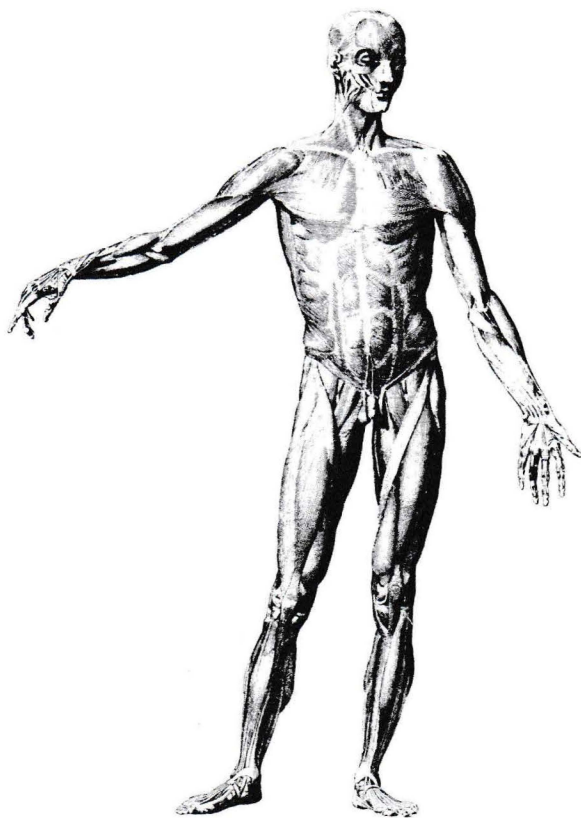


# MANUSCRIPT

2017

# MANUSCRIPT

2017



Copyright © 2017 Wilkes University Manuscript Society

Interior layout courtesy Elyse Guzewicz  
Interior images courtesy Vintage Vectors

## 1947 FOREWARD

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.

THE EDITORS

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Manuscript Society of Wilkes University has been publishing its creative writing and visual art magazine, *The Manuscript*, continuously since 1947. Currently, the student-led editorial staff publishes one issue per year, and copies are complimentary.

In preparation for a career in editing, publishing or creative writing, any Wilkes student is welcome to submit to or work on the editorial board of the Manuscript Society. Staff members critique a variety of creative pieces from Wilkes faculty, staff, students, and alumni. This process includes creative workshopping, copy editing, and layout.

Wilkes students may elect to enroll in ENG 190B, *Projects in Writing: Manuscript*, for one (1) credit of coursework. Meetings are held during club hours each semester. Monthly, bimonthly, or seasonal campus poetry readings are open to the Wilkes Community and greater public. The end product is a published, award-winning magazine.

Elyse Guzewicz  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Emily Bellanco  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Grace Graham  
COPY EDITOR

Robert Hildenbrand  
Kendra Mase  
Taylor Balasavage  
Mary Cordisco  
Nicholas Littzi  
Tara Giarratano  
STAFF

Dr. Sean Kelly  
Dr. Chad Stanley  
FACULTY ADVISORS

# WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

## I.

"My body is tugged by the whims of the  
moon" ANONYMOUS

Les Feuilles NICOLE KUTOS

helen dreams of open seas  
ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

Lac Lemans CHAD STANLEY

Bare Your Teeth KENDRA MASE

letting go. MARY CORDISCO

## II.

Bored of the View  
JONATHAN SYTKO

Cyrano Cyrano Cyrano  
ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

Cathedral  
VICTORIA RENDINA

Untitled #1  
JONATHAN SYTKO

Meanwhile, in the Barnyard...  
CHAD STANLEY

Garfunkel  
NICOLE KUTOS

"The world moves by me"  
ANONYMOUS

III.

too much! too much!

VICTORIA RENDINA

Belly of the Beast

JONATHAN SYTKO

Academia, I've Given You All And Now

I'm Nothing

MARY CORDISCO

Self-Portrait

NICOLE KUTOS

Frank, it's not that funny.

JONATHAN SYTKO

In A Huckleberry Bush

CHAD STANLEY

IV.

Sonata

CHAD STANLEY

Gentle Heart

VICTORIA RENDINA

Jessie's Goodbye

ROBERT HILDENBRAND

Frostbite

KENDRA MASE

I Have a Poem Stuck in my Sharp

Sharp Teeth

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

Molly

CHAD STANLEY

II.

he View  
Cyrano  
athedral  
titled #1  
rnyard...  
arfunkel  
es by me"



V.

run.

MARY CORDISCO

a happy poem

VICTORIA RENDINA

Technicolor Whirl

NICOLE KUTOS

Little Bright-Eyed Soldier Girl

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

Howl

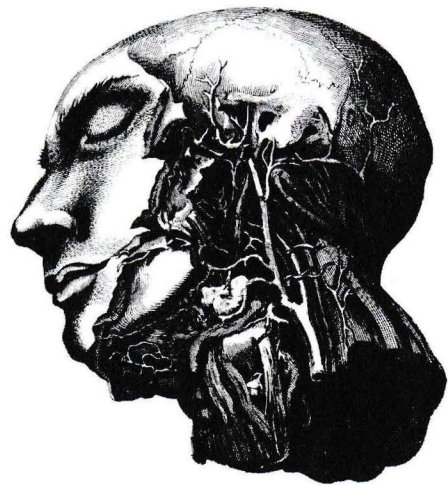
CHAD STANLEY

After Another 12-Hour Shift

GRACE GRAHAM

The Yellow Wall-Paper

MARY CORDISCO



I.

“My body is tugged by the whims of the moon”

ANONYMOUS

My body is tugged by the whims of the moon,  
Cold, bright and maternal.

I am my very own ocean,  
And my tides ebb and sway.  
I am a thing of beauty,  
I am tumultuous, I am unknown, I am endless.

I am the brine on your lips,  
The salt in your eyelashes,  
The sea breeze that catches your hair.



Les Feuilles

NICOLE KUTOS

## helen dreams of open seas

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

I . aphrodite

a cool evening  
the night the goddess came.

“Helene, daughter of Zeus  
and Leda, sister and wife and  
high Queen: hail.”

a voice soft low triumphant:  
light sea-foam  
rolled into violet chambers,  
baby rocked to sleep  
in the fading light.

flickering against sunset  
the goddess promised  
no harm of course. to remain  
safe and strong in angled gardens of myrtle.

of course,  
no stranger to men who thought beauty  
was a prize and a possession and a thing to be  
stolen.

of course  
if paris saw the tears  
blotted with a fig leaf,

mounted his horse  
and stole away

he certainly  
didn't say a word.

II. hera

left naked and alone  
in the cold fennel of cranac  
prayed. on her back  
fists digging little ditches in the dirt  
mouth open in a silent scream  
face stained salt-spray wet:

"mother goddess,  
I know you have no love for me.

I know my father  
and what he did to you  
the night my mother gained me.  
but I loved my daughter  
like you have loved your sons  
and I have felt the pain of men  
as you have felt your brothers  
choke your power at its roots  
and leave your fate  
in the hands of my captor;

mother. please  
my anger burns like yours now  
my hatred. my jealousy.  
I know your power  
and I beg of you:  
even if it burns me to the ground  
take your revenge.

make his blood run red  
through the streets of troy.

I know  
you are a mother –  
as am i  
as am i”

there was no answer.

when light broke:  
dress made of peacock feathers  
diadem of lilies  
teeth of diamond  
heart of steel.

iii. athena

of all the prayers that reached Olympus  
the twin doves, ash white, burned to Athena  
were the sweetest  
truest  
most well answered

the battlefield strewn with greek and trojan dead;  
say her smile launched a thousand ships  
the curve of her waist dashed them on a hundred shores  
and as the stormclouds cleared  
a golden dress and milk-white ankles were the only  
things unbloodied

hail helen  
of troy  
of sparta  
mother of hermoine  
most beautiful among women  
your reddened teeth tell deeper stories  
than a thousand epics.

## Lac Lemman

CHAD STANLEY

Somewhere at the bottom of Lake Geneva,  
Lac Lemman,  
Is the boat we set in motion,

Winding gears with your hand, you stored energy  
That turned the driveshaft,  
Which drove propellers.

Moving levers, clicking geometries,  
You set the course with your fingers.  
Then you let it go.

We picked it out at a toy shop on the shore.  
I wanted, of course, the bigger one.

I wanted the one with the family-sized cabin:  
The one you had to carry in both of your hands.

The one I wanted was the one with the "RADIO CONTROL"  
(as the box said, in a box way of saying that).

"RADIO CONTROL" (I thought) meant that there was something about it  
That meant that you could communicate with it, at a distance:  
That you could talk to it if you couldn't even see it anymore.



It meant that if you let it go, before you meant to let it go,  
Or if you happened to let it go in a direction you hadn't meant to let  
it go in,  
You could change everything; everything that had happened.

It meant that if it went too far away from you, you could turn it—  
Make it heel over, brave the waves, and not keel over.  
"RADIO CONTROL" meant it would come back to you.

The boat we had, but, it had pre-set simple courses:  
You could choose a square, rectangle, or circle.

"It won't come back," I said,  
(watching you turning gears, setting levers).

"You're doing it wrong," I said  
(in my child's way of saying that thing).

From Lausanne, collecting escargot,  
Then South, around to Montreaux,  
(where we saw jazz when you were younger than I am old now)  
I imagine it moving, drawing circles around Lac Lemman.

To me, dysphonic,  
"Lac Lemman" means "the lake of your hand":  
C'est le lac de ton main;  
C'est un lac de mains.

And when people say "Finger Lakes," this week,  
I don't think of those lakes:  
I think of a lake, Lac Lemman, and fingers.  
I think of that lake and I picture your fingers.

## Bare Your Teeth

KENDRA MASE

To be  
Animalistic  
Is all humans are  
Good for.  
To fight  
To shoot  
To wage war on  
The bodies our souls are  
Kept captive in.



## letting go.

MARY CORDISCO

i was always the kid clutching the balloon string with every ounce of strength,  
terrified of what could happen if i let go.  
i've seen it happen enough times-  
kid is careless, some adult appears, a new shiny  
red helium balloon immediately replaced in the kid's hand;  
tears cease, all is well again.

but that's not what i worried about.  
what about that floating balloon?  
where does it go? is it alone?  
on the few occasions the string slipped through my fingers  
my parents consoled me by saying i set it "free":  
it's with its friends, the birds, floating around the sky.  
happy.  
it didn't help. i cried for hours.

only years later in a science class  
did i learn about what happens when you let a balloon go.  
that eventually, that balloon pops.  
that sometimes their friends, the birds,  
eat that popped balloon.  
that when they do, they choke. and they die.

RY CORDISCO

II.

# Bored of the View

JONATHAN SYTKO



Bored of the View

JONATHAN SYTKO

# Cyrano Cyrano Cyrano

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

Cyrano  
 Cyrano  
 Cyrano  
 Danger of  
 4  
 6  
 the Flesh  
 the  
 Devil  
 75  
 '03  
 The  
 52  
 Emily Bronte's Wuthering  
 End of the Affair  
 End of  
 Love '81  
 Love '04  
 '04  
 '04  
 '06  
 of God '97  
 '97  
 Fatal  
 '05  
 '06  
 Love  
 For  
 A Girl  
 Good Girl  
 Good Night  
 Goodbye  
 '08

## cathedral

VICTORIA RENDINA

i lost my grip on faith years past asleep  
alone under the altar of my God's  
cathedral. stain glass windows smashed  
in another explosion of His wrath. i still  
pull bloody shards out of my palms from  
every time

I used to pray i could pick up His pieces

*hallelujah and oxen free, come out come  
out wherever you are, my god my God  
why the fuck have you abandoned me?*

i found my shot at sweet salvation  
by writing down the past seven years  
of my life through metaphors based  
on a religion i can no longer trust

a god i lost from an early age when  
i realized he will never be Upstairs  
for me and the God I found between  
dirty sheets and shared cigarette  
drags during the early hours of a  
warm summer Sunday

i overkill the Catholic imagery,  
i spent my half my life brainwashed

to believe that a baby can be born of a virgin  
holy man and wholly god. i can't help myself  
to think of these myths when my God,  
an average man convinced He was holy,  
conditioned me to breathe blind faith  
in His likeness in hopes of being  
saved. i bowed before my God  
in penance, face crushed beneath  
the feet i kissed as He delivered  
His absolution

"I'm so sorry, I'm so so sorry baby  
but it's not my goddamn fault"

i whispered hallelujah on hands  
and knees, the shattered stain glass  
digging deep into my hand's heartline  
exposed on cold marble floor, I prayed  
in silence that He might stop

"you've been a very bad girl" He cooed  
into my neck as He cradled me within  
His angry hands and held me over  
three flights of stairs "show me that  
you love me. only me"

how dare i love another god before Him!

for forty days and endless nights  
i let myself grow far too cold on His  
cathedral floor and wept for the day  
He might return. "maybe if i were carved  
from His side and crafted in His image maybe  
then would He see that I am trying" but i  
was far from perfect in His eyes and knew  
that i had failed Him.



my God is never to return again

so much time has passed since I started  
praying i made this battered house my  
home. it's far from perfect, foundation  
built upon His broken image of me, a  
sinner exiled from His promise  
land, i am no longer cast within perpetual  
light. only shadows shine down upon  
my soul, spent and stretched far too thin  
though I stumble blindly, hands outstretched  
in the dark, i now can see myself without  
His grace

over time i carved offerings and profanity  
for Him, for me, in the wood of worn down  
pews, sang hosanna to the highest til my  
throat became sore. I burned the Pascal  
candle down to wax remains months since  
past just to show Him i could still seek light

*hallelujah and oxen free, o my God,  
show me Your divine mercy, i am heartily  
sorry for having offended You, I'm  
so so sorry, please please forgive me*

i never thought i would make peace with  
the pain He nailed deep in my chest but  
i learned to carry this cross from the bottom  
up i will swallow my pride hard and fast

before He could ever come  
back to me

(He won't come back He never will)

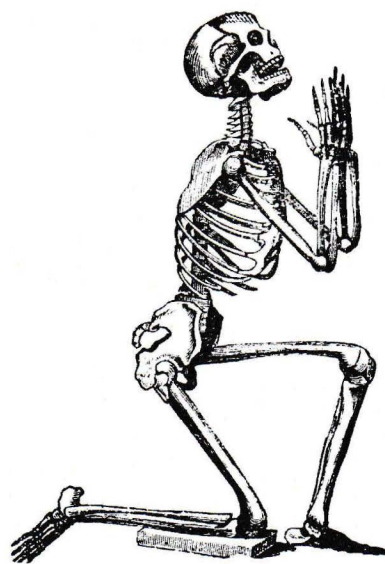
it took me a lifetime but i found myself  
buried under the rubble in the broken  
home He left me. though i shake i learned  
how to stand straight again and scream  
into the rafters of this wholly holy  
hallowed ground:

*hallelujah and oxen free; it's been  
fifteen months since my last confession  
and these are my sins*

buried deep on bloody hands, there  
still remains this piece of glass i refuse  
to pull out. though i have plucked in  
patience and penance every shard to  
wash my hands clean. through delusions  
of faith and illusions of salvation my God once  
promised me, i keep finding my finger  
picking at the jagged edge of this  
stubborn sliver, bleeding hot and sticky  
over my knuckles with each little nudge.

scars from the others have yet to fade  
but blood hasn't seeped through those  
wounds since i chose to keep them exposed  
and He no longer resides in me.

my time has come to repent and sin no more





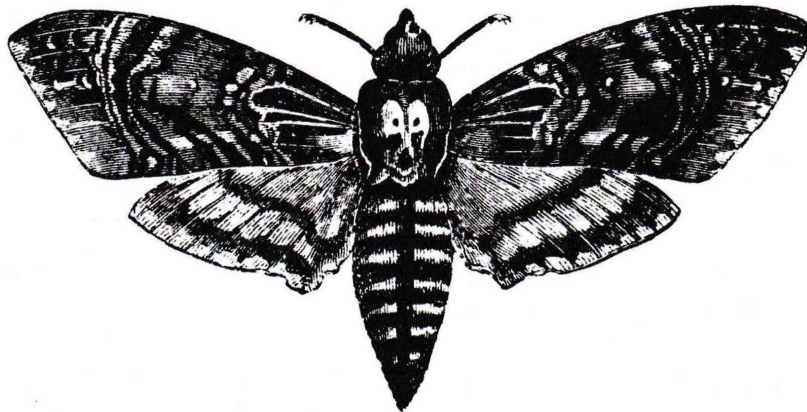
Untitled #1

JONATHAN SYTKO

# Meanwhile, in the Barnyard...

CHAD STANLEY

Vote Fox, said Fox  
(and said Fox).  
But Fox, said Chicken,  
You have eaten my children.  
Said Fox said that that shows how smart I am.





Garfunkel

NICOLE KUTOS

The

The word  
Burst of  
The rush

I move th  
The tide  
My shoul  
But it nev

Sometime  
White no  
I want to  
To watch

And I blo

“The world moves by me”

ANONYMOUS

The world moves by me in a slipstream of colour and touch,  
Bursts of staccato sound,  
The rush of rain, the sound of my mother’s laughter.

I move through it like I don’t belong,  
The tide of life snagging on me,  
My shoulders, my elbows, my hips –  
But it never caresses me like it’s supposed to.

Sometimes, with light slanting over me,  
White noise filling my mouth,  
I want to stretch my hands heavenward,  
To watch as my fingers turn to new leaves.

And I blossom.

# III.

100

the  
adve  
c. 1  
they  
two  
of a  
app  
dirc  
man  
man  
The  
The  
and  
own  
the  
had  
the  
with

# too much! too much!

VICTORIA RENDINA

too  
adverb -

I. to a higher degree than is permissible, or possible; excessively

they say you can never have

too much

of a good thing but that goes  
against the mere definition  
already there's too much  
more than allowed  
more than you should take

i'm a huge fan of coffee and  
i'm never happy with just one  
single cup some days i need  
two or three some days my  
day's not complete until i've  
had that late night eighth

too much.

i drink too much and smoke too much  
hell i shower too much when the mood's right

will there ever be enough for me?



or am i constantly set out to see  
what truly lies at the bottom of  
a bottle, inside the grinds of my  
coffee cup. will i find enough

through a morning message meant for  
sleepy eyes to swallow without  
cream and sugar, black and bitter  
or will they set it aside to go cold  
because they've had their fill

have i reached the point of  
permission, am i being  
unreasonable, over and  
over and over again  
because my fill falls above  
their limit should i really  
drink this much?

i feel too much  
i love too much

is too much of too much a bad thing?

i forget too often not everyone can  
have too much; sometimes they  
settle with the quiet comfort of

enough

stuck on the rim of their cup  
after the first lonely swig

some people know when they've had  
too much and i never know when to stop

too

adverb

2. in addition; also  
synonyms: also, as well

well, are you coming along, too?  
or have i given you too much  
of a good thing, as well?

in addition, is it enough to admit  
i can't get enough

of coffee?  
of booze, smooth jazz, and hard rock?  
of sex and drugs and cheap perfume?  
of anything regarding you?

you.

i can never get too much of you  
and not as another additive in  
my insatiable sense of what i need

my addictive personality comes out  
when i'm with you, i'll never know  
when i have to stop, i crave you

before my morning cigarette with a  
cup of coffee, i'm still searching for  
that caffeine buzz i taste when we  
kiss, your lips subtle and soft, you  
wake me better than that sixth shot  
of espresso requested in my drink

kissing you tastes of live wire pressed  
firm against my lips, and every hot jolt  
screams "too much! too much!"

too much

is that good or bad?

is chasing you another lonely night  
bar crawl chasing jameson with  
a second shot of hard liquor  
or are you the water that eases  
the burn and softens the pain

too

adverb

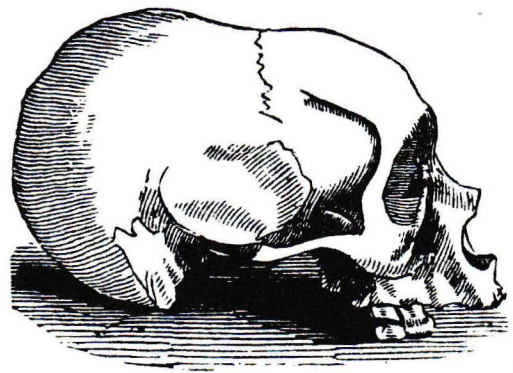
3. moreover

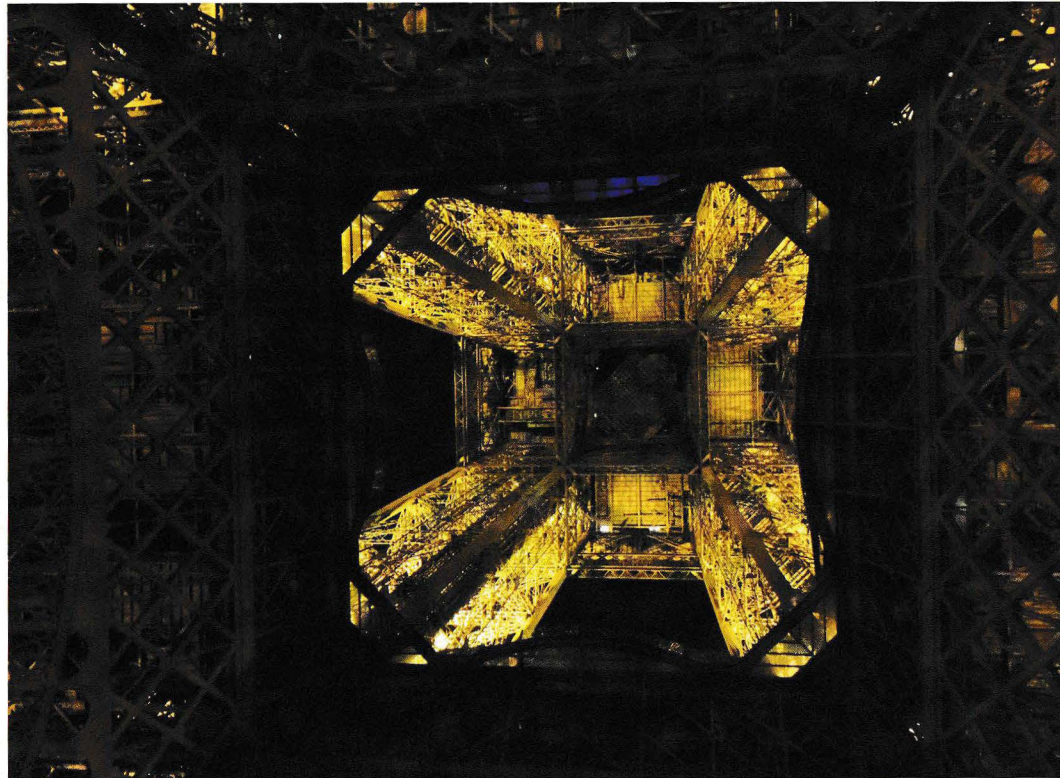
i hope this poem makes sense to you  
i still can't seem to get my fill  
still searching for an angry fix off  
too many words that mean nothing  
and everything, too many sounds  
meant only to sound good when  
spoken out loud

but you sound good to me  
(would it be too much to  
say that out loud?) i beg for  
more than just one quick hit

and i can't quite figure out  
if that's too much for me or just

enough





Belly of the Beast

JONATHAN SYTKO

## Academia, I've Given You All and Now I'm Nothing

MARY CORDISCO

I spent the winters checked in; burnt out,  
The springs as well, reluctantly.  
Neurosis spewed and thoughts piled on each page.  
Scattered  
Incoherent  
Fragmented  
I'm trying to come to the point:

A library full of tears  
Minutes, hours, a blur. i woke up older in  
The basement, not alone, all  
Coffee eyes and blank stares;  
I'm more than happy going down with them.

I'll spend the winters clocked in; checked out,  
The springs as well, reluctantly.  
Emotions withdrawn, opinions withheld  
Proactively sick of the insane demands.

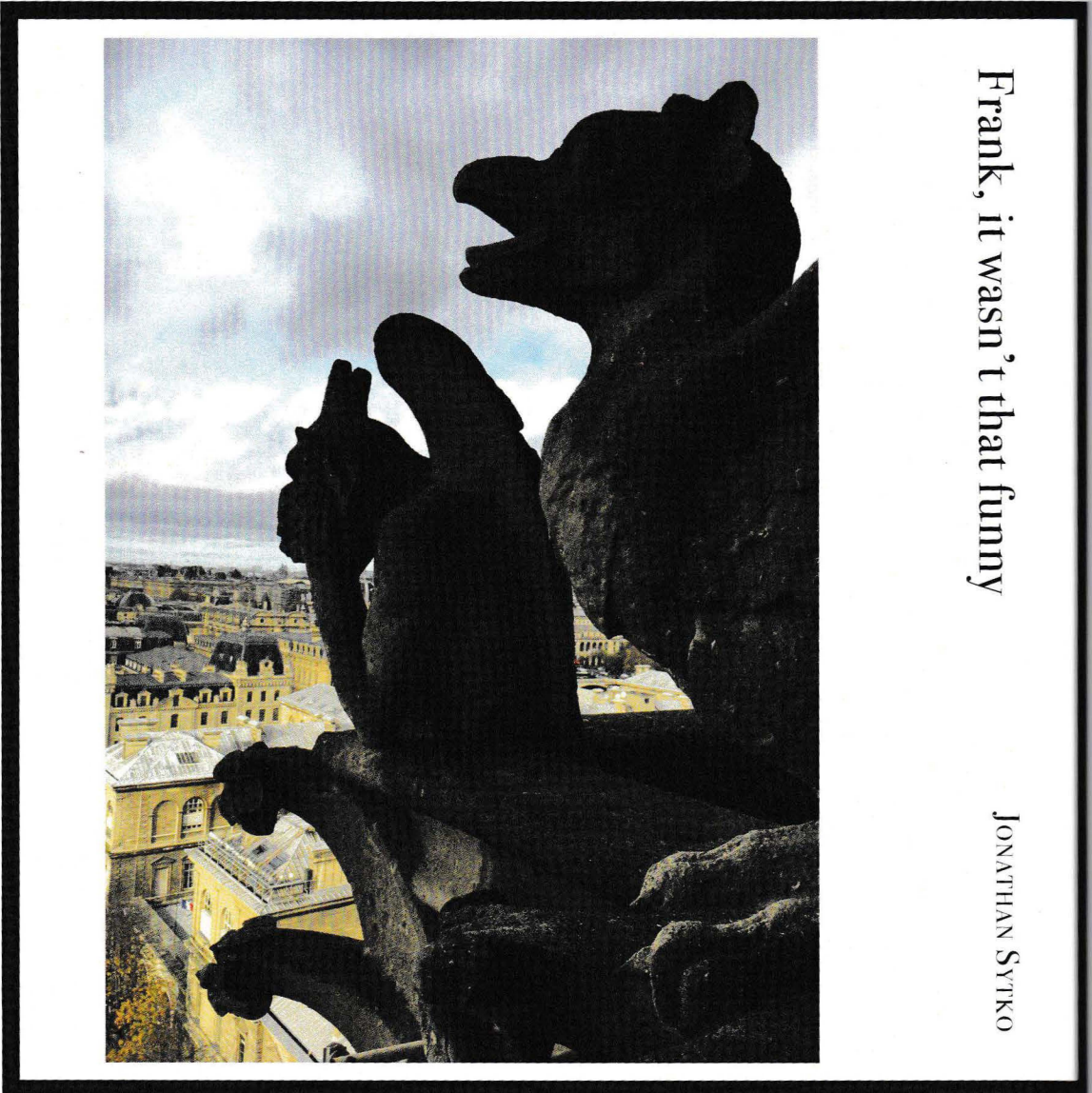
Surrounded again,  
coffee eyes and blank stares,  
i can't go down with them this time.

Everybody's serious but me,  
and things change, but i'm not sure why.  
just don't let it happen to me.



Self-Portrait

NICOLE KUTOS



Frank, it wasn't that funny

JONATHAN SYTKO



In A Huckleberry Bush

CHAD STANLEY

From 'it wasn't that funny'

JONATHAN SUTKO



# IV.

Sonata

Sonata  
A comp  
ments.

Sonata  
Generi  
A sedat

I. And

In the s  
Uncle T  
He wor

Pressin  
Loving  
His ben

Anointi  
Halving  
Gracing

Then, f  
Ted, he  
Abunoi

# Sonata

CHAD STANLEY

Sonata (so-NA-ta). Noun

A composition, often with an accompaniment, typically in several movements.

Sonata (so-NA-ta). Noun

Generic Name: Zaleplon (ZAH-le-plon)

A sedative, also called a hypnotic, used to treat insomnia.

## I. Andante

In the slaughterhouse, outside of Chicago,  
Uncle Ted, in the forties,  
He worked the boltgun.

Pressing it to foreheads, he ministered,  
Lovingly, to his flock;  
His bended, lowing supplicants.

Anointing with bolts, Ted conducted:  
Haloing circles, calling and culling them;  
Gracing each in time and in turn.

Then, from packing plant,  
Ted, he was made Reverend.  
Abattoir became nave; killing floor: pulpit.

Ted's brother, Billy,  
The younger Son of Mother,  
He too; he worked the floor.

In time, in his avocational turn,  
Billy was called, culled and anointed:  
Made Minister of Music.

Compelling voices, Billy conducted.  
The congregations sang;  
They sang in their tongues.

They sang, asking questions, when he met his Emily:  
"Can she bake a cherry pie, Billy-boy, Billy-boy?"  
"Can she bake a cherry pie, Brother Billy?"

II. Allegro

Our Billy, as William as Bill,  
Married Emily;  
As Teddy, as Ted, Lost Lenore.

They ran from the South  
In the fifties;  
Each dragging a slaughterhouse behind him.

Ted flew East to West Germany,  
Transatlantic by Pan-American;  
All raptured up.

Billy drove North,  
To a stage where he conducted,  
Outside of Hartford, Connecticut.

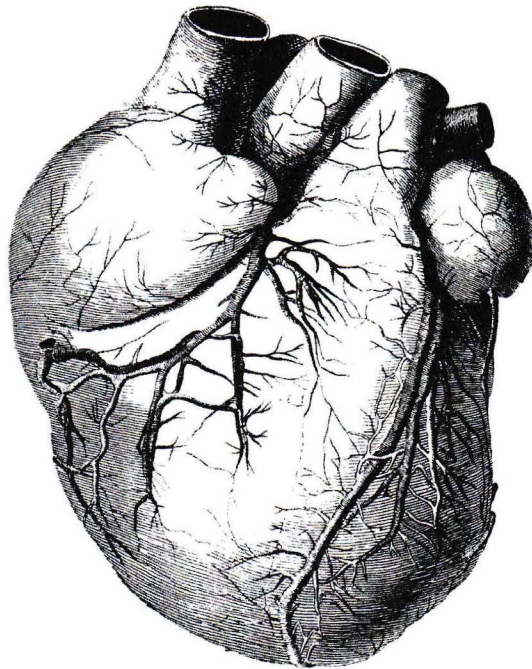
At the edge of Hartford, in Colt's Patent Firearms  
J.G. Accles long ago labored,  
Conceiving; lathing the boltgun.

He delivered it in 1913;  
Breeched the Cash model Captive Bolt Pistol.  
It weighed twenty and some-odd avoirdupois pounds.

Ten pounds lighter, Emily delivered me later,  
And I fell through her hips in a blizzard;  
Hips broken by the floor of G. Fox's.

I was born in Hartford, kicking;  
Outside of Chicago,  
After the boltgun.

In Hartford, after the boltgun,  
I was born kicking  
After boltguns.



# Gentle Heart

VICTORIA RENDINA



## Jessie's Goodbye

ROBERT HILDENBRAND

Captain Hunsiger, chief medical officer of the medical frigate Ajax glanced to the unmade medical bed. The monitoring device was left to lay on the pillow, haphazardly placed at the beds mid-section, the intravenous lines left dangling from their bags. "Nurse," he said. "Lieutenant Selert. Where is Private Meyer?"

Lieutenant Selert stepped out from the corner office to stand beside Captain Hunsiger. "I don't know." She said. "Meyer was here an hour ago, sitting up in a wheel chair. I wouldn't have let her leave the bay."

Captain Hunsiger shook his head and then glanced to the security camera, "Ajax," he said. "Where is Private Meyer?"

"Private Meyer no longer exists on this ship." Ajax said, speaking through the medical bay's overhead speakers inserted in the ceiling.

"No longer exists?" Hunsiger asked, hesitating for a moment. "Clarify."

After a moment's pause, Ajax continued. "Private Meyer changed her surname to Wayland and may be found on level two, junction six, bulkhead...."

"The makeshift memorial." Hunsiger said with a sigh as he closed his eyes.

Jessie clung to the composite metal wall, her fingers dug into the space between wall segments. She pressed her knees into the wall as she shifted her right hand to her left hand, and made her way to the makeshift memorial made from gray cotton material that was placed over the black metal composite wall she clung to. She rested her head against her forearms. "You can do this," she said with a heaved breath before she reached her shaking left hand into the breast of her medical gown to retrieve a photo she had partially slipped behind the many other photos pinned to the memorial.

The photos were bathed in blue light, their names scrolled in blue lettering across a video display: "Patricia Roberson, Keven Smith, Mathew Stevenson, Eric Usenko," scrolled by, but the name "James Wayland" stuck out at Jessie and caused her to loosen her grip for a moment. Unable to hold on, she collapsed to her feet, twisted to slam her back into the wall where her body froze from the stabbed pain in her legs as it shot through her body. She slid with a clenched jaw to the ground, only to fight back the urge to scream as she fought to sit up right. She inhaled a long, pained breath as she tilted her head to look up at the photos, and focused on the one she placed, of James and herself standing on the bridge overlooking a stream.

In the photo, James stood protectively behind her, his arms wrapped around her. The photo was taken by Overlord's security camera in the ship's Atrium while they were onboard the Battle Wagon Overlord. The ship's AI sent her the photo as a signifier of its condolences to her loss, a programmed gesture of sympathy it attempted to facilitate to

everyone.

"James," Jessie said. "I got your message. I don't care what they say," she fought back her tears and whispered, "I know you are out there." Her mind went back to the many times she watched him overcome every challenge put before him, entering the Peer High School, making the winning shot in the Peer level basketball game, their overcoming the anti-normal racism of the school and society, the loss of Amy, and then their parents, and finally him dragging her across the burning firebase. "I lived, and that means you lived too." She looked away from the photo, and winced as she tried to make herself more comfortable. "They say that it was impossible, you and I." She smiled and then winced at the pain in her legs as she tried to bend them, to bring her heels in close. "We proved them wrong every time," she said as tears continued to run down her face. "Whenever they said don't try, that you wouldn't make it, you weren't good enough, weren't smart enough, strong enough, you weren't a Peer, weren't ever going to be one." She let loose a short, pained laugh and ran her hand across her belly. "Guess we proved them wrong again."

She looked up at the security camera focused on her. The ship's AI, Ajax, watched and listened to her speak and as she turned her head to the photo. "You were always a Peer. James, you just didn't know it, you couldn't have known your grandmother was a rejected Peer." She smiled. "Momma and father are probably fuming in their graves about now." She leaned the side of her face against the wall as she turned toward the memorial, blue lights inserted into its base, shined softly against the photos. "We couldn't have had a child if you were anything but a Peer." Her eyes went distant again as she revisited a memory of her and James attending the memorial service for his sister, at the Memorial of The Honored Fallen while they were on Earth, and then back to the moment on the bridge where Overlord took a snapshot of the two. In Jessie's memory, she turned to James with fear in her eyes. "I don't want to ever see you in blue." She said.

"You won't," James said, "If you live, I'll live too."

"They've written your name in blue, written you off as dead." Jessie said, and tilted her head back to look at the photo. "I know different." She smiled and pressed her hand to her belly. "I wish whatever it is, you could be there. If it's a girl, I'm naming her Amy, after your sister. If it's a boy, I'm naming him Nicolas after your mother." She stared at the photo, as if she were looking into James's face with as happy a face as she could manage. "They're discharging me when we get back to base. I'm going to need leg implants, and after I give birth, reconstructive surgery to fix them. I'm going take your advice and not follow in my father's footsteps. I'm going to fight." She paused for a moment. "I'm going to fight for Xu, and the normals of her colony first, and then for everyone." She looked down to her belly. "For you and me, and whatever it will be. They won't like it; they're going try and stop me," she smiled again, "but they won't stop me from changing things. The Peers controlling things have made a mess of things, and I won't let them oppress you or my baby like they've done to so many."

"The First Peers wanted their children to uplift humanity, to make the Normals into Peers." Jessie said, "I think you've given me the way to do that. To make good on a darker time." She turned to rest with her shoulder against the straight wall and her hips against the angled lower wall section. "I'm not saying goodbye. But I cannot hold onto you and make a better future for our child at the same time." Her voice softened as she closed her eyes. She tucked her head against her raised shoulder, with her arms folded. "I know you'll find me, someday" She smiled as her mind drifted into the pleasant memories of their past.

## Frostbite

KENDRA MASE

My hand  
Slipped into yours  
Molded to never let go  
You said that that's how it  
Felt  
Love,  
So why, why did you dare  
Leave it go  
To pry me off your fingers  
Like ice  
Sticking frostbite  
That slowly made you  
Feel just a little more  
Dead inside.

That hand  
Blackness coating it  
Not heat  
Not pink of rosey cheeks  
A hole of hate  
A glare unneeded.

The hand  
Was enough to see  
The bad habit  
A tingle stuffed back into me  
That some people  
They don't want to  
Hold on  
Only let go.



## I Have a Poem Stuck in My Sharp Sharp Teeth

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

I bit it out of a plastic,  
    corded phone, sickly  
yellow like the room around it;

the knotted cord  
    snug around my neck,  
coiled, a hangman's rope behind me,  
and you, you've pulled the wooden lever.

You string me up.

I catch your awful  
    poem  
in my sharp, sharp teeth:

I have grown  
to its presence.

Often I forget  
words are there, until  
I bite down, hard –

some bitter piece of prose  
or a particularly cruel song.

I swallow pieces of your poem.  
I choke again and

remember how  
they trapped me  
    in a yellow-glow room,

my long white fingers  
    wrapped around the window-bars:  
steel like my narrow fingertips

Steel  
like the wire you wrapped  
your broken-glass poem in  
    my white tooth steel, my  
sharp sharp words  
tear apart my lips again

I have been waiting for you  
    to kill me again  
the way you did before:

    the same way  
    your teeth did  
three years ago.

I don't love you  
I don't love you  
I don't love you



Molly

CHAD STANLEY

V.

Malle

CHAD STANLEY

run.

MARY CORDISCO

january evening,  
fogged windows of my Saturn running  
packing the essentials:  
laptop, tea bags, a blanket  
last night would be my last night  
these goodbyes  
far less destructive.

one summer morning before sixth grade  
she shook me awake, said to pack a bag,  
we would have a new home that evening  
lost piece by piece  
with each whispered call,  
each goodbye a demolition.

a happy

Babies, God da

Your mother a  
write a differen  
poem. "Not th  
crap. Oh! Wo

A happy poem

Damn, that's l  
on the cusp of  
old and you ha  
happy memor  
168th month l

You have a lo  
sorrow that c  
presented in  
of poetic wor  
ideation of a  
point list of h

(Fooled you  
I fool myself

It's not your  
crafted somb

## a happy poem

VICTORIA RENDINA

Babies, God damn it, you've got to be kind

Your mother asked you to  
write a different kind of  
poem. "Not that depressing  
crap. *Oh! Woe is me!*"

A happy poem.

Damn, that's hard when you're  
on the cusp of 288 months  
old and you haven't had a  
happy memory since your  
168th month birthday.

You have a lot of pain and  
sorrow that can only be best  
presented in a twisted pattern  
of poetic word play and suicidal  
ideation of a well placed bullet  
point list of harsh enjambment.

(Fooled you there, didn't I?  
I fool myself too)

It's not your fault you've  
crafted somber nursery

rhymes to lull you to sleep  
when Mom stopped singing  
the cheerful ones to you.

But you know what?  
You're only 272 months  
old, exactly 2 Point 5 in  
dog years (and it took you  
that long to discover that  
dogs age 10.5 years faster  
than their whiny infant  
owners, always crying for  
no reason, because we're  
hungry, because we're  
sitting in diapers, so full  
of shit).

Little one, you're just a baby, you  
shouldn't be so sad. You have no  
taxes and bills and doctor  
appointments and childhood  
trauma and former abusers  
to deal with every day. By God!  
it's a miracle you've been potty  
trained! The struggle of life  
would leave the sanest baby  
shitting their pants well after  
22 months old. Goddamn, look  
out world, you're growing up.

So you wrote this poem  
because she wanted happy  
when she only gave you  
years (or whichever unit you  
prefer) of sad. In fact,  
this poem was supposed to be  
an ode to almond butter, but,

in your 10.5 old dog age, you've  
forgotten those lines (I guess  
you can't teach an old dog  
new tricks). There's not much  
left inside your infant mind but  
sad and pain and pills and  
existential dread best told  
with waving hands

swaying bodies

jabbing

stabbing

lagging

dragging

swerving

punchy rhythms found deep  
in slam poems (which, despite  
common misconception, is not  
when you throw your pen on the  
ground, unless that pen still writes  
the words you scream into  
silent spaces on violent nights).

This is the best you've got.  
It's not much, but it'll do.

At least this isn't as depressing  
as the last time you ended something  
you wrote with:

*I'm sorry I disappointed you, Mom.*





## Technicolor Whirl

NICOLE KUTOS

Lit

Akran  
doing

delica

slouch  
for m  
down

to Ak  
finger  
knock

city,  
and e  
termi

prea

the b  
sim  
start  
with

## Little Bright-eyed Soldier Girl

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ

"I just got these pictures – I mean, *ma'am*, I just got these pictures in, it's – you're not going to be happy –"

Wolf quickly jumped up, planting a foot to keep her chair from sliding back and disturbing the map.

Akram was standing in the doorway, heaving, a sheaf of papers a disheveled pile in his hands. Wolf rose carefully, doing her best to maintain a calm, composed exterior.

She thrust her hand out. "Give them to me."

Akram ran up to the desk and handed them over, doing his best not to drop any. Wolf picked them up delicately, doing her best to smooth out the wrinkles and look them over.

She stood like an old military commander. Her father used to smack her across the shoulders if she slouched in front of any of the low-level thugs they had running spike or grabbing information. She hadn't seen him for months but she still held the irrational fear that he'd walk in and see her slumped like a bored teenager. This run down, condemned warehouse might as well have been the Pentagon for how he treated it.

Even now, she didn't dare disobey.

"It's graffiti. We get this all the time, just have one of ours go out and mark over it." Wolf looked back up to Akram, who was nervously fiddling with his glasses. He wore bicycle gloves almost all the time these days, and the fingers were fraying around the edges; Wolf suspected that he had noticed some of the fighters who wrapped their knuckles and thought they made him look cooler. "Why did you interrupt me for this?"

"No, sorry, it's just if you look a little closer it's, um, it matches some other tags we've seen around the city." He pulled out a smartphone, trying to swipe into the fingerprint access without much success. He gave up and entered the password, pulling up some pictures from the gallery. "See, these are all the same guy, but in Golda territory. He's – he signs over – see, if you look, it's there –"

"For fuck's sake, Akram, what is the point of all this?"

"It's, well, it's a Golda territory mark, and that's just a problem because it's on our territory and I mean I'm pretty sure they know that and –"

It had been relatively calm as of late. There had been a skirmish about a month ago at one of the borders, where Fifth Street met Albany Avenue. Wolf hadn't let herself or her people get involved and it had simmered out after a few days. Golda hadn't made a move against the Shadows for two years, and she doubted they'd start now. There was nothing she could do to keep a few overzealous teenagers hyped on green from picking a fight with the first person that looked at them wrong.

It didn't mean she shouldn't be careful. She'd been keeping extra patrols along that area.

Wolf cut Akram off as he continued to chatter meaninglessly, gesturing at the huge map that hung on the

far wall of the room. "Get over here and show me where this mark is."

He pulled a pencil out of his pocket. It wasn't very sharp. "It's maybe around here?" He made a little mark near the border, about a mile from where the last skirmish had been. "See, it's on an old restaurant that used to be their territory before the big war in '89. We have some tags in the area, and I think somebody patrols around there too, but it's just that this is definitely a territory mark and I don't really know what to do?"

Wolf had already turned around, pulling out a bright red pen and marking the area, furiously erasing the pencil lines. "What have I told you about touching my map, Isa?"

If you laid them down side by side, the map would probably be bigger than Wolf. She had spent painstaking hours modifying and annotating it. It sprawled across the wall, red strings tied between pushpins to mark boundaries and scrawled notes in some strange mixture of Mandarin and English only she could understand, annotated with snapshots and headshots and chemical formulas.

Akram quickly stumbled back a few paces. "Now, we have tags over there," Wolf pointed to an area marked in blue about 500 feet north, "and over here, by the YMCA. Either somebody's really stupid or Montgomery's thinking about a turf war. Who's this guy, this graffiti artist?"

"It's somebody we've called Kismet? At least that's how he signs everything. You know, it's just that he signs them with this little hangul mark next to the Golda wings."

"Do we have any info on him?"

"Yeah, we've caught him on a few cameras. He's not that tall, usually has a skateboard." Akram started fiddling with his glasses again. "Why, do you want to put out a watch for him or something?"

"Not exactly." Wolf stared at the map again, connecting the dots in her head. "I'm not quite sure what I want to do, entirely, but if he crosses a territory line again we're going to have a problem."

Akram shrugged. "No one's seen him tagging in person yet. It's not going to be easy to prove it's him."

Wolf tugged at her handwraps with her teeth. "They aren't looking hard enough. He's a tagger. He has to carry gear. Go, get out of here, and tell the restaurants we protect to send me every bit of video they have from a five hundred foot radius of every tagged site and get Mike to send someone to mark over those spots."

"I, um, do you want all the security footage from those areas? It's just that only Jordan can hack the Department of Transportation and get the traffic camera stuff."

"Then have Jordan get it."

"I would, but he got picked up on a drunk and disorderly two weeks ago."

"Shit," Wolf muttered. "Well get me what you can get me. Go."

Akram spun on his heel, failing to look smooth as he stumbled to the side before half-jogging out of the room.

Wolf didn't boost anymore, but this would have been the ideal time to pick up the habit. Before her father was killed, she boosted a few times a week – only blue, only to keep her sharp for fights, and only enough for her to feel the buzz. She was regimented, taking a week off every month for detox. After, she took anything she could get her hands on – green, blue, backdoor mixtures of both, until her body started breaking down from the strain. She spent most of those days on her knees, retching in a back alley after getting into bar fights with rough men twice her

size.

The chaos resolved. She cleaned up, fought her way to the top, and never touched a booster again.

Wolf realized she hadn't looked at the map in too long.

She whirled, studying it intently. Nothing had changed. She leaned in and moved a red string with her fingernails, nudging it aside with a light touch and looping it over a pushpin about a centimeter north, running a hand through her hair. She wasn't sure if that was right. She slid it back and forth, trying to find the exact location of the boundary in her mind. Her hands started shaking and she stepped back for a moment, stumbling into her chair.

Wolf pulled her feet up into a lotus position. She began fiddling with a small steel throwing knife, flipping it up and catching it between her fingers. The ceiling was ugly brown foam, the kind you found in your grandmother's kitchen that crumbled and fell in your soup when you weren't watching. Wolf never knew why they hadn't moved somewhere more upscale – maybe a penthouse that could be divided into offices, or a bunch of studio apartments across the city. These days, they had the money.

She spun her unbearably squeaky chair around to face the solid mahogany desk. Left drawer, pens, sorted by color; right drawer, sticky notes and memo pads. She pulled out a blue pen and white note, jotting down "search for viable alternatives to current location, perhaps near warehouse" and replacing her implements.

This shouldn't have happened. Montgomery – a veteran, the big boss of Golda for longer than Wolf could remember – should have known better than to let some punk with a can of spray paint threaten the city with a turf war. The fact that it'd happened this many times meant it was personal.

Wolf spun around and looked at the map.

Folding out of her chair, she placed the note she had written earlier by the green circle that represented the warehouse where the Shadows stored whatever boosters they had. She picked up some old production reports and tossed them into the wastebasket labeled "paper," picking up the newest ones her lieutenant had left on her desk. Manufacturing had been working overtime, and the sales of blue were skyrocketing. Of course, a good deal of what they made was traded to Golda for their supply of green, which kept the peace and kept everyone happy and out of rehab.

Wolf reached into the second drawer on the left side of the desk. Expense reports were tabbed by month and year and neatly stored in files. She pulled out the last two months and compared them to the production chart. Top right drawer, pink notepad. Top left drawer, black pen. She wrote some notes to the chemist in charge of the major production point. "Set aside 200 units of blue for trade. I want to stock up on green in case of an emergency skirmish somewhere."

She turned around and studied the thin layer of dust on the surface of her desk. She pulled a microfiber cloth from the pocket of her jacket and dusted the surface of the desk, getting up and folding herself over the front in order to reach the scrolling on the front.

The lines on the map were clear. The markings were easily four or five blocks in from the boundary. This wasn't a mistake – it was an act of aggression against her gang, and she had no choice but to retaliate. Showing weakness at a time like that could get her killed – there were upstarts who thought they could take her job on every corner.

Wolf chewed on her lip ring, turning to the wall behind her, scanning the map over and over again, making

sure there was nothing she had missed. She put red dots everywhere there had been an incident within the last six weeks, pockmarking the map into adolescence.

For once, she didn't know what to do except find someone that did.

She pulled her phone out of her pocket, unlocking it and punching in the first few numbers.

The contact popped up quickly enough, and she held the phone to her ear as it started to play the midi alarm that meant it had connected.

It rang for thirty-five seconds before he picked up.

"Qingqing, at long last. It's been a while."

"I'm stuck. There's a problem and I don't know what to do."

"Well hello to you too, sis." Wolf could hear her brother typing in-between words. "I'm doing great, thanks for asking."

"Chun, I don't have time for this. I'm serious, I'm in trouble."

"Okay, okay, what's the problem?"

Wolf began explaining as succinctly as she could. "I've got someone tagging Golda marks half a mile into my territory."

"Could be an accident." His tone had switched almost immediately, becoming far more serious. "Since the chaos has settled, some newcomers may have the boundaries mixed up."

"No, it's intentional." Wolf spun slow circles in her chair as she thought. "There are too many to be by accident, and from the pictures I have they're mainly symbols right from old-school Golda tags, not personal tags with gang affiliations."

A couple seconds of silence.

"Could you email them to me?" Chun asked. "I can take a look, see if I have anything on whoever it is."

"Give me a second." Wolf set her phone on mute and pulled up the camera, laying the pictures out neatly on the table and taking a few quick snapshots. She quickly attached them to an email, addressed it, and hit send. She turned the sound back on her phone and put it up to her ear. "Sent."

"Why are you still doing this, puppy?" Chun sounded almost like he felt sorry for her. "Dad was never that good to us. This life ate him up almost as fast as it did mom, you want that for you?"

"Don't call me that!" Wolf's voice cracked a little. "I stay very organized. I'm not a dog and I can take care of myself. You said you'd look at those pictures for me, not lecture me. We can't all go to a fancy college and act like we're better than the life."

"Simmer down, Qingqing. These pictures aren't great quality, but I can see the tags on them - this guy isn't super experienced. These aren't the marks of someone who's a Golda veteran."

"You don't recognize any of them?"

"Well, I haven't been there for many years, but no, I don't. This is probably someone who got into this after the big turf war." There was a pause. Wolf could hear more clicking and typing. "You're right though, these are definitely on purpose. You know who it is?"

"We're calling him Kismet." Wolf was still a little annoyed, but she tried to sound professional. "It's

because of his signature.”

“Unmyeong? Yeah, it means ‘fortune’ or ‘luck’ in Korean.”

“Is it his name?”

“Doesn’t sound like a name. Could be a nickname, like how you used to tag. He’s probably Korean, though – most people don’t care enough to learn a nickname in a language other than English or their native tongue.”

“Could be a play on the name.” Wolf shrugged before realizing her brother couldn’t see her. “You have a better way of finding him?”

“I’m guessing when it comes to the underground, this kid goes by Unmyeong all the time. I’m telling you, it’s like you going by Wolf instead of Qing. If you’re looking for him through contacts, ask for him with the nickname. I’ll bet you money that most people don’t know him by anything else.”

“We’re combing through security cams looking for any pictures of him to pass around.”

“Uh-uh.” Chun clicked his tongue. “You don’t want to tip anybody off that you’re looking for him. He’ll turn and run at best – at worst, he’ll tell whoever’s in charge that you’re looking and they’ll come after you. No offense, but I don’t think you’re in a position with enough power to withstand a full assault. Dad was a hard man, he could take just about anything. We might disagree about you being involved in this life, but even you have to know you’re too soft to handle war.”

“Montgomery is hard, but he’s not stupid. Do you really think he’ll risk another war?”

There was a long silence. “Wolf, Montgomery’s dead.”

“What?” Wolf stopped spinning in stunned silence. “No, I would have heard about that.”

“I’m honestly very surprised that you didn’t. I heard about it through an old friend from the city.”

“So you’re telling me there are people in my gang who know this and haven’t told me?”

“I try not to think about the gang if I can avoid it. I don’t know if this guy’s still involved.” Chun took a deep breath. “Look, all you need to do now is figure out who’s in charge of Golda and get into a talk with them, get them to back off.”

“Chun, tell me who told you.”

“Qingqing. You should know that I will not enable violence in your life. I don’t want to encourage you behaving like this anymore than I have to. Also, it’d be nice if you called me once in a while just to talk, not to get my help on some Shadows issue. Stop involving me in the life. I got out for a reason. I have to go”

The phone clicked and Wolf groaned, her head falling back against the headrest.

She turned and looked at the map again. To her left, above her head, there was a section labeled “CENTRAL COMMAND AREA,” covered in notes referencing Montgomery as the leader. She had posted analyses of where he might live, his health condition, and the status of possible offspring and successors.

It was all wrong. She had hours of work, hundreds of annotations she had made over the last six months, notes she had taken over years from her father or personal experience. There was writing directly on the map that was wrong and she didn’t know how to fix it.

Comb through her ranks and find out who knew about Montgomery’s death and didn’t tell her? Pretend

she knew all along and try to track down whomever was currently in charge?

Her hand hovered over the phone, unsure of where to go next.

If someone with only her level of experience had become the leader of her rival gang, the chances of the marks being an accident rose exponentially.

If someone with experience below hers had taken over, she was about to be in the middle of a war.

Wolf's hands flicked over buttons, turning the screen on and off and on again. She couldn't stop looking at the map, folding out of her chair, spidery limbs gone rigid from confusion and focus. She reached out, thin fingers shaking as they wandered over obsolete information compiled over months.

She hadn't even thought about Montgomery dying within the last month. Her research on possible successors had stopped a few weeks ago, as she had to deal with negotiating protection contracts and solving minor disputes. She had no concept of what would be done about the replacement or who was in a position to grapple for power.

Wolf hastily rifled through papers she had pinned to the map. There had to be something, anything that could point her toward where she could find what she needed to know.

A sticky note fell to the ground.

Something snapped.

Hooked hands like claws tore at paper, crumbling photographs and onion-skin thin diagrams fluttering down in butterfly shreds.

Wolf's fingernails raked the corkboard behind the map, leaving talon-marks like browning scars across the green-blue-gray expanse.

She shook like a child, watching the remnants of her attack fall languidly, some still connected to the map. Eyes wide, her arms were wrapped around her chest, teeth chewing at her lower lip and spinning the steel ring through it.

A photograph brushed against the toes of her boots. The corners were dog-eared and worn from age. An older Chun stood aside a young Wolf – maybe fifteen or sixteen years old – the latter smiling broadly, a split lip betraying her fighting habit. Their father stood behind them, an almost-smile ghosting around his lips.

He did not touch her. There was a respectable distance between the three of them, and he had only let her take the picture because she had gotten straight As that semester in high school. She and Chun had a handful of photos together over the years, but to the best of her knowledge this was the only existing image of Zhao Lei in the world.

He would not have hesitated. Anyone caught tagging in Shadows territory illegally would have been shot in the street. Maybe Chun was right. She was too soft, like her mother, and unless she could change that, she would be devoured and left dying in the street too.

She crouched to pick the photograph up and carry it back to the map. She took one of the now-available pushpins and stuck the picture over the gashes, sticking the pin directly through her face.

Ribbons of paper fell over one corner, obscuring her father as well. Only Chun stared back at her.

She turned around, put her phone in her pocket, and left the room, forgetting to turn off the light.

ances of the  
a war.  
t stop looking  
ut, thin fingers  
ossible  
olving minor  
o grapple for  
anything that  
ms fluttering  
scars across the  
ed to the  
g the steel ring  
from age.  
ly, a split lip  
ad only let  
d a handful of  
ao Lei in the  
ave been shot  
at, she would  
ow-available  
at her.  
e light.

# Howl

CHAD STANLEY





## After Another 12 Hour Shift

GRACE GRAHAM

Time drags hours to minutes.  
Instinct takes over,  
The water grows dark.

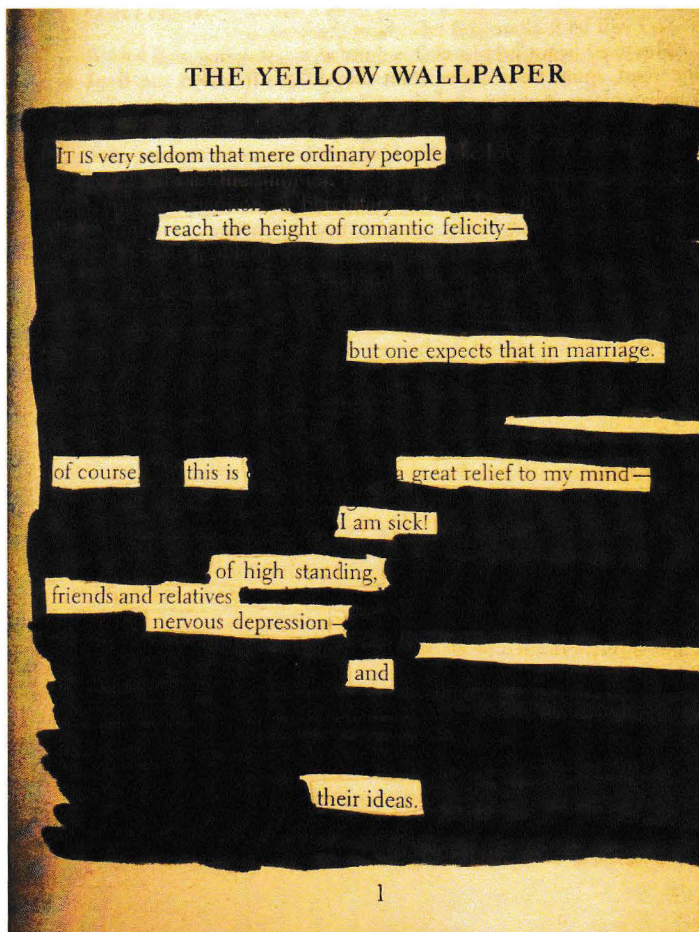
Like sharks at a feeding  
Making waves, causing chaos  
Churning foam, white and red.

Never stopping, swift and merciless  
Until few remain  
There's blood in the water.

The feeding is done,  
Nothing remains.

# The Yellow Wall-Paper

MARY CORDISCO



## BIOGRAPHIES

ANONYMOUS is a little too nervous for all this.

MARY CORDISCO would really rather not write about herself in this way. She's sad to be leaving Wilkes and doesn't know how she's going to handle not being in school for the next year until grad school. Probably she will just keep rewatching The Newsroom on a loop as a distraction from the world falling apart. Mary will never understand how Nicole Kutos likes the music she likes but doesn't like the Beats. It doesn't make sense. Also, she'd like to take this moment to tell everyone to listen to The Wonder Years, the band that her poem "Academia" was partially influenced by. They're also just great, so. Listen.

ELYSE GUZIEWICZ would probably sell her soul for a couple of really cool rocks and, like, even one good night's sleep.

GRACE GRAHAM is an English major who loves to read, write, and play tennis. If she's not in the classroom or on the court, she's binge watching shows on Netflix with a pint of Ben & Jerry's nearby.

ROBERT HILDENBRAND is a senior English major and Manuscript member with a focus in Digital Humanities. He sometimes likes to write books.

NICOLE KUTOS is an Aquarius and is always in the mood for driving around and getting cupcakes. Her short-term goals include finishing her two capstones while her long-term goals are to visit the Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam and to meet Brendon Urie (if anyone can help her, she'd strongly appreciate it). Nicole is upset at the backlash toward La La Land because it's such an amazing movie. She thinks Hemingway and the Beats are overrated, but wants you to take Mary Cordisco's advice about listening to The Wonder Years because they're great. Nicole is both excited and not about graduation but someone once told her that "we're writing our text" so she thinks it'll all be okay since she believes she's a half-decent writer.

KENDRA MASE is a freshman English major and a Wilkes University one-hit wonder.

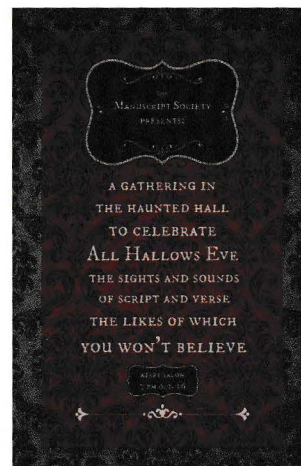
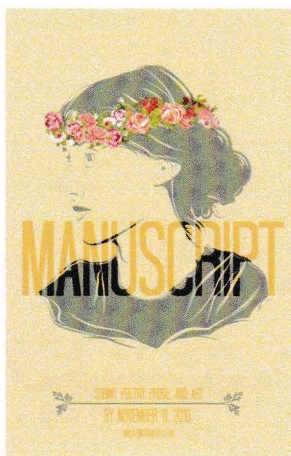
On the brink of starvation due to moldy food and financial debt, VICTORIA RENDINA was bribed by a certain executive editor to submit to the Manuscript in exchange for food. As an English alumna of Wilkes University's class of 2015, Victoria spends most of their post-graduation life suffering under the weight of student loans and writing poetry on paper napkins

JONATHAN SYTKO is a P<sub>4</sub> pharmacy student who still dislikes writing about himself

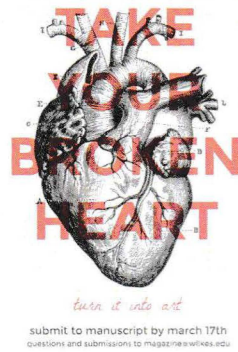
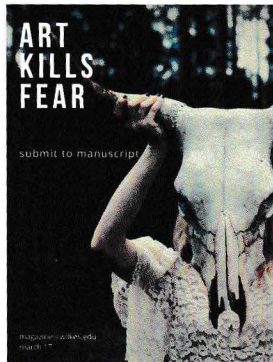
DR. CHAD STANLEY is an Associate Professor of English at Wilkes University, first and foremost; then, a painter, and then a person who does things with words.

# MAKING MANUSCRIPT

Fall 2016



Spring 2017



**WILKES UNIVERSITY  
MANUSCRIPT SOCIETY**

**BEGIN  
AFRESH**

A POETRY AND FICTION READING

APRIL 20 | 11 AM  
KIRBY SALON

**we end at the beginning**



**MANUSCRIPT**

2017 UNVEILING  
May 2 | 1:30 PM | Kirby Salon



