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1947 FOREWORD

With this issue of Manuscript a new publication is launched on the Bucknell University Campus in Wilkes-Barre. Those who have been responsible for its coming into being earnestly hope that through your efforts and the efforts of those who come after you that this magazine will develop into a college tradition of which we may all be proud.

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M A N U S C R I P T

2019 - 2020
WILKES UNIVERSITY

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DEAR READERS -

Well, we made it! This was the only task on my Executive to-do list: to make a magazine. Done! ... Just kidding! This year, our goal has been to extend Manuscript's outreach and provide artistic resources to the Wilkes community.

We had a lot of new ideas and practices emerge over this year. First, we began each semester by visiting twenty English and Art classes to do outreach and spread word about the magazine. In addition, for the first time, Manuscript had a table at the Homecoming Tailgate Tent event, where we shared Halloween Mad Libs and candy (that we kept eating all year!). We also held film screenings of *Die Hard* and *Shrek*. We also began our Digitization Project, where we worked with the Archives Department to scan every edition of Manuscript for an online database. I was able to scan the first 22 years of work — from our inaugural issue in 1947 through 1969 — and I am excited for the future where this project is completed and accessible online.

And, of course, we were able to give you this year's Manuscript. We were excited to receive submissions from both undergrad and grad students, as well as our accomplished alumni. Thanks to the dedicated work of our submission review staff, we were able to send out detailed feedback to every one of our submitters, a goal we set at the beginning of the year. I hope Manuscript continues to act as a resource for both the emerging and seasoned creatives of Wilkes University.

This magazine is often many students' first publication, but it also serves as a reflection for what's going on in the world. This year, we decided on a theme of "Renaissance," a title that seems even more relevant following our mid-semester interruption.

Every year we bring you a magazine, but every year it's something a little different, a little new, a little freeze-frame of the world as it surrounded us. As you all know, our spring semester was cut short by the outbreak of COVID-19. Despite our separation across the country, having to take classes online, and being quarantined, I am so proud of the work our staff has done to bring you this year's issue. Our members continued to be active in their work, keeping high spirits while meeting virtually and working from home in order to successfully produce this year's Manuscript. We hope that this year's issue breathes some new life into you, and may we all emerge from quarantine a little brighter, a little more awake, and ready to return to the world.

BRIANNA SCHUNK

Executive Editor

Wilkes 2020

sometimes i wonder about the world's past.
what existed before us so long ago.
starving my curiosity leaves me downcast.
after all, what good is it to not know?

why was it all locked away long ago?

perhaps it is best if we do not know.

“time capsule”
- Emily Cherkauskas

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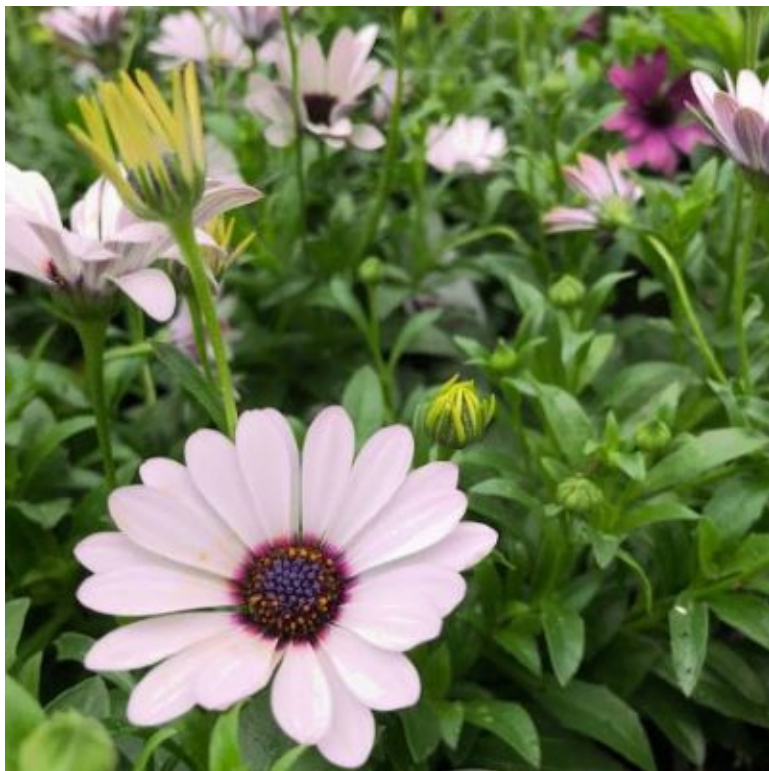
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HELLO

- EMILY CHERKAUSKAS

NATURE'S MILLSTONE

- WILL FARNELLI

somewhere in the woods
sits a skink who's lost his patterned tail.
effortlessly he flits about
unburdened by the severed stump.

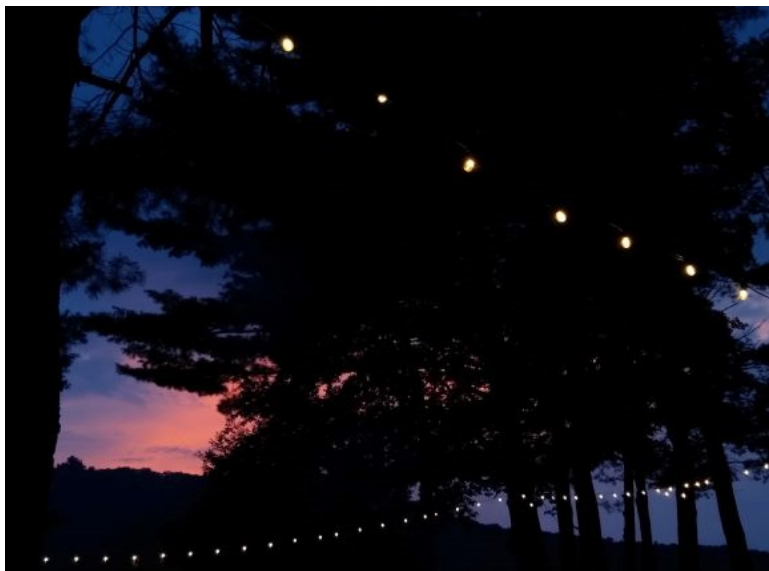
yesterday, the chickens
were gifted with a rotten melon.
the melon's skin,
now free of rind,
is all that was left by morning.

you could ask the skink
if he was feeling well,
and to that he would reply
"better than yesterday
and better tomorrow,
as i can always grow another tail."



NEATH THE HEAVY THUNDERCLOUD

-KRIS TJORNHOM



AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

- MEGAN TINDELL

THE ART OF LIVING

- HALEY KATONA

It is the adoration you can muster up inside of you for the
olive trees
For the resplendent yellow sun pouring over white snow
covered branches
The dark blue songbirds that sing their song in the stir of
the morning
For the beating of the silver drums inside gold music that
dances
The pale purple reflection of the sun on snow warming
It's finding peace within the gentle pink clouds that lightly
coat the sleepy sky
And watching with ease as the black concrete turns to a
hazed grey as it dries

BALLOONS

- EMILY CHERKAUSKAS

There once was a bold blue balloon
Its time to fly was opportune
It witnessed unseen sights
Beyond reachable heights
Farewell to the bold blue balloon.

There once was a sweet red balloon
A happy kid found it so soon
So traveling the mile
Made it all worth while
Farewell to the sweet red balloon.

There once was a pure white balloon
It mirrored the light of the moon
Then it was cut free
Catching the breeze
Farewell to the pure white balloon.

There once was a sad gray balloon
It shivered with a starved raccoon
The rain was frightening
Till it saw lightning
Farewell to the sad gray balloon.

There once was a dull gold balloon
Long ago did it lose its tune
It was so creased and curled
Forgotten by the world
Farewell to the dull gold balloon.



HOBQUEEN

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU

ODE TO THE MALL RATS

- MADDISON BLACK

It was always a Friday when the Mall Rats appeared.
They came with their trench coats and oblong ears.
They smoked many things outside the food court,
From Camel, to marijuana, Marlboro, and Newport.
They stole from the Bon-Ton and gave to the nerds,
They were truly the heroes we never deserved.
They were the type of kids that my mom would condemn,
But I always said "if only I could be more like them."
From gothic, to punk, alternative, emo
They collectively listened to plenty of screamo
In Spencer's they joked at the penile confections
Adults always said that they had no directions.
But I'd disagree from what elders would say
As the mall rats seemed happy almost every day
Most kids my age played with board games or barbies
But I was preoccupied outside of the Arby's
For as you can see, no one greater existed
Than those ass kicking mall rats in which I just listed.
You can laugh at the Mall Rats, you can think they're a
bore.

However, their lives might be better than yours.
You can laugh at their piercings and silly tattoos,
But when you live at the mall, you've got nothing to lose.
The Mall Rats grew up, but still hung around,
While everyone else moved away from this town.
With my new full time job, I needed a top,
So I returned to that mall at which I once shopped.
And to my surprise, guess who was still there?

Those edgy Mall Rats with their fun colored hair!
Most adults took trips to New York or the tropics,
But the Mall Rats still took trips to shop at Hot Topic.
I looked at their happiness with envy and resent,
It's like they knew not of what "growing old" meant.
Still having fun, still joking and shopping,
It's like they skipped college, parties, bar-hopping!
They didn't get married, they didn't have kids.
They just ate soft pretzels outside of the Lids.
You can joke that their lives have no direction,
But in our world today, that seems like perfection.
And I believe that their lives are better than others,
Despite the fact that they live with their mothers.
A life in the mall would be so serene,
To laugh with your friends by gumball machines.
Mall Rats still rule; they still are my heroes
(Even though my mom would consider them zeros).
They have no cares, the mall is their gem.
And still say "if only I could be more like them."



LE CHAT

- MADDISON BLACK

THE SLANTED BARD

- WILL FARNELLI

There was a musician,
Who got to thinkin'
“What makes a rhyme
Just sound so right?”
If you have the right pitches,
Your tunes will be bitchin'
And with a good tempo
It will be God sent gold
But if it doesn't rhyme well
Then the battle's uphill,
So the musician now warns
“Please don't rhyme with orange.”



HUNGRY FOR...

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU



IT MOVED WITH NOISELESS TREAD

- KRIS TJORNHOM

THE GHOSTS OF KIRBY HALL

- BRIANNA SCHUNK

This is absolutely ridiculous. I'm sitting in a room full of suffragette ghosts who are all yelling at each other about the dangers of attending some protest. Who decided this was a good way to spend my night?

"I have children at home, they need me!" "What good will it do for the cause if I'm stuck in jail?" "How do you know that won't happen to us?" "You never mentioned there would be violence! We're supposed to bring peace!"

I'm standing with my back against the parlor doors, the handles biting into my waist. I can't even see the ceiling because it's completely obscured by the chaos of hazy flying blurs of white.

"Ladies, ladies, please! Return to your seats! Stop these dramatics!" The woman in charge is desperately trying to bring the meeting back to order, but her voice is barely audible above the whining din.

I take the moment of chaos to try the doors again - still locked. The metal handles rattle in my fists. How on earth did I end up on the wrong side of the only room that no one is allowed in? Better still - what am I going to do about my work? "Sorry, Dr. Hamill, I couldn't finish the layout for Inkwell because I went downstairs to take a break and I got trapped in the parlor with a bunch of screaming suffragette ghosts!" That will go over real well.

"This is simply too dangerous!" "Well, I think this is getting out of hand!" The voices continue to shout and scream above me. My ears are ringing, and the room is starting to spin - books are flying off the shelves, the globe across the room is whirling madly, throw pillows have been knocked to the floor. I cannot be responsible for this - if anyone comes back tomorrow and finds this room a mess, and with my fingerprints on the door -

“HEY! KNOCK IT OFF!” I blink, finding myself facing the inside of the parlor. All floating objects suddenly drop to the carpeted floor with a dull thunk. “Can you people shut it for just one minute and let me get out of this joint? I have work to do!”

The haze begins to clear, and muddy outlines of floating bodies begin to separate from the clouds. As quickly as they appear, they begin to disappear - what little detail I can see begins to dissolve into itself, their blurred faces blinking out under hat brims.

“Finally,” I mutter, “time to get out of this place.” I turn the handles again, but the door doesn’t move. I drive my shoulder and hip into the door, shoving madly, and the door shakes against my weight, metal and wood rattling furiously. I smack the window pane in frustration, my hot palm fogging the glass, when -

“What work do you need to get done?”

I stop, looking back at the question. The voice hangs in the empty air.

“It must be very important for you to break down a door over it.”

Now the ghosts are sassing me? I turn fully around now, hands on my hips, peering into all the corners of the room. The moonlight streams through the windows, giving everything an eerie white glow.

“If you really must know, I’m - well, I’m a student here, and I’m an English major, and I work with our department newsletter, I’m the Executive Editor, and I’m working on the computer, laying out where all the articles are going to go, and I have to get it done tonight because we need to get it to the Print Shop by Friday and my usual layout editor is sick at home right now, and I need to spend the rest of the week studying for my midterms, and - “

“That sounds like an awful lot of work,” the voice interrupts.

“Um...yeah, it is.” I sniff, suddenly overwhelmed with my workload. I spy the couch at the far end of the room, and seeing as I’m not going anywhere, I figure I’ll take a seat. I plop down on the couch, and the sniff turns to a sneeze from how dusty it is in the parlor. Of all the places to get trapped.

“*Hankie?*” A thin, white handkerchief materializes in front of my face. I sniff again and wipe my nose on my sleeve. The handkerchief wiggles in the air, as if it’s asking me to take it. After one long breath, I reach one hand out and take the handkerchief.

As my hand meets the white fabric, a slim white hand begins to appear, holding it poised between two fingers and a thumb. Following the hand is an arm, sleeve down to the wrist, and then a shoulder, a neck, a chest, and then there is a figure of a lady sitting beside me on the couch. Her hair is pinned messily under a wide-brimmed hat - indoors, which is weird - and she’s wearing a slinky dress with a long skirt and sleeves, with little lace borders around the hems.

She smiles at me, drawing her hand back, and I feel the weight of the handkerchief drop into my fingers. It looks like a normal hankie - there’s even a little pink flower embroidered on the corner. I look up at the figure again. She shoos her hands toward me, urging me to use the hankie. My nasal drip wins out over my fear and I blow my nose.

“*That’s fantastic, simply astounding. You’re a student, you said?*”

“Yeah, junior year. Still not sure what I want to do when I get out, though.”

“*But you already have a job as the editor of the newsletter, yes?*”

“Oh, yeah, well, it’s not really a job in the normal sense - it’s not hourly pay or anything.”

“Then how do you afford to pay your schooling?”

“Well, I got a lot of scholarships, but I also do work-study in the Writing Center, where I help people write papers. And, for a while, I worked at Subway.” She looks confused. “It’s a sandwich shop,” I add.

She nods. *“Two jobs, an education, and a powerful position as a newspaper editor. How wonderful!”*

I shrug. “Well, pretty much everyone gets a college education now, and I was pretty lucky because I never needed a job in high school. Yeah, I dunno, it’s pretty cool, I guess.”

She smiles. She’s practically glowing. *“Do you still live at home, with your parents?”*

“Oh! I did for a while, but me and my boyfriend just got our own apartment over in Kingston. It’s not much, but it’s ours, and we have a cat; it’s nice.”

“Oh...and he owns it?”

“No, definitely not,” I say, smiling, “both of our names are on the rental lease! There’s no getting out of that!” She smiles back at me, and I feel shame creep up over my shoulders.

“I’m sorry about shouting and ruining your meeting,” I say, standing up from the couch. Another puff of dust escapes the faded yellow fabric.

“That’s quite alright. I think you’ve more than made up for it, my dear.” She rises and pats me on the shoulder, and the back of my neck goes ice cold as it connects with her gloved hand.

“Ladies! I have new developments!” she calls, her voice a whispery echo. Slowly, the suffragettes begin to rematerialize and fill the room once more. The striped wallpaper wavers as women appear from the sides of the room, out of bookcases, armchairs, even the china cabinet. Some float down to rest on chairs and couches, while others remain hovering close to the ceiling.

I see the leader across the room. She claps her hands. *"I would like to call back to order this meeting of the Luzerne County chapter of the National Women's Party. Rosa May, you had something to add?"* She gestures to the woman with whom I was speaking.

"Yes, thank you, Agnes. I've been speaking with this young person, and I think she stands as a reminder of just what we're all fighting for. She has informed me that she is here, in Kirby Hall, getting a college education, and that is now a nationwide standard for all young adults." A hush passes through the room.

"She is working for an hourly wage where she helps people to write papers. She is also the Executive Editor of a student newspaper, for which she is paid as well." As I look around the room, I can see that the women are smiling. Some, I think, have tears rolling down their cheeks.

"She was able to sign her own name to lease property. She pays for her apartment through the funds from her employment. She did not have to work until she began her education - she never had to labor as a child. Women, these are the things at stake! These are the things we are fighting for!" With all of it laid out in front of me, the work I have done this semester comes rushing back to me. I can feel the blood rising to my head, like my body has been turned upside down.

"Sisters, I hear you. You are scared. You are exhausted. You are weary from fighting to be seen as equal in the eyes of society. This young woman is the reason we must be present at the protest this weekend - no matter the personal cost! We are here to prove that this country is worthy - nay, it is overdue - for change! It will have no choice but to listen to progress - and this young woman is proof!"

With each declaration, the group cheers and claps, rattling the walls. As they cheer, their details become clearer and clearer. The energy in the room is overwhelming

- I can see every woman in the parlor, every hand, every mouth, every ribbon on each dress. As the cheers get louder and louder, I realize my own mouth is open, shouts escaping from my throat. I close my eyes, lean back, and cup my hands around my mouth to give a final hoot, and -

I open my eyes. A beam of early-morning sunlight catches my line of vision. I blink and rub my face, my eyes full of white spots from the sun's rays. I realize I've fallen asleep in one of the armchairs in the front hall - the one right next to the parlor. I jump up, heading for the stairs to the DH Lab, when I check my watch - it's nearly 5AM. I've been in Kirby Hall all night. I peer into the salon - it looks untouched. Every book is on the shelf, every pillow resting on the seat of a chair.

I climb the stairs and turn on the computer. Quickly, quietly, I finish typing up the last of the articles, then add a note from the editor:

“The privilege of what we have today came at the personal cost of lives long before us, and we continue fighting so that the lives long after us may have even greater freedoms. Happy National Women's Month from Inkwel.”

I shut down the computer, grab my backpack, and head back downstairs and out the front door. On the front steps I inhale the cold morning air deeply and feel it rush through my lungs. As I walk down the steps I shove my hands into my pockets.

Wait. There's something in there. Slowly, I pull out a white handkerchief embroidered with a little pink flower. I blow my nose. The handkerchief is full of dust.



WOMAN, WHY ARE YOU WEeping?

- BRIANNA SCHUNK

MOONFALL

- SARAH WEYNAND

Much like the moon,
you went through phases,
not of everchanging, slow shifting
ratios of light and dark,
phases of me, of your love for
a real
breathing
person,
whose love for you was always bright and full.
You were so far away from me,
you were there in the nighttime
and lingered where I couldn't see you the morning after,
some nights, I couldn't see you at all
because your light focused on a different star,
but when they flew away, I was always there.
The phases came and went and the only thing they had in
common
were prayers gone unanswered and dried tears on my pil
low,
until I gave up astrological adventures
and stayed grounded, guarded where my heart was safe.
Continue to fly, and see what form of life looks past the
inconsistency
for your beauty
- besides, I know how much you love space



INCREASING DAY BY DAY

- KRIS TJORNHOM

THE ORCHESTRA

- NANDRA SINGH

can they hear it?
the silence,
playing so loudly,
like an orchestra.
you orchestrated
to kill me.
with the words you never said,
but implied;
dancing around the truth.
tell me now:
was all of it fake?
or did you say
all that you said
to be music to my ears?
it's a blank wind now.
no motion, no movement.
no noise.
no more clutter.
no more you.
i thought i hated the sound of your lies,
the bittersweet notes.
but now i know,
the absence of your presence
is the darkest
melancholy
of
any symphony.



CANTEEN

- MADDISON BLACK

BAD OMENS

- ASHLEY WALLACE

she's a black rose in a field of red
a crow landing on your shoulder
don't know whether that feeling is dread
or wishing you could hold her

she's black ink spilled
on your favorite book page
she's poison distilled
makes you wish you had your sage

use a ouija board to read her
her secrets and thoughts, she'll never tell
in your dreams you'll definitely see her
mocking you like freddy on elm



TEMPTATION

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU



LIZZIE

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU

THE JUNGLE'S ELIXIR

- SARAH WEYNAND

Velvet valor
in a glass,
inching closer and closer
across the bar:
a lion waiting to pounce
on my brain's vulnerabilities.
Its sweet scent purrs,
hooking me in seconds.
I, a gazelle in a leopard skirt,
give into the smooth mane,
whose claws burn my throat going down,
but leaves my core coated with warmth.
Silk, deliquescent courage
draws all other animals to me,
the social butterfly,
top of the food chain,
life of the party.

A wolf appears at my heels,
sucking out my deepest secrets with honeyed words
and tender paws
that pay for another drink.
Violets, reds, sparkling whites, bright greens
draw curtains over my eyes to soothe
the hurricane against my skull.

Wolf leads me to his cave,
tucking me into his nest
and his teeth into my flesh.
Blood waterfalls from his grin,
howling in ecstasy.
I imagine the Jungle outside,
picture myself dancing in fields,
rolling in rivers.

The Wolf tosses me out,
bones and fat and all.
I limp back to the bar,
croaking for a glass of Lion.
To escape the cage this night had put me in,
I need some liquid courage.

DIESEL FOR THE EVERYMAN

- WILL FARNELLI

From the bitter cherry pit
The black bean water flows,
Burning down esophogi,
Diesel for the everyman.
The black bean water,
Hearty and dry,
Electrifies the mind,
Nectar, elixir,
Roasted, ground, brewed,
Sharp as a slap to the face.
The black bean water,
An oasis within the hot carafe.
Jack would kill his cow himself
For a bag of these magic beans.

INSURANCE FRAUD #2[±]

- BRIANNA SCHUNK

I'm fighting sleep
he's fighting cancer
the crows outside fight the world
my mom fights the lawyers
the lawyers fight the adjustors
electricity fights its way thru the wires
my voice fights breaking
my eyes fight watering
I'm fighting for this to end like it normally does
guitar strings fight to stay tuned
flies fight to escape window screen
lighter fluid fights the wind
we are all fighting gravity
fighting to get away with it
fighting to wipe the ash from the explosion
fight to get the garbage in the can and onto the street
fight the cold
fight the heat
fight the way I lean on rhythm
I'm fighting the urge to rhyme
but it's just about that 12:45 sleep
where the cat meows at me
that it's time to get into bed.
he knows. he doesn't fight.
he fights sleep when the sunlight
and breakfast time
overlap.

[±] Title borrowed from The Mountain Goats

PLACES

- JAY GUZIEWICZ

when i said goodbye,
a part of me shattered.
fragments broke off and scattered in the wind.

they went to armagh/marion/moraga.
the places i thought would make me whole.
and lead me back to myself,
but i was wrong.

i was not found in St. Patrick's Cathedral
or among the trees in Redwood Park.
once thought i was close to seeing my reflection
in The Granger House Museum,
but even there it was only a dusty vision.

i learned not to search among the people i thought i loved,
the people i thought loved me back,
because while they can hold my hand during the journey,
only i can lead myself home.



DANCE WITH DEATH

- MADDISON BLACK

THE COLD SPOON

- HALEY KATONA

Calloused gray hands covering silver metal
One single spoon carved with flowers, their petals
Dug through drawers in search of it, named of the devil
Serrated edges, thick handle, sharp to unsettle

Grabbing a hold of my skull
The washed up remains, pecking of the ivory gull
Hair braided and thin, honey brown in dark, dull
Cold and raw pressed against my eyes, lull

Into sleep I fall against the thunder of rainfall
The white and noiseless walls pulling me, they enthrall
Cutlery charged against my crawl, bottles open of alcohol
He has the hands of an eight ball, the drywall painting of
St. Paul

Tossed aside layers of braids with a gripping hold
Smoothing the pieces back with hands firm and controlled
Spoon in between fingers pressing into skin, the blindfold
Wrapped around my eyes, light beaming like white gold

He tugs and yanks, he strips and cuts, tearing
Strands and skin back into blood, he is unsparing
The bone of my skull bruises easily, pounding and blaring
Deeper it goes, scooping while I'm swearing, he is glaring

At his work of fine art, a true statue of his muse
Skull cracked and hanging almost loose
I stand like a fuse draped in both red and chartreuse
A proud artist of misuse, the spoon in the artistry of abuse

SUNDAY SCHOOL

- MADDISON BLACK

the pride of womanhood-
wrapped in Scottish lace;
lined with vellus.
back when womanhood was a stranger-
and my Temple was my Temple.

still, it beseeched for solicitous residence:
white walls,
mosaic sunshine-
a Good Samaritan to bathe in its Holy Water.

O, how I believed I had been found!
at sixteen and in true love!
I hadn't known much of
Baphomet then.

kissing my bodice
I fell into a familiar cottage.
warm memories flooded the floors-
but the fireplace was no longer burning.

he led me to my casket as
skeletal fingers molested my body;
zip ties that strangulated my lungs
prevented my prayers.

gasping for grace
I clutched rosaries to my breastbone-
The Serpent's scythe slid closer to gullet.
words trickled through teeth
and like acid they scalded my child-like cheeks.
"There is no God."

THANK YOU, SYLVIA

- SARAH WEYNAND

Plath's "Daddy"
struck me in guilt's gut,
revealing the faulty concept
that everyone else has a dad but me –

Plath wags a dainty finger:
Dysfunction does not discriminate.

I am not alone
in my unfed stomach,
my unbrushed tears,
my unclothed frame.

I am not the
only daughter that has
reached her arms to
the sky in hopes to be
picked up, held in a cloud –
only for Daddy
to strike her down;
his hate is lightning,
burning and paralyzing.
his addiction is hail,
pellets numbing hope.
his car ride away, his lowering into the grave
pulls the heartstrings of a million daughters
until they snap, ready to be tied into a bow
by any boy who finds your
daddy issues as intoxicating
as your perfume.

There were no nightmares hushed,
no foreheads kissed,
and when you tried
to find Father elsewhere,
you got the same false promises,
the same black eyes,
and found yourself
feeling trapped
yet right at home
at the very same time.

Yes, Sylvia,
teach me how to override Freud,
slay Nazis, rise from the ashes,
and capture men like oxygen into my lungs,
for you have given us the lessons
our father should have and could have,
but didn't.

Thank you, though,
for teaching us
that we, too,
could be through
with Daddy.



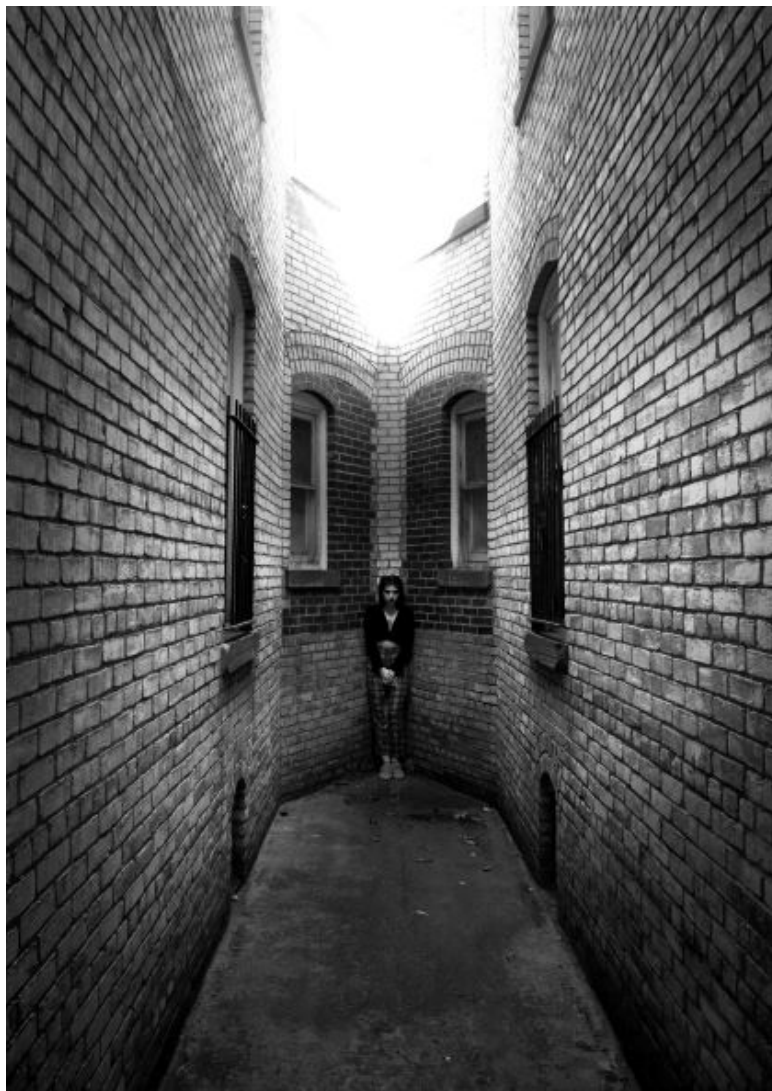
UNTITLED

- ANONYMOUS



BAR AND BARRIER

- KRIS TJORNHOM



FULL WELL THY CITIES KNOW

- KRIS TJORNHOM

RATTENFANGER

- WILL FARNELLI

How the body changes.
Circe resides in a coffee shop.
“One sugar, please.”
Saying you’re something that you know you are not.
“Sugar, please.”
Murinae metamorphosis.
“Please.”

How the world changes.
They flood their sewers
With stolen wine,
Fit for a king.
Drunk, dead,
Or drowning,
They all hear me sing.

How the mind changes.
Finally, I have a kingdom!
My followers,
Abject,
Silent,
Remain loyal,
More afraid of cats
Than kings.

How time changes.
My flute is broken now,
Worn from disuse.
The woods flood
With the vermin,
While I am unable
To lead them into the river.



TWINKLE JUNGLE

-MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU

LONELY IN PARADISE



Facing the Fact of My Death.

As a child, my mortality was [redacted] an opportunity.



MY DEATH

- MADDISON BLACK

PRINCIPESSA

- SARAH WEYNAND

As a small girl, your heart is a monument, and your arms
cling to your eldest brother like a sloth on a tree.

Family roots dig in deep and birth a castle in your suburb,
an Earth princess, loyal to what nature and nurture seeps
into your lungs.

Dearest brother lowers you from the branches;
your knight whose helmet sheds just for a moment so he
can make you giggle

and assure you that the dragons can't hurt you here
until the night

he shivers off all armor,
revealing a sinister grin,

a twisted jester who slips their palm beneath your nightie,
blocking your flinches with his trunk of a leg kneading into
your tulip.

The confusion, the vomit, your limp branches, and sweat
drenched crown
are nothing alongside the gut punch of your mother telling
you to

forget it, it was silly.

It's 1972, 73, 74, 75

and the blood between your thighs is silly,

the fingerprints on your breast are silly,

the scene dragged under the rug

instead of to a therapist

is silly.

Remember you are the only girl in an Italian family
with antique-porcelain-doll-ankle-length-skirt-no-sneak-
peek-shoulder

values listed in the fine print of your DNA.

They demand that at dinner,
you sit next to the prince
who makes you want to deadbolt your bedroom door at
night,
and you won't care if no one can get you out during a fire.
You'd welcome the torched touch, melting to bone,
the key to get out of your own skin.
Imagine that: warm freedom.
Warmer than the queen's cookies,
Or the king's cheeks after too much beer,
Or the maroon monsoon betwixt your dainty twigs.
Imagine that your eyes snap open and it's forty-something
years later,
fiery fantasy sliding to the back burner.
The prince, now married with children,
rips off the battle scar's scab as he rings the doorbell
for a visit.
You're 13 again when you see his dark locks,
and start to scurry upstairs
when Mommy Dearest's voice
pours salt on the open wound:
"darling, don't run away –
your brother's here."



CHAINS

- KRIS TJORNHOM

THE LION I LIVED WITH

- BRIANNA SCHUNK

How close have you ever gotten to a lion? 500, maybe 100 feet? Maybe even closer, if you've ever visited a circus, or a zoo? Always watching the ferocious beast from behind iron bars, thick plexiglass, or under the lion tamer's whip?

Have you ever been so close that you could feel its hot breath on your neck, sending gooseflesh across your bare skin? Have you ever been close enough to count the dimples in its nose, the individual whiskers on its face, close enough to see the glint and glisten in its eyes?

Maybe you've only ever seen it sleeping, snoring, its massive paws resting under its even more massive head, its golden coat reflecting afternoon sunlight back into the trees. Maybe you've seen it stalking prey, every muscle rippling down its back and into its long snaking tail. You've watched on a nature documentary as some helpless zebra looked the wrong way, and what you thought to be a snoozing kitty-cat suddenly leaps - pounces - lands on its unassuming dinner. The lion slinks away with its prey, animals parting to let royalty pass, its crown still squarely in the center of its head.

When I met my roommate, Dina, she seemed sweet. All cats do, at first. Their fur looks so soft, and most of the time their wide eyes and caterwauls are pitiable. Dina arrived in my life following a severe falling-out with all of her other friends, and being the soft heart I am, I took her in, gave her some food and water, and petted her.

Cats, I learned, have strange ways of showing love. Sometimes, they will go out and kill mice and birds and leave the half-eaten carcass on your living-room rug. Dina used to assign herself to our defense, finding people who she deemed a threat and slitting their throats - metaphorically, of course. As time passed, I found myself picking up

half-dead friendships on the carpet - and having to decide for myself if they were worth saving. Dina had already done the work of bleeding them out, telling me “you know what he said, right?” and “God, she’s so annoying, no brain there” - it was up to me to throw them in the garbage.

Sometimes, cats will bite you as a way of showing affection. Dina used to love doing this. She would chase our other friends around the apartment, and I would listen as shouts of “Fuck you, bitch!” and “Love you too, honey” would float down my hallway. She bit me with “Watch it, I’m gonna move out,” quite a few times. I showed my fangs a few times, daring to spit “bitch” and “slut.” Curse words turned my tongue to sandpaper and it hurt to clean my wounds. It was always a gamble - how far can you push the kitty until she decides she’s had enough?

Sometimes, cats just need to be left alone. Overwhelmed by classwork, financial stress, family crisis, and health issues, I tried to turn to Dina for support. Often, I would come home from a long day to find that she was not there - and that she did not return until the day after. Dina, experiencing her first whirlwind romantic relationship, was consumed by her partner, and I had to beg her to go on grocery trips with me and to clean the bathroom in our apartment. Whenever I did manage to talk to Dina, it was like talking to a brick wall. She often sat, phone in hand, scrolling through her social media accounts while I unloaded my heavy days, only for her to shoot back helpful suggestions: “Yeah, that sucks, I wish my parents were divorced too,” or “Maybe if you didn’t waste so much time on that complicated project,” or the best yet, “I don’t see why not eating all day is a problem.”

Cats, however, don’t have egos. As our friendship grew strained, I realized I didn’t have a cat for a roommate - but a lion. Her earlier nips now threatened to take my arm off with teeth as big as my hands. I caught her half-

dead friendships, now heavy and striped with blood, with open arms. I cringed every time I had a curse word thrown at me, flinching to catch it in a spot where it wouldn't bruise. When I didn't see her for days on end, it sent me into a panic - I hid in my bedroom, waiting for her to pop out and bite me, fearful of the lion I could not find.

I tried to make excuses. I tried to bring our friendships back to life. "She's just not a people person," I would lie, "she's just protective of herself." It became harder and harder to pet her, and I spent more time licking her wounds than taking care of myself. I absorbed her negative energy, afraid that if I dared to let anything go it would all fall apart. I came to realize that the safest spot for the prey is directly in front of the lion - as long as I kept Dina in sight, kept her close, I threw no risk of being bitten myself with the fangs of hate she kept hidden in her heart.

No prey can ever relax for long. Eventually, Dina overstayed our friendship. One night, my girlfriend and I were preparing to watch a movie. When Dina came home, I invited her in to watch it with us before she had to leave for work. I was met with a cold stare, a "no, I'll just leave you two alone," and a slamming bedroom door. Later, I would find out that Dina complained about the situation, roaring that she was "a prisoner in her own house" being kept from relaxing in the living room because of our presence. I had to laugh - a prisoner that walks free from her cage three nights a week? A prisoner who is well-fed and petted, who doesn't even empty her own litter box?

Dina bit me deeper than I ever thought a cat or friend could with her words, and shortly after I spent less and less time in the jungle of our apartment, which had become a hunting ground for miscommunication and silent treatments. As I spent more time with other friends, they began to unravel the knots I had put myself in trying to weave tight enough to catch all the negativity. I spent

evenings surrounded by “I love you” and “you’re doing amazing” and, best of all, “it’s not your job to make your roommate happy.” I realized that I wasn’t prey, and I wasn’t a slave to her royal commands. I was free to step away from the lion’s den - and I did just that.

When I moved out, Dina completely cut me off. She insisted that I ruined everything. She blamed me when mutual friends cut her off. She complained about having to get a new roommate. She whined that I took the television, and the couch, and the tea kettle. I hoped that our friendship would be repaired if we were no longer roommates. Dina was the one that taught me - cats have strange ways of showing love. Sometimes love means being taking time to be away from someone. Dina never seemed to understand that, and never did forgive me for leaving. Her jungle was burning down, and I stood among the charred bushes holding the match.



BLACKOUT

- MADDISON BLACK



LONG DISTANCE

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU

DRACULA

- DARREN MARTINEZ

i dont know if i miss you.
i miss my own warmth
someone to talk to
arms to hold me,
but i dont know
if this is specifically You

misty visions of your smile
live in my past
im in my past there with you.
my husk is without its bread
in the present,
drinking from dry gourds
and smashing vases

the superstitious
are haunted by ghosts
the realists
suffer memories
the schizophrenic
at the end of the hall
talks to them both
from a little circle of salt

birthday cards in wine-red ink,
i dont think i can ever see your face again.
what are you
what were you
what were we



HYSTERIA

- MADDISON BLACK

ROOM 32

- MADDISON BLACK

this time, I am willing.
judgement day be soon inside my sanitarium.
I rattle such as a babe on this washcloth
but, time is unheard of within purgatory.

plagued by fatigue of her own ignominious battles
Earth's daughter,
yet here she lie,
a descendent of Baphomet lives among you.
the penile art mocks me, as if to sermonize
obscenities and claw marks make a mural of white walls.

the prisoner of Room 32.
here I lie

stripped of possessions, I saunter to bloodless grave.
repetitious frocks guide paths of sovereignty.

I return as dust.
By Commandment,
and sleep upon a chilling tile.
let I rest among the rusted bolts.

THE HONEY IS GONE

- HALEY KATONA

Wind sways through the branches
Into the edges of my open car window
Sprinkling light fairy breaths of warmth
That lace over my bare skin and encase my heart.

The cherry blossom pink skies of March's end reminiscent
Of dark hazel wood violin notes, thick and heavy
My mind paused in time, my body steering while my eyes flutter
Opening softly only to shut harshly as the sky and song
intertwine
Light honeyed pink clouds that twisted into brown oak
Dripping down remembrance of the days once before.

Those violent arrays of colors flashed for a moment
Honeyed blood red, soft yellow, dark gold, pale pink
Drizzled over my smiling face, coated my tightening throat
Drew back and forth until my blue eyes wept for my blue soul
How I ache to feel the glow of pink once more
Upon my cheeks, upon my heart, my soul --

But only within the untouchable sky do I see the pink
And only when the wind blows a certain way do I hear the violin
The strings that ache as they are pulled
Even when played with a bow dipped in honey
The luster of roseate carnations planted within the dirt
Sway within the wind's hands as the sun sinks into the sky
Taking its warmth with it and my window is drawn up

In an attempt to silence the sound of black tires on grey gravel
That scratch and shake the already strained violin
As they compete for the lasting of the pink sky's attention
Knowing I no longer have it.



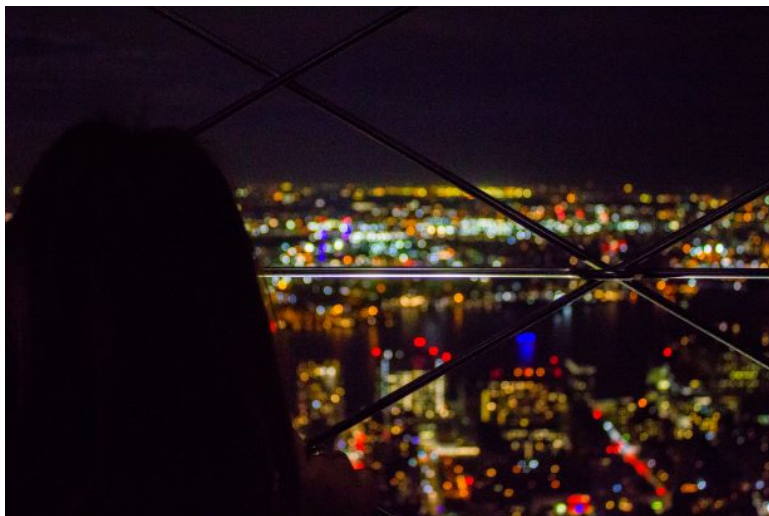
SHADOWS AND SUNSETS

- MEGAN TINDELL

SOLAR ECLIPSE

- ASHLEY WALLACE

your smile the outline
of a sun sinking down
beneath the calm waters
of a deep blue sea
your hair the hues
of a sky set on fire
from the star that burns
all over, so bright
saying goodnight
for a nights' long slumber
the beach welcoming the moon
it's favorite, timeless lover



GLAZING

- MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU



CLOSURE

- EMILY CHERKAUSKAS

HEEL TURN 2

- BRIANNA SCHUNK

even when I get hurt

(and I will)

love with a child's heart

don't want it to die

even when I get hurt

(and I will)

reserve myself a seat

for my breakdown

for my better self

for my bitter revenge

even when I get hurt
 (and I will)
 walk out in one piece
 play my guitar
 to the sound of your angry footsteps
 down our bruised and narrow hallway

even when I get hurt
 (and I will)
 beat my heart black and blue
 out of my chest
 to match the bruises on your face
 apply your icy stare to the swelling

even when I get hurt
 (and I will)
 play piano though no tune
 will reach my deaf ears or yours
 when you finally close the door
 I will wrap myself in the comfort of silence

even when I get hurt
 (and I will)
 wrap one child-size fist
 around the blue-green veins in your wrist
 it's true - no pulse

I get hurt
 and I will still live
 and I will still love
 and you will enjoy the
 cedar walls of your
 coffin'd heart.

BENEATH A WEeping WILLOW

- RASHONDA M. MONTGOMERY

Pouring spirit down into my soul
beneath a weeping willow
I am miles away
swaying, dancing in the breeze
beneath the sunset
while golden poppies surround you



WESTWOOD

- KRIS TJORNHOM

BIOGRAPHIES

BRIANNA SCHUNK / Executive Editor / English & Dance
Brianna's favorite craft is making outfits for her cat, Mina, who is named after the poet Mina Loy. Mina is a good sport about all of it.

MADDISON BLACK / Assistant Editor / Musical Theatre & English / When Maddison wrote her bio, she had just finished writing 50 pages of her capstone novel in five hours. We hope she's slept since then.

JAY GUZIEWICZ / Art Editor / Psychology / When they're not at school or work, Jay enjoys playing Dragon Age and dancing in their kitchen to folk punk at 3am.

MMACHI O. DIMORIAKU / Photography Editor / Theatre Arts / Mmachi's nickname her freshman year was "Mmachi with the Good Hair." This still rings true.

WILLIAM BILLINGSLEY / Copy Editor / Political Science & History / Will's original bio was a complete retelling of "The Shaggy Dog." Get in touch with him for the full story.

JULIA KOERWER / Staff / Undeclared / Julia has the same birthday as Albert Einstein.

SHEYLAH SILVA / Staff / English / Sheylah has a betta fish named Mike Wazowski.

SARAH WEYNAND / Staff / Musical Theater & English Literature / Whenever Sarah feels writer's block approaching, she can always look to her loving feline, Theo.

EMILY CHERKAUSKAS / Communication Studies & Creative Writing minor / Emily has such an unhealthy obsession with tie-dye to the point that she might need an intervention.

WILL FARNELLI / English / Will's eaten many species of insect in the past and plans to eat many more.

HALEY KATONA / English & Political Science / Haley really enjoys singing and the sound of the cello.

DARREN MARTINEZ / English / Darren is currently on a Smash Bros tournament streak of 2 at Wilkes. He is very proud of this mediocre achievement and considers it his only impact on Wilkes.

RASHONDA M. MONTGOMERY / English & Secondary Education / The fact that turtles ARE their shells and do not simply live in them still blows Rashonda's mind to this day. She had two pet turtles and wondered when they would buy them new shells.

MEGAN TINDELL / Graduate Student in Creative Writing / In undergrad, Megan wrote two theses and one of them was on dragons, so she thinks that pretty much sums up who she is as a person.

NANDRA SINGH / Psychology

KRIS TJORNHOM / Musical Theatre / One fun fact about Kris is he loves the outdoors.

ASHLEY WALLACE / English / Ashley has 61 digits of pi memorized.

2019-2020 POSTERS

By JAY GUZIEWICZ

art is what you can get
away with.



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FALL 2019 CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

MANUSCRIPT PRESENTS



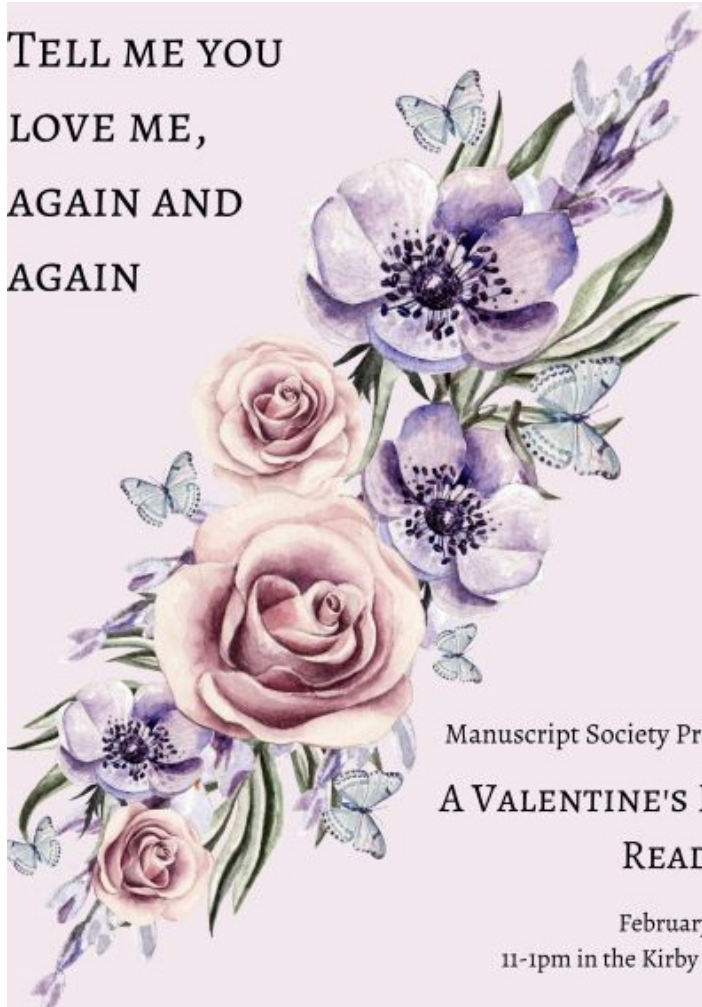
ANNUAL HALLOWEEN READING

10.30.19 | KIRBY SALON | 6:30PM

COSTUMES ENCOURAGED - BUT NOT REQUIRED

HALLOWEEN POETRY READING 2019

TELL ME YOU
LOVE ME,
AGAIN AND
AGAIN



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A VALENTINE'S DAY
READING

February 13th
11-1pm in the Kirby salon

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SPRING 2020 CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

MANUSCRIPT WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A HAND IN THANKS TO:

DEB ARCHAVAGE, English Dept. Administrative Assistant, Doer of All Things, You're Ours! (from 8-10:30 am and 1:30-4 pm)

SUZANNA CALEY, Director of the Archives, Keeper of the Books, General Ball of Sunshine

DR. MISHELLE ANTHONY, Manuscript advisor, Recurrent Meeting Attender, Fiction Judgement Avoidant, Sassy Cat Owner

DR. CHAD STANLEY, Manuscript advisor, So Busy It's a Miracle If You Catch Him, Lover of Any and All Ideas, *Somewhat* Shy Dog Owner

DR. TOM HAMILL, Community-Appointed Protector of the DH Lab, Fellow Publication Director (Thank you for always checking in with Manuscript!)

HEATHER SINCAVAGE, Director of All Things Artsy, Partnership Extraordinaire, Thug Cat Owner

THE ENGLISH FACULTY & STAFF, Supporters and Encouragers of All Who Dare to Submit and/or Join, Thank You for Letting Us Visit Class!

THE ART FACULTY & STAFF, Supporters of the Cause, Likely a Bit Overwhelmed by Our Energy, Thank You for Letting Us Visit Class!

MINUTEMAN PRESS, Printer of Magical Things Such as Book Spines, Please Enjoy a Drink on Us

THE KIRBY HALL GHOST, he/she/they/it's floating around somewhere...just ask Dr. Davis.

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