

CABABI

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ISSUE 7



POETRY
PROSE
VISUAL ART

2020/2021

ABOUT THE COVER



Origin of the Cockatrice image: One Sunday my daughters and I were spending time with my in-laws and my oldest daughter suggested that we draw. My father-in-law pulled out nice paper and a huge box of colored pencils and we all sat around the table and drew. My oldest daughter loves dragons so I decided to draw a cockatrice (basilisk) for her. A cockatrice is a mythical creature with the head of a rooster and the body of a dragon. Supposedly a cockatrice hatches from an egg laid by a rooster and hatched by a toad or snake. I used our rooster, Cupcake, a Barred Rock mix, as a model. My daughter loved the picture and it is now framed and hanging in her bedroom.

Cockatrice (Colored pencil)
Jennifer Wiley

SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Kenneth Chavez and Dolores Duran-Cerda for funding and overseeing this project.

April Burge for her expertise and guidance.

And to Laura Rincon for working quickly and tirelessly to produce a publication that is also a stunningly beautiful work of art.

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Be in the 2021-2022 Cababi Magazine
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Lake Pleasant Regional Park, Arizona (Pastel Painting)
Mana Kariman



Andre Moura (From Pexels)

GOD GIVES KISSES

By Linda Zello

I saw God
In my dreams
Last night.

He was a
good-looking man
in khaki pants
and a polo shirt.

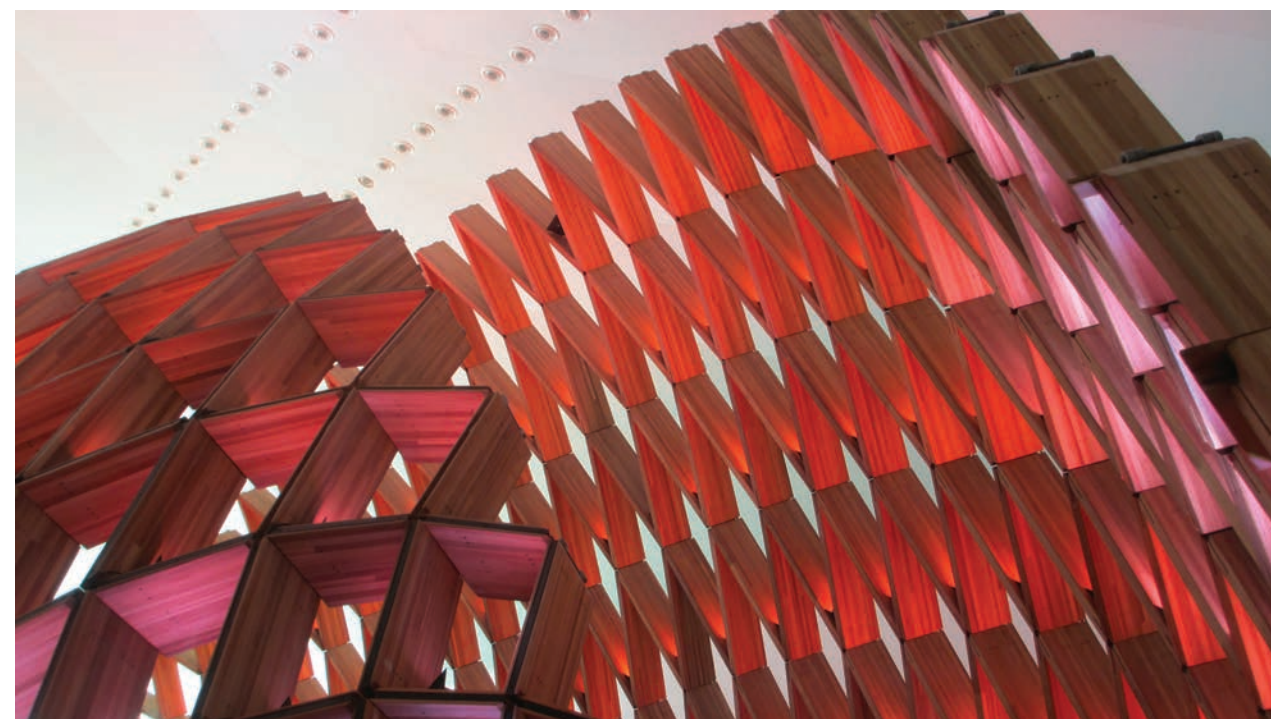
He kissed me
Briefly on the lips.
I sat down
in the shock
and wonder of it.

“God loves you,”
My mother said.

I had to believe her.



Sunset through the Old Fence
(Digital Photography)
Michele Rorabaugh



Visual Symphony (Digital Photography)
Nina Nardolillo

THE DIVOC SPIRAL

By Fred Duren

Down, down, beneath the ground
Stop and squirm beneath
the town

Of license and decadence of all things unnatural

Don't be shocked by what you see
Its only beings never meant to be
Or do
Or say anything of significance

Toiling in the soil for unknown reasons

Further down—sliding and skimming without brake or direction

How far till the down becomes up?
How will I know when I've reached the new land?

Spinning and twirling, I rise up as if resurrected—

To see the new land
covered with white sand
and a blessed ocean
calm and deep

Will I now find peace?

Or will the snap and crack
Show itself to be a newer subtler trap
of inhuman complacency?



Moon in the Trees (Watercolor with Ink)
Emily Jacobson

“TWEEDLE-DEE” WHO ARE WE?

By Linda Zello

For my son:

“Mommy,” says my four year-old son,
“the birds only know part of a song:
tweedle-dee, tweedle-dee”

Our song, like the birds’
has no triumphant chorus,
no sweet closing refrain.
“Tweedle-dee, tweedle-dee
Who are we?
Who are we?”

And yet, how beautiful, how serene
to lie amid the early morning
In shades of grey
And listen to harmony of the birds
singing
“tweedle-dee, tweedle-dee”!

PERCHANCE TO DREAM

By William Everist
- Fiction

Sitting amongst a group of students in a one-hundred-seat lecture hall auditorium, Amanda's eyelids began to feel like the lead weights she would diligently use in her workout routines to assure her the body of a distance runner common to the advertisements in her fitness magazines. Her marathon struggle to stay awake was starting to wind down, however, as her conscious awareness began to fade like daylight being swept away by the sunset. For the past few nights, she had studied late, picking facts from volumes of knowledge she'd retrieved from the library, without a chance to sleep-in during the day. Consequently, she often found herself subject to an unexpected nap attack by mid-afternoon.

Doctor Irwin J. Hawkins, an internationally prominent expert of global economics and visiting statistics instructor at the university, had just entered the room and stood piously at the edge of a raised platform in front of the class. As he glanced around the room like a predator seeking out his prey from the students who were still awkwardly entering the room and finding the way to their seats, he adjusted his glasses and walked to the podium to begin his lecture. Amidst the ambience, unable to resist her lack of sleep any longer, Amanda became overcome with a shift of consciousness and was now walking casually down an overgrown dirt path totally within the confines of her own dream state. A

Dapo Abideen (From Pexels)

chill in the air prompted her to grab her elbows and pull her arms closer to her slim well-conditioned body as she continued walking down the path through a wooded area of rural Chicago.

Approaching a small pond, she was suddenly startled by a haggard old man in an overcoat who came running from the woods yelling, "My horse! My horse! Oh my God, what's happened to my horse?"

Frantically looking from side to side in search of the poor animal, he suddenly stopped and came running towards her repeating his plea, "My horse! My horse! Have you seen my horse? Oh my God, she must have drowned!"

Fear enhanced the chill in her body as the old man reached out to grab her and an adrenaline rush revitalized her body, triggering her run through the surrounding brush, bushes, and trees in an effort to escape. At length, satisfied that she had outrun him, she gradually surrendered to the growing pain in her legs that implored her to stop. Slowing to a jog, she became aware that her gasps for air were a painful match to her rapid heartbeat. Yet between these pants of agony, she thought she heard the distant voice of her statistics professor gradually getting louder in the background of her mind.

"All right, let's review that dilemma I selected from your text in our previous class meeting," he proposed.

Amanda slowly raised her head from the lapboard desktop and glanced through the blonde bangs gracing her forehead. Her instructor was holding his glasses firmly to his eyes while reading from a textbook in his other hand, periodically stopping to write notes on the whiteboard behind him.

"A farmer estimated that his corn harvest yield was about 150 bushels per designated plot of land. However, after an unfortunate accident forced him to consider the replacement of his

(continued, next page)

horse with a tractor, much to his surprise, on fourteen randomly selected plots of equal size, the average yield was 158 bushels.”

Finishing his last notation, he returned to the podium.

“This would, of course, lead one to believe that there may be an advantage to this new technology,” he continued. “However,



Cattle Chute Afternoon (Photography)
Teresa Dodge

if we are to assume that the yield per plot is normally distributed, with a standard deviation of 15 bushels, using a probability p-value significance level of .05, can we assume that the farmer is better off without the horse?”

Setting the textbook on the podium, he paused for a moment to scan the classroom in search of a respondent until he ultimately rested his gaze upon Amanda.

“Amanda Summers. Miss Amanda Summers—can we make this assumption?”

A rush of adrenaline jolted Amanda to a full awareness alert.

“Miss Summers!” he repeated then stepped away from the podium and began walking forward until he stopped just short of the foot of the stage.

Amanda’s heart began to beat like a distance runner as any recollection of the appropriate statistical calculations drained from her awareness like ice cream melting on a hot summer’s pavement.

As her consciousness began to fade, she vowed she would not let him win. Pull it together, she thought. You’ve got this.

“Miss Summers, does the tractor offer a significant improvement for the farmer?”

Wiping away any remnant of sleep, she confidently looked directly at her instructor who remained silent, awaiting her reply.

Taking a deep breath, Amanda responded slowly, “Well, sir, I’d have to admit that I’m not really sure this question can be adequately resolved. Since the situation requires a more

complex assessment of the dilemma at hand, it would appear that there are some additional unknown concerns very similar to the ones one might consider in the purchase of an automobile. One might ask, for example, if this is a new or used vehicle? Also, what is the recorded mileage? What are

its maintenance requirements? And, of course, there also seems to be a moral issue involved. Was the farmer at fault for the death of the horse?

“With additional product information about the tractor’s performance capabilities and upkeep requirements, it could prove to be a promising cost-effective venture. However,” she added, pausing briefly to catch her breath, “as I was saying before, in spite of it all, the real issue appears to be the guilt feelings acquired by the farmer concerning the loss of his horse. Did the horse’s drowning by the farmer’s negligence justify the death of the horse that ultimately forced him to make this consideration in the first place?” She again paused, and then added, “I think not.”

The room remained totally silent as Amanda finished her reply. The instructor kept still, thrown off-guard by her lack of a numerical response. He briefly glanced downward



Weathered (Photography)
Missy Blair

and then rubbed his chin, pondering her answer. Finally, he took a deep breath and looked up.

“Urr, uhh,” he briefly stumbled, clearing his throat, “thank you Miss Summers for that insightful, yet amusing response to our farmer’s dilemma. You have certainly expanded our concept of the situation and provided an alternative perspective *outside-the-box*. However,” he added, “I would sincerely recommend that you review the designated procedures for product testing, since I can assure you it *will* appear on the upcoming exam.”

Abruptly shifting his attention, he then returned to the podium and presented yet another text question for consideration...



Shakti Yoga (Sculpture in Bronze)
Susan Johnson

My \$8 dress from Target has soup on it.
Oh you like it? It has pockets! What a steal.
Clean it quickly but don't gaze in the mirror or at
them too long.
Apply makeup liberally to cover acne scars
But don't apply too much.
It's good to look natural.
Am I doing this right?
Body positivity, focus on being happy now
But also you almost died when your baby was born.
And now that he's grown it would be good to lose
those last five.
I still don't think I'm doing this right.
Have dinner prepared for children. Read, do
homework, tuck them in at night.
But also, practice self-care, make time for yourself,
treat yourself.
Not time for a mani-pedi
Do it yourself at 10:30 at night while your to-do list
of tomorrow's responsibilities grows a mile long.
Be a good partner, daughter, sister, friend, employee—
but first mother, don't forget that.
I am doing EVERYTHING and mastering nothing at
the same time.
Shouldn't I know if I really have it all?

What She Carries



Parasol View (Oil Painting)
Susan Johnson

By Sandra Shattuck

inside the hidey-hole
the cupboard near the kitchen sink
floored in 1950s linoleum
the dried-blood walls shelter
bottles of local gin, my grandma's supplies
when I open the cupboard
a lightning flash
warns me to shut the door
I don't
I lift one tall clear bottle
the graceful neck
the powder-blue ribbon on the label
I am five
the bottle is heavy
I walk strong
to Grandma and her recliner
with the forever oily spot from her pomaded hair
she bends to me
lifts the bottle of gin
pours into an empty cocktail glass
with one pickled onion like a skinned eye
she puts the cap back on
returns the transparent burden
to my waiting arms

Forty years

By Robert Matte

Ezra Rasdale and Denise Banks tied the knot forty years ago. A little white church in the wilds of Montana with a blizzard brewing. Witnessed by two mountain men and a scraggly sheepdog.

Newly married, discovering the rhythm of shared lives cool calculations, the heat of the moment, nuance upon nuance as fingers twine together.



Brianna Amick
(From Pexels)

Forty years which has seen the birth of three children, the finding and losing of jobs buying and selling of houses. Tasseled graduations, the burying of each parent and two siblings, the mirage of too many dreams.

Fetches from a shoebox, Denise shows Rasdale a decades old picture. A young couple pushing a curly haired child in an ornate stroller, the clothes indicating high summer. Rasdale holds the picture close, inspects the child, imagines the warmth of the sun.

Everyday Augury

By Eric Aldrich
- Fiction

Veronica and Mother are in WalMart. Veronica is perusing the kitty food in the pet section while Mother stocks up on paper plates in a different aisle. Veronica fusses her way past Friskies and Whiskers and 9 Lives. At the end of the aisle, she confronts a daunting omen: a wall of fish tanks, each one an aquatic mortuary for goldfish, angel fish, and guppies. Belly up they hover, suspended in murky green water. Veronica makes the sign of the Cross, thanks God for the warning. She selects only chicken kitty food, avoids tuna or salmon.

When they go to Walmart, Veronica tries to keep away from Mother as much as possible until it's time to check out. Much to her frustration, Veronica looks just like Mother, though she's 34 and Mother is 55. Like Mother, her six-foot frame bears only 127 pounds of woman. Her anxious metabolism incinerates calories, but Mother would never stop pointing it out if Veronica gained weight, so she staves off hunger mostly with rice cakes. Today the women have worn nearly identical outfits—blue jeans and kitty-cat sweaters and white Keds. Mother's sweater shows kitties and yarn; Veronica's sweater depicts kitties in a basket. Both Veronica and Mother have waist-length hair. Mother's hair is red; Veronica's, auburn.

Laden with kitty food, Veronica must return to the cart. As she passes the McDonalds, the smell of burgers makes her mouth water. A small boy at a yellow plastic table dips McNuggets into BBQ sauce, sips a soft drink. The scene is lit like a manger display. What does it mean? As a girl, she and Grandmother would go to the Micky-D's drive-thru and Veronica would always order a double cheeseburger and a large Sprite. Veronica considers sneaking in

and cramming down a double cheeseburger, but if Mother smells onions on her breath she will know and endlessly repeat the grams of trans fat and sodium. Grandmother's diabetes cost her two toe amputations and Mother would harp on that. Mother will have Wheat Thins in the cart. Veronica will eat some of those. She abandons the uninterpreted omen.

Veronica checks the paperback aisle in case Mother is there. She spots a priest holding a romance novel. The cover depicts Fabio cradling a swooning southern belle, his bare chest bursting through a blue Union uniform. Mother loves Fabio novels. To see a priest holding one is a sign of judgement, but Veronica won't warn Mother. Veronica hides her oracular literacy.



She fears that if people knew, they would exploit her. In particular, she worries about Mother demanding foreknowledge of soap opera plots and upcoming sales.

Veronica comes upon Mother in the personal care department, peering over her glasses at a cornered employee. His nametag says Stan, he looks in his twenties and about 5'4." Goatee hairs sprout sparsely on his chin. Stocky in his blue employee vest, he cowers in Mother's lanky shadow as she interrogates him: "Do you have the big squirt bottles of oatmeal lotion? Healing amino oatmeal lotion? My heels get so dry..."

"They're right next to you, ma'am," he points to a lower shelf.

Veronica moves closer to the cart and bumps into Stan. He looks over his shoulder at her, then back to Mother, then back to Veronica. His pupils expand. He moves aside and stutters, "Can I help you?"



200 Block 2 (Watercolor)
Danny Lawlor

Veronica replies, "Yes." She's not really in need of assistance, but he helped Mother, so he must help Veronica also. She orders the young man, "Take these cans and put them in the cart." Stan awkwardly plucks cans from her elbows and transfers them into the cart alongside country apple potpourri, prune juice, Diet Pepsi, Metamucil, and paper plates. Mother, crouching like a resting mosquito to examine lotions, notices. Veronica sees Mother move the lavender bottles behind the peach ones.

"Excuse me, young man. Do you have any more of the lavender oatmeal lotion?" Mother interrupts. Veronica shakes her head; the aisle reeks of lavender.

Mother lies. For example, every Tuesday two Jehovah's Witnesses stop by and try to convert them. One week, Veronica came downstairs from watching Rachel Ray just in time to see them drive off. "They weren't here very long," Mother said. Veronica wanted to tell the Jehovah's Witnesses to be extra cautious on their evangelizing rounds. Someone had turned two religious greeting cards upside down at CVS, inverting the golden crosses

(continued, next page)

200 Block 1 (Watercolor)
Danny Lawlor



200 Block 3 (Watercolor)
Danny Lawlor

on their covers, which was a clear warning. Luckily, the pair were naturally careful people and they were OK, but she had been worried about them. On their next visit, when Mother lured the Jehovah's Witness man into the kitchen with coffee, the lady asked if Veronica's yeast infection was better. "What yeast infection?" Veronica had asked at the outset of an awkward silence.

"I see some lavender behind the peach bottles, ma'am," Stan points to the disorganized flasks of lotion. "Oh, I'm going blind," Mother overemphasizes her chuckle.

Veronica suspects what Mother might pull next. Mother's greatest joy is when they're mistaken for sisters. Conversely, this is Veronica's profoundest misery. Mother will try to get checkout clerks, mechanics, dentists, or anyone else to make that mistake. Sure enough, she stands up holding a lavender lotion and playfully asks Stan, "How do you think we are related?"

Stan goes red. He replies, softly, "She's your daughter?"

Veronica, grinning, points at Mother with her knot-jointed finger. Mother lets out a venomous hiss, followed by a guffaw. She stands

200 Block 4 (Watercolor)
Danny Lawlor

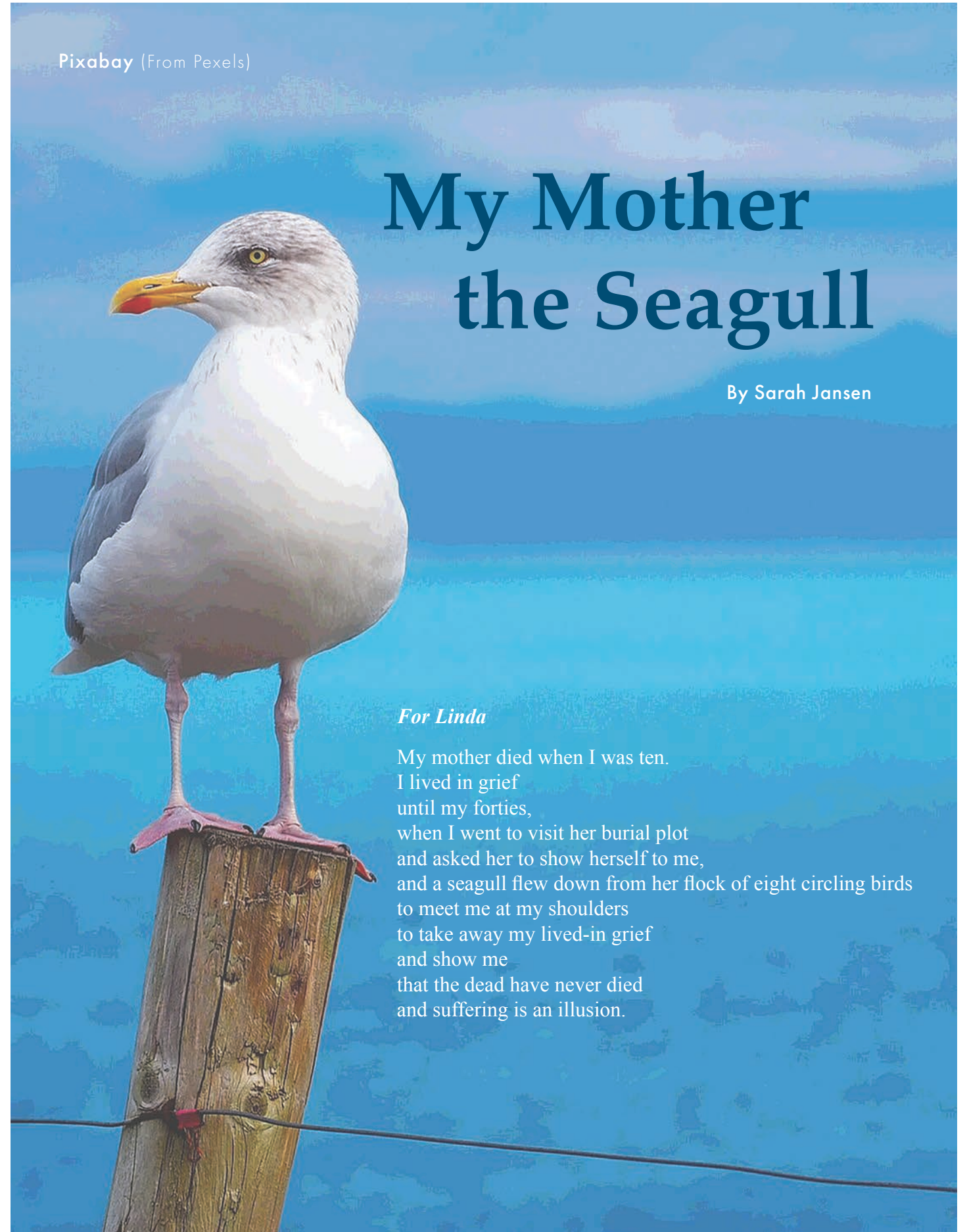
to her full height, pushes her chest out. Veronica does the same. Standing toe to toe, they look like a kitty attacking her own image in a mirror.

"I...I'm...sorry..." Stan stammers and shakes his head. "Are you her aunt?"

"No!" Mother throws the lotion into the cart and snarls. "You're right. I'm her mother."

For a moment, triumph smells like lavender. Veronica could hug the employee, but he is backing away. If he could read omens, identical women would be a sign to him. He flees the aisle, but Veronica suspects he doesn't comprehend what the universe was trying to tell him. What was the message to Stan?

As she hurries away from Mother to go get Lean Cuisines, Veronica considers following Stan, questioning him about what she and Mother signify. But when she gets to the frozen section and sees her gaunt image in the glass door, she realizes the warning wasn't for him. Veronica is the soothsayer, so the omen of identical women is meant for her. It has been staring her in the face her whole life, warning her, directing her to action. She selects seven Lean Cuisines for Mother and buys herself seven Hungry Man Dinners. They're a thousand calories a piece. Veronica will have hips where Mother has bones, she will have smooth fingers with proportionate knuckles, her breasts will fill out, her inner thighs will grow together, she will dye her hair blond, she will wear glasses instead of contact lenses. Maybe she will adopt a puppy. She closes the freezer door and sees her smile reflected. It's the harbinger of a new Veronica.



Pixabay (From Pexels)

My Mother the Seagull

By Sarah Jansen

For Linda

My mother died when I was ten.
I lived in grief
until my forties,
when I went to visit her burial plot
and asked her to show herself to me,
and a seagull flew down from her flock of eight circling birds
to meet me at my shoulders
to take away my lived-in grief
and show me
that the dead have never died
and suffering is an illusion.

BLACK BEAR AND JACK RABBIT

By Maureen Burns

Cecilia is smaller but tougher.
She can out-run
the wolves and coyotes.
Long legs leap over the sandbox,
as she weaves through
the jungle gym,
darts across the dirt yard,
and disappears
behind the juniper bush.
Waiting and watching,
ears tilted forward,
eyes sharp as arrows,
she scans the playground
until the teacher
comes out
to shoo the predators away.

Melinda is a loner;
sometimes she swings
alone on the playground,
under the light of the moon,
or waits outside
the Casino
for her mother's shift to end.
Each morning she walks
through a field of sunflowers,
listening to the meadowlark's song,
as she waits
for the yellow
school bus again.



Apache Plume • Palo Verde • Night Blooming Cereus • Catclaw Acacia

Coyote Nap (Pen & ink Drawing)
Desert Ehrhart

Cecilia and Melinda met on the bus,
two fatherless girls.
That is to say,
their fathers are nowhere
to be found.
Melinda knows her father
is not one
of the ghost people.
Cecilia only knows
her father is gone.
Together, they make
a formidable team
at St. Francis School.

Each morning
Melinda searches for
a new hiding place
for her lunch,
a bag of raisins and seeds.
Then she goes to meet
her friend Cecilia,
behind the ironwood trees.
The day after
Mathew Hammer
steals her bag,
she leaves an earless lizard
in his lunchbox.

Each day Cecilia scans
the school yard for a new place
to hide. Feeling invisible,
she propels herself
across the parallel bars,
careens off the slide,
and darts off
to her new secret spot.



Prickly Pear Blossoms
(Pen & ink Drawing)
Desert Ehrhart

One day, surrounded by Wolves,
Cecilia and Melinda emerge as
Jack Rabbit and Black Bear.
Cautious Cecilia shrieks,
hollers, and kicks.
Solitary Melinda stands
up straight, bares her teeth,
and emits a ferocious growl.
When the wolves disperse,
Jack Rabbit and Black Bear
retreat to their corner
of the school yard,
near patches of lupine
and brittlebush, to eat
their lunch in peace.



Paint Time (Watercolor with ink)
Emily Jacobson

Bucket List

By Robert Matte

Rasdale comes across a bucket list he made out some years back, before diminishing sight, age spots, belly fat and leg pain became part of life's complex equation.

Hike the Grand Canyon rim to rim, read the 100 Great Books of the Western World, Eat at every Mexican restaurant in the county, run the Snake River rapids. Write a family history going back three hundred years, pilot a Mississippi Steamboat.

Settling for the more prosaic Rasdale plays Chutes and Ladders with the grandkids, takes aqua classes at the



Sugar Skull (Watercolor)
Emily Jacobson

Senior Center, reads the obituaries in the paper and heats up Mexican dinners in the microwave.

Maybe when he gets to heaven, Rasdale can sing in a choir with the angels, polish their halos and then sweep those golden streets; that would beat the hell out of his bucket list.

SOMEONE TO HOLD MY HAND

By Sherrie Lynn Stewart
- Nonfiction

An airplane taxied away from the terminal. Its tail glowed brilliant red against the blue dome of desert sky. I held Mother's hand, and we walked along the expanse of hallway.

"I missed you," she whispered as we paused to watch the 747 through a wall of windows. The red tail glided across the blacktop to find its place in line for takeoff. Other travelers rushed past. We stood suspended in a moment between coming and going.

Mother and Papa Charlie, my stepfather, had just flown in from Texas. He had called two weeks ago. I answered the phone at my office. The voice on the other end sounded frantic, but determined. He threatened, "You have to do something. I'll kill your mother and then shoot myself if you don't do something!"

Something?

The word whirled around in my mind. Charlie had loved Mother when she helped him build and manage their businesses, when she cared for him as his eyes became dim, and when he forced her to move from her dream split-level house across the street from the country club to a mobile home at Lake of the Pines so he could go fishing every day with his 'pickin' n' grinnin' buddies. Now she needed that level of love

And he couldn't handle it?



Purple Sunset (Photography)
Mike Rom

So, rushed arrangements had been made, flights booked, and a furnished apartment rented at the assisted-living center. Today, my husband Bob and I met the red-tailed plane that finalized that 'Something.'

The sight of Mother's condition had startled me as the stewardess led her up the ramp and placed her hand in mine.

"Here she is," the short, brunette flight attendant told Mother with a sigh of relief.

"Nice lady. Too bad," I heard her mutter as she turned back to other passengers disembarking from the ramp.

"Someone get Mother," Papa Charlie barked at me over his shoulder as he and Bob walked off to the baggage claim area.

Always a bright and beautiful wom-

an, Mother had visited the beauty shop every week to have her hair styled and had worn it blonde even though a natural brunette. Still cut and curled to perfection, her hair gleamed silver above the translucent pink rims of her gradient glasses. Only a thin red line of lipstick seared her porcelain face. No eye makeup or blush accented the deep blue eyes or high cheek bones. Her makeup had always been applied meticulously, but today she appeared plain, smaller, her body shrunken, and her eyes drained of recognition.

Watching her pale face, I visualized my mother readying for her second job, the one at night, admiring her reflection in the medicine cabinet mirror. Her dark roots didn't show under the platinum blonde, bouffant hairstyle.

(continued, next page)

The feathery half bang emphasized the arched black eyebrows perched above dark lined eyes.

Cobalt blue lids teased her deep blue irises framed by long, dark lashes. A dusty rose blushed on both high cheekbones with her lips glossed just a shade darker than her cheeks. The full length mirror on the closet door had glared white and then filled with her image as she stepped in front of it to scrutinize the finished product.

Black suede stiletto heels and taupe hose rose to a short, black skirt.

"I could stand to lose this tummy," she stated, pulling her shoulders back and adjusting her girdle.

Leaning over, she jostled her breasts inside the sequined black halter bra. Standing straight again, Betty Grace admired her cleavage as she dobbed perfume between her breasts. Having four children had made her breasts bountiful, and she considered them her best asset.

Her gaze turned solemn. "You kids get



The Tree of Scars (Photography)
Nina Nardolillo



I'm Here (Photography)
Amanda McPherson

Jimmy fell in love with Jennevene, their sister-in-law. Betty and the four kids moved out of the corner brick house.

Betty Grace worked two jobs to make ends meet. But they never did. She wore an operator's headset every day at the telephone company and her "B-girl" costume three nights a week at a local bar, enticing men to buy drinks for her. At first, she had been afraid, feeling like a bit of bait in a sea of sharks. But soon, she began to like the way these men admired her body. Their hungry looks made her feel like a beautiful woman again.

She erased a premature grey streak by bleaching her hair to a shimmering iridescence, teasing and sculpting it to perfection, masked her fatigue with a precisely painted Macaw-like face, while stuffing the evidence of childbearing into tight girdles. After a couple of years, Betty regained her self-confidence and began rebuilding her life.

While still working at the telephone company, Betty Grace partnered with a musician named Charlie Hopkins to open her own bar. That lounge, the "Circus," became the first

(continued, next page)

to bed by ten," she yelled down the carpeted hallway. Pulling on a black, fake-fur jacket, she picked up the keys to the red, 1960 Bonneville waiting in the driveway.

Born during the Great Depression, then married in the boom just after World War II, Betty Grace had five children and a hysterectomy by the time Kennedy became President. She and her husband Jimmy bought a corner brick house in 1954. He became a carpenter and she, a telephone operator. Christmas Eve mystery assemblies and Sunday church services, birthday cakes and emergency doctor visits, late night shifts and making pitchers of Kool-Aid filled the years. Then

of five beer bars and two cafes that she eventually owned. She learned to keep the books, hire and fire, order beer and wine, and became successful. The little corner brick house was only half the size of the split level she bought across the street from the country club where she learned to play golf. Classes taken at the local college helped her become a better business woman. The children grew up, married, joined the military, and moved away. Betty and Charlie wed, becoming partners in life as well as partners in business. Her career, new Spanish style furniture, and nine holes of golf on leisurely Saturday afternoons measured out those days.

"Where are they going?" Mother asked. She stared through the glass at another plane taxiing across the tarmac.

"Maybe Phoenix or Las Vegas or San Diego. Maybe even New Orleans," I answered.

"I love Las Vegas." Mother raised her left arm and pulled down as if cranking on the lever of a slot machine. "Horse races in New Orleans, too. Can we go with them, Baby Girl?"

"Not today, Mother."

And never again. My heart wept as she recognized me in a fleeting lucid moment.

Diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease about five years ago, Mother had mentally become a small child, pleasant and easy going. She laughed often and seemed happy. But she had lost the ability to live independently.

Mother's red, manicured nails felt smooth and hard as I grasped her fingers to continue our slow progress toward her new home. Her motor skills had deteriorated since I had seen her last. She stumbled as we stepped away from the windows, scooted her feet across the floor, and clung to my hand. This seemed strange to me because Mother had always been so graceful. She loved to dance and did it so well that everyone wanted to be her partner on the dance floor.

Charlie had been a professional musician since a young man, and continued to play

during their married life. His 'Axe' was the alto saxophone. He accompanied bands in country and western honky tonks and dance halls across East Texas. That left Betty stuck at the band table all night. So she danced. She made it look so easy that everyone wanted to dance with her.

I remembered the time Charlie played in the house band for Ray Price at the Rio Palm Isle, the famous dance hall in Longview, Texas, with a dance floor the size of a football field. All night long she danced the Jitterbug, the western Two Step and Waltz, even showed her mastery of the Hustle. Her maneuvers and intricate footwork

commanded the dance floor. Her easy smile and throaty laugh broadcast her pleasant personality. I had watched, amazed by her agility and endurance.

Today, my mother took unsure steps, clinging to me for support. These images of my mother's other lives raced through my mind as she and I strolled through the airport causeway toward the baggage claim area.

I asked an airport attendant for directions to the restroom. We found it next to the gift shop. As we approached the restroom door, Mother loosened her grip on my hand and wandered toward the shop window. She stroked the glass in an attempt to touch the carved Kachina Dolls standing on clear shelves guarded by an invisible barrier. Confusion clouded her face as she tried to feel the tan leather tunics, turquoise and coral beads, and the green and gold feathers of the traditional ceremonial figures. I finally grasped her trembling hand, coaxed her away from the gift shop, and led my confused mother into the restroom.

Inside, a slim lady wearing a yellow sundress stared at us. I guided Mother into the larger handicapped stall, unzipped and unbuttoned her pants, then handed her toilet paper. Now, she

(continued, next page)



The Cure For Everything (Photography)
Nina Nardolillo

was the child; I, the care giver.

I watched her face become placid, then perplexed, as she looked for a place to discard the wet toilet paper. Mother's disease had spread slowly throughout her brain like the relentless roots of an unwanted plant invading the

most fertile ground, hoarding all the nutrients and moisture, until only the monstrous weed remained. I took the wet paper and tossed it into the toilet, imagining how her life must have changed over the past few years.

One day Betty Grace had become afraid again. She couldn't remember where she had put her grocery list or to feed the dog. She found herself driving on a street far from home but couldn't remember why she went there. She burned the beans on the stove and overdrew her checking account. Memory dissolved away and with it, her hard-won independence.

The doctor had called it short-term memory loss. *He wouldn't say Alzheimer's in front of her.*

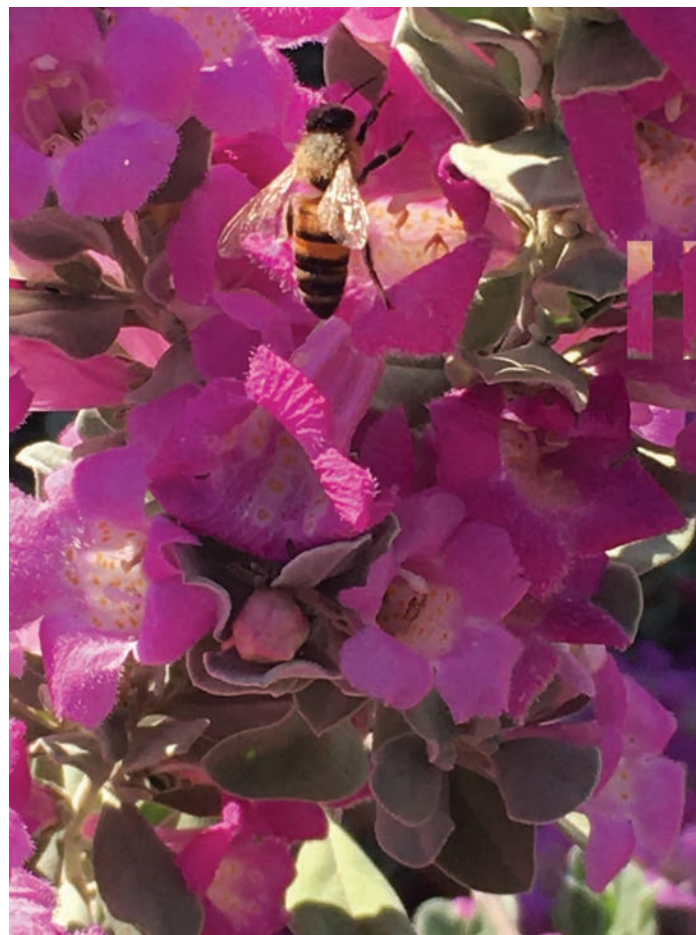
My mother's name, Betty Grace, had suited her. Betty Boop, Grace Kelly, and Betty Davis all rolled into one. Sweet and Sexy, beautiful and autonomous, mixed with sultry and opinionated, that's who my mom had been before a disease began eating away at her mind. That disease had stolen her identity but not my mem-

ories of the sassy blonde in black or the graceful dancer struttin' her stuff.

We came out of the stall, and the lady in the yellow sundress still stood there by the paper towel dispenser. She turned and smiled at us while we washed our hands.

"I just wanted to tell you. Well, that I think it's so nice. I mean, you know, I sure hope I have someone to hold my hand when I get old," she said in a soft, wistful way.

I smiled, glancing at Mother, and said a polite thank you as we all returned to the hallway together. Mother stared after the woman and asked, "Do I know her? Was that Ada?"



Busy Bee (Photography)
Monique Rodriguez

Ada, mother's baby sister lived in Houston. I thought of her, and then of the disease growing within my mother's mind. A shiver of dread wriggled up my spine as I saw my own reflection in Mother's glasses. I couldn't escape its grip, but I tried to return her smile. My husband and I owned our own business and felt successful and comfortable. But only a few years ago, Betty Grace had, too.

Mother and I found Charlie and Bob waiting with the bags stacked on a rolling cart. We worked our way out to the parking lot, loaded the luggage, climbed into our spacious Suburban, and then headed for their new apartment. Mother and I sat in the back seat. She still held onto me and stroked my hand with trembling fingertips.

As we drove along, I thought about all those professions this woman had fulfilled, all those other lives she had lived. Mother had worked for southern Bell telephone for twenty five years, when directory assistance was still called information, and operators still answered the Calls. She had used one of those peg boards that you see in late night movies where the operator unplugs and plugs in wires to connect the callers to the correct numbers. As a child, I dialed 'O' on a rotary dial phone for the operator and got my Mommy. She'd rebuke me, "Baby girl, y'all get off that phone."



Michael's Improvisation
(Life-size Sculpture in Hydra-Stone, Acrylic)
Susan Johnson

Long before retiring from the telephone company, Mother and Charlie had opened several businesses. Always trying to improve herself, she became a college student and took classes in accounting and business management. Forced to sell the businesses when Charlie lost most of his eyesight, she opened up her own small accounting and tax service near their home at the lake.

A telephone operator, bartender, business owner, wife, mother, and an accountant

(continued, next page)

—she had been all of these. But now, when we hugged, she laid her head on my chest like a submissive child.

Mother and Charlie lived in Tucson for a few years. Her condition worsened, and they moved into our home. Within a year, she needed more supervi-

sion, some sedation, and, finally, to be placed in a special care facility. Charlie died of congestive heart failure one year before Betty Grace expired from respiratory failure. She escaped this world strapped to a bed, wearing a diaper, writhing from an invisible mental torture. We buried her in her plot at the cemetery near the Lake of the Pines between Charlie and her youngest son, exactly where she would want to lie for eternity.

My brothers and I sat in the front row at the graveside service. We held onto Uncle Johnny and Auntie Ada because they were what were left to us of her. We wrapped arms around shoulders and gripped fingers as we shared the pain.

I watched the funeral director remove the blanket of white roses and red carnations from her ivory colored, carved casket, augmented with shimmering brass handles. In just a few years, my mother had lost the identity that it had taken her a lifetime to develop. I wondered how this happened to someone who loved life



Peaceful Rest (Photography)
Teresa Dodge

as much as she did.

The bright and beautiful woman who had been my mother had left my life. But looking around the grave site, I saw her in everyone there. She lived in Auntie Ada's broad smile, in Uncle Johnny's throaty laugh, and in my older brother's saunter. But a lingering dread of her disease peered out from their eyes. Having all said our goodbyes, we wandered away from the rows of folding chairs facing the casket.

While everyone chatted politely by their cars, I cleared my mind and saved an image of my mother there to have when I needed It. The scent of damp pine and freshly cut grass placed

this memory in springtime. She sat by a sparkling pool wearing her favorite red jacket and holding a white rose. A slight breeze ruffled her silver curls, and she gazed at me with that wistful smile.

I won't forget. I promise.

A few days later, my return flight landed in Tucson. Exhausted, I disembarked the plane and headed up the expanse of hallway toward the security station. I stumbled as my roll bag caught on a bump in the carpet next to the TSA luggage check. A small hand grasped mine to stop my fall.

"Are you okay, Gramma?" a familiar voice asked.

Turning to find my young granddaughter beaming up at me with sparkling blue eyes,

I answered, "I am now." My throat grew tight.

She whispered, "I missed you."

My eyes burned as we hugged. Her long, dishwater blonde hair smelled of herbal-scented shampoo and felt cool and smooth against my cheek.

Springtime. Stroking her back eased my mind. I exhaled for the first time in days.

"Grampa says we're gettin' ice cream after we pick you up. You know, to celebrate you bein' home."

"That sounds great to me."

"What flavor do you want, Gramma?"

"Oh, I like strawberry. What do you choose?"

"I don't know yet. Lots to choose from. Maybe chocolate mint or bubble gum or rocky road. You know, with marshmallows"

"Yep, you've got lots of choices," I said, and my saved image of Mother flashed through my mind.

"Let's go, Gramma."

"Okay. And thanks for coming to find me, Baby Girl," I answered and gripped her fingers. Noticing the Sunflower on her dress, I added, "Sure is nice to have someone to hold my hand," as she guided me through the crowd to find our family.

Senior Center

By Robert Matte

Rasdale and a coterie of wizened golden-agers sit at a Formica table discussing the lessons in some trendy self-help book. As the others drone on, Rasdale wishes he could help himself to some buffet pizza down the street.

Asked to join the gardening club, Rasdale says he has a black thumb; everything he has ever planted died. In crafts class, Rasdale tries to make a leather wallet but

it pales in comparison to the one he made decades earlier in the Boy Scouts.

While he likes the aqua class Rasdale has to endure endless stories of wayward grandkids from the very large women splashing next to him. And the pool is too cold.

The life stories writing class is meant to elicit poignant memories from the past but Rasdale can only focus on the shoe sizes of customers he helped at Sancho's Shoe Salvage. Oh, to be back doing the Peppermint Twist in the early 60s.



Time Honored (Photography)
Amanda McPherson

Miller Lite Blues

By Anthony Dalessandro
- Fiction



The road to her house is quiet this time of night. Lights are off or low; even the hospital, about a block away, is dimly lit except for the red “Emergency” signs. I pass a black police cruiser going the opposite direction, the lone vehicle sharing the road, and I park my Honda behind an old AMC Matador with faded red paint. It’s always parked here at night. I step out of my car and reach for the grocery bag in the back seat. The brown paper bag swings into my arms more quickly than I expect; my reactions have slowed. I’m glad that police cruiser sped away.

Old and poorly tended, the peeling white, two-story house has a single dull light glowing in a second-floor window on the south side. I unlock the front door with a borrowed key and step out of the warm summer air. I shut and lock the old wooden door and turn on the stairway light. Before starting up the stairs, I dig the borrowed key from the left pocket of my khakis and place it back on the nail sticking out of the top of the doorframe.

Lisa (Life-size Sculpture in Resin)
Susan Johnson

The steps to the second-floor apartment are old and steep, almost too steep tonight, and the heat increases with each upward step. The smell of trash not taken out earlier today for the garbage truck enters my nose as I reach the second floor. I walk forward and smell burnt tobacco. A feeling of blues swelled by beer, now stale, emanates from the room directly in front of the staircase. As I enter the room, I notice the wood paneling is dull, reminding me of a 1970s basement recreation room. In the back of the room, a vinyl

Bridge (Oil on canvas)
Mickey Haist



album is skipping on the turntable, and I reset it to hear a familiar and appropriate song.

Picking up the evening’s beverage, an empty can of Miller Lite slips out of my hand, and I glance at the motionless figure lying in a corner of the room. I pick up several more beer cans, but I leave the half-pack of Marlboro Lights and the pack of matches on the coffee table for her. I move to the kitchen across the hallway and drop the empty cans into the trash bag that should have been taken to the street curb. As the

turntable’s arm reaches for the next group of grooves, I hear her take a deep breath. I walk back to the living room to see if she has awoken, but she has just flipped to lie on her left side with her face to the wall. She must have passed out. Taking a thin white blanket from the bedroom at the end of the hallway, I walk by her cousin’s bedroom and see that the door is now shut, and no light appears from the door’s bottom. The cousin probably needs to wake

(continued, next page)

up early for work, so I decide to be as quiet as possible. Even so, I don't feel comfortable leaving the apartment in its present state of mess. I cover her with the blanket and turn off the overhead light.

Carrying an empty pizza box and dirty dishes into the kitchen, I step on a sticky linoleum floor. Glancing at the yellowed white countertop covered with used plates, glasses, and cups, I see a granddaddy long-legs scatter from the pile, and I promptly rinse him down the drain. I pull a six-pack and dishwashing liquid out of the brown paper bag from the Sheetz 24-hour convenience store, push the stopper into the drain, and fill the pockmarked porcelain sink with hot water. I place the beer in the fridge and then begin washing, starting with a glass I drank wine from at least two nights ago. I wash and rinse the rest of the mess, drain the sink, and dry my hands on the dishtowel. I don't really know where anything goes, so I just leave the clean stuff to air-dry in the drainer.

I walk across the hallway and reenter the living room, where she is sleeping it off. I reset the album to that popular song and walk back toward the hallway. I turn left and quietly step past the bathroom, her cousin's room, and enter her room at the end of the hallway. I walk in and turn on the nightstand lamp. Wrinkled clothes cover her unmade bed, and I decide to do this one last chore before going

home. Piling a dozen or so tops and bottoms on the floor, I notice the black and white knit top she was wearing the first time I saw her about three months ago at the local daily newspaper.

I fold a few skirts and dresses over a wooden chair and place two pairs of pumps and a well-worn pair of sandals by the bed. I noticed earlier that she was still wearing her sneakers. After positioning the tops of the sheet and blanket under a single feather pillow, I notice Gypsy Lou—an old Cabbage Patch doll with long blonde hair much like her owner's—sitting on the bed and against the far wall. I fold blouses, t-shirts, and jeans from the pile on the floor and place them on two new piles on the foot of the bed. I lay Gypsy Lou on



Tree Pose (Charcoal on Paper)
Carolyn McKee

the pillow and glance around to make sure the room looks tidy.

As I turn to look at her small bedroom desk, I notice the round vase of red and pink roses I bought a week ago. The roses are starting to wilt, as petals now cover the desk. I leave them alone, deciding she can save or toss them.

I glance over to the left at her dresser and notice the different items that identify a woman's room. There's a row of cosmetics, a brush, hair pins, a container of curlers, and several brands of perfume, each in its own identifiable glass bottle. Reminded of her current fragrance, a smile creases onto my tired face. Looking around for any misplaced items, my eyes catch an accidentally full view of the far wall my mind has been trying to ignore since I walked into her bedroom.

Pictures of one I have no desire to know. There's one of them together, and several of just him in various poses, some humorous, yet none make me smile or laugh. Suddenly I feel an emptiness, like something has been pulled from inside me. My pulse quickens, and the rate of my breathing increases. I look at the photographs longer than I should, and then I quickly leave the room. I have to walk back to turn off the lamp.

I remember to tiptoe through the creaking hallway. I enter the living room, shut off the turntable, and carefully lift the arm, which has been skipping again on the inside of the album. Walking over



Marine III (Photography)
Ernesto Trujillo

to the twin bed that serves as a makeshift couch, I sit on the edge, beside her back, and stroke her hair while listening to her slow, steady breaths. I wonder how many more days I'll have the privilege of hearing her nighttime breathing. Laying a single soft kiss on the side of her right cheek, I lightly run my finger down the length of her nose like I do sometimes just to irritate, but she doesn't stir. I wonder about what she is dreaming, and I wonder whom she'll choose

(continued, next page)



Ride On (Photography)
Melissa Bouey

when summer ends. I suppose he'll continue managing the local Wendy's, while she returns to Penn State for senior year. I'll head back down to Morgantown for senior year at WVU. I've ended things with my fiancée of the past year, but I doubt I'll still have, if I even did have, a new girlfriend by summer's end. Maybe we could hook him up with my ex. I smile briefly, but it turns into the numb, emotionless grin I'm becoming accustomed to.

I stand, leave the room, and walk slowly, softly down the stairs. On the first floor, I turn off the stairway light, open the wooden door, twist the lock before closing the door, and enter the cool, early morning air. Getting into my car, I notice a familiar scent.

I shut the ashtray, swig the last sip of a Miller can, toss it to the passenger side floor, and turn the key to start. I glance back up at the darkened house, turn up the radio's volume, push in the clutch, and put the stick into first gear. The street is empty except for my Accord hatchback and her coupe, so I make a U-turn on the two-lane street, head North past the hospital, and then turn east, going over the railroad tracks and passing the Sheetz store. I drive a couple of miles, turn north up the road to my parents' house, enter the driveway, and park beside the light pole. I turn the car key counterclockwise so the engine ceases, but the radio still plays a sad song from the album left motionless on her cousin's turntable.



Glory be to the Screen, the Agenda,
and the Programming (Oil on panel)
Mano Sotelo

Applesauce

1918 - 2020

By Cathy Thwing

Three cranks forward, one crank back.

My great-grandmother places on the
cutting board, stem-side up
six Newton Pippins, three Arkansas Black, two
Carter's Blue, five Dudley Winter, one
Winter Queen, and a Maiden's Blush

to chop, chop, chop—
half, quarter, cook it up!
Green skin, red skin, splotched,
dashed, and dotted,
cores and all in the pot!

Perfumed steam in the kitchen
out the window
through the neighborhood
and everyone sings,
“Grandma's applesauce!”

Into the cast iron food mill,
crank it one way,
three for the sauce,
crank it back one,
clear the grate

Two steps forward, one step back
Into twelve jars,
the applesauce,

one for Smitty,
whose wife has the flu

three for cousins
whose dad's out of work

two for the roofers
at Mr. Jones' store

six for the volunteers
with the Red Cross

One turn forward, one turn back
One hundred and two
revolutions on
our small blue
planet

around the sun

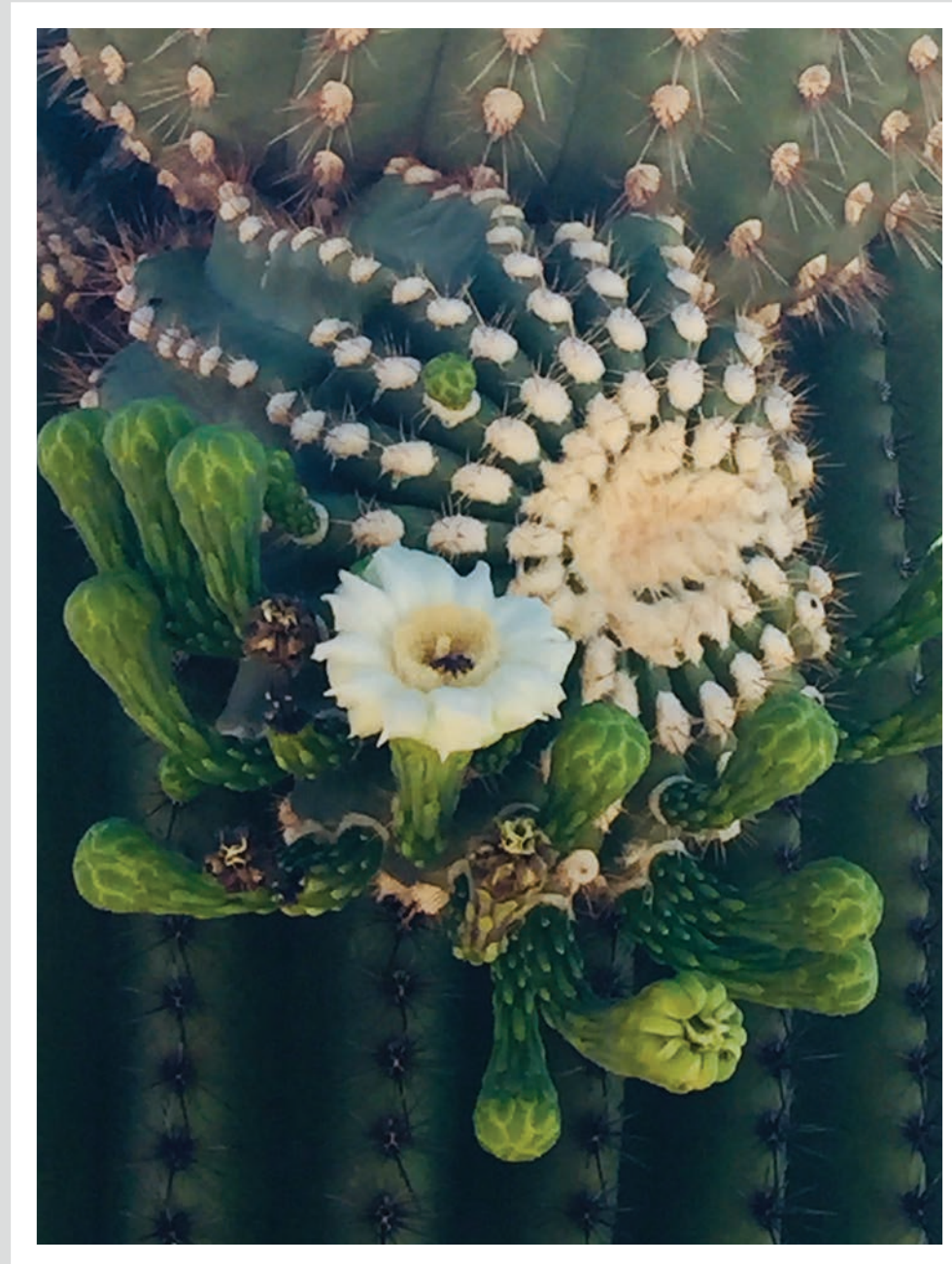
and
again a virus
brings us down
or draws us to each other

as we stay apart

I cut Granny Smith,
Fuji, Gala into cubes,
simmer on the stove,
blend in the blender

and it's applesauce
sustains us,
just us two,
alone in our house

but thinking of you.



Cactus Blossom II (Photography)
Kris Swank

Passing the Buck

By Danny Lawlor



Layin' About (Pastel Drawing)
Carolyn McKee

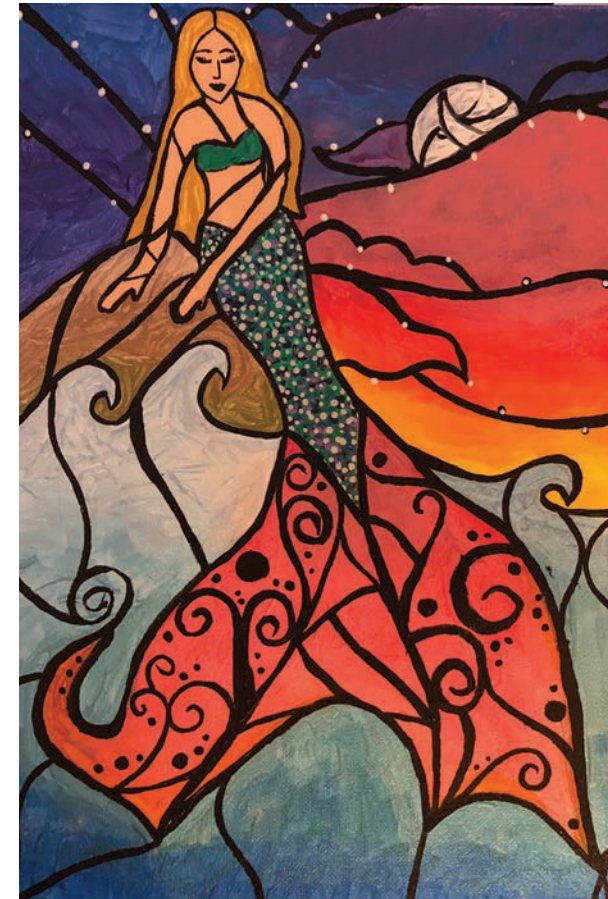
Behind her in line
Her head wrapped in shirts
Body defended by heavy coats
Layers of pants
Inflated
Buying a tall can sweating on the counter
Mrs. Lee stretches aqua latex gloves behind the register
How much did you say it was?
Two eighty
Two what?
Two Eighty
A clear plastic cup of coins pulled from the folds
Muttering
Jangling
Coins clatter across the counter awash with urine
My nose burns
Two bills produced
Tightly crumpled
Slapped down and driven
A greasy streak in their wake reflecting
My jalapeño, water, and bananas

At the close of my purchase
The bills recirculate
Damp and vegetal
Held on their edges
Carried without touching
home
Tossed behind the shallow dish filled with change for laundry
To dry and be forgotten

A week later, maybe two
Buying coffee
A woman gracefully bears them
Still reeking
Hidden under a decent dollar
While I make small talk about the Everglades

How To Heal

By A.Z. Martinez



Mermaid Dream (Acrylic on canvas)
Veronica Willis

The heart (broken) cries—
Mournful, longing pain;
Newly “widowed”
(The Uprooted)
*After years of {love}
and {devotion}*

What could mend the
Longing heart (?)

Which weeps for your:
*Sweet {laughter}
Warm, coy {smile}...*
*Or those (otherworldly), captivating {emerald
eyes}*
Who’s roots run deep,
And hold fervantly

Why does mourning {the living}
*Hurt more than (mourning)
Those “dearly departed” (?)*
*The part we feel, but cannot see
That sunlight warmth.*
And dreaded winter frost

While longing for your (loving) embrace
(Pondering)
“What else is there to be done?”
(For your attention)
For your care to come again?

And, while decay eats me away,
(Longing for another nurturing taste)

I think of the gardener’s wisdom:
For the tree {to grow}
You must cut away
The Rot.

ESSENTIAL

By Cathy Thwing

workers, from home, from the corner of the street, from the parking lot, where the families drive in their procession of cars to pick up laptops and free meals

Stay in the car.

The essential worker leans toward the window, in her mask, with her latex gloves, and hands the mother the laptop. the printed work books. the meals

in plastic bags.

The essential code flies from my fingers and points the way to the school with the social distance lines where 10,000 families get two free meals

a day

and 10,000 loaner laptops find their ways to students.

Fifty-four essential emails chime, and the zoom meeting starts, and my mic is essentially

dead.

and I find my way back into the code where *a href* directs 49,000 families to the note that tells them school is closed and what will we do now

Essentially.

Everything takes five times as long as it did before

But when the email chimes stop, and the code flows, around me stretches the softest bubble that holds within it me and my man and our tiny room with our two laptops and two devices and two computers and Dvorak playing in the other room and the only person I will see today is the bright-eyed boy I met 40 years ago, when we were both young, and the planet still had time to stop

in essence

every crisis, even this one.



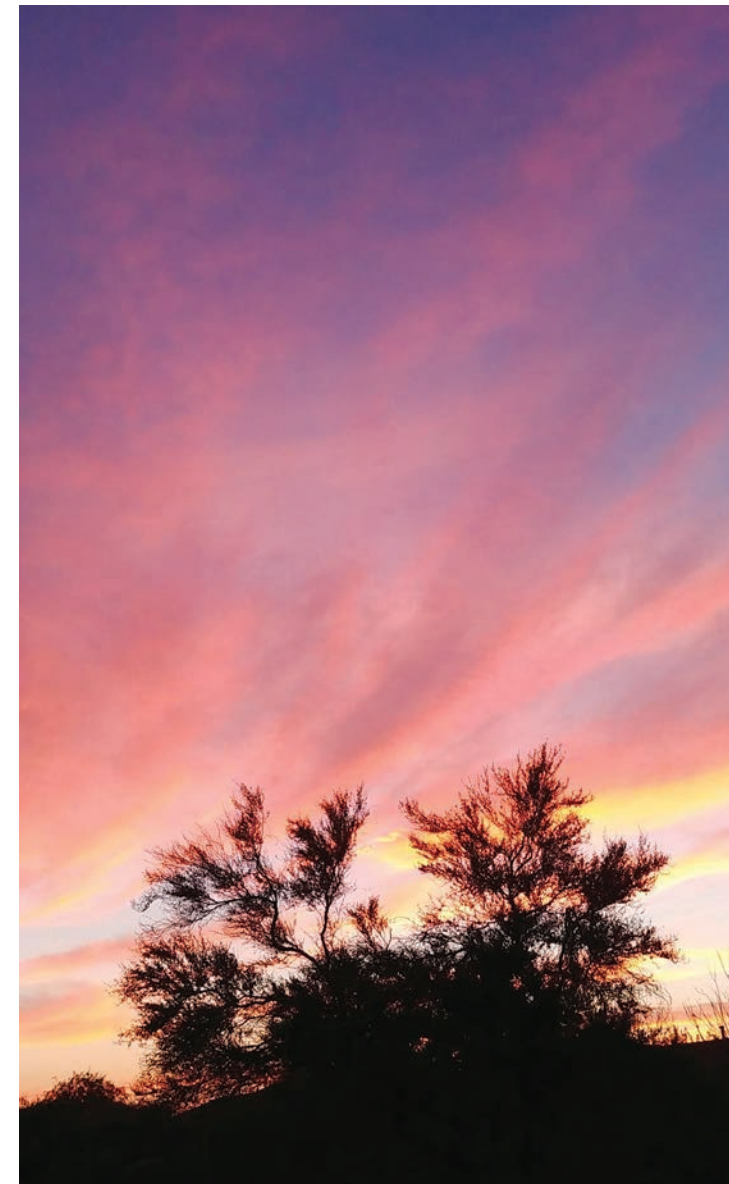
Cactus Blossom I (Photography)
Kris Swank

Home

By Sarah Jansen

For Josie

The eucalyptus tree
shivers in the wind,
its leaves blinking
into the sunlight
as though it just woke up
and breathes the air
in the melodic sighs.



Cielo Colorato (Photography)
Laura Rincon

haiku for George Floyd



ArtisticOperations
(From Pixabay)

I can't breathe...I can't
Fathom the darkness ahead
When will freedom shine

(haiku for George Floyd, RIP 5/25/20)

By Angela Garcia

The Song

to Come

By A.Z. Martinez

Sweet land of "liberty";
My country, 'tis of thee—
America;
Land of the Free
I raise up my glass—
toast, and drink
To thee

Raise a glass(!) to (freedom)
Something they can
never(?)
take away

(we pray)

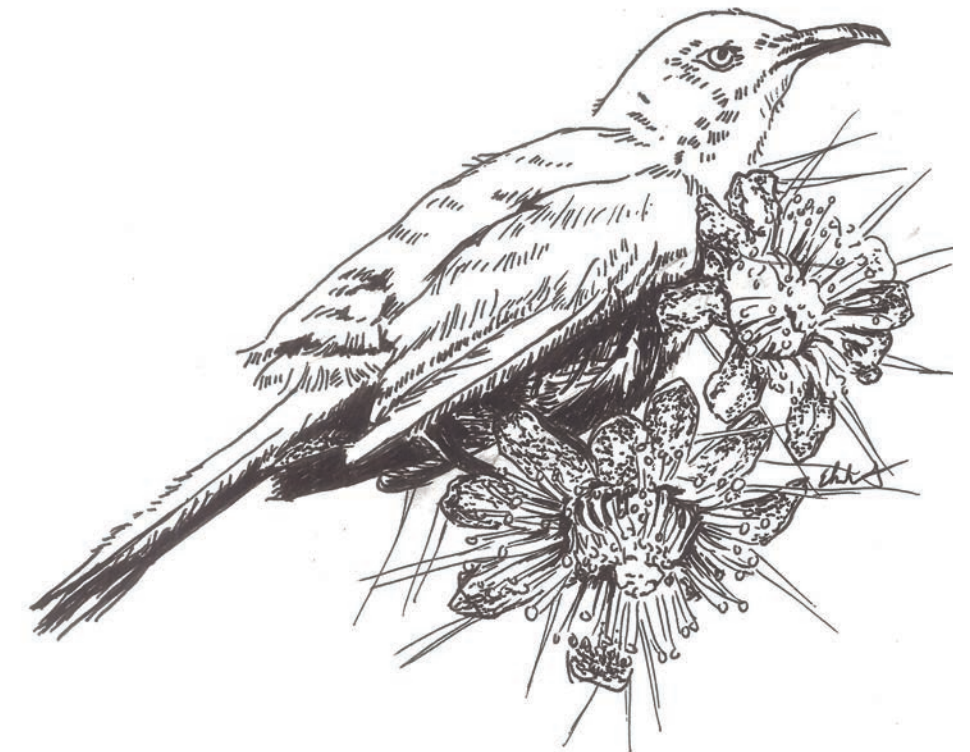
Land of the Pilgrim's pride
Land where (*my*) fathers died:

We sing from day to day;
With each added weep
Another joins the fray—
For?

A somber, bitter tale
Told in vitriol and gore
From sea to shining shore

Revolution
Cry the masses
Their drunken delusions rein—
they bring us to; *again down they swing*

Hear the call:
Raise a glass to freedom
Something
you will never see (again)
O' say does that star-spangled banner
... yet wave?



Thrasher with Cholla Blossoms
(Pen & ink Drawing)
Desert Ehrhart



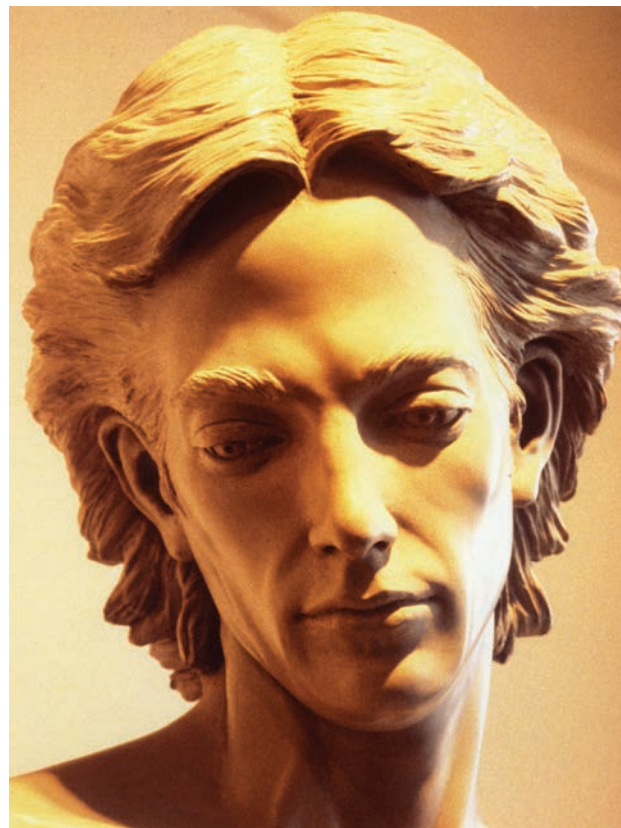
MY AFFAIR WITH THE MISER OF TIME

By Frankie Rollins
- Fiction

The Miser of Time was tall, with the gorgeous posture of a horse or a long-legged bird. I wanted to climb inside of him and be that tall, that clear and upright.

I was new to the village, and the villagers warned me about the Miser of Time. They told me that he counted the minutes he ate, the minutes he drank coffee, the minutes he drank cognac, minutes he spent washing his clothes, minutes he spent washing his body, the hours he slept, the hours he worked, the hours he spent in the village, the hours he spent eating. They'd described his counting room in the house, where he noted how each moment was spent. I'd even heard that he took finalized black books about the year and put them in a box at the bank. I wasn't alarmed. I was extremely attracted to him, and I supposed that everyone has their obsessions. Even later, when I caught a glimpse of his back hunched over a desk through the door, I couldn't see what those notebooks might mean. What they might signify for me, personally.

Once he'd tallied a day's time, those hours and minutes would be calculated into weekly or monthly tables and charts. Then there would be weekly or monthly goals for shaving off the time spent doing certain things. Sudsier soap meant less time lathering. Putting on socks while standing saved seconds. Refusing to wait for things, even if you had to come back later, saved time in the long run,



Alex (Life-size Sculpture in Resin)
Susan Johnson

else you might be distracted by a conversation or an invitation and ultimately lose much, much more time. He wore a broad-faced watch hung on a silver chain clipped to his belt loop, heavy and ticking in his pocket. I loved the watch as I loved him, as you admire all the belongings of your new lover. I thought it old-fashioned, exquisite, solid. I thought it spoke of a kind of loyalty to love. But when I asked if it was an heirloom, he shook his head, no. He'd bought it when he was a young man, after a particularly raucous weekend party in the country. He'd wanted a better sense of the passing time after that, he said.

I asked him, "You once went to a raucous weekend party in the country?"

He blushed but didn't explain further.

The Miser had extremely blue eyes, long-fingered hands, a jaw-line like a book cover. His blushes were like perfect roses appearing on his closely-shaved cheeks. He was skinny, but shapely, considered, as if he'd been made, not born.

When the Miser took me in, everyone was surprised. Not that he'd been drawn to me, because people often were, but that he would share his precious hours with me.

I entered his stone house with foolish joy.

Once there, he invited me to share his bed, to spend uncountable hours in it. We sat together over fires, read books aloud, went for walks in the neighboring meadow and sat by the stream. He let me send his cook home so that I could make lavish, sumptuous meals. We sat by the fireplace, talking over plates

of sauced meat and gratinéed vegetables. After, there would be great mounds of dishes and it took just as long to clean as it did to cook and eat, and we'd stand over the frothing sink, one of us washing, and one of us drying, chatting as we worked. I believe, for a spell, he forgot about the passage of time in these moments. Perhaps I flatter myself.

He had a rare book collection. (He collected these not for the content but for the fact of their being the ultimate signature of time saved, caught, captured.) We spent whole days, sometimes, traveling to nearby villages for a book he'd wanted but previously hadn't had enough spare time to fetch. He collected insects in amber, fossils in stone. He corresponded with a biologist studying tree rings. Together, we had time to spare. We were an ant colony stockpiling extra seconds. We had the soil of time.

I made friends easily, and though they warned me about him, I assured them, "He has various interests. You're wrong to think him so narrow." I didn't see how all his interests were connected to the tally of time; I didn't understand that he only ever had one interest.

Somewhere inside the canals of our love, a clock ticked.

Once, late at night, staring into my eyes, brushing my hair back from my face, he talked to me about the value of time. "It's continuous. Events in sequence, one after another after another. What is past

(continued, next page)

is also present. The future is being built by the past and the present. One must be aware of these things at all times. Past, present, future are the large gestures. I collect extra moments, small time, and in this way, I feed the large gestures, I do not squander life.” He paused, and resumed in a wistful tone, “I have misused time, not attended to it the way I should have. I owe,” he sighed, “years.”

“Owe? Owe who?”

He said, “Before I knew how important time was, I wasted it.”

“Who measures the time you owe?”

“I do.” He laughed affectionately as if I was being foolish.

I sat up and said, “Not all of time is the same, though.”

He leaned away from me, “What are you talking about?” he asked.

“What about moments that you can’t predict? Surprising laughter! A breathtaking vision that you think about for the rest of your life? All minutes are not the same! The ways they change us are not the same. You are thinking so much about the vessel that you ignore the quality of what it bears!”

He said sternly, “You don’t understand.”

My voice rose, “No, I don’t understand, by your measurements, how counting time is not considered wasteful. Those large gestures you speak of are built by experiences, not empty minutes. Should you time a kiss, or the time it takes your beloved dog to die? Or should you be present, engaged, there with the passing life?” His face closed like a vault. He turned from me and rose. He put on his trousers. I sat, waiting, but he didn’t say another word, and he left the room.

I’ve always been reckless. I’m especially careless about time. Years have slid through my fingers while I tended intangible things like relationships, the drama of work, helping others achieve some sense of self. This is why, of course, I own nothing, live nowhere in particular, have nothing to show for my time alive. I am a notorious, unfixable, waster of time.

Early on, the Miser joked about how I did so many things at once, and though I seemed terribly inefficient, I would still somehow get things done. I gazed into his eyes, thinking that I was changing him.

Now I can’t imagine why he invited me in. I am a broken dam, a smashed levee, a river bank breached and run over. I like to spread an hour out on the grass and roll in it, then add another. And another. I like the passage of time to be filled with conversation or reading, food and wine, strolling or climbing. I like to watch shadows, look at the last apple in a winter tree in the rain.

The Miser was, for that brief period, pretending to be something else, someone else. He wanted me, and he wanted to be right for me. For a time. To be fair, I don’t think

he knew he was pretending. I certainly didn’t know. I would head for the kitchen, and he would join me, rolling up his crisp white sleeves to help out. For a long time, I thought this was eagerness, willingness. In truth, he was hiding his true self from me. Always, he was counting, unstoppably counting, the hours spent making something that no one needed, that could have been taken care of in a fraction of the time, say, an egg seared in a skillet instead of a three-course meal. A sandwich. A bowl of apple slices. Now I know that my flagrant wasting of his carefully portioned, time-shaving rituals secretly galled him.

Our affair lasted longer than people thought it would. I didn’t notice him chafing at my side while I stopped in the village to chat with friends, and I lacked

the imagination to know that he wasn’t as interested as I was. When he asked in a voice of frustrated restraint one night, “What did you get out of that?”

I thought it was a real question, not a reprimand. I thought he wanted to know how to relate to people better.

“Oh, my love,” I said, stroking his long cheek with my whole palm.

A new pattern emerged as he slipped back into his true nature, which mystified and pained me. Without saying so outright, it began to cost me his company. The hours I wasted were taken out of my “balance.” I suppose he longed for his life of sandwiches, his thick oak door of privacy. Somewhere inside of him, he suffered the wasting of hours. It broke him each time we’d squander a morning in bed, fritter away an evening on an elaborate meal.

Because I was the kind of lover who believed in love, I thought that I was learning about him, that I could learn how to restrict and bind my time to fit his. Perhaps, I even thought, I could learn from him, learn to accumulate things, not give everything away willy-nilly. Perhaps, I thought, he was changing, and learning things from me, too. I loved the brightness of his eyes, the quick of his brain.

It is in this way, particularly, that I fail myself. That I fail others. I was raised to wink and squeeze and flex into what might be needed. I didn’t know that to be loved by the Miser, I should become fixed, that he wanted fixed things: ritual, order, habit.

He began to disappear into his tally room for longer periods. We spent only half days together. Then, sometimes, he was in his room for whole days, multiple days. At first, I was merely surprised, and thought I wasn’t communicating well. I laughingly begged for a whole day on the weekend, but the stiffness of his countenance, the sternness and distance in his eyes chilled me and stilled my request.

The cook was rehired without him mentioning it to me, and she made it clear that I wasn’t welcome in her kitchen. He told me, in one of our last warm



Huggin and Muninn (Acrylic Painting)
Veronica Willis

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moments, that he'd rehired her to save us time for better things.

"What is better than something enjoyed?" I asked.

"Something you enjoyed," he corrected me mildly, while tending the fire. He didn't look at me then. He didn't look at me much anymore, as if he'd know where I'd be without looking.

The tally room door stayed closed more and more often. It was awkward, because there would be questions that arose, and I didn't know if I should knock or not. We shared three evenings a week. If he came out with me to the village and I spoke with someone, we would then only share two evenings a week. It wasn't unfair, if you understood his system. If you stayed within the limits.

That sweet hot love, that which seems the truest, most long-lasting thing, is merely an intense moment, a momentary diversion, a sip. It is never meant to last, although I always think it will.

I don't know why I stayed as long as I did. I've always loved difficult people, I suppose, as if overcoming the difficulties were the flavor of love itself. I tried to live within the constricted paradigms he set. I snuck my wastefulness elsewhere. I spent it visiting with friends, rambling with the pets of other households.

I counted the time I'd spent in ways he'd understand. I wouldn't tell him about time in the tavern singing with the other patrons, but I would tell him if I took two shortcuts through the village to get home. We had a few last happy times, while I lived within his rules.

After a while, I understood my hours with him were entered on the tally sheets, too. I was being counted among all ordinary duties of a lifetime, no more important or deserving of time than his book collecting, than the washing of bodies or eating. In fact, at first, I could see his logic. It was my gift as well as my downfall, you could say, to see things through the eyes of others. Eventually, though, this rigid frame of logic went against my own nature. I wasn't built to be countable. I was meant to gush, to rise, to slop over, to spill. I couldn't help that any more than he could help his desire to count.

"Why did you invite me to live with you?" I asked him at the end.

"Because you're so different from me."

"But you don't like me very much, do you?"

"It's not that I don't like you." He answered, and then he took out his notebook and wrote something down. "It's that we are not alike."

The night I packed my things he came in the door and watched me in silence. I asked him again how minutes spent counting minutes could be considered time well spent.

"You'll never understand," he said impatiently.

So, I went away and enjoyed anew the fullness of the hours.



The Gloaming (Acrylic on canvas)
Danny Lawlor



American Redstart & AI (Watercolor & pen)



Dickcissel & Donald (Watercolor & pen)



Hummingbird & Harvey (Watercolor & pen)



Marsh Wren & Matt (Watercolor & pen)



Tree Swallow & Tyson (Watercolor & pen)

By Laura Milkins

Book of Dreams

By Lacy Arnett Mayberry - Fiction

Maggie flew with a baby to Shanghai. The baby's parents—Chinese citizens pursuing doctoral degrees at the University of Arizona—had been murdered one night in their bed inside their cinder block apartment on Second Avenue, near campus. Both shot through the chest by someone who'd crawled through the window. A neighbor had found them this way, bloodied beneath their sheets. The baby, unharmed in her crib, waiting patiently for someone to lift her out ("eerily calm" one report read), was later brought to the social services office where Maggie had begun working the year before.

Some of Maggie's co-workers speculated that the murder had something to do with an unpaid debt back home. "That's how it is over there," said Jerry Lebowitz, who had recently traveled to Beijing for the Olympics. "Unforgiving."

There was some confusion as to the child's citizenship, whether she had been born in the states or in China but eventually it was discovered that the child's name was Su Yin and that she was American, born at the University hospital less than a year before. It took a few weeks to locate the relatives of the couple—Maggie wondered whether the debt had still not been paid and the family was hiding, fearful—but finally an aunt living in Shanghai came forward, offering to take the child.

Maggie worried for the baby, destined to grow up in such a brutal place. And for herself, having to take her there. She had been selected, despite her lack of seniority and experience, to escort the child. Among her co-workers, she was the only one who had no children of her own ("no children yet" her boss added, in case

there had been any offense), the only one whose sudden and prolonged absence wouldn't be a tremendous inconvenience at home. Of course, she had Robert, but he could take care of himself. Still, Maggie wished she didn't have to go. She'd need to get a passport rushed. She didn't speak the language. She'd only ever been out of the country once, and that was just to Nogales, crossing for a few hours with a girlfriend to buy pottery and have lunch.

"And what will you do for dinner?" she asked Robert.

"Just buy some of those frozen pizzas I like before you go," he said.

They had only been married a few years and she didn't like the thought of leaving him alone. But Robert thought that going to China was a good idea. "An excellent opportunity to advance your career," was how he phrased it. But a person didn't advance in social work like they did in pharmaceutical sales, Robert's profession. Already, she could see that her only advancement would likely come in an increased load of casework.

When the day came, Maggie's friend from the office, Linda, drove her to the airport, where she was supposed to meet up with the temporary foster family. Maggie was terrified.

"Don't be," Linda said, handing her a gallon bag filled with lollipops and Benadryl, a travel kit Linda used with her own three children. But Maggie didn't need it. The baby behaved well on the flight, making hardly a peep. She picked at the buttons on Maggie's jumper and smeared the thick plastic windows with her fingers, bobbing her knees slightly as she stood on Maggie's bony thighs. The child's own thighs were enor-



mous, indenting into themselves every few inches. She wore a romper, rainbow striped and tied at her shoulders and when she fell asleep in Maggie's arms, Maggie stared into her face, wondering at the size of her cheeks, surprised and a little frightened, perhaps, by the instinct she had to squeeze the child closer to her as she slept.

The sudden understanding of what it meant to want to eat a baby. It was all an attempt to stop time. She wondered how much a child remembered at this age, whether this trip with Maggie might come back to the girl in her dreams someday. She wondered, too, whether Su Yin's subconscious would conjure the sound of gunshots, the tragedy tucked and dormant in the folds of her brain. Asleep in her arms, she imagined the baby

Across (Photography)
Nina Nardolillo

was dreaming about the last thing she saw in wakefulness: Maggie's face as she rocked her.

It was Linda who'd started Maggie thinking so much about dreams. She'd lent her a book about dream interpretation and told her to keep a journal at the side of her bed for writing down what she remembered when she woke up. This practice, Linda said, along with the book she lent to Maggie, had utterly changed her life.

She had bought two notebooks, one for her and one for Robert, and laid them on their night tables. She liked

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the idea of a dream journal, of thumbing through Robert's innermost thoughts after he'd left for work—thoughts not even fully understood by him, coming to her coded through his dreams. He hadn't scoffed at the idea like she thought he might, but his notebook remained empty. Maggie woke each morning and eagerly scribbled out what she could remember of the previous night but then, even with the book, had trouble knowing what anything meant. After this trip, she had thought she might give the journal to Linda and ask her advice.

On the plane, people complimented her on the baby. The flight attendant said she'd never seen a baby so well behaved on such a long flight and brought cups of warm



Cholla in Rain (Photography)
Kris Swank

water for the baby's bottles, the measuring and mixing of which Maggie perfected over the hours in flight. Su Yin would suck at the bottle vigorously for a few minutes before her eyes began to close, leaving the milk to pool and run from the corners of her mouth. Maggie took the bottle out then and the child would rouse and she'd repeat the process. The woman sitting next to them offered to hold the baby for Maggie if she wanted to rest but Maggie almost greedily kept the baby to herself. She was keenly aware of the woman watching her now. Fondly observing. She understood then, looking down at the child, that this was what it was like to have a baby: a private bond with a public audience.

Robert didn't want children. He'd made her promise before they married that they wouldn't have any of their own. And Maggie, who was in love with him, and who had never been one of those women who fawned over babies anyway, agreed. It wasn't that he didn't like children. (That seemed to her an important distinction.) His two nieces visited for a week one summer and he'd taken them to the club pool and out for ice cream and asked about their boyfriends, which made them blush because they were much too young for boyfriends at the time. Neither girl even wore a bra.

"I know the hell my brothers and I put our own parents through and I'm just not interested in going through that same hell," he'd explained to her. It had seemed perfectly reasonable to Maggie at the time. And as a concession, even though Robert wasn't in the least an animal person, he promised they could get a dog.

As the plane descended, Maggie felt an overwhelming sense of attachment and pride in Su Yin. She relished the parental status she'd been given through no particular effort of her own. She wondered whether Robert might change his mind if he'd accompanied them on the long journey.

Then, because of an electrical problem with the plane in Tokyo, the connecting flight was delayed. The next flight out wouldn't leave until the following day. Maggie was di-

rected by the airline to a nearby hotel and she and the baby were re-booked onto an afternoon flight to Shanghai.

Exhausted from the trip, she debated putting the child into bed with her. But she'd heard too many stories at work of parents crushing their children. Instead, she spread a blanket onto the floor beside the bed and laid the baby down on it. But the girl immediately sat up and then began crawling away so that Maggie had to fetch her and set her back and then she'd crawl away again, and Maggie would fetch her and lay her back down on the blanket. This went on for an hour.

"You could have called down to the front desk for a crib," Linda told her later.

Finally, she lay down on the blanket with the child, resting Su Yin's head in the crook of her arm to feed her a bottle until she got sleepy. She liked watching the baby fall asleep. It was fascinating to witness the exact moment of unconsciousness in another person. Lately, Robert turned his back to her in bed. He said he couldn't sleep unless he was facing outward.

When the baby's breathing slowed, Maggie extracted her arm, bloodless and tingling, and slowly crept up onto the bed. That night she dreamed she was treading through shallow water, expending all her energy and never making it to the shore, despite being so close. When she woke in the morning, for a moment she couldn't remember where she was. What day it was. What year. She lay awake staring at the ceiling, letting the present pour itself back into her: she was in a hotel room. On a bed in Tokyo. With a baby. She bolted upright and looked over the bedside; Su Yin was gone.

She felt a sudden panicked certainty that criminals, the ones who'd killed the child's parents, had broken into the room and shot the baby while she'd slept. Then beneath her own loud breathing, she heard the child's breathing. She peered beneath the bed. Su Yin was sprawled



Why did the (Black Angus) cattle cross the road (Photography)
Michele Rorabaugh

there, having rolled in her sleep. Carefully, Maggie pulled her out, trying not to wake her but she opened her eyes and tried to sit up, hit her head on the bed frame, and began to cry. Maggie looked over at the clock. It was past eight in the morning. She was desperate for a shower. She hadn't had the energy for it the night before, after the long trip, and now she was reluctant to leave the baby alone for any amount of time. Instead, she bathed and dressed Su Yin. The diapers supplied by her office were nearly gone. She'd have to buy more before they boarded the plane in a few hours.

She carried the baby downstairs to ask the front desk where she could find some and wished she had a stroller as she carried Su Yin, who was quite heavy, plus her purse down the street to the store. The Japanese diapers were strange—like hundreds of papery hospital gowns pressed together. She wondered how absorbent they would be.

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“Think of it! Me, worrying about diaper absorbency!” she imagined saying to Robert. He hadn’t answered the night before when she called him from the hotel phone. She’d left her cell at home, worried about international charges. But she’d managed to leave a message at her office to tell them to let the baby’s aunt know they’d be a day late. She’d thought to email Robert this morning from the computer in the business center but now there wasn’t time. She’d have to wait until they reached China.

Su Yin was wild on the flight to Shanghai and wouldn’t take a bottle. The flight attendant asked about the last time the baby had pooped and recommended a glycerin stick. Or more vegetables in the child’s diet. Maggie resented the advice. By the time they landed she

was tired and frazzled and had expected to be taken to the aunt’s home for some tea (“They’re wild about tea over there,” Jerry Lebowitz had told her) so they could go over the papers Maggie had brought: the child’s birth certificate and passport, a newspaper article she had clipped about the shooting. She thought the aunt might be interested in the details of their long journey. But the aunt spoke no English. She made no gesture of invitation. Weeping in the baggage claim of the airport, she took Su Yin (also weeping—exhaustion, another of the flight attendants had suggested) into her arms and Maggie almost had to force her to take the child’s bag and the folder of important documents.



Macro of Drops on a Feather (Photography/macro)
Matthew Medeiros

Her flights had all been changed because of the delay in Tokyo, and then that night she became violently ill. The fish she’d eaten at the hotel, she thought. She had planned on walking around Shanghai and getting a short, English-guided tour before flying back home, but instead spent the day vomiting in her room. She couldn’t muster enough energy even to take the elevator down to the lobby to use the computer to email Robert, who must have thought she was dead, though it gave her some satisfaction to think of him worrying about her.

But as the night went on, she worried that she wouldn’t be able to crawl out of her room to make the flight the next morning. That she might not make it through the night alive. Her one comfort (an absurd one, she realized even then) was thinking how much Robert would miss her. How she’d calcify in his mind as an idealized version of herself until no living woman would be able to touch her memory.

But Maggie lived.

A doctor at the airport gave her a shot in the buttocks and she slept all the way to L.A. Robert *had* been worried and the dog—a miniature schnauzer named Benny—greeted her, spinning in frenzied circles at her feet until Robert held him away with his foot so she could walk through the door. She had spent the last leg of her flight, from L.A. to Tucson, trying to imagine Su Yin in her new life. Was her aunt warming the bottle enough? Were the Chinese diapers much different from the ones she bought in Tokyo? The garage door opened onto the kitchen and she could smell the odor of condiments solidified on dishes piled in the sink. It was normally something that would have annoyed her, but she was too tired—too hopeful—to care. She set her bag down and turned to Robert.

“There’s something I want to ask you,” she said.

* * *

Several years after her trip to China, when they moved to a house on the east side of town to be nearer to Robert’s ailing father, Maggie found her dream journal in a box on the closet shelf. She had put it aside after her trip, never consulting Linda on its meaning after all. The last entry was from the night following the food poisoning episode in Shanghai, something she didn’t remember having written:

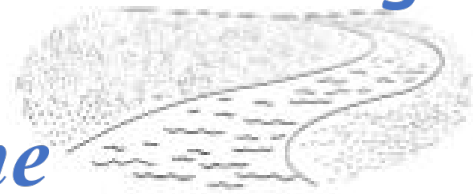
The baby came to me. She poked me in my nose. Kept poking me until I bled from both nostrils. And then I saw her parents in their beds. With blankets pulled up to their necks to hide their blood from her. But the blood was mine. From my nose. The baby asked me where the milk was. I looked everywhere and I found it under her parents’ bed in that awful cinder block house in Tucson. Her diaper was soaked through into the mattress and then I left the baby in the room and went out to tour the city and saw only empty streets and then remembered about her and panicked and woke up just as I was opening the door to check on her.

Maggie read this passage, remembering Su Yin. In the years that followed, when she’d see Asian women on buses or in restaurants, she’d wonder if it was her—the baby grown up, returned. Wondered if there was a chance—however small—that she might recognize her. And yet even on that last night, violently retching over the side of her bed into the hotel laundry bag, Maggie understood that she would never know what would become of the girl she carried to China.

She threw the journal into the trash bin and continued packing. What was the use anyway of writing down—of remembering—things that hadn’t actually happened?

Montana Morning

Routine



Rise with the sun

Brush my teeth

Throw on my clothes

Pull on my boots

Head to the barn

Horses are waiting

I say "Get in your stall"

They do

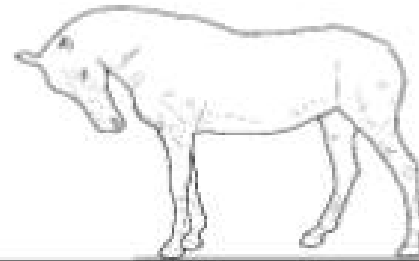
Pour sweet feed in their buckets

Toss them some

hay Muck out the manure

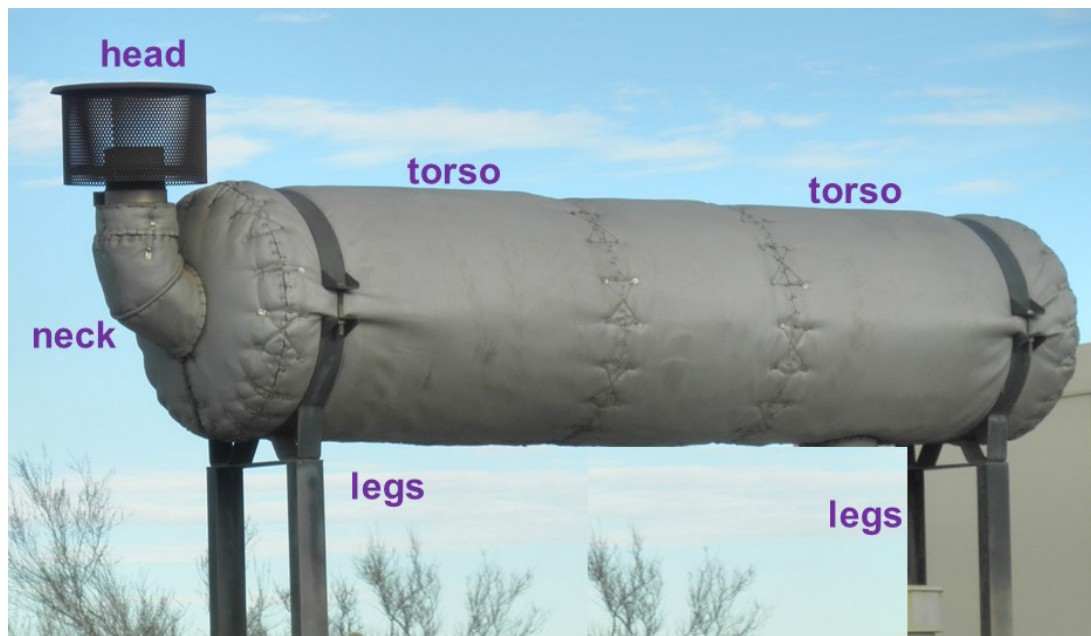
All set till dinner time

*Head back to
the house*



Layout design
by Ethan Varner,
nephew of the
author.

By Michele Rorabaugh



Urban Animal Sculpture
(Photography)
Keith Bletzer



Honor al Vaquero (Drawing with pastels)
Fabiola Munoz

Artists' Bios

Alexis Kopkowski is an educational support faculty librarian for the east campus. She is also a PhD Candidate studying American Indian studies/Public Health at the University of Arizona.

Amanda McPherson is an Early Childhood Education adjunct faculty instructor for West and Northwest Campus. She also works part-time for The STEMAZING project with the Pima County Superintendent's Office, facilitating STEM workshops for teachers. She enjoys hiking, kayaking, photography, and traveling.

Angela Garcia is a licensed massage therapist and PCC Therapeutic Massage Program adjunct faculty member at NW campus. Angela enjoys many creative outlets including painting, mosaics, theatre, and writing.

Anthony Mark Dalessandro is a former magazine editor and nonprofit communications director. He has been an adjunct member of the communication faculty at PCC for 10 years.

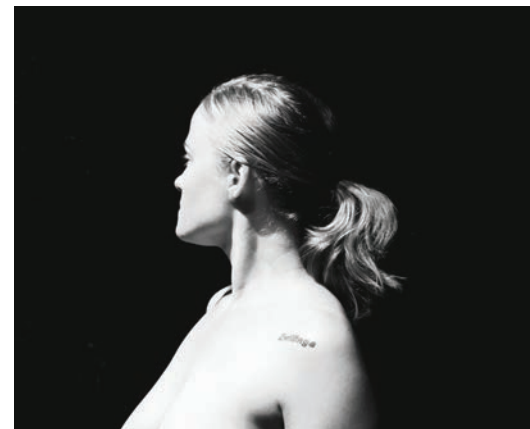
A.Z. Martinez is a writer from Tucson A.Z. He is working for Pima Community College as a Writing Tutor at the Downtown Campus. Traditionally a long-form fiction writer, Martinez is currently working with Prose Poem Essay Writing and Poetry.

Carolyn McKee is the Writing Specialist at Desert Vista's Learning Center, as well as a multimedia artist. One of her favorite mediums is pastels, honestly because she loves bold colors and getting her hands dirty. She also sculpts, makes films, and is teaching herself animation.

Cathy Thwing is one of PCC's first online educators. She has been teaching online with Pima Community College since 1997. She earned a Master's of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Eastern Washington University, where she studied with Ursula Hegi, Janet Campbell Hale, and John Keeble.

Danny Lawlor works at the West campus as an ESL tutor. He enjoys painting, drawing, and printmaking. His work has been shown at the Untitled Gallery, Raices Taller Gallery, Contreras Gallery, and the Louis Carlos Bernal Gallery. Recent paintings have focused on themes of isolation and vanity in the digital world. His work can be seen at his website www.dannylawlorart.com.

Des Ehrhart works as a figure model for the art department at PCC. They spend much of their free time out in nature, gardening and working with plants. A dedicated crafter, they explore many mediums, primarily working with pen and ink and oil pastel, Desert's artwork is heavily influenced by wildlife and their practice with herbal medicine. They are currently inspired and



challenged by a couple of children's books they are illustrating.

Emily Jacobson graduated from Utah State University with a bachelor's degree in Fine Art, with an emphasis in drawing. She later received her Master of Arts in Library Science and currently works at Pima Community College East Campus Library as a Library Services Specialist. While studying art in school she came to love the process involved in printmaking, particularly woodcuts and in photography. She enjoys drawing, printmaking, and photography, but has recently gravitated towards watercolors and acrylics as well. She particularly loves painting cacti and flowers. However, Photography is where she truly finds her solace. She personally perceives photography as a way to memorialize the beauty of everyday objects and nature. She loves portrait photography as well, and particularly loves the quiet and still within nature when taking photos. She enjoys finding something ordinary in nature and making it look extraordinary to those who behold it. Art is a way she can express how she feels and how she sees the world. Follow her on Instagram: [@fineartforays](https://www.instagram.com/fineartforays).

Eric Aldrich teaches literature, writing, and humanities at PCC. He splits his time between Downtown Campus and Pima Online. Eric's recent work has appeared in Weber: The Contemporary West, Hobart, and Terrain.org. His novella, "Please Listen Carefully as Our Options Have Changed", is featured in *Running Wild Novella Anthology Vol. IV*. You can find more about Eric at ericaldrich.net.

Ernesto Trujillo is a graduate of the University of Arizona CFA. Currently, Ernesto works as

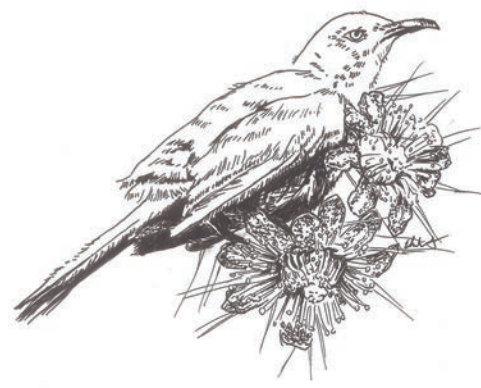
a Special Projects Professional for Desert Vista Campus and Business Adjunct Instructor. Ernesto has exhibited his artwork all over the United States and abroad. His constant focus has been the honest exploration and expression of human nature.

Frankie Rollins published a flash fiction novella, "The Grief Manuscript" (*Finishing Line Press*, 2020). The novella, "Doctor Porchiat's Dream", was published in *Running Wild Press Anthology 3* (2019). Rollins previously published a collection of short fiction, "The Sin Eater & Other Stories" (*Queen's Ferry Press*, 2013). She serves as English faculty, teaching Honors and Creative Writing courses for Pima Community College.

Fred Duren Student Service Specialist—Pima College Registrar's Office. He started writing Poetry during the pandemic. My spouse is a health care worker who was covid + for a time (she's recovered now) and I had increased contemplative time on my hands during this period. My other passion is playing tournament chess.

Jennifer Wiley is instructional faculty in Writing at West campus and also serves as the Humanities department head. She enjoys hiking, gardening, listening to music, and spending time with her family and pets.

Keith Bletzer uses photography to provide images for D2L courses. All images are photographs taken near the campus where he teaches, which has varied by term. To avoid permission issues, people are photographically absent.





Kris Swank is the Library Department Head at NW Campus.

Lacy Arnett Mayberry is an adjunct writing instructor at the Nogales campus. Her work was selected by Justin Torres as a finalist in the Crazyhorse Fiction Prize and she won an AWP Writing Conferences & Centers Scholarship for fiction. She has an MFA from Lesley University.

Laura Milkins is an interdisciplinary artist living in Tucson, AZ. Her work explores vulnerability, intimacy, and cultural norms, using a variety of media: online-interactive performance, video, drawing, painting, and live radio/podcasting. Through storytelling, her work examines the connection between technology, community, and notions of identity.

Her current project, *In Search of the Great America* (2020), is a mobile radio lab “traveling” virtually to the biggest city and a small town in each state, asking people to define their great America: past, present, and future.

Recent solo works include *Of Birds and Men* (2018-19), a series of 26 portraits of men in power who have been accused of sexual misconduct, accompanied by an exquisitely-drawn bird starting with the same letter as his name; *For the Birds* (2019), works on paper, *Zero Packaging Project* (2018-19), a year-long performance; *The Depression Session* (2015-18), a performance radio show devoted to de-stigmatizing depression; *Vertigo Performance Art Series: Wonder Women* (2012), a solo performance titled *Death and Paperwork*, and *Walking Home: stories from the desert to the Great Lakes* (2011), a five-month performance in which Milkins walked 2,007 miles from Arizona to Michigan wearing a live webcam.



Additionally, her work has been included in institutional group exhibitions in the 2012 Desert Initiative (Tucson), 2009 Prisma Forum (Oaxaca, Mexico), 2009 Venus Cabaret performance at Casa del Lago (Mexico City), and 2007 La Pocha Nostra performance at MOCA (Tucson).

She is the recipient of awards, including the 2019 Tanne Foundation Award, 2011 ArtPrize Sustainability Award, 2008 Fulbright Award (Mexico), and a 2008 Puffin Grant as an organizer for Her Shorts International Video Festival (Tucson).

Linda Zello is an adjunct writing teacher at Northwest Pima Community College. She is married and has two adult married children and two grandchildren. She enjoys reading, writing, and walking with her German shepherd on dirt roads in the desert. She loves nature. Currently, she is working on a historical fiction account of her genealogy for her grandchildren.

Mana Kariman is the PimaOnline Computer Technology Department Head, Faculty, and Associate Instructional Designer East Campus and Northwest Campus.

Mana has been a faculty for over a decade and joined PimaOnline six years ago as a PimaOnline Department Head in Computer Information Technology (IT) and now has an additional new role as Associate Instructional Designer. She has a Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership (EDD) with a Master’s of Science degree in Computer Science. She also enjoys playing the piano, drawing, painting, and sketching.



Mano Sotelo, Visual Arts Faculty, West Campus BFA Otis Art Institute Parsons School of Design, MFA in Painting from Academy of Art University. His work has been exhibited at the Coutts Museum of Art, Alexandria Museum of Art, Tampa Museum of Art, Coos Art Museum, Tucson Museum of Art, University of Arizona Museum of Art, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson Desert Art Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, local and national juried and invitational shows, and a variety of Tucson galleries. Mano’s work has also been highlighted in competitions hosted by *The Artist’s Magazine* and *International Artist Magazine*. His work can be seen at www.sotelostudio.com or Instagram: @manosoteloartist

Matthew Medeiros I’ve been a biology and chemistry adjunct instructor with Pima college since 2013. I earned my doctorate in pharmacology at the University of Arizona. I do photography as a hobby, but enjoy reading, weightlifting, and running when time permits.

Maureen Burns grew up in Kentucky and has lived and worked in several states throughout the United States. She also attended schools in Germany and Switzerland and later moved to Colorado, where she completed a bachelor’s and a master’s degree at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Since graduating, she has taught English Composition and Humanities courses for Colorado Community Colleges and at Pima Community College. She has also facilitated creating writing and poetry workshops for adults.

Since moving to Arizona, Maureen enjoys hiking in Sonora National Park and studying the diversity of the desert plants, animals, and birds. Her love of nature and appreciation for the resilience

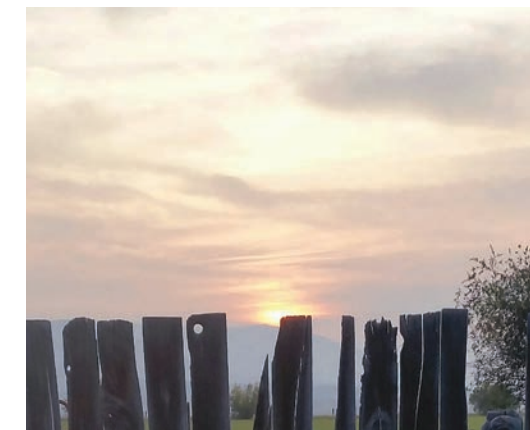
of desert life inspires her poetry and her hopes for the future of mankind. Maureen writes that “Writing, like my life, has been a journey of self-discovery, leading to a better understanding of the world I live in and the human perspectives and ideals that drive it. Also, as Linda Hogan beautifully states in her essay titled, “Hearing Voices,” published in *The Writer on Her Work, Vol II, New Essays in New Territory*, “Writing begins for me with survival, with life and with freeing life, saving life, speaking life. It is work that speaks what can’t be easily said.”

Melissa Bouey is an Instructional Faculty Member in Mathematics at the West Campus. She is an amateur photographer who enjoys capturing the beauty found in nature. The angle of a plant, the color of a flower, the sunlight as it streams through clouds are all sources of inspiration. She is happy to be able to share her images with all of you.

Michele Rorabaugh loves to get nature and outdoor shots. Her favorite pictures come from their farm in Red Lodge, MT. From time to time she manages to get a great picture of her beloved horses, the surrounding countryside, sunrises, and sunsets, or something humorous (“Why did the cattle cross the road?”)

Mickey Haist Jr. is an adjunct philosophy professor, who has taught at both the West and Downtown Campuses. He is married and has three cats.

Mike Rom (Instructional Media Services, Downtown Campus) has a BS in Film and Television production (not that kind of BS). He worked in



the movie industry in Tucson for over 8 years and did everything from art department to office PA to special effects explosives assistant. When he started working at Pima College in the AV Department, he expanded their offerings to video and computer graphics. He was also able to indulge his creative side through their Digital Art classes. He took sculpture and drawing classes and learned how to paint with acrylics.

Mike started photographing flowers for his wife's paintings—she works in oils—and eventually framed his own work and put them into art shows at the Blue Raven Gallery and Gifts. He sold his first piece in his first show and has done pretty well since. He shares a website with his wife at RomByDesign.com, to exhibit his art

Missy Blair is an advanced program manager at Pima Community College's Center for Transportation Training. When she isn't working or serving the community as a court-appointed special advocate for kids in foster care, she is outside with her family and rarely without her camera. She strives to take photos and keep them "as is"—with minimal editing—as a challenge.

Monique Rodriguez is an Educational Support Faculty Librarian at the Northwest Campus. She holds an MLIS and an MS in Educational Technology. In her spare time, she likes to capture images of Arizona's natural beauty.

Nina Nardolillo is originally from Russia and moved to the US eight years ago. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Cartographic Sciences from Moscow University of Geodesy & Cartography. Nina previously worked as an instructional

faculty at four universities in Colombia (South America). In spring 2019, she graduated from PCC in AAS in Digital Arts/Graphic Design. Currently, she is a Program Assistant for PimaOnline Student Success Department, Northwest campus. She speaks fluently English, Spanish and Russian languages. Nina has been passionate about photography for many years, and she took additional classes in photography at PCC. Her photographs were published in *SandScript* 2018 and 2019. Three of her photographs and her poem recently were published in *Cababi* 2019/2020. Two of her photographs were displayed in three local photography exhibits in 2019-2020.

Robert Matte Jr. taught writing and literature for thirty years at Pima Community College and the University of Arizona. For the past several years he has been a writing tutor for East Campus. He is also a retired army officer and a practicing ventriloquist. Mr. Matte is the author of several chapbooks and full-length collections of poetry including *Star Kissing*, *Eating the English Army*, *Asylum Picnic*, *Fort Apache*, *Digging for Bones*, and a new collection, *Coyote Moon Trailer Haven*. Mr. Matte and his wife live next to a critter-filled arroyo in Tucson, Arizona, and are constantly filled with awe and wonder.

Sandra Shattuck is the writing faculty and literature discipline coordinator. My home campus is Desert Vista. Although I consider myself a prose writer, sometimes I just can't help myself, and I have to write poetry. Thanks to the Fabulous 3Ms (Molly McCloy, Mike Rom, and Mariah Young) for the collaborative writing that helped this poem emerge.



Sarah Ruth Jansen teaches philosophy at PCC West Campus. A Tucson native, Sarah took her first philosophy course at Pima before becoming a philosopher herself. Sarah's other passions include coaching cycling and writing fiction.

Sherrie Lynn Stewart is originally from the piney woods of East Texas, Sherrie Stewart has lived in shiny Las Vegas, Nevada, farmed for a decade in snowy northern Michigan, and floated around on a sailboat for about a year in the aqua waters of the Florida Keys. After surviving ten years of the break-neck pace in Los Angeles, California, her family moved to Tucson in 1991. She and her husband started their own business here. In 1998, they adopted three grandchildren. That same year, she lost a large portion of her eyesight. In 2001, she began taking classes at Pima Community College to learn how to run an internet business. That began her academic journey. Two decades later, three more children have come into their home, and she holds two Masters and a doctoral degree. But she jokes that she still has no clue how to get that Internet business off the ground.

Sherrie put her degrees to use by teaching at the University of Arizona and at Pima Community College. Her articles and reviews have been published, but her passion continues to be writing stories.

Susan Kay Johnson since I was a child I have been fascinated with the human figure as forms of expression. I first started working from photographs and then to direct observation. I did my BFA and Masters Degrees at School of The Chicago Art Institute. I also went to Italy, Spain, Holland, England and France to study and research

the work of the great European masters.

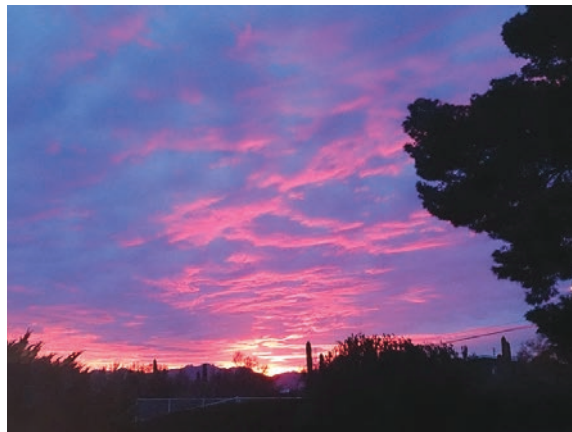
I have created a series of life size figures in clay, working back and forth from drawing to painting and sculpture. I am interested in the amazing beauty of the human figure and how it articulates in movement and form. I make molds of the clay work and cast in resin, in hydrostone and bronze. Each piece takes about 2 years for me to complete.

I have created a series of extreme yoga poses. Dealing with the negative space in between around the body and how it works to create these amazing poses. Each process is an amazing art form, from drawing, to painting, to modeling in clay and wax, mold making, wax work, venting and gating, pouring of the metal, cutting off the spurs and welding and refinishing the metal and then the patina's.

Teresa Dodge is a Library Services Specialist at Downtown Campus Library. She is a hobby photographer and her favorite subjects are always found while roaming around the desert areas of Tucson.

Veronica Willis Tucsonan born and raised. I have been working for Pima College for 13 years.

William Everist has a PhD in Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology and has been an adjunct instructor of psychology at Pima Community College for over 20 years. Over the years he has instructed at all campuses except the Northwest facility. Having recently discovered the art of fiction writing, he decided to submit a character piece from an Introductory Fiction Writing class assignment at Pima.



*CABABI IS A TOHONO O'ODHAM TERM
THAT MEANS "HIDDEN SPRINGS."*



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