



North Shore Community College

1 Ferncroft Road
Danvers, MA 01923-0840

Danvers Campus
978-762-4000

Lynn Campus
781-593-6722

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978-236-1200

www.northshore.edu

SPARK

A REVIEW OF NSCC STUDENT LITERARY & ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

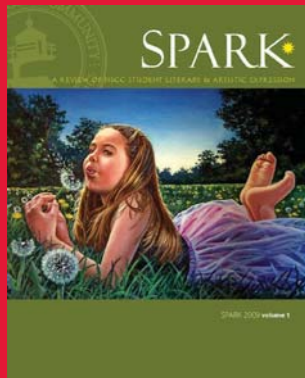
sparked by inspiration

Through poetry and stories, photographs and drawings, Spark showcases the talent and spirit of students at North Shore Community College. This third issue of Spark is dedicated to the persistence of vision, forward movement, and the knowledge that creativity is its own reward. **Enjoy.**



SPARK 2011 **volume 3**

spark 2009



spark 2010

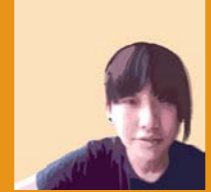
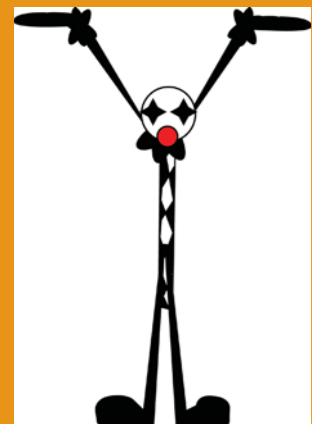


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www.northshore.edu/spark

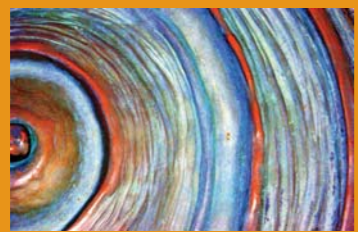


▲ "My favorite piece was 'Lula Mae'. I loved the way this artist used the bright colors against the darkness of the woman. It made the picture pop and caught my eye. It was a very creative and **talented** piece."

Angela Panevino,
Nurse Education, 2013



▲ "I especially liked the piece called 'Beachgirl'. I loved how this artist painted the picture and the **colors** they used. I grew up on the beach since I'm from Gloucester and could relate to this picture. I feel like I've been this girl and seen this girl!"
Meg Asaro, Radiology, 2012



◀ "I fell in love with the picture 'Illuminated Night' because of the colors and location of the picture. This submission was very **creative** and an interesting photograph for someone to take with such **great quality**."
Amanda Frost, Liberal Arts, 2011



SPARK

what our judges are saying...

"Seeing the **versatility** of ALL of the work submitted by our students **energizes** me."
Sandy Fuhs, Graphic Design Program Coordinator, NSCC's Business Sciences Division

"Our students certainly show in this publication that they can compete with some of the **best and the brightest**."
Lloyd Holmes, Ph.D., NSCC's Dean of Students

"It was **exciting** to be able to take part in choosing what went into the magazine..."
Jessica Souris, Liberal Arts, Women in Transition Program

"I thought the photographic submittals ... were quite **varied in theme and technical approach**, and had a strong balance of **naturalistic** settings in color, and black and white, to pictures that were more **experimental** in approach."
James Chisholm, Professor, NSCC Cultural Arts Department

"In my second year of judging Spark I have seen so many **outstanding** art and literary pieces."
Sophie Plamowski, Liberal Arts, 2012

"The range of work (from **somber** to **uplifting**) reflects on the fact that the students at North Shore Community College all come from very different walks of life."
Lee Cusolito, Liberal Arts, 2012

"It was great to see such an interesting and **eclectic** set of student submissions."
Lisa Altomari, Professor, NSCC English Department

"It was **impressive** to see how **creative, dedicated** and **talented** our students are."
Christopher Dufort, Web and Portal Administrator

"I found this experience to be both open and very **fulfilling**. This coincides with my favorite literary pieces, which is a tie between 'Shine' and 'My Sweet Baby Brother.'"
Nick Stilianos, Liberal Arts, 2012

faculty, staff, student volunteers and student contributors

LISA ALTOMARI
Professor, NSCC English Department
Spark Literary Committee & Judge

MEG ASARO
Presidential Scholar student, Spark Art & Literary Judge and volunteer

JAMES CHISHOLM
Professor, NSCC Cultural Arts Department
Spark Art Committee & Judge

LEE CUSOLITO
Student, Spark Literary Judge and volunteer

CHRISTOPHER DUFORT
Web and Portal Administrator, NSCC Information Systems Department
Spark Art Committee & Judge

CALA ELDER
Presidential Scholar student, Spark Literary Judge and volunteer

ERIN FORD
Graphic Designer, NSCC Marketing Department
Spark Art Judge, Spark layout & design

AMANDA FROST
Presidential Scholar student, Spark Art Judge and volunteer

SANDRA FUHS
Program Coordinator, NSCC Digital Graphic Design Program
Spark Art Committee & Judge

LLOYD HOLMES
Dean of Students, NSCC Enrollment & Student Services Department
Student Life Spark Art Committee & Judge

ANGELA PANEVINO
Presidential Scholar student, Spark Art & Literary Judge and volunteer

VICTORIA PASCIUTO-DOGRAMACIAN
Assistant Director, NSCC Student Life Services
Spark coordinator

SOPHIE PLAMOWSKI
Presidential Scholar student, Spark Art & Literary Judge and volunteer

JESSICA SOURIS
Student, Spark Literary Committee & Judge

NICHOLAS STILIANOS
Student, Spark Literary Committee & Judge

spark on the inside

2. My Art | *Christina Siebertz*
2. Kirsten | *Sabrina Markham*
2. Pen and Ink | *Yulin Wu*
3. Shine | *Jessica Toomey*
3. Leave-Taking | *Wendy Walker-Casal*
4. Zoo | *Scott Schiavo*
4. Boothbay Harbor Sunset | *Joanne Graham-Troy*
4. Several Winter Trees | *Karen Spear*
5. Eye Sea Depths | *Scott Schiavo*
5. Bird | *Yvonne Ellis*
6. Lesson | *Andrew D. Woods*
7. Ice on Branch | *Janice DiMare*
8. Siren's Call | *Adam Arsenault*
9. Grandstand | *Cala Elder*
9. The Time 18:00 | *David Dougwillo*
10. Prehyscopic | *Stephanie Buonaugurio*
10. You Stay With Me | *Christina Siebertz*
11. Outside Looking In | *Tanya Green*
11. Matchmaker | *Yvonne Ellis*
12. Panorama Beach | *David Dougwillo*
12. My Sweet Baby Brother | *Krystina Tejada*
14. Sunflower Sky | *E. Nicole Ferro*
16. Color Rings | *E. Nicole Ferro*
18. Infinite Sidewalk | *Debbie Scarfo*
18. Illuminated Night | *E. Nicole Ferro*
19. Creative Endeavors | *Stephanie Buonaugurio*
19. Fading At Dawn | *Tanya Green*
20. Beachgirl | *Joanne Graham-Troy*
20. Water View | *Karen Spear*
21. Lula Mae | *Cala Elder*
21. Tree Sunset Water | *David Dougwillo*
22. A Night's Soliloquy | *Audrey Rose Sullivan*
23. Seascape | *Joanne Graham-Troy*
24. Lies | *Sabrina Markham*
24. Slime | *Stephanie Buonaugurio*
25. Mi | *Yulin Wu*
26. 20 Cigarettes | *Caroline Usovicz*
26. Phony | *Cala Elder*
28. Wedding Day | *Shannon Horgan*
30. Kelsey | *Joanne Graham-Troy*
30. Addiction | *Sabrina Markham*
31. Cranium Game Brochure | *Yvonne Ellis*
31. My Logo | *Yulin Wu*
32. Nautical Knot | *E. Nicole Ferro*
32. The Intake | *Wendy Walker-Casal*

on the cover:

Personal Maze | *Jake Bartolomeo*

My Art

by **Christina Siebertz**

Once with me in human form,
You are now the stroke
Of my brush,
The colors offsetting the words
Streaming down a page,
The mold with a shadow
Next to the window,
My collage with random
Shapes and photos,
My story;
An intricate beginning, middle,
and end,
My rising action,
My dance in the moonlight
Where no one watches;
Passionate twists and turns.
My film;
With laughter and mystery,
Grabbing audience attention,
My musical masterpiece;
Touching every soul in the room,
My minor and major;
My minor detail on the earth,
My major piece of my heart.
My song.
My creation!
The beginning of color.
You are art!
My art.

Nothing more as of late. ■

Kirsten

by **Sabrina Markham**

Her eyes
Blue, electrified
Leave me paralyzed

Her lips
Pressed against mine
Stop time

Her face
Like an angel
When gone leaves me in hell

Her beauty
Surrounds her
Captures my attention

Her love
Soft and pure
Beautiful, like her ■

Pen and Ink
Yulin Wu



Shine

by Jessica Toomey

I have this feeling that when the sun shines on me, that it's someone's way of telling me to be happy. I feel like I need to shine like the sun. To share my shine and make other people happy as well as myself. I have felt dark and cold lately, but something has changed. I feel bright and strong on the inside as well as the outside. Like not even a cloud could stop me from shining. I feel like I have a little more bounce in my walk, a little more shine in my smile and a little more chuckle in my laugh. I have realized that no matter what happens in my life or who leaves it, I know that I will always have me. That I can always make it through the harshest storm, or the coldest day at the top of a mountain. That if I fall I can always get back up. And if I close my eyes they will always reopen. That life never stops, people do. That I will never stop, and neither will my life. ■



Leave-taking

by Wendy Walker-Casal

Uninvited tears before the plane leaves.
The window is a misted crack,
a rabbit hole, a mirror. I hold my entrails.
I miss holding your leash, your hair.
Waves – unsalted bile and saline tears
tear at my hair. Knotted like anacondas,
my hair invites a steward's pity,
my unleashed chignon. Red or white wine?
No. I miss the oldest plane tree,
caged next the Thames by iron and assaulted
by whining tourist children,
their cotton candy cries unleashing bile.
Iron on the tarmac turns to sulphur.
The engines whine. Stewards hop like rabbits
holding trails of seat belts,
uninvited cages. Holding my eyes in my hands,
I cry. My hands feel tomorrow,
the day I shall miss the mirror
of your white canvas. Friday I
shall swallow a black anaconda
and grasp the stew of intravenous lines.
Swallows fly through mist along the runway.
Rabbits scurry down red trails to galleys.
I crack, and hold the candy of your skin,
Warm like a '57 Chevy engine.
Here, wound in my innermost trails,
The oldest of serrated plane leaves. ■



d
s
Zoo



clockwise

Zoo | Scott Schiavo

Eyes Sea Depth | Scott Schiavo

Bird Photograph | Yvonne Ellis

Several Winter Trees | Karen Spear

Boothbay Harbor Sunset | Joanne Graham-Troy

Lesson

by Andrew D. Woods

I was following wildlife tracks in a State Forest during stormy weather. The snow of the night before and that morning had become freezing rain, and clumps of snow falling from the trees and icy sleet splattering down probably masked the sounds I made crunching up the hill. The fresh tracks in front of me were somehow unusual and, as I was concentrating on them rather than looking ahead, it was a surprise when I saw the deer in front of me. It was crouched under some brush, leaning forward and preparing to bolt. My first thought was that it was as surprised as I was. I didn't want to scare it off so my instinctive reaction was to drop to the ground and avoid eye contact. Lying with my back to the deer, I didn't hear the expected sound of its flight. After a few minutes I slowly turned my head towards it.

There was obviously something wrong with the animal. Her not running off when I'd shown up was a bad sign. I looked her over from three feet away. She had curled up with her eyes closed. Her coat was matted with rain and she was expelling mucus and liquid from her muzzle. Her breathing was harsh, labored and uneven. Whenever she opened her

eyes they appeared cloudy and glazed. I lay there watching for a while, trying not to disturb her any further.

I knew I there wasn't much I could do for this deer. Slowly, I offered her some water cupped in my hand, which she rejected. She did take a small piece from a Clif bar, but that was all. I expected that she just wanted to be left alone. I thought about the dogs and coyote whose tracks I'd followed that morning, and about the fisher sign I'd seen nearby.

This deer was ailing, probably dying, and about to become something else's meal. What bothered me, though, was that she was suffering. From her struggle to breathe to how her ears constantly twitched as the rain ran into them, she just radiated pain. I wanted to do something but I didn't know what—or whether doing nothing was what the situation required. It occurred to me that I might end her suffering.

I consider myself a caretaker of the land, but this was beyond trail maintenance and picking up trash. I had a responsibility to the doe, but I wasn't sure what it was. My role wasn't clear to me and I didn't have much on which to base a decision. My ideals include respecting living things and not interfering with them. I'd watched animals eating and being eaten and I'd followed

“I doubted my ability to kill her cleanly and quickly.”

tracks to and from kill sites and feeding sites, where I'd been fascinated by trying to decipher the marks telling what had happened. But something was different that afternoon. I wasn't a dispassionate observer. The deer and I lay in the slush. It was getting dark and there weren't many options. Get up and walk away from her, kill her and walk away, or carry her out on my back and find an animal hospital. Picking her up and carrying her four miles to my truck seemed ridiculous and would only disturb her more. I doubted my ability to kill her cleanly and quickly. I had a sharp knife and a big, cop-style flashlight in my pack, but I didn't know where or how to cut her throat, and I imagined bludgeoning her to death would be neither quick nor clean. Leaving her to the dogs was unacceptable. I didn't know what to do.

My primary rule when observing nature is to not

interfere. Modern man is at best an interloper, and influencing the flow of life in the woods more than we already do is simply wrong. The balance of nature has its own morality, and it is folly to try and impose our values and desires on something we barely understand. The constant, essential drives to stay fed, defend territory and to reproduce determine most of what happens between creatures in the wild; the appropriate role for man is to stay out of the way and try to repair the damage we've already done. The dogs and coyote play more important roles. They maintain the health of the herd by eliminating the sick and weak—only man takes the trophies. Without predators, the herd grows beyond what its range can support, becomes

sickly, and eventually starves. The predators are vital to a healthy ecosystem, no less important than their prey. I knew all this. I'd learned it from books and other trackers, and I'd been fortunate enough to see some of it for myself. I was able to reflect on what I'd seen and learned over the years, all that crawling in the mud or sitting against trees late at night, hoping I was in the right place to witness something amazing. Often I had been; I'd seen wonderful things and been taught some valuable lessons. When I saw the resolution of my dilemma it was more of an affirmation than a revelation. Sitting there in the rain, watching the deer die, the knowledge passed with finality from the academic to experience.

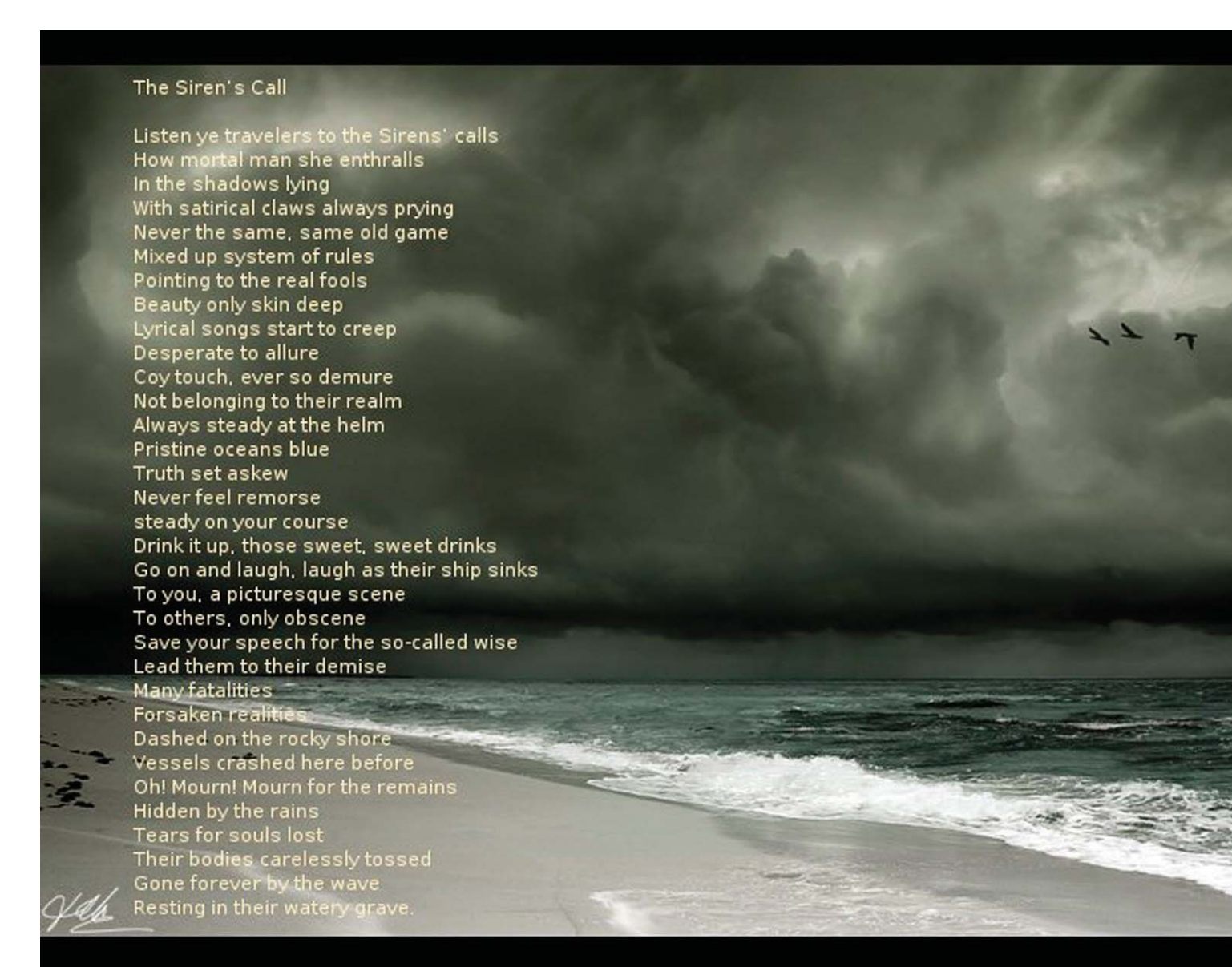
I remembered my role. I crouched over my sketchbook to make a quick drawing of her, and then I got up and walked away.

Since that day I've talked and emailed about this with other naturalists, especially some instructors I'd met at a tracking school. All of them told me that I'd done the right thing, and for the right reasons. Some even considered me fortunate to have had the encounter. Killing the deer would have been a gross intrusion in her final moments, and just offering her a little comfort was the best thing to do. John Muir once said, "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." I often recall his words, and what I received from that deer. ■

Ice on Branch
Janice DiMare



The Siren's Call



Listen ye travelers to the Sirens' calls
How mortal man she enthralls
In the shadows lying
With satirical claws always prying
Never the same, same old game
Mixed up system of rules
Pointing to the real fools
Beauty only skin deep
Lyrical songs start to creep
Desperate to allure
Coy touch, ever so demure
Not belonging to their realm
Always steady at the helm
Pristine oceans blue
Truth set askew
Never feel remorse
steady on your course
Drink it up, those sweet, sweet drinks
Go on and laugh, laugh as their ship sinks
To you, a picturesque scene
To others, only obscene
Save your speech for the so-called wise
Lead them to their demise
Many fatalities
Forsaken realities
Dashed on the rocky shore
Vessels crashed here before
Oh! Mourn! Mourn for the remains
Hidden by the rains
Tears for souls lost
Their bodies carelessly tossed
Gone forever by the wave
Resting in their watery grave.

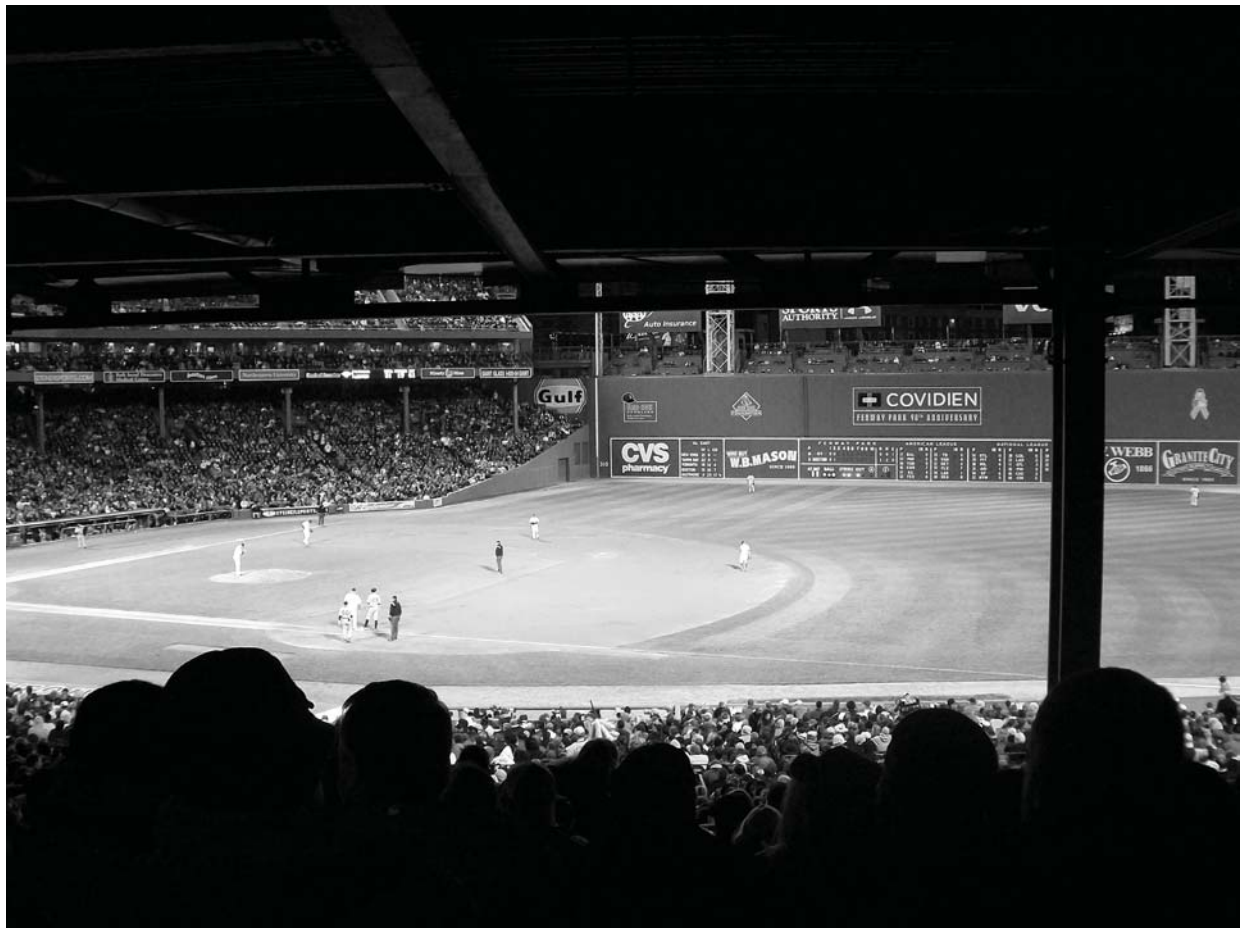
Yeh

clockwise

Siren's Call | *Adam Arsenault*

Grandstand | *Cala Elder*

The Time 18:00 | *David Dougwillo*



Prehyscopic

by **Stephanie Buonaugurio**

I'm your little...

prehyscopic/ leave / myopic

Dinotopic

Lice and relay

Instant decay

I'm scared of the think

I'm scared of the think

Drown your sorrow -

In tomorrow, and leave your visions

astray, Decombing stack

I'm getting back

At all that backwards passion play

I'm triple stack, I'm out of whack, and

Here's the game that we delayed

I'm turning back

You're earning sap

As the clouds just

Blow away... ■

You Stay With Me

by **Christina Siebertz**

You are far away

In that land,

Vastly different from my own,

Where natural parts of life flourish

And progress out of reach.

Yet progress toward me, I say...

Since you are already with me

All the time.

I mimic how you react

To things.

I think of words

And the way you might say them.

I love how we amble together

On a clear day;

All things possible.

Your spirit so gentle;

Our energies as one.

Now we walk alone;

Equally, but in opposite lands.

In our freedom lands.

Yours with your ways

And mine with my ways.

But our energies still reach

Beyond borders.

Somehow you won't leave me,

Even though the world

Gets so busy sometimes.

You always manage to

Stay with me; walking.

Even when it's raining. ■

Outside Looking In

by Tanya Green

24 hours since the end of time
Came out of habit
Loneliness
Principle
Denial
Curiosity
Regular drill
An instant ghost town
Alone on the sidewalk
Standing by the door
Looking in
Shelves still stalked
Carts still lined up in the usual way

Lights on
Never realized how well one could see it
Register 4 from the doorway
Sitting in the doorway
Remembering the distant
And not so distant
Past
Ghost of me reappears
Young again
With my grandparents
Shopping
Watching myself grow
Disappearing
Returning
An employee
Shooting rubber bands
Sanitizer War!!!!
Flashlight tag/relay
Shoveling out during snowstorms
CJ's pen
Deli samples
Memories interrupted
Woman on the side walk, "May I help you?!?"
"No"
Not welcome anymore
Precious past
Turned futile history
It faded into the void of the night ■

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NORTH SHORE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Matchmaker Poster
Yvonne Ellis



My Sweet Baby Brother

by Krystina Tejada

Why can't I stop thinking of you? Months have passed since that fateful day. It still seems so surreal. Tears still flow from my eyes each day. No matter how hard I try to make sense of it all, I just can't. The pain I feel is tremendous and unlike anything I have ever experienced. There is only one thought that brings me solace - that you will never again feel an ounce of pain. But on the contrary, I am full of discord knowing that I will never hear your voice again, see your smile, or witness your goofy demeanor. I will never be granted the opportunity to see you be married or become a father. You never even got the chance to learn how to drive. On Christmas morning, your presence will be sorely missed. No matter what we are doing, your spot will always be empty and its difficult to comprehend.

On the day of your accident, I was working at the hospital. It was a hot, sunny Friday. I wasn't feeling well and almost called out, but decided against it because I had the weekend off. Thinking back, I am glad that I went because I was there for you. When I arrived at 7:25am, I was in for a shock. I logged onto my computer and had learned that you had suffered a severe trauma. Seeing your name in my computer left me speechless. My heart began to beat at an

incredible pace. My hands started trembling. I could feel my eyes begin to fill with tears. Words cannot begin to express the level of emotion that I was experiencing at that moment. I closed my eyes for just a moment and hoped that it was all just an abominable nightmare from which I would soon awaken. Thoughts were racing through my mind. Perhaps, I was hallucinating from the medication I took, but I wasn't. It was not a figment of my imagination, nor was it a nightmare. You were there in the emergency room, where I work everyday, suffering from life-threatening injuries as a result of a hit and run.

As tears trickled down my cheeks from my eyes, I knew I needed to tell someone at work. It took every ounce of strength that I could muster to be able to speak and still, I could not make any intelligible word. All I could do was sob and point at the computer to your name. A nurse walked over to me and asked if I was okay, but I wasn't even remotely close to alright. Once again, words escaped me. At this point, I was sobbing uncontrollably. Somehow I managed to spit out the word "brother". She understood what I was trying to say and calmly explained that there was an accident. The nurse then asked if I would make a positive identification and, of course, I agreed.

While walking through the ER, I felt like



Panorama Beach | *David Dougwillo*

everything was moving through slow motion. All eyes seemed to be on me as I walked through the room, teary-eyed and being escorted by a nurse. From the threshold of the doorway, I could easily identify you even though your face was not visible from my location. I wanted to run right over to you as if you would just laugh and say, “Gotcha!” But this was no practical joke. My tears were no longer trickling and began to gush from my blue eyes. This was all too real. Your perfectly spiked brown hair was tinged with red. As I walked closer to your bed, I could see your face covered with blood. A tube was in your mouth and helping you breathe. There were many people in the room, doctors and nurses, but for that moment I felt as though it were just you and I. “Michael,” I said, “stay with me, please.” I gently kissed your forehead without any concern of blood and held your hand tightly. The nurses were extraordinarily empathetic and one brought me a chair so I could sit in the room with you while we were waiting for Med-Flight to arrive to transport you to Mass General in Boston. In that chair, I stayed until they arrived to take you.

The family met me at MGH. We were guided to a small family room in the emergency area of the hospital. Once we were there, a surgeon entered the room and advised us that you had suffered a critical head injury along with several

other injuries. The largest area of concern was the head injury. He explained that your brain was swelling and that a life-saving procedure was needed to alleviate the pressure. The doctor also explained that there was no guarantee, however, that you would survive, but we were trying to remain positive.

The family went to the surgical waiting room because we were advised that you would be in surgery for several hours. While there, we saw your story on the news. The reporter showed a surveillance tape of the accident and I must say it was one of the most disturbing things I have ever seen. It's one thing to learn your brother has been involved in a hit-and-run and quite another to actually see a video of it. We could clearly see you in the crosswalk looking both ways just moments before you were struck. Poor Michael, I hope that you never saw it coming or felt the impact. It seemed like seconds after we saw the news that a police sergeant entered the waiting room to speak with us. He was pleasant and told us that all of the police in our city are looking for the driver. The state police were also assisting in their search. He asked us to call him in the event of changes in your status and we agreed to do so. Several of your close friends even came up to the hospital as soon as they heard the tragic news. Everyone tried

continued on page 14



continued from page 13

to sit patiently and just wait for you to come out of surgery.

After several hours of waiting, the surgeon had good news for us. You had survived the surgery. She was not all positive though; you were still in critical condition, the extent of your brain injury was not yet known, and you were in a coma. She told us that there was a possibility that you might die, but, for the moment, we were ecstatic that you made it so far. One at a time, we were allowed into the ICU for a brief visit with you.

When I went in, I saw a lot of machines and

tubes connected to you. The lights in the room were off because of your status and injuries. I whispered your name and grabbed your hand. The machine monitoring your heart-rate would indicate an increase in your pulse. I was curious if you knew I was there so I asked you. Your fingers moved for a moment. To this day, I still think that you knew. The nurse told me there is no definitive way of knowing for certain; but every time I would ask you if you knew I was there, your heart-rate would increase and your right hand would move.

You were in the ICU for 12 days and seemed

“...and kissed your forehead just as I did the day of your accident.”

to be making progress. Your eyes would open when someone would talk to you. It seemed like you were making eye contact and looking around a lot. Everyone was hopeful and knew that your recovery would be a long extensive process. Then it happened. That phone call from the hospital that the entire family needed to come to the ICU immediately. No information would be given over the phone.

After rushing to get to the hospital, our worst fears were brought to reality. The doctor told us that you suffered from a stroke caused by all of your injuries. Your brain was so severely damaged from the accident that there was no way of fighting it. He had performed several tests to confirm and all results showed that you, my baby brother, were brain dead. They had not officially declared you because they wanted us there. The nurse asked Mom and Dad if they wanted to be alone with you and clean you up once last time, but neither of them was emotionally capable. I would not let you die alone so I went in. It was just you and I, plus a nurse and doctor. I washed you up for the last time and helped the nurse put a new gown on your body. I covered you with a blue fleece blanket and kissed your forehead just as I did the day of your accident. Your time of death was 11:34pm.

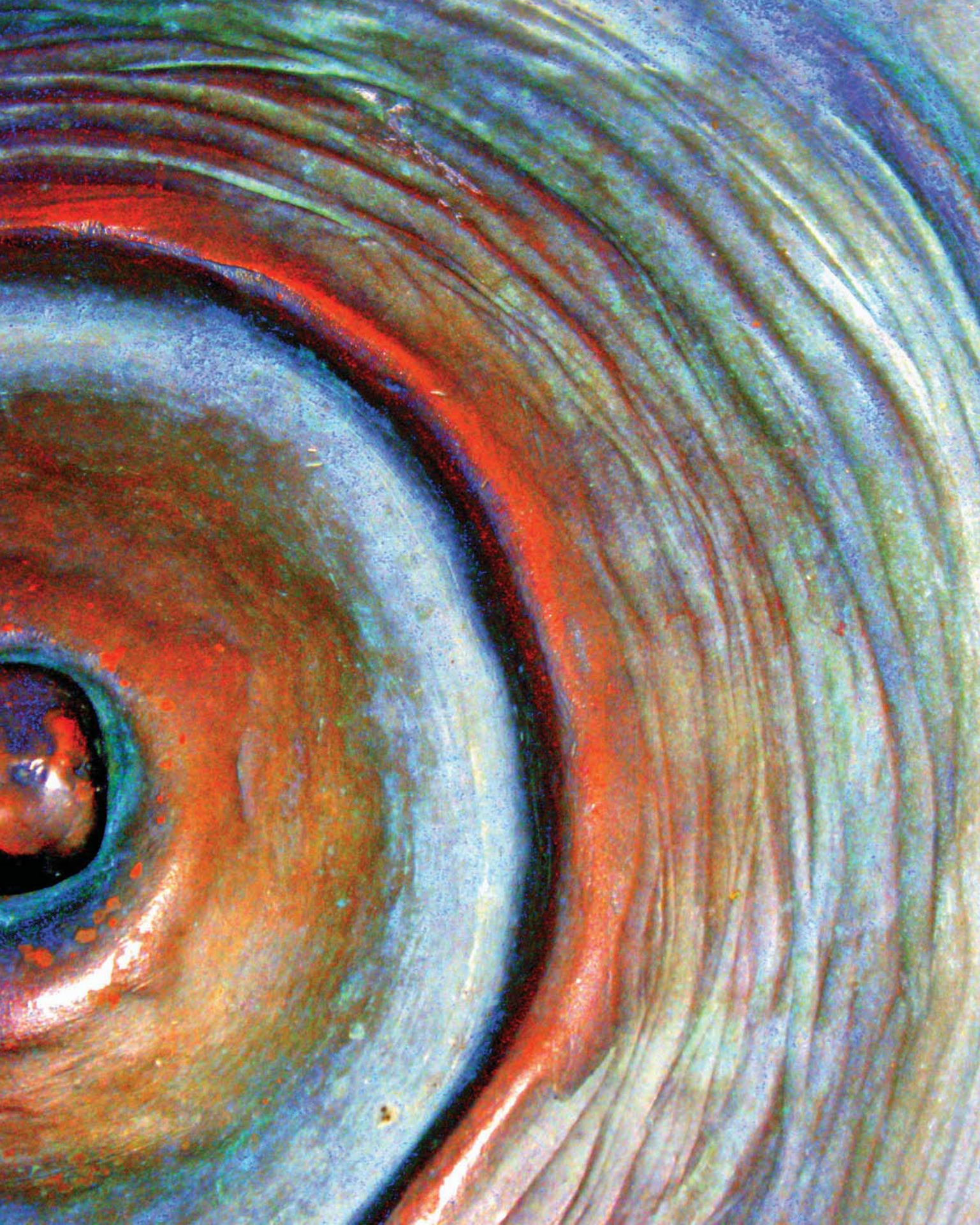
Although hard to do, we donated your heart, lungs and kidneys. In your death, you were able to save some lives. A part of you still lives on inside of someone, beating in someone's chest, breathing fresh air, and helping someone have kidney function. You had a heart of gold and I know you would have wanted to help anyone that you could.

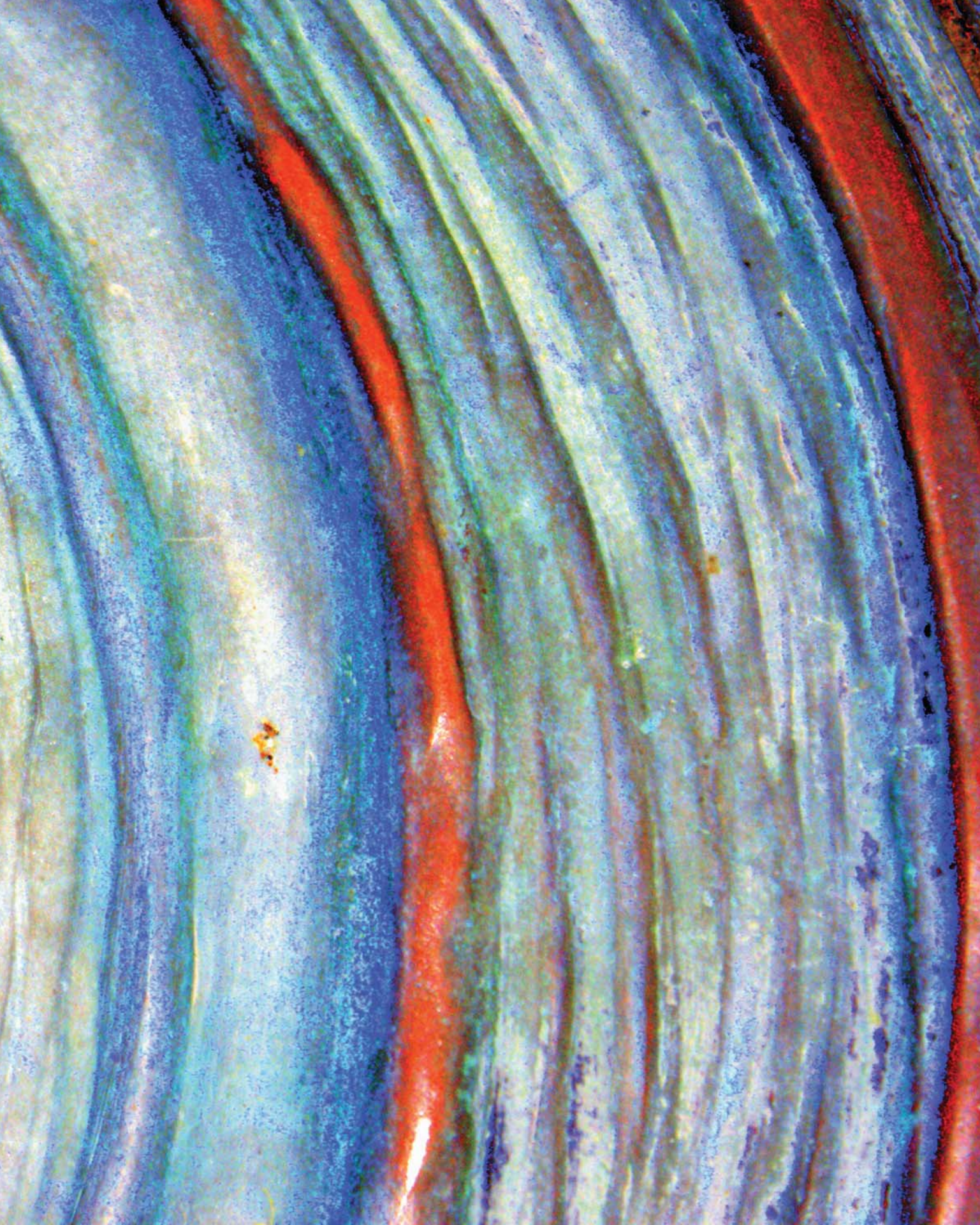
The local newspaper announced your death on the front page. You would have gotten a kick out of knowing that you made the front page. A candlelight vigil was even held at the place where you were hit and so many people attended. The

news even covered it. We had a beautiful funeral service for you as well. You were dressed in your new concert T-shirt that you purchased the night before the accident. You looked so peaceful, like you were sleeping. Hundreds of people came to honor you. Your niece, Mariah, even wrote something to read but she started crying and couldn't read it. Your best friend, Brandon, said something beautiful. He said that we were all family now and it was sad that we had to lose one amazing man to gain a big family.

We decided to have you cremated and placed in a black marble urn that you would have loved. I have a small keepsake urn with some of your ashes in it that sits on my fireplace mantle. Since I can't have you back, I am glad to have a piece of you. Forever in my heart, you will remain and the hurt hasn't gotten any easier; but I know in time, my grief will become less painful. The driver who took your life has not yet been caught, but the investigation is still active. I hope that he will forever be haunted by the thought of taking a wonderful young man's life. I'll always miss you, Mike. At 22 years old, you had much more living and growing to do, so I am left here to wonder what kind of amazing man you would have been. Rest in Peace, baby brother. Michael Scott Zarba
10/14/86- 05/20/09.

Love Always,
Your Big Sister ■

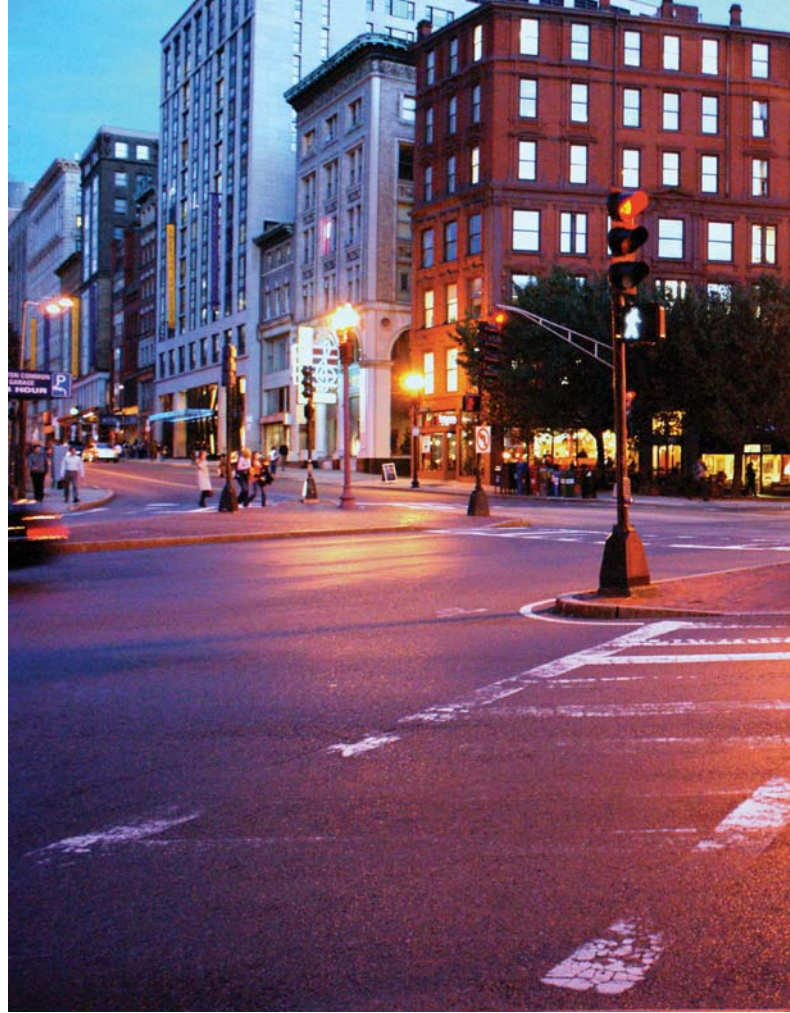




Infinite Sidewalk

by Debbie Scarfo

I stumble on my never ending sidewalk,
no matter how many steps I take. It moves
me place to place, with turns and twists, left
corner to right, blind spots I cannot heed.
Once I reached a brick wall, but my sidewalk
revealed itself again, bringing me down
this road and that. I stop sometimes to smell
a flower but the concrete burns my soles, urging
me beyond. My sidewalk has drifted
me to busy streets and seductive facades
of outside lights, inside dwellings, hidden
reality, transforming into a speeding
highway, dodging bullets in a terrifying
blur. One dreadful night it swayed me
to a dirty alleyway. Evil lurked
as I crept along, cold with gut fear.
On wondrous days I march forward, strong
and determined. Occasionally I skip,
delirious with laughter, contentment
filling my shoes, then run, feet pounding
pavement as I make my way onto a new
hairpin turn. Sometimes I cannot trudge
one more step, mud-stuck, desolation-fog
hindering me. I've dared to ask, "Why
are you taking me this way? There are sharp
rocks hurting my feet." Paralyzed,
too exhausted to crawl, my perplexing
sidewalk carries me on. I arrived
one fateful day at a fork in its path,
confusion filling each ambivalent step.
Today, I still do not know if I chose the right
road. People have joined me on my sidewalk,
weaving in and out. I never can catch
the ones ahead, yet always forget
the many behind. Some I have pushed
to my curbside, while a chosen few walk



with me, guides to the next plateau.
Deep crevices arrive by surprise. I jump
over or slither around, careful not to fall
in or I may be lost, forever. Searching
horizon's end, impelled to follow
the path of my sidewalk's infinity. ■

previous page
Color Rings | E. Nicole Ferro



Illuminated Night | *E. Nicole Ferro*

Fading at Dawn

by **Tanya Green**

Sunrise not yet appeared
Dawn's light fighting toward the horizon
Flickering, sputtering
Fading
Back to night
Slowly
Then faster
A song barely sung
Innocence losing ground
Smile still present
Radiance intermittent
Energy fading
Eyes heavy
Weight lost
Pain begins to over come her
Morphine now added to the IV drip
She hangs on for one last Christmas
Family surrounds her
Friends pray
Hope dying
Happiness leaves with her
Leaving us too soon
A young life
Ending
Trying so hard to make her 13th birthday
She falls short
Long road ends
In the valley
Sun shining
Time
Now hers
Angels come
Peacefully
To take her home ■

Creative Endeavors

by **Stephanie Buonaugurio**

Creative Endeavors
Push on my levers
Assuming position of stride -

I'm not waiting 'til later
To jump off the equator
Just to land on the other side ■



Beach Girl
Joanne Graham-Troy



Water View
Karen Spear



Lula Mae
Cala Elder



Tree Sunset Water
David Dougwillo

A Night's Soliloquy

by Audrey Rose Sullivan

Upon the night that swindles so
with the bourgeois and their jealousy, their greed,
Well, that won't get me down.
No, that won't get me down.

Hope, my quiet interlude
of a system so ordered and right
comes forth a stabbing sensation of righteousness,
of stemming belief.
Of something, just blossoming, among reeds of
insolence,
among nothing.

And down the river that roars
the kinds of things that make your heart pour out,
well, there's no hesitation, hence
knowing these things have their own time,
and they all make their own sense.

Hope, my friend of knowingness,
for my past, present, and future.
I have belonged to you for some time
and would have it no other way.

Upon the mountain I climb,
whose rocks are like demons,
the stars look brightly, and pat each other on the back.
And because well, time can vex you,
I climb.
But no, that won't get me down.
That will never get me down.

With little to prepare you
except for yourself and life's bait,
you keep the flame alit,
to endure for a time well deserved.

Because the voice is an echo to your valley.

Because the voice is an echo to your ear.
Because the captain is my very soul itself,
and this captain will not be spared.

And to the winds,
their far reaching breaths revive,
I've been upon that mountain, and felt my gleaming
eyes,
run down that river parallel,
into the soft spoken night.
And to the winds who listen greatly,
I've been upon that flow, and swam in its constant tides
and sewed all there is to sew.

But all to learn that nothing,
nothing, will keep me as frank,
as life itself, the many,
the journey's that we take.

You listen to the sharks,
despite their grilling teeth,
and see what there is to see,
even beyond that.

And upon those eyes that look at me
of cringing make believes,
or dreams deferred,
or rubbles flared,
I've always thought this moment,
this moment, it was shared.
For no one is alone,
and you always have your fears.

Hope,
you are the forefront runner of this land,
upon the shores that trouble me,
upon the sea that swelters me,
and upon time, that takes me away with it. ■

Seascape | *Joanne Graham-Troy*



Lies

by Sabrina Markham

Your so called love
Proclaimed undying
Couldn't you tell me then
You were lying

The thought of her
With you
Makes me sick
Causes physical harm

I loved you so much
I gave you everything
But now I feel nothing
You killed all my feeling

The day you left
You didn't hear my heart break
But it shattered
No way to remake

It would have been better
If you never met me
Now I'm here alone
Carrying your baby ■

Slime

by Stephanie Buonaugurio

I'm your little ...

Miss-demeanor
- calmer, sweeter -
Wake you up at nine -

Momentous freight trains
obnoxious tax claims
And it's nothing close to what
God designed.

Waiting, Freaking
Slightly Sleeping
While the waste is eating up your
time.

I'll be dragging
I'll be nagging
leave you a trail of yellow
Slime. ■



20 Cigarettes

by **Caroline Usovicz**

in twenty cigarettes time
I am back and forth
watching my friends losing their minds
Ana
introduces me
to the guy
in the monkey hat
and he touches me

on
the
small
of
my
back.

he has to be around
40
that's two times my age
two times my age. ■



Phoney | *Cala Elder*



Wedding Day

by Shannon Horgan

I arrived at this church with the purest of intentions; to set her free. For four years I've saved a place for her in my heart. I've carried her with me through my accomplishments and I've kept her with me for my failures as well. The space was constantly present, a void in my heart that never left but was occupied by hope instead. She looks simply breathtaking, as I always imagined she would. I picture myself standing up at the altar waiting for her and I try unsuccessfully to push this particular image to a dark corner in my head. I'm just torturing myself by being here and I know it. She looks so happy without me; it hurts to associate that happiness with anyone but me. It was supposed to be us. She has made her way down the aisle to stand beside her very soon-to-be husband. Sunlight filters in through the stain glass windows and illuminates the bride in all her beauty. Each curl of her hair sparkled in the warmth the sun was bathing her in. I can still remember the scent of her hair when it was spread out over my pillow. I could even smell it now in this spacious church as if I were standing right next to her. Her hair smelled of a mixture of fresh strawberries and roses intertwined. Memories start to play themselves like a home movie; the day I laid eyes on her, the day we moved in together, the day I failed her and the day I failed myself.

I was studying my class schedule to make sure I was in the right classroom, when a girl walked by me into the room. I took the seat next to her and smiled at her. She politely smiled back and went about getting out her notebooks. It was this moment that I knew I could love her. Her eyes crinkled around the corners when she smiled and it was the cutest thing I had ever seen. The professor walked in, and to my embarrassment, never called my name during attendance because

I was indeed in the wrong room. She giggled a little as I left the room after realizing my mistake. I didn't even care I couldn't find my own class because I knew I had just found the girl I could spend my life with. I eventually waited outside of her class one day and found the courage to ask her out.

My first apartment was with her. We had so much fun painting the rooms. Outfitted in some of my old clothes, she looked amazing. Even the paint smudges on her face just seemed to add to her natural beauty. We spent two wonderful years in that apartment. I've spent the last year living with a ghost in that same apartment. I used to come home to her studying in my old jersey or sitting, curled up on the couch, reading and waiting for me. Now I come home to a ghost; her ghost, her presence that I can still feel there. The ghost of what we used to be. I didn't change a thing. The only difference now is that her stuff doesn't live there anymore. Her heart doesn't live there anymore.

I hid the ring in my section of the closet the day I brought it home. In a small satin-lined box, it glittered with a promise. It was a promise of forever with each other. A promise that had somehow gotten broken beyond repair. I was waiting for the perfect moment to ask for her hand in marriage. I wanted her to have the picture perfect proposal every girl dreams about. The kind of romantic moment that gets passed on in stories to our children. We never got to have that moment; we never made it that far.

She said I was never home. She said she didn't even believe I loved her anymore. Lies. All of it was lies. I worked extra hours to hide away money for the wedding I had hoped we would plan together. A wedding fit for a princess, because

that's what she was to me; a precious, beautiful woman who deserved to be adored like a princess. I had loved her more than anything in this world. I still do. It was the worst to be away from her but I figured I could afford to sacrifice some time when we were going to have forever together. The fights only got worse after that night. I tried everything in my power to make her stay so I could get down on one knee, but I knew better. Everyone hears tales of love surviving anything that blocks its path; don't let these tales fool you. I am a walking example that love doesn't always survive anything. Sometimes love takes you places that you never navigate your way home from and it is in those places that love is lost. I could see it in her eyes, I had done irreversible damage. I could tell that our love, which once was a powerful compass in our lives, was now lost. My heart broke that night. It broke the instant I saw the hurt that seemed to reside in every last piece of her. The hurt that I had caused. My intentions were never to hurt her; my intentions were to love her with every part of my being. Forever.

She left after that of course. The part of her that I killed was gone for good; the part of her that loved me. I must have apologized a thousand times and begged for her to stay. It was no use, she packed her stuff, left, and took a piece of me with her on her way out. The ring is still in the place I left it. I have never had it in me to get rid of it. I guess I was still saving it for our picture perfect story. I was saving it for the only hand it was meant to be worn on. I can still see the look on her face on the day that she left. I've tried for years to erase that look but I can't rid myself of the memory.

My little version of a home movie stops and I'm still in the back of the church. I look up and

once again admire her beauty in that wedding dress. I admire the man staring into her eyes, the same man who will share his life with her forever, till death do them part. With each promise and vow they make to each other, my heart breaks a little. I sit on this church bench and it takes all of my being to refrain from shouting my feelings through the masses of people. I would stand up and step out into the aisle. I would shout her name across the church to catch her attention. I would give a brilliant speech to profess my love for her. I would make my way to her and take her face in my hands before leaning in to kiss her. I would win her heart in that moment and whisk her away in my arms. Instead I keep silent and listen to them say "I do". I watched her marry him and everyone watched a piece of me fade away. A piece of me that would most definitely be lost for good. They turned toward the crowd and walked hand in hand out of the church towards their future. She passed my pew and I took a mental photograph of every feature on her face. This is how I wanted to remember her face; happy and excited, not hurt and sad. For a second, I could have sworn she made eye contact and if so, she showed no sign of it. I made my way out of the church and felt free. I understand a piece of me is gone but somehow that doesn't matter anymore. What matters now was the miraculous strength I seem to possess on this day. I had the strength to let her go, the strength to let her be happy, and the strength to watch all of this with my own eyes. Now, I can move on and know this is what she truly wanted. I took a deep breath and made my way to my car. I think I'm going to find a new apartment, maybe something more small and cozy. Yes, definitely a new apartment. I'm sick of living with a ghost. ■



Kelsey | *Joanne Graham-Troy*

Addiction

by **Sabrina Markham**

She exhales
Plumes of blue smoke

Blood shot eyes
Take another toke

She's not herself
Hates herself for being there

Someone else
She no longer can

Still alive
Through all the lies

Addicted again
No more friends

Lost herself
Everyone else

Dies alone
Overdosed on oxycodone

Saved herself
Lost her soul ■

WOW

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(AMONG OTHER THINGS OF COURSE)

AS IT TURNS OUT, I AM A GENIUS. MY PARTNER IS ALMOST A GENIUS.

STAY HUMBLE — IT'S HARD SOMETIMES

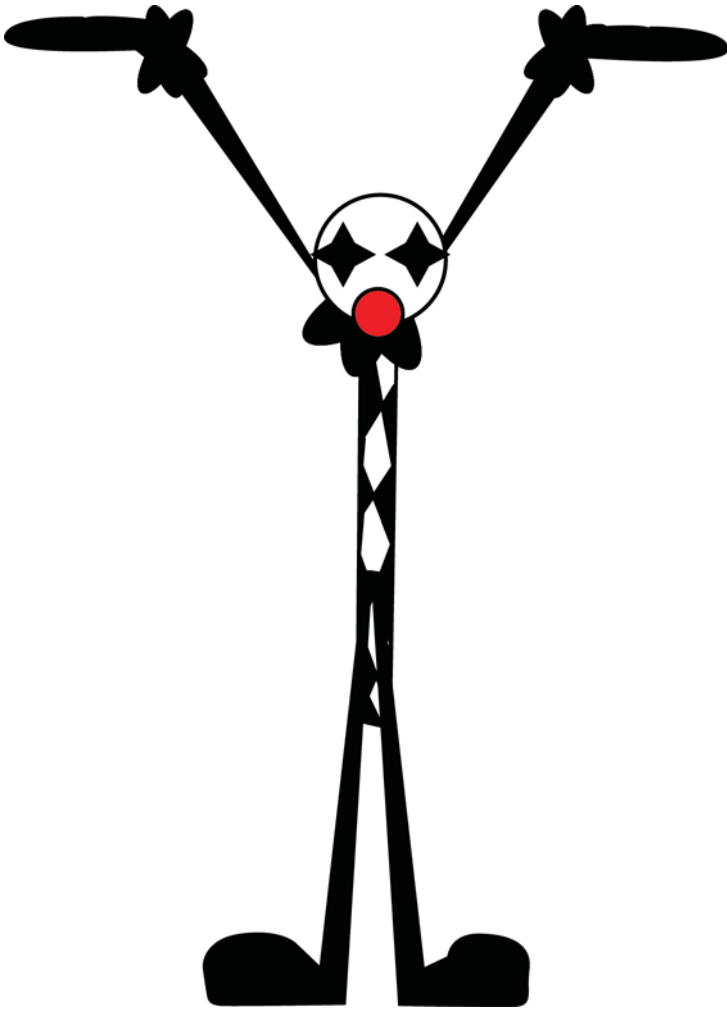
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CRANIUM
 COMPETICUS LAUGHICUS SHINEUS

MEET THE MOVERS
(AND THEIR HATS)

WOW YOU'RE GOOD SURE I CAN ACT, BUT I REALLY WANT TO DIRECT

LEAVE THIS ON YOUR COFFEE TABLE TO IMPRESS YOUR FRIENDS (PAIRS PERFECTLY WITH YOUR DESSERT OF CHOICE) **THIS ONE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE YOU** (THE RESEMBLANCE IS UNCANNY!)



top
Cranium Game Brochure | Yvonne Ellis

left
My Logo | Yulin Wu



Nautical Knot | *E. Nicole Ferro*

The Intake

by **Wendy Walker-Casal**

You asked about my lower knuckles, red
and raw from bile my stomach empties out
at my command. (I crave control.) I'm dead
within my skin. I seek the living clout
of WASPy waist; the power of my bones
to map perfection; piercing ribs and eyes;
demuscl'd arms and thighs. I have redone
creation. Heaven failed my height and size.
If I could live in Hudson Bay, I'd yearn
for sleek wide hips of seals and emerald gills
of Arctic charr. Rolls of fat, perhaps. I'd learn
to love white skin and wrinkles, dying krills.
And lest you think my mind has given way,
I only covet what I see each day. ■