger. Find something else."

Adam rolls his eyes and does what he's told, settling on a Brooks Brothers suit he wore to his grandmother's funeral.

"Is this okay?"

Lillith looks over from the mirror slowly, a mascara brush sweeping her eye. "Sure, whatever," she says.

The disinterest she says this with reddens Adam's face and he considers stop tying his tie to wrap it around Lillith's neck until she's quiet. But he refrains.

Looking at her watch, Lillith says, "Well, we're late now." She whirls around to face him, crossing her arms. "Nice going."

During the hour's drive to Los Angeles neither of them say anything.

Adam takes the 405 into the city and Lillith calls her dad and tells him to just meet at the restaurant.

"Well, we're late anyway... Adam had to change his clothes..." Lillith looks over at him now and Adam tightens his grip on the steering wheel. "Where is the restaurant?" Lillith covers the mouthpiece with her hand. "Get on La Cienega. Okay, we'll see you there... Uh-huh, bye." Lillith hangs up, looks back over at Adam.

"Your knuckles are white," she tells him. He clears his throat.

"Yep," he says.

It's late enough, so traffic isn't terrible, and they arrive at the restaurant and are led to a table where Lillith's father sits, alone. As the couple approach him he stands, like a gentleman in a Victorian period film, and the act comes off as archaic. Adam rolls the word over in his mind's tongue: *archaic*. Lillith leans over the table so her father can kiss her cheek. He then extends his hand to Adam and smiles showing his teeth.

"Gaius Grey," he introduces himself as Adam takes the man's hand and shakes it. "You would be Adam, I take it?"

"Yes, sir," Adam says stiffening as if addressing a general or an old god. Gaius' handshake is strong, and when it ends, he steals a glance at his wrist to double-check that his hand was still attached, that Gaius hadn't taken it and left him with a bloody stump. Gaius.

'*What an odd name*,' Adam thinks, and again that word echoes in his head: *archaic*.

"Call me Guy," says Lillith's father jovially, smiling again. The smile bothers Adam, and he can't think of any legitimate reasons why, but the teeth glinting in the dinner light, like needles, put him off. They all sit and a waitress takes their drink order before leaving Adam alone with the Greys.

"So, Lilly tells me you recently graduated from film school, congratulations!" Guy beams.

"Oh, thanks," Adam says. "Yeah, it was a lot of work, but I'm finished now."

"Not at all," Guy counters, "I should think you have a lot ahead of you."

"I guess you're right," Adam murmurs. Whenever he thinks of what his first film may be, or anything regarding the future, he breaks out in a sweat. "So what do you do?"

The question was innocent enough, but he obviously broke some secret rule because Lillith planted a fork in his thigh.

The motion was incredibly discreet: under the table and so quick that Adam didn't even see her remove her fork from the table—because she hadn't. Hers was still on the table, cocooned in cloth with a knife (*Why didn't she use a knife?*), and that's when Adam realized she must have prepared for this, and taken one from an empty table while the maitre d' led them to the table. It was a clever move.

Adam makes no noise as the tines penetrate his flesh, halfway between knee and groin. He sharply inhales and sucks his lower lip in his mouth to bite down on for a few seconds and grabs Lillith's hand, squeezes it so hard he feels something break in his grasp. Lillith moans quietly, disguises it as a throat-clearing. Through all of this, Guy either didn't notice, or pretended not to.

"What do I do?" he repeats, carefully preparing his answer. "I nudge people—get them to where they need to be."

"Mmm," Adam hums, more to help deal with the throbbing in his leg than provide a response. He doesn't dare look down, but he can feel a warmth ooze and pool around the wound before tickling its way down his leg.

"So are you a life coach or a travel agent, something like that?" Adam asks. He feels the weight of Lillith's hand back on the fork, as a warning: drop it.

"Something like that, probably closer to a talent agency," Adam nods and the subject dissipates. As a reward, Lillith pulls out the fork quickly and tosses it beneath the table. Adam lets out a heavy sigh.

"Here," Lillith says, ridding a napkin of its silverware with a flourish. Adam notices she uses her good hand, placing the napkin on his lap. "So you don't soil your only suit."

"Thank you," he says, looking over at her for the first time since they sat down. He drops a hand beneath the table and applies pressure.

Drinks and dinner plates come and go. During the course of the meal, Adam learns more about Lillith, things they never talked about because they both agreed they were boring.

Like that Lillith (*'Lilly?'*) has three siblings: Sam, Michael, and Evelyn, the boys being from Guy's first marriage. They both work for Grey in his "talent agency". He also learns that in her youth, Lillith had nearly been killed in a car collision—an SUV had hit the driver's side of the car in the middle of an intersection and killed Lillith's mother.

"Tara was ..." Guy loses his receptive warmth for a second and looks down at his glass, running a thumb along the rim. "She was something else."

Lillith stays mostly quiet during the entire dinner, except when Guy announces that her sister is coming to town. When he does, Lillith drops her fork on her plate and Adam recoils, but barely.

"Is she now?"

"Yes, if you could pick her up from the airport when she gets in, that would certainly be a boon to me."

"A boon?" Lillith's voice drips with venom. "Who fucking talks like that?"

"Will you do it, please?"

"I guess," she says after a beat, sinking into her chair a bit. Adam looks over at Lillith, curious: he's never seen her submit like this.

"Excellent," booms Guy, clapping his hands together. "You know, when raising your brothers, I was much more harsh."

"I've heard," Lillith says pointedly. "I know all about your halcyon days."

"Well I don't know about all *that*," Guy laughs. "Anyway, we'll have to do this again sometime after Evie gets here—the whole family."

Lillith motions for another drink.

"How grand," she says.

\*\*\*

Later, during the drive back to Elysium, Lillith and Adam pull over to have sex. It's like a game to them: do something terrible in public to get ahead, then fuck to determine the winner, a process unto itself. Pulled over on Bering Street, they couple, constantly wrestling over who gets pressed against their door and who's pressing, who's pushing their swollen and curled fingers (*'Like a dead spider'*) into the other's pulsing leg, and after sending a fist into his eye, she realizes she's in control but it makes her cocky and a sentence fumbles its way out "Normal people don't do this" but it's then when he finally presses back, hard, grabbing the wrist of the hand and sending it into the glass, through the glass and the day is his. A tally is being kept. A fork in the thigh, a broken knuckle, these are nothing.

There is still so much more they can do to each other.



**Christopher J. Burton**  
*Daisy*  
Black & White Photograph

## The Coke Man, the Town Mortician, and a Lassie Dog

fiction by Brian Tucker

Tal Gabbard, a hard-working thirty five year old Coca-Cola distributor, made his money by driving fast. He didn't swerve or love tap people with his Peterbilt freight truck, but he made sure he was visible. Coming around curves on Highway 90, he would turn his lights on to warn others that he was not slowing down. And people moved, because an eighteen-wheeler motivated those that drove smaller vehicles. Tal took pride in his punctuality. He was dead set on getting to Monticello, and then Tennessee, by nightfall, but he had to pass through Seton, KY first.

The semi-truck and trailer rounded a twenty-five mile an hour curve, electric guitars wailing on the radio, and it coasted into a town that looked like something from Whoville. Tal noted a dingy establishment on his left with a half-lit sign reading Mercer's Pub. Up a little further he spotted Pyles' Consignment Shop with an obnoxious flashing neon light pointing towards the storefront. A stray half-starved cat ran into a hole provided by the store's porch steps. Tal hit his anti-lock brakes hard, as a beige car appeared from nowhere. It was his first driving test of the day.

The Coca-Cola truck honked at the bald head driving the automobile. No acceleration. Instead, the car braked when there weren't any traffic lights and slowed down without reasons for doing so. Tal laid on the horn again. In response to the noise, the bald headed man turned on the Oldsmobile's blinkers. *Unbelievable*. The little man got out and walked to Tal's truck door.

"Dog laying in the road," the geezer said.

Tal leaned over his cab door and saw a shiny scalp reflecting sunlight. Tal cleared his throat and let the man stand there. His silence didn't shake the old man. "She's got red stripes across her stomach and head," the man added.

Tal exhaled, bored-like. "I'm in a hurry. A lot of Coke to get out today. People want it."

"Looks like they ran her over once by accident. Then, went over her snout to finish her off."

"Like I said. I've got a lot of Coke in my truck. It won't distribute itself. If you'd be so kind, I need to get around you," Tal urged, aware of the tiny two lane road.

"She looked like a good dog. A Lassie dog by the looks of her. Of course, that red color makes it hard to tell what color her coat really was," the man said.

"Did you hear me ... old man?"

"They call me Butch around here. It's a nickname. Much better than Old Fogey or Crippled," he smiled at his joke.

"Huh?"

"I sure do feel bad for that dog lying next to my car," the man said, as he looked back to the red streak.

"It might've had rabies. Could've been mad just like Old Yeller. Listen to me, Butch, I need to get going. All these people behind us need to get to work. Could you help us out?" Tal asked, some compassion making his voice raise an octave.

"Butch Sanders is my full name. But not BS. Hey, do you like selling Coke for a living?"

"I like having a job."

"Pay pretty good?" Butch asked, squinting his old eyes at the white lettering on the truck trailer's side. The Coca-Cola red coloring filled his eyes.

"Pays better if I make it to cities on time," Tal hinted.

"I don't know if it was rabies or not, but she sure got it. Ribs crunched and head squashed. It's a sight for sore eyes."

"I'm going to try and go around you. I have to get to Tennessee tonight. It's a good drive from here," Tal said hopping in his cab and coaxing the big rig forward. The old man stepped aside, bald head down. The truck lurched a few more feet and stopped.

Tal could see the dog when he put the semi into park. He had nudged up to the side of the Oldsmobile and almost wedged his company truck between the post office and the car. The dog lay still. The red streaks were worse than Butch had described. Her chest cavity was sandwiched together like a bologna and ketchup snack. The dog's skull looked as if it had been trampled by an angry elephant. It was a sad mess. No one behind them offered to help. He backed the rig away from the building, and the man's car, and got out.

"Let's get this over with okay? I've got better things to do than reminisce over a dead dog."

It was odd that no one else in the town was assisting the old man. Tal reached for the bloody mess, eager to be in Monticello delivering soda.

"Wait just a minute!" The old man shouted, his wrinkled hand smacking Tal's shoulder.

Tal jumped backwards stunned. "What the hell are you doing? I'm trying to help."

"We can't move her yet."

"Why not?" Tal asked stunned.

"She needs to be prayed over first. Then, we can move her."

Tal stood up and laughed. It had all sunk in. The old man was crazy. Everyone else here knew that. Tal had to find out the hard way; he imagined how many dogs the old man had prayed over.

"She needs to be sent on to the next life properly."

"What kind of prayer does this one need? A quick fix? A pit stop along the way to purgatory? Or, does this dog go straight to heaven?" Tal teased.

"She didn't deserve the first hit. The second one was there to help. To put her out of her misery. So let's pray for this Lassie dog's owners and whoever had to wash the red off their tires."

"You're *dead* serious," Tal said smiling, his frustration now turned to sarcasm.

"Let's pray," the old man said, not letting Tal's joke faze him. "Dear Father in heaven, here our prayer for this dog. She has no nametag around her neck, and judging by her looks we've called her Lassie. Please take good care of this dog that is now with you. Please take care of those pups she left behind. Be with the people that are missing her wherever they are, and finally, don't let the one that did this go to bed easily. Amen."

Butch opened his eyes, raised his head, and pointed his wrinkled index finger at Tal. "Now it's your turn," he said.

"You did a good enough job for the both of us. I'm out of here." Tal's watch read two hours off pace. He'd never been late before. Tal looked over his left shoulder and spotted the police officer. He was still watching Tal and Butch closely from the post office railing. "Will you please move your car?" Tal asked the old man.

"When we've buried her," Butch said.

"I don't have time to bury her," Tal pleaded.

"Sure you do."

"No. I have to be on my way. People are waiting for me in the next town."

"They can wait. This poor creature needs us more than they need soda water."

Butch's face was pale white with creases all over. He had the constant worried look that only old age could offer.

"This dog needs to be dropped in a ditch somewhere. We prayed already. Now let it go. Can't you see everyone thinks you're crazy?" Tal scolded Butch, waving his arm across the traffic and people behind them.

The old man shook his head and wrapped the deflated animal in newspaper he had retrieved from his Oldsmobile. "Lassie deserves better. They all do."

"Nice meeting you, Butch. Hope you have a good one. Maybe eat less Fruit Loops next time you drive," Tal added sarcastically.

He drove the shiny eight-and-a-half foot wide Coca-Cola trailer through the tiny hole he'd been too hesitant to pull through earlier. Paint was scraped off the trailer's side leaving red and white streaks across the post office wall. The policeman waved to Tal unconcerned with the new paint he was leaving behind. The truck blew the newspaper away from the Lassie dog's lifeless body and into the vacant street.

"Bye Coke man," Butch murmured with his bald head bent down, re-wrapping the Lassie dog in new unused newspaper.

Tal Gabbard shifted through all ten forward gears of his company truck unconcerned with the sixty thousand dollar trailer he'd just damaged. He inhaled the pleasing aroma of diesel fuel from outside the cab, and he turned up a Bob Seger song on the radio. Happy to be speeding to his next city, Tal squeezed orange scented Gojo onto his hands and rubbed them together as if to wash away Seton completely.

## **I Love You, Mommy**

*fiction by Brandon Ballard*

She was screaming again. Her hands danced violently in the air, the bottle clenched in her fist. Andrew sat on the couch, hands folded in his lap, feet dangling above the floor. He focused all of his attention on the tiny cockroach crawling across the carpet. Its feelers twitched. Its legs scurried. Headed nowhere.

The bottle smashed against the door. The screaming stopped. The roach froze on the floor. The door opened and closed. The one she was screaming at was gone now. She grumbled something and stepped into the room. She stared at Andrew.

"Bed. Now."

Andrew hopped to his feet. He could smell the alcohol as he slid passed her, his back pressed against the doorframe.

"Fucking pest." She stomped down on the cockroach. Andrew flinched.

He rushed to his room. Andrew flung the door shut and twisted the latch into place. He slowly backed away from the door. Then, his back hit the wall. Paint chips fell to the floor and crunched beneath his feet. Andrew sucked in the rancid air, then pushed it back out of his lungs. He waited. All remained silent.

He slowly pulled his body close to the floor. He buried his hands in the dirt caked carpet. He crawled across the room like a turtle, making his way towards the closet doors. His heart stopped with every creak and he paused to stare at the door, as if she would burst through the door at any moment. His palms were black when he reached the closet. He rubbed his hands against his tan trousers, leaving a trail of black on his pants leg. Andrew tugged the door open and paused for a moment. A mirror shattered against the bathroom floor. She cursed and spat.

He dropped to his knees and shoved the plastic playthings aside. There was a rusted grate beneath them. He gently popped it from its place and reached down into the hole. Martin squeaked. Andrew pressed a finger from his free hand to his lips. He lifted Martin from the hole and tucked him against his chest. Martin's nose twitched. His tail dangled from Andrew's hand. His whiskers brushed against Andrew's fingers.

Andrew pinched and cracker in his pocket and placed it near Martin's mouth. Martin's teeth grinded upon the crisp cracker. Andrew watched as crumbs fell onto the plastic plaything below. When the cracker was gone, Andrew gently rubbed Martin's head and rose to his feet. His toes pressed against the carpet as silent as could be. Andrew climbed up to his bed, his fingers wrapping around the bed post as he pulled himself up. Rust rubbed off of the post and onto his palm. He quickly wiped the red grime onto his pants. It mixed in with the black dirt from before. Andrew set his head onto the soft pillow and sighed to himself. Martin crawled over his thumb and curled up above his belly button. Andrew stared at the ceiling until his eyes closed. The refrigerator door slammed shut.

The door handle rattled. Andrew's eyes burst open. She shook the door and thumped her fist against it. Andrew reached for his stomach and his hand touched the cotton fabric. She thumped her fist against the door again, then kicked it. She was screaming again.

"Open this damn door!"

Andrew dropped to the floor. The carpet rubbed against his cheek. Dirt streaked onto his face as he pushed himself across the floor. His eyes twitched, searching. The room was still. The lock rattled. Andrew froze. He lifted his face from the carpet and stared at the door. It burst open and crashed into the wall. A silver key stuck out from the lock.



**Lea Faske**  
*Pathos*  
Charcoal Drawing

She stood in the doorway for a moment, towering over everything in the room. Then she grabbed his shirt and slammed him onto his feet. Her hand slapped across his face. His cheek turned red beneath the black dirt. She slapped him again. His collar was clenched in her fist. She slapped him again. Tears dripped down his face. It broke the black and let the red show through. She slapped him again. Then she was gone. The door slammed shut behind her.

Andrew did not move from where she had put him. His body shook. His face was wet. The black was broken into pieces, separated by wet, red lines. Martin squeaked. Andrew crept across the floor to the closet once again. Martin stared up from his hole. His body shook. His hair was bristled. Andrew gently placed the grate over the hole, then climbed back into his bed. He stuffed his head beneath the pillow and stared at the darkness.

"Andrew?"

She was not screaming anymore. Andrew opened his eyes. She hovered above him, her eyes staring into his. The edges of her mouth were pulled tight, shifting from a slight smile to frown. The pillow was now on the floor beside her. Her face was wet. She reached out and touched his head. Andrew flinched. She pulled her fingers away and placed them on her heart. She slowly backed away, then dropped to the ground, her legs curled beneath her. Andrew sat up and peered down at her from his bed. Her breath shook as she spoke.

"I'm sorry..."

She tucked her face into her hands and drew quick, shallow breaths. Andrew crept towards her. He reached out and touched her hair. She moved her hands from her face and curled her fingers beneath her chin. Andrew slowly crawled into her lap. She wrapped her arms around him and nestled him against her chest. She ran her fingers through his hair. Her tears dripped onto his shoulder. Andrew reached out and touched her cheek. She smiled and kissed his forehead. Then, she wiped the black from his cheek. Once it was gone, only the red remained. She froze. She leaned in and kissed his cheek. Andrew drew away from the sting. Her arms tightened around him.

"I don't want to ever hurt you again, baby... I promise."

Andrew waited. All was silent. He sucked in the rancid air, then pushed it out of his lungs again. She smiled at him. Andrew turned his attention to the door. There were holes from the doorknob planted upon the wall. He turned his attention to her and her smile. He wrapped his arms around her neck.

"I love you, mommy."

## The Greystone Hotel

*fiction by Brian Hawkins*

The old man stood on the sidewalk with his grey trench coat buttoned around him and grey fedora pulled snugly down over his brow against the cold. His wardrobe seemed appropriate for the day, either as a match for the dirty snow piled at the side of the road, pushed aside by the city plows, or as a tribute to the last day of the once-elegant limestone hotel being demolished across the street. For the moment, he was talking to the others gathered to watch destruction while the wrecking ball stood motionless, the crew pausing to adjust this or that before continuing with the beginning of what would be several days of tear down and clean up.

The conversation was a mix of memories, sadness and excitement over a new beginning for the nearly empty downtown. The four sides of the courthouse square had once bulged with retailers selling their wares. Jewelry, shoes, men's clothes, women's cloths, hardware, and the general department stores. Lunch counters bustled at noonday and at night, especially Fridays, families would walk the square to socialize and maybe drink a soda together. Once the area surrounding the county courthouse had possessed no less than three movie theaters as well. And there was, of course, the hotel.

Once called the finest "100-room hotel in the country," the six-story building had nearly sparkled the glittering white of newly sandblasted limestone for over fifty years. Its ballroom had hosted the celebration of a senator's election as well as local proms. The coffee shop and the formal dining room could accommodate customers of all types. Before the interstate rerouted east-west travelers away from its front door, the hotel had been almost unmatched in grace and elegance by any other small Midwestern town.

But the last twenty or thirty years had witnessed its gradual decline until finally the doors had been shut. Fire had damaged the roof and water seeped inside to destroy whatever it could find. Vandals added graffiti, whenever they could, to the outside, and one part of the façade collapsed and closed the road for several days. For ten years, the Second Law of Thermodynamics had dominated convincing many that the eyesore should be torn down if the struggling downtown economy were ever to be turned around.

When approached by a reporter from the local paper, the man in the grey trench coat had echoed this opinion. He said, "You know, a couple of years ago a businessman from up north came down to look at the place, thinking of doing a restoration. He and his team even went inside and for a while they even had a couple of tours that people could sign up for to see it again. But in the end, he just didn't think the millions of dollars

he would have to spend would be worth the investment and I guess he must be right. The past is the past and while I had a lot of good times in the old place, everything has to give way to the new eventually. I'm just looking forward to the future, to whatever comes next. I just hope I'll be around to see it." He smiled at the reporter because neither of them knew he would be dead within the year, a clot in his brain acting just like the wrecking ball across the street. Sudden and more than enough to do the job.

The reporter moved on to talk to other spectators just as the crane pulled the enormous steel ball back and let it swing free for the first time. With eyes pointed upward, the old man watch the ball arc across the stark whiteness of the winter sky, a blackened and bleak omen of what was to come. He wondered if he really felt what he described to the young reporter who was from out of town and not even old enough to remember the hotel's grandest years even if he had been from here.

When the ball hit the side of the building, the boom echoed off of the courthouse and the other, mostly empty, places of business. As loud as the sound was, the "Ooohs" and "Ahhs" of the crowd almost matched it. As though they were watching fireworks at the local park on the 4th of July, with each boom came the accompanying sound of appreciation and awe from the crowd. Though the city had been concerned about the structural safety of the building, especially after the "landslide" some years back, the ball seemed to do little more than bounce off the building the first half dozen times it landed. With each successive slam into the east wall, the crowd which was now growing more rapidly expected to see cataclysmic damage. The tension grew as the ball hit and was pulled back, hit and was pulled back. Only after those first few impacts did sizable chunks of building begin to fall into the area of the street that had been cordoned off.

The old man's nephew arrived shortly after that first hiatus had ended and began to take pictures of the now-gaping hole that had been torn in the building's skin. He figured they might work out okay for his high school photo class. The assignments all required black and white photos but he knew the overcast sky might not lead to anything useful. Still, this was not an event he felt he could miss. Though he had never been in the hotel himself, he had heard many stories about the place. He often dreamed about what it would be like to be able to meet a girl there in the coffee shop after school or take a meeting in the lobby. Far too often he lived in his head, in a past he had never experienced but felt more comfortable in than the reality he had been given. So for him, this was the saddest of days on which he knew, even in his youth, that something ill-conceived and irrevocable was happening.

After snapping a few shots and quietly "Oohing" to himself, he took a more permanent position next to his uncle. Looking at the old man, he wondered how it must feel to have been inside the place, to see it in your mind as if the glory had never faded, and then to stand here and watch it fall. "Hey, there. How are you taking all this?" the boy asked his uncle.

Looking over at him, a bit startled to see his nephew standing there. As intently as he had been watching the demolition, he had not yet noticed his presence and had not at all heard the question the boy had asked. Instead of answering then, he offered his usual greeting, the one he had been teasing him with since boy's early childhood. "Well, hello there. Now tell me, is your name MacGuilicuddy? Why would your parents do that to you?"

Smiling at the familiar joke and playing along as usual, the boy said, "You know that isn't my name."

"That's not your name. Why mercy, why would I think that you were a MacGuilicuddy? I must be getting old."

"If you are getting old, maybe you shouldn't be out here in the cold watching this then."

"Son, this is history for us and I would be out here if the temperature were fifty below. You know this is the first place I ever took your aunt on a date? Right there in the coffee shop. I met her for a slice of apple pie and a cup of coffee after I got off work one Friday night. She knew one of the gals I worked with and when your aunt asked about me her friend set us up. Six months later, we had our wedding reception in the ballroom."

"Yeah, I know. You've told me, but I never mind hearing it again. I just wish I could have seen it back then."

Both turned in silence as the ball pierced the limestone once again, this time taking a towering section of wall with it as it swept into the hotel's interior. The rooms looked small to the boy, used to the modern conveniences of the Holiday Inn and the Ramada he and his parents usually chose while on vacation. After the last section of wall had fallen, a modest cross-section of the rooms had been revealed. Rooms and bathrooms stood stacked upon one another, none having been this exposed to the world outside since the days of construction. Where a building had stood for just over seventy years, a skeleton was now growing. With each jolt of the wrecking ball, the crew added another piece, another layer, to the death they were constructing.

"I asked you before how you were taking this," the boy said to his uncle when the sight of the steel girders and loose wires between floors had begun to remind him of the

muscles, ligaments, and tendons in the human body and he had felt compelled to turn away for a moment. "I don't think you heard me before."

Quietly, after thinking for a moment, the old man looked over at the boy and replied, "No, I guess I didn't hear you. Son, I told that man from the paper that this was the right thing to do. The mayor wants it down. The city council wants it down, and I thought I agreed with them. I know that the past is the past and times change. But seeing inside the place. I am not sure I can even explain it, son. Seeing inside, I don't have to imagine anymore what used to be. I can see it again. I can see through the grime and grit and decay and I can see the big men from the stone companies coming in to have their meetings and Bill Jenner on the night he became a senator and Earl Wilson the night he got elected to Congress. All of them there in that place. And I guess, well, it isn't my choice to make. Now it's no one's choice to make. But I think maybe we shouldn't be so quick to get rid of old things. Hell, I'm getting old myself and I don't want anyone to get rid of me. No, maybe we need to slow down some. Slow down and look at the way things could be, they way they ought to be, instead of what they are."

The boy looked at the old man, at his grey coat, his grey fedora, and his grey mustache and he knew that he didn't have to say anything. He would miss the hotel when it was gone just as his uncle would, though each had reasons of his own.

He would miss his uncle when he was gone too. He would always wish he had stood there for just a little longer with the old man watching the ball swing back and forth, back and forth, bringing the old grey lady down stone by stone. He would long to be called MacGuilicuddy one more time, to hear the old man's stories one more time. Though people and hotels may be resurrected by memories, neither can be saved by them.

In the end, everything returns to the earth, of course, but at least the stone leaves a scar to prove that it was here, if only for a little while.



**Rick Lewis**  
*former self.*  
Vector Drawing

## Pizza Delivery

fiction by Brian Hawkins

The doorbell rang just as our band was getting ready to watch the movie. The Bass Man had hooked up the bell to sound like the theme from Barney Miller. Ridiculous. But kind of cool.

I answered the door for the Pizza Guy who had gauged ears open enough I could see the Black Flag bumper sticker on his car. With tattooed arms, sleeves they call it I think, he handed me the pies and told me it was \$15.37.

I said you must like country music.

He said he'd seen Merle Haggard over five times over at the Little Opry in Nashville.

What does over five times mean? I gave him a twenty and asked for change. He still got a tip though.

I told him to come back we were getting ready to watch *Crazy Heart* again, that it's about an alcoholic country singer and that you could almost see Maggie Gyllenhaal's boobs. That last part so he wouldn't think we're queers.

He still must have thought we were queers but in an hour he came back with a case of Stag beer. Good stuff when it's free.

We watched the movie and drank until Jeff Bridges got sober and then asked the Pizza Guy what he played. I figured guitar and the Drummer figured the drums. He said he had a record company. Of course.

We did get it and asked him to record our music but he must have been drinking while he was still delivering pizzas because by this point he just wanted to talk about his girlfriend and how all he wanted to do was go to beauty school.

She was going overseas for three months because of college and he was going to spend eighteen months learning to die hair blue and give perms to old ladies even though he would rather have hot young girls from the university in his pump chair.

Who wouldn't, right?

He said that music wasn't paying the bills and that being a starving artist was pretty good as an idea but when it came to the actual starving part it kind of sucked. He looked at the TV for a long moment or two and said that he wanted to see Colin Farrell sing that song near the end again.

Turns out he and his girl were both from Southern Illinois where it is flat and he said there's nothing there but cornfields and state parks. Lots of state parks for some reason.

I played the song and I think the Pizza Guy cried a little. He said that he hadn't finished high school but that he kind of did because he got a diploma from some kind of alternative school where kids who can't get on well with others go. He told us he hated school.

I said that we all did that's why we formed a band because we wanted to change the world through music not play "On the Road Again" in marching band. Willie wouldn't want us to do that we all agreed. School's nothing more than a breeding ground of conformity – a place for baby fascists to learn to bully others and think alike.

We all agreed that it was.

Then the movie was over and the beer was gone, no one else cried. Doesn't it seem like that when the beer is all gone people either cry a lot more or stop altogether?

The Pizza Guy said he wanted to go home but his girlfriend would already be asleep and he didn't want to wake her up but if he didn't go home she might be mad even though his tips from delivering pizzas paid the rent and it was just as much his apartment as hers, maybe more. He said she wasn't really that bad.

As much as he was complaining, I was pretty sure he was in love with her. I asked him if his girl would still want him when she got back from Europe but before he got done with beauty school.

He said she would probably never marry him but that he didn't mind because marriage was just an institution forced on people by the church so the priests could control what everyone did all the time.

I told him I was a Methodist and I didn't have a priest but I agreed with him mostly and didn't really go to church much anyway because he were usually out late playing our gigs at the local Girl's Club for their Saturday night dances. They liked to hear the popular songs which we hated.

The job pays though.

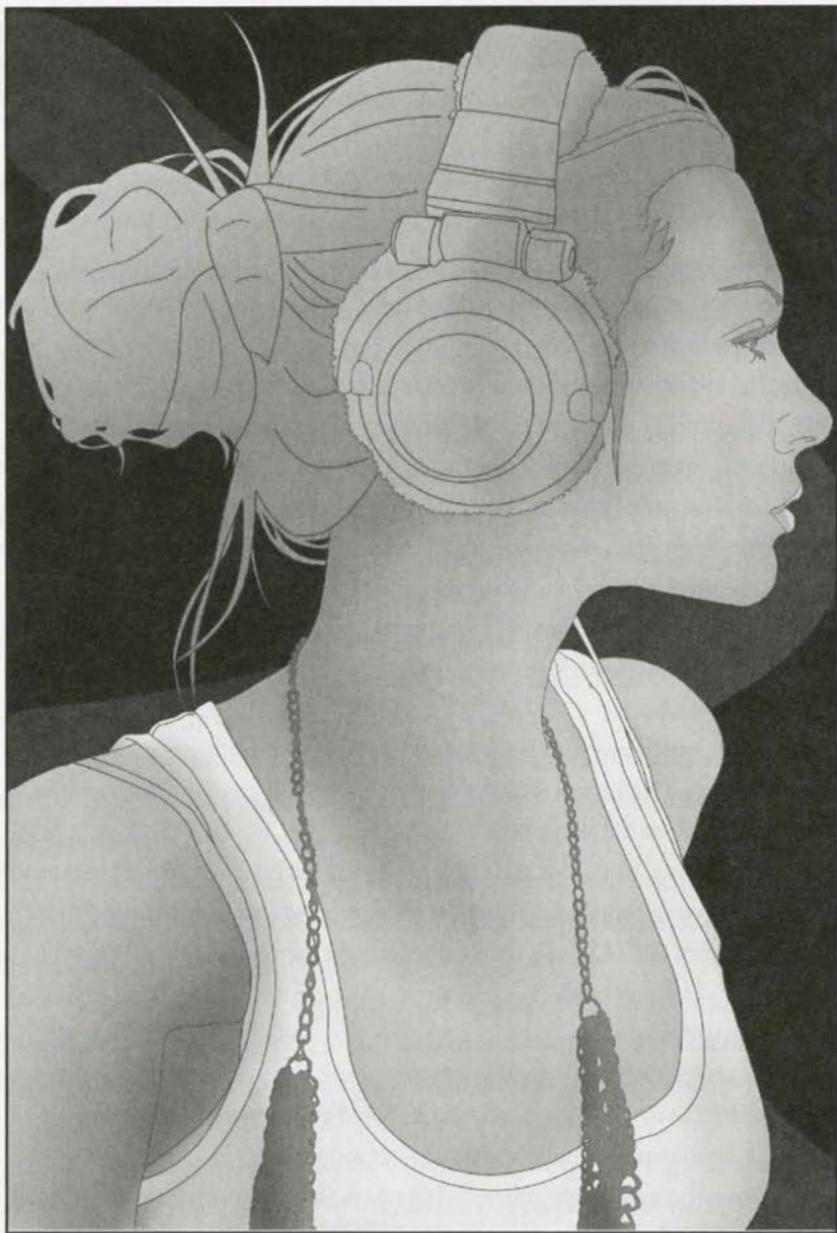
Even he agreed that junior high dances were a fine way to make a living if you can.

We told him to sleep on the couch and he could go home in the morning,

He was gone when we got up and so was our movie.

I said I hope he watches the other ending where Jeff Bridges ends up drunk again and in the gutter in the rain.

That's the way the book ends. The Pizza Guy should know that it does.



**Justin Howell**  
*Audible Silence*  
Digital Drawing

## Making a Living

*fiction by Chris Prewitt*

The news station out of Hazard concerned itself with Ashley Judd's anti-mountain top removal activism that summer. In a press conference, Judd referenced a golf course in Prestonsburg—but did not name it—that had been built on a reclaimed mountain. Shortly thereafter Hazard's news station reported that a banner had been hanged at that golf course. The banner depicted an enlarged photo of Judd, topless but covering herself, from an ad, and written to the side of the image was "Ashley makes a living removing her top, why can't coal miners?" The Hazard news station reported the story during the six o'clock newscast one night but did not show the portion of the banner depicting Judd, hoping not to offend viewers, according to the reporter doing the story; however, the reporter noted, a full image of the banner was available on the Hazard news station's website. The banner came from an anonymous donor. Men interviewed at the golf course found the banner effective in, if nothing else, reminding Judd of where she came from.

That night Jeff Floyd was removing pics of Judd, wearing nothing but University of Kentucky apparel, from his Facebook profile. Dr. Pepper cans formed a parameter around his laptop. The only light in his room came from the screen, the lit apple on the back of his laptop, and the blue digits of his iPod-playing alarm clock. It was not late. The blinds and curtains in his room eclipsed the sunlight. He heard his dad yelling for him downstairs. Reluctantly, he left his desk. He passed his sister's bedroom. Her door stayed closed.

The living room had been situated in the basement, a popular aesthetic in the mid-to-late-nineties subdivision boom in Southeastern Kentucky. In a red recliner, Perry Floyd sat with his legs propped up, his gray socks ripe with lint and a loose stitch from his pair of khakis. He rubbed his right temple, sometimes stroking the last bit of sandy blonde hair his crown recession had not taken. He had the remote control in his other hand, having muted the TV as the Hazard news station went to commercial.

Jeff came down the stairs. He walked passed his dad and went into the garage where his dad kept a fridge. Jeff got a burn-your-hand-cold can of Dr. Pepper and walked back into the living room.

"You could've asked me if I wanted one," Perry said. Jeff had just pulled the tab.

"Do you want this one?" Perry looked at his son and then turned back to the TV. The news broadcast had resumed. The weatherman was on. Perry did not unmute the TV.

"Did you see what they done at the golf course?" Perry said. Jeff sat on the couch to his dad's left. He did not drink the Dr. Pepper, nor did he place it on the glass coffee table.

"I read about it online," Jeff said. They were both looking at the TV. Rain was projected for Sunday on the seven day forecast. Then he said to Perry, "What do you make of it?"

"People who don't know about anything ought not to run their mouths. Serves her right," Perry said. "Living out in Hollywood so long she forgot about us. When she makes those movies, where does she think those lights come from, how they're powered? Coal. That mansion she and them liberal actors live in, their lights is powered by coal."

Jeff didn't say anything. He just looked at the TV. as his dad did.

"And she don't know about that golf course," Perry added. "We done good work up there. Plants is growing. Trees is starting to grow. How does she think that's hurting the environment? I can't understand it."

Jeff's hand started to go numb.

"When was the last time you went up there, to the golf course?" Perry asked.

"Not since you took me up there with Mom and Uncle Clay, to show him how good it looked since you all had done work to it."

"Yeah," Perry said.

"Yep," Jeff said, looking at the Dr. Pepper.

"We should go again sometime," Perry said.

"Sure," Jeff said.

"Before you head out to college we'll do it. You, me, and Leslie."

"Yeah, since she didn't get to go last time," Jeff said.

"Sure," Perry said. "She's got a few years 'til college, but I don't want her to forget where she comes from. When you get to college, you'll see. Those liberal professors will try to turn you against us. But you just tell them you've seen how green the mountain is and how those trees is starting to come up."

Jeff sat with his dad a little longer with neither of them speaking. Then Jeff set the Dr. Pepper on the coffee table and went back upstairs. Jeff needed to use the bathroom, but the door was closed. He knocked. He heard his sister say, "Yes?"

"Nothing, sorry," Jeff said and went to his room.

Jeff's sister was fourteen and had a naturally dark complexion like her dad. She also had his square jaw and had had his portliness until her mom died. Then she lost a lot of weight and spent a lot more time on the Internet like her brother. She got a bob cut like her friends at school got. She posted a link to the photos of her new cut on her LiveJournal, whereon she had many friends, more than a hundred. She got the idea from some of those friends to dye her hair black. She got the idea from some of those friends to get serious about photography. They told her money could easily be made from doing it. She decided to try it.

The best lighting in the house was in the bathroom. She decided to try it this evening before she showered. She took her camera in the bathroom. She fixed her hair, applied her makeup, and took off her clothes. She kicked the pile of clothes behind her into the corner. She held the camera above her, carefully held her legs together, and covered her chest. She knew she needed a practice shot.

## Buried Alive

*fiction by Gary Smith*

Ryan leaned against the stone wall and held a cigarette while he knocked his heel against a rock jutting from the pavement. The wall behind him curved around the hillside and the earth spilled onto the narrow road. When he closed his eyes, he saw the dull glow of his headlights on the empty road and the yellow line in broken intervals. When he opened them again, he saw Jeffrey walking up the road, swinging his arms as he climbed.

"It's about time you answered my messages," said Jeffrey, breathing heavily. "How is everything?"

"Tired is all," Ryan said. "Hasn't really hit me yet."

"Damn," Jeffrey said. He ran his hand through his hair, "I didn't know your Dad was sick."

Ryan turned his focus to his car parked in the wide spot near the bottom of the hill. "The thing is, he wasn't sick. I guess that's why it hasn't sunk in yet."

Jeffrey shook his head and turned to look at the city, "I missed ya and I'm glad to see ya, but I hate the occasion."

"I've been meaning to come home, but I was busy with work." Ryan looked at his friend. "It was unexpected."

Jeffrey crossed his thin arms and looked at Ryan, "Jess coming down with the baby?"

"You mean Jennifer," Ryan said. "She'll be here tonight, after she gets the baby from her parents."

"How long have you guys been married?"

"Three years," Ryan said. He noticed an orange and purple reflection on the hood of his car; it swirled and flickered as the sun rose, light breaking through the tree limbs on the side of the mountain.

"It's been a while, ain't it?"

"Doesn't feel like it," Ryan said. He walked to the edge of the road and sat on the curb. He looked over the hillside and down at the boulevard to the city.

The city was tucked between the hillside where he sat and the mountain ridge across the valley. The trees were fading into gold and orange, melting into one another and flecked with green that gave shape to the curve in the mountain. Rocks extended from the hillside. They were big compared to the trees that stirred in the wind.

"Remember that?" Ryan said as he raised his hand to the sand colored stones that blended with the shades of the dying trees.

"Mostly," Jeffrey said. He looked up from rolling a thin joint. His eyes squinted and his nose wrinkled. "Haven't been there since we were kids. They put a gate at the bottom of that road." He licked the paper and patted around the creases. "Have to have a key code to get up there, now."

Ryan remembered the first time he went with his friends to the rocks. He and Jeff sat in the back of the truck and watched the tall houses fading in front of them as they passed, climbing the mountain. The top of the mountain was leveled off and cleared for a housing development.

Once they passed the construction sites, the road sloped downward again and was lined with trees. Dust rolled from the cab of the truck and from under the bed. Gravel popped beneath the tires and shook the truck's small frame. A little grassy hill led down onto a dirt trail. The trail became more narrow the farther downhill they walked.

The trees thickened and the trail behind, as well as all sight of the truck, was gone. It felt to Ryan like they were being funneled down from the top of the mountain to whatever was below; he remembered Jeffrey tripping over rocks, trying to keep up and yelling for them to wait.

The trail stopped abruptly and was split by a crevice. At the bottom of the drop-off was a stream lined with moss covered rocks that made the air smell like rain. Jeffrey rushed past Ryan and jumped the crevice. Plumes of dust rose from his feet.

"Don't look so surprised, Ryan. It's no big deal"

"Looked pretty crazy to me," Ryan said.

He considered the jump for a few minutes, watching his friends run to the edge and jump to the other side. When he threw himself across the divide, he realized the other ledge was shorter, and the jump was more of a rush than a risk.

"Can't always be so cautious," Jeffrey said. He wrapped his arm around Ryan's shoulder and led him up the hill. The tree line stopped and the sky opened as they walked out on the rock.

The hills were dark green and the air was humid. Strands of white cloud streaked across the sky, covering the valley and blocking part of the sun. The rock was the size of a house and the stone had names painted on it. There was an indentation further out; they climbed down the indentation and sat.

The town filled the valley and curved around the mountain. The courthouse sat in the middle of town, its roof green like faded copper. It sat across the street from the furniture store and the new bank, whose bricks were still a bright red. The pond on the backside of town was deep green, reflecting the mountainside. Across the valley from the rock was the cemetery. It was dotted with blues, reds, whites, and yellows that accented the stones that were settled into the soft, trimmed hillside. The cemetery was cradled by the road that led from the boulevard, up the hill.

"Over there, Ryan," Jeffrey pointed, "That's where I was talking about." Jeffrey laughed and held his arms out to his side.

"Why did they bury her if she was still alive?" Ryan asked. Jeffrey made clawing motions in the air.

"They didn't know she was alive. Legend goes her statue looks out over the city that turned its back on her; that way they'll never forget." Jeffrey pointed to the cemetery, but Ryan couldn't see the statue, just the road that led up and around the hillside.

This was the road he stood on now, talking to Jeffrey. They talked more about the rock, graduation, Ryan's family. Jeffrey talked about working at the diner, the grocery store, at a garage his family owned, but Ryan kept looking over Jeffrey's shoulder, across the valley to the hillside he remembered as green.

"I got this one at the old bar down by the bowling alley," Jeffrey said, pointing at the scar on his forearm. His arm looked like a bone, save for the dark hairs that were scattered along the other side and the purple bruises near the sleeve of his shirt.

"How long have you been using?"

Jeffrey hesitated. "I don't remember when I started," he said. He looked over Ryan's head at the hill and rubbed the creases in his arms. "It's not as bad as it used to be."

Ryan looked away from Jeffrey's bruises, "Want to head on up?"

"We're not here for ghost stories."

Jeffrey's laugh turned to a cough. His body shook and he bent over, holding his fist to his mouth. Ryan patted Jeffrey's back. He could feel his spine. There was no longer any trace of the muscles they built together in weight-lifting class, just bone under a loose t-shirt.

"You alright, man?"

"Yeah, just got tickled. Let's stop and see how ole' Bernadine's doin'."

Ryan smiled, "Let's go, I waited on you long enough."

"Glad to see you, too, pal."

Ryan laughed again as they walked toward the fence. "The fence is still pulled apart where we broke it," he said as he crawled under.

"Hold it for me," Jeffrey said.

The grass was tall but brittle from the morning cold. "Didn't you say you had relatives up here?"

"Dad told me we have family up here, but I can't remember their names."

Jeffrey's feet crunched with each step as he walked between the headstones and their barren vases, "I guess they figured the cold would kill this grass."

"Seems that way," said Ryan.

The older headstones and monuments were at the top of the incline, closest to the tree-line. Behind the cemetery were pine trees. A layer of pine needles kept the grass from growing. Bernadine's statue stood near the timberline. It was always the first to be shaded by evening.

Ryan looked at the hillside and the old statue. Her frame was petite. She stood straight and tall, cutting into the gray sky and fog clearing from the mountains as the sun rose.

"Wonder what she really looked like?" Ryan asked.

"She doesn't look so great now."

The statue of the woman was weathered. Her nose was missing, the stone breaking apart, and her arms were cracking. She was not the statue from Ryan's memory.

"Remember coming here on Halloween?"

Jeffrey turned and looked at the statue. "I don't remember her looking so big. I guess I'm remembering it wrong."

Ryan watched Jeffrey as he looked at the statue. He remembered when they first came to the cemetery. Jeffrey cut through the fence with a set of wire cutters he took from his dad's tool box and led them between the headstones to the trees. They sat in the pine needles and looked up at the statue that cut into the purple sky and hid the stars. Jeffrey told the story and Ryan watched as Jeffrey traced her figure with his eyes.

"She came down with a fever and they couldn't help her. The people in town didn't know what to do," Jeffrey said, "So when they thought she was dead they buried her. They wanted to bury her before she spread her sickness."

Ryan remembered Jeffrey's voice being deeper. They were younger when Jeffrey first told the story, but the statue had since begun to fall apart, her arms thinner than Ryan remembered.

"Hey, Jeff," Ryan said, "How did her story go again?"

"They buried her alive."

"I remember that," said Ryan, "but why?"

"They thought she was dead, but then the same thing started happening to other people in town. They say when they dug her up, they found claw marks inside of the casket."

"You think that story is true?" asked Ryan.

"I don't know," Jeffrey said, "Maybe." He turned his head and stared out over the barren ground. "They said she tore at the inside of that casket until her hands were bloody."

Jeffrey looked to the ground and scratched his side.

"Why did you call me?" he asked.

Ryan waited before he answered.

"I just wanted to see how you'd been. I didn't know who else to call." He stood by the empty plot and turned his eyes toward the city. The once pale roof of the courthouse was now shingled and the bricks of the bank were faded. Most of the department stores were closed, their windows boarded up.

"My ride will be here, soon." Jeffrey rubbed his nose and crossed his arms, "I'm glad I got to see you."

Ryan let out a deep breath and looked down the hill. "You're right," he said, "Let's get out of here."

He turned and looked across the valley, the sun no longer broken through the trees, then headed down the road to his car.



**Kelsey Zachry**  
*Untitled*  
Oil Pastel Drawing

## The Morning Call

*fiction by Stacey Greene*

*Joe*

When I woke I sat up in bed and saw Meryl reaching toward a limb of the apple tree, the plush of her upper arm sagging toward her chest. I didn't know if I'd ever hear her hum again, like she did before we met. She never even hummed after Annie was born and I didn't tell her I missed it like I did. What would it matter? I don't think she would even say anything. I don't think she would know what I meant.

I laid back down and listened for the semis. Behind them, I always hear the coyote's howl, and this time, I wondered how we became louder than them. Meryl used to lay beside me for hours in the morning, before we lost the child, and we would listen together, after each howl whispering whether it was a child or mother, or a man.

I wonder what it would've been, if I'd taken that job. How Meryl's face would be different—if Annie wasn't killed. Or if the truck had hit Meryl, instead, if I could have been a father without her. I think of us, of me and Annie, sitting at the kitchen table with plates of mashed potatoes and even steaks and cornbread salad like Meryl used to make, so Annie would never miss her mother. I would plan everything out that way.

But there's no need for planning. And now I have to tell Meryl what I did.

*Meryl*

I don't like the way he looks at me, sometimes, coming home from work his hands already dirtied like nothing would make them worse, his fingernails so long and flattened on the ends and unnatural. And like he wants them around my neck and when he dreams he is in a place where Annie never existed. I see it in his eyes even when we're making love.

Love. That is different now, too. We don't talk about it. Sometimes he comes into the room and lifts me onto the counter, just raises my skirt and I can't make myself stop him because there is something in the sweat that makes me feel wild and like a different person. But sometimes when I wake his hands are already between me and we curl back together like we never breathed before, like Annie never happened. And we both know then that whatever we came together to create before—now, it never happened.

*Joe*

Between the site and the hollow I smoke three cigarettes. Going home, four. And I start to think—I have money in the bank. We won't use it. We put it away for Annie's Christmas and didn't use all of it for her funeral. And it happens to me—I turn the wheel around into the driveway of someone I don't know, and go the other way. I don't go home.

*Meryl*

I waited a week and searched, ate up all the food in the house, and I don't think that I'll even see that man again. The sheriff came by and looked at me like it's true. But his face accusing—like I drove Joe away myself. Like I killed Annie. I never once believed it was my fault. And Joe knew it. If he would've taken the job at the strip mine we wouldn't have broke down on the side of the road that day. If he would've made the money to get the tires changed we wouldn't have fish-tailed from the ice right into the mountain side, and that semi never would have hit Annie, sitting there on the roadside, waiting for her Daddy to come pick her up out of that cold.

I don't know if I've told all this to the sheriff. I can't remember if I've told it to anyone. I think of baking a pie and walking it a mile down the road to our nearest neighbor—the old woman April Avington—lifting the towel away from it so she smells how sweet and still warm it is, and watching the steam come up into her face so when I shout that it was always Joe's fault I can't see her eyes curl together and her smile fall down. And then the woman would take the pie from me, slice it and feed me and then put me to sleep in her extra room with the extra heavy quilts so you feel safer than you've ever been. And quiet, too.

Meryl

She's been in my dreams, there with Joe. Standing on the cliffs, the rocky ones you can see from our back porch, that I've never looked over. Then the face of the rock falls and the three of us don't even try to move because we know we can't. I wake up. All I remember is sky, but it comes to me in pictures as the day moves.

Today I baked a cherry pie with the money I got from cleaning the house up the road a bit. It was a long walk, but I'd forgotten how good gravel feels under your feet. My mother used to say how easy it is to forget. I'm taking the pie to April Avington.

Meryl

The old lady wasn't home, but I left it on her doorstep anyway. The dogs will probably get it first. When I came home, Joe's truck was in the driveway. I could still smell the diesel in the air so it couldn't have been there long. So I walked up the road and back, and the gravel felt sharp and my heels began to hurt and I knew I had to come back because he wasn't leaving.

I saw the back of his head reaching above the recliner. He had taken his hat off and turned the television on to *The Andy Griffith Show*. I stood there for a while and still he didn't move.

I took my shoes off and moved slowly to the recliner, noticing how smooth the carpet was this time. When I stood by him, I put my hand on his forearm, and he looked up at me as if he was startled but he must have felt me there before I ever touched him. His face was wet. I smoothed my dress sleeve across his forehead, his cheeks, over his eyes as he closed them and then his hands were around my wrists and I remembered how strong he was.

Joe

I didn't know what I was doing when I pulled her onto my lap, and it was worse that she fell so light like she remembered the way it was and wanted to hurt me with it. I had the handgun between the recliner cushion and the arm, waiting for her to come

home. I don't know why I wanted to see her face before I did it. I don't know why her face changed my mind. How a woman like that can do it, I just don't know. I never was an attractive man. Meryl never was an attractive woman. But in the quiet of her voice she turns me on, like she wears flowered dresses when all the other women are wearing blue jeans and dress pants.

I couldn't do it, then. At that moment I realized that I was going to walk back to the site and ask for my job back. Tell Larry that I still had a family to feed. Bend my knees if I needed. And then I would come home and Meryl would have made cornbread to stuff into a glass and pour milk over for dessert. We would have dessert again. And drink coffee across the table and not talk and not look at each other and go to bed at night and say I love you before the lights went out. Then wake in the morning.

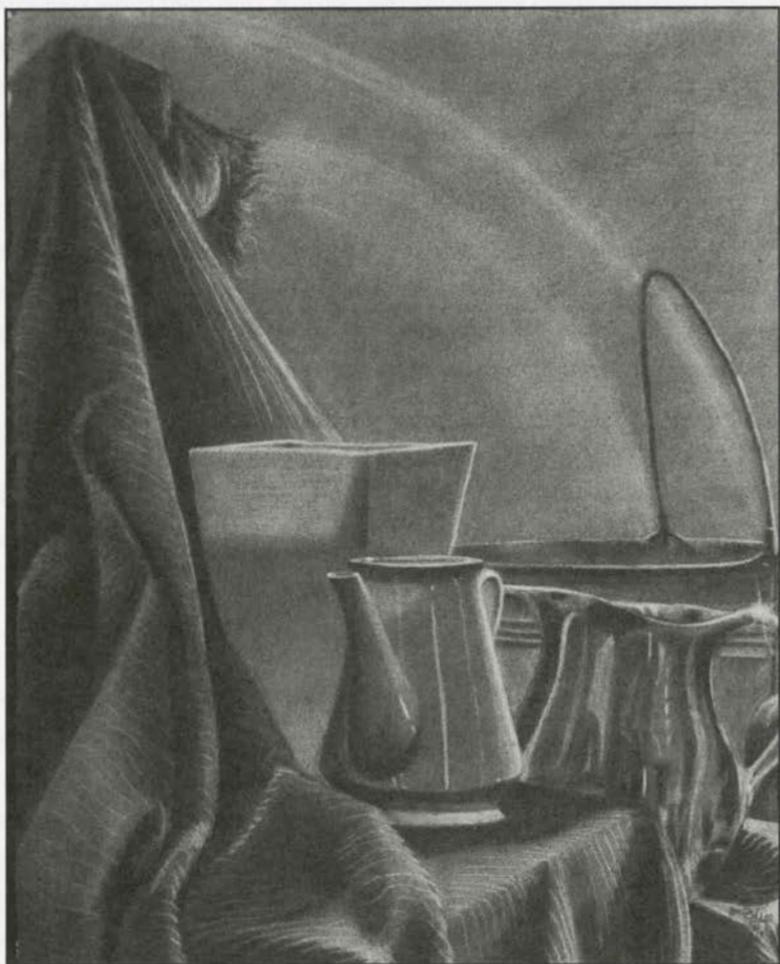
I cupped my hand around her chin and she looked at me the way I remember Annie's eyes looking to me. And I realized it would never be that easy.

*Joe*

When I woke I sat up in bed and saw her reaching toward a limb of the apple tree, the plush of her upper arm sagging toward her chest. I don't know if I'll ever hear her hum again, like she did before we met.

Hummm. I feel the vibrations deep in my throat and it's like riding my truck over gravel.

The morning still calls to us when we lay together, and she reaches up that tree for fruit in winter like she does in spring and I know it's what she will do until the day she is dead. I think I will build her a swing.



**Emily Katelyn Baldrige**

*Still Life*

Charcoal Drawing

## Contributors

**Jeremy Armstrong** is a senior English major minoring in Philosophy. His work has been published in *Inscape* once before, and he mostly writes free verse poetry. He enjoys perusing the world and adult beverages.

**Emily Katelyn Baldrige** is an Art Education major at Morehead State University. She earned recognition as a burgeoning talent in her native Prestonsburg. Her current work focuses on the intimate qualities of the human existence and our greater role in the natural cycle of the living Earth. She enjoys stargazing, stargazer lilies, and *Star Wars*.

**Brandon Ballard** is a member of the BFA program in Creative Writing and an Electronic Media Production minor. He writes in every form, be it poetry, nonfiction or fiction. At this point in time, he has won no awards, but that is probably due to the fact that he has not submitted anything to anyone... until now.

**Julie Brooks Barbour's** work has appeared in *New Zoo Poetry Review*, *Public Republic*, and *roger*. She teaches creative writing and composition at Lake Superior State University, and is currently working on a manuscript of poems titled *Come To Me and Drink*.

**Christopher J. Burton** is a University Studies major at Morehead State University. In 2010, he won multiple First Place Awards at a local art gallery in Louisa, Kentucky during *September Fest*. Recently, he has been working with portraits and is getting ready to start a new project based on nature.

**Sean L Corbin** was born a poor white child in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. With Chris Prewitt, he is the co-founder of Antilachia ([antilachia.wordpress.com](http://antilachia.wordpress.com)) and co-author of *The Gospel of Playing Dead*. After graduating from the MSU Creative Writing BFA program this spring, Corbin will continue work on an experimental memoir, a collection of poetry, and his pathetic abdominal muscles.

**Cody Evans** is a journalism student with a new ambition to obtain an MA in teaching. He has been writing songs for many years and has only recently found himself seriously interested in poetry.

**Lea Faske** is an Art major with a minor in Creative Writing at Morehead State University. Her artwork was displayed in the 2009 Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, and published in *Inscape* in 2009 and 2010. Faske's written work also was published in the 2009 edition of *Inscape*. Her current work focuses on emotion and aesthetics.

**Stacey Greene** is a graduate of Morehead State University's BFA in Creative Writing program and is a native of Greenup, Kentucky. Her current projects include a collection of poetry and a short story cycle.

**Matthew Haughton** has published one chapbook, *Bee-coursing Box* (Accents Publishing). His poetry has appeared/set to appear in many journals, including *Appalachian Journal*, *Now & Then*, *The James Dickey Review*, and *New Southerner*. Haughton lives and works in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Brian Hawkins** is a lifetime resident of Bedford, Indiana. He holds a BS in Secondary Education from Indiana University, an MEd from Indiana Wesleyan University and is currently working to complete an MA in English at Morehead State University. During the Spring 2011 semester, he is writing a creative thesis which will focus on the people who worked in the Southern Indiana limestone industry at the turn of the twentieth century.

**Jessica Herrington** is a senior majoring in English, with a minor in Linguistics. She is from Nicholas County, Kentucky. Her work is primarily poetry, though she will occasionally explore other modes of creative writing.

**Derek Holston** is a native of Greenup, Kentucky. He is a graphic designer pursuing an Art major at Morehead State University, who also has a passion for photography and intaglio printmaking. Holston has presented his work in numerous galleries, including Mount Sterling's Gateway Regional Arts Center and Morehead's Rowan County Arts Center, as well as MSU's Strider and Claypool-Young Galleries. He was published in *Inscape* in 2010, 2009, and 2008. His current art projects focus on embracing and finding true self.

**Justin Howell** is a senior at Morehead State University, majoring in Art with an interest in graphic arts and illustration. His current body of work consists of illustrations representing people's stories juxtaposed with vast colorful- often futuristic-worlds. Placed in fictional worlds, a set of general rules are applied to the people and from this point, their lives and interactions are observed.

**Blythe Hunt** holds a BA in English from Colorado University and is currently working on her MA in English with a concentration in Creative Writing. She lives in Colorado Springs with her husband and book collection.

**Christopher Knox** is from Stanton, Kentucky. He has previously been published in *Inscape* and will be published in an upcoming *Motif* anthology from Moates Books. He hopes to graduate from MSU this spring and then pursue his MFA. He lives in Berea with his wife Koula and their three furry children, who all speak fluent "Tooten Toos."

**Rick Lewis** is a double major in Art and Computer Science at Morehead State University. He presented his work in the 2010 Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, as well as the 2009 *MSU Sophomore Exhibit*. His current art projects focus on showcasing the inner workings of his mind, while maintaining a somewhat "clean" sense of design and execution.

**Gwen Long** is an IECE major at Morehead State University. She was awarded Honorable Mention for her children's book, "My Book of Opposites," in MSU's *Literature and Materials for Young Readers* course in the Spring of 2008. Long's current focus is on earning her degree and raising her son, while still finding time to be creative.

**Brandon Massengill** was born and raised in Ohio, which shouldn't be held against him. He has previously been published in *Inscape*, and will (probably) be graduating Morehead State University this spring with a BFA in Creative Writing. Afterwards, he'll more than likely become a cab driver.

**Jonathan Nickles** is an Art major at Morehead State University, focusing on drawing and illustration. He is the recipient of the *J.E. Duncan Junior Art Award*, as well as the *Outstanding Freshman and Sophomore Awards*. His work was presented at the 10th and 11th Annual Juried Student Art Exhibit at the Gateway Regional Arts Center in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, where he placed Second in two categories, Painting (2010) and Digital Art (2009). In addition, Nickles' work was juried into the 2010 *University Open Exhibit* in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Kathryn O'Neil** is a senior Philosophy major who grew up between Maysville, Kentucky and Mulgrave, Nova Scotia. She has been published in *The Symposium*, MSU's Philosophical Undergraduate Journal. She is currently writing a women's studies piece. O'Neil hopes to attend graduate school for journalism.

**Drew Pearson** is a Computer Science and Creative Writing double major, who enjoys writing all sorts of delightful literature, especially confessional poetry about suicide and the end of the universe. He also likes cats.

**Annie Jo Peterson** is an Art major and a History major at Morehead State University. She is currently working on figure drawings, and a self-portrait.

**Sosha Nicole Pinson** is a Creative Writing major who has fixated on poetry since an early age. She is also the moderator of *Coffeehouse*, and finds herself in a long-term love/hate relationship with Eastern Kentucky. Pinson is working on two different poetry collections, one concerning her relationship with home and one concerning how she identifies herself in relation to her biological mother. She also makes paper chains out of the rejection letters she has received.

**Christopher Prewitt** currently lives with his wife, Kim, in Blacksburg, Virginia, where he is pursuing an M.F.A. in Creative Writing at Virginia Tech. Most recently his poems have appeared in *Switched-on Gutenberg* and *Suss*. Prewitt recently co-authored with Sean L Corbin *The Gospel of Playing Dead*. He is a multiple time recipient of the Billie & Curtis Owens Creative Writing award.

**Marvin Andrew Puckett** is an Art major at Morehead State University. He presented his work at the 2010 Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, for which he won First Place in the Sculpture/Ceramics category, and the juried 2010 *University Open Exhibit* in Lexington, Kentucky. His current work focuses on the abuse and manipulation of farm animals.

**Natasha Reader** is a recent graduate from Morehead State University, where she majored in Art. In the past year, she was awarded the *Outstanding Undergraduate Art Award* at MSU. She has exhibited work in multiple galleries, including a solo show, titled *Self-Examination*, at the Godbey Appalachian Center in Cumberland, Kentucky, and the 2010 Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, for which she received First Place in the Painting category. Reader also was published in the 2010 issue of *Inscape*. Her art focuses on emotional issues and the human body.

**Joe Schubert** is an Art major with emphasis in graphic design at Morehead State University. He has received awards in competitions for his logo and design work for businesses, organizations, and events. His current work focuses on alternate perspectives of current events and exploring new media.

**Ralph Shelton** is working on a teaching Masters (MAT for math) at Morehead State University. He is an electrical engineer employed at AK Steel in the labs. He is high on poetry and has recently published a book of his poetry entitled "InScapes". Shelton is organizing a fund raising hike of the entire Appalachian trail for Autism, scheduled for spring/summer/fall 2014. Please contact him if interested in a grand adventure or contributing to the cause, need lots-o-help, RTP remember the poetry. Shelton worked a couple weeks in Haiti on earthquake relief, and was very impressed with the All Hands.org volunteer organization there.

**Gary Smith**, originally from Virgie, Kentucky, is a twenty-two year old senior English and Art double major at Pikeville College. He is the president of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society, and has made three Sigma Tau Delta International Conference presentations, as well as two conference presentations at the Kentucky Philological Association's annual convention. Smith has also won six writing awards in Pikeville College's Writers' Competition, including two awards for First Place.

**Taral Thompson** is a senior at Morehead State University, majoring in Art. She presented work in the 2010 Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* in Mount Sterling, Kentucky, and was published in the 2008 and 2009 issues of *Inscape*. Currently, she is working on a few different series involving both travel/documentary photography and painting.

**Brian Tucker** enjoys spending summers on Lake Cumberland and writing fiction about the ever-changing South. He is a current student in Eastern Kentucky University's MFA Creative Writing program. Brian has been published in (or soon to be published in): *Southern Grit*, *Dew on the Kudzu*, *Trajectory Journal*, *The Dead Mule*, *Gloom Cupboard*, *Burnt Bridge Press*, and *The Camel Saloon*.

**Sara Volpi** is a Creative Writing major with a minor in Studio Art. She has participated in a few public readings of her own work, which centers on creative nonfiction writing. Poetry is also an area of interest that she has been working on over the last few semesters. Volpi's writing always involves themes of family and self-reflection. She finds inspiration in nature and taking road trips or reading. She has presented her artwork at shows in her hometown of Somerset, as well as at the annual Gateway Regional Arts Center's *Juried Student Art Exhibit* for the last two years. Volpi received the Second Place Award in the Eighth Annual Judy Rogers Women's Studies' *Visual Arts Contest* in 2010

**Ben Whisman** lives and works in Mount Sterling, Kentucky. He is a member of the creative writing program at Morehead State University, where he is haunted by his own grandiose aspirations. Whisman studied martial arts under Master Tim Nance for four years until he unexpectedly quit to pursue his education for reasons unknown.

**Kelsey Zachry** is an Art Education major at Morehead State University. Her work was published in the 2010 edition of *Inscape*, and Zachry also participated in the 2010 *Reverse Ekphrasis Project*.



*Inscape* is a Morehead State University publication with a long history of cutting edge visual and literary art. Media and genres of work range from prose, poetry, short story, long narrative, non-fiction and creative essays to photography, printmaking, drawing, painting, sculpture & digital art.

The Department of English offers MSU students the opportunity to submit work for publication. Students may submit poetry, fiction, non-fiction or drama. The works are reviewed by a panel and top selections are included in *Inscape*.

The Department of Art and Design offers students two opportunities to have their work juried for publication. For every issue, jurors review the competitive pool of submissions for both the cover design and the visual artwork published within *Inscape*. Their selections help form a unique and diverse issue of *Inscape*.

For specific guidelines and submission dates, visit  
**[www.moreheadstate.edu/inscape](http://www.moreheadstate.edu/inscape)**.



At Morehead State University, you will find "much more" than you might imagine. We are much more than college classes . . . much more engaged . . . much more personal. We provide a safe campus environment that is much more welcoming and student-friendly. We deliver a quality, affordable education in a student-focused learning environment. Our students thrive in small classes taught by dedicated faculty and staff committed to student success. We are much more than a regional partner . . . and much more than an alma mater. We are committed to enriching the lives of those we serve. At MSU, we aspire to be the best public regional university in the South. Visit [www.moreheadstate.edu/aspire](http://www.moreheadstate.edu/aspire) to learn "much more" about MSU's mission, vision, and values.

Morehead State University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, other protected veterans, and armed forces service medal veterans, or disability in its educational programs, services, activities, employment policies, and admission of students to any program of study. In this regard the University conforms to all the laws, statutes, and regulations concerning equal employment opportunities and affirmative action. This includes: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Kentucky Revised Statutes 207.130 to 207.240. Vocational educational programs at Morehead State University supported by federal funds include industrial education, vocational agriculture, business education, and the associate degree program in nursing. Any inquires should be addressed to: Affirmative Action Officer, Morehead State University, 101 Howell-McDowell, Morehead, KY 40351, 606-783-2097.



inscape  
art & literary magazine