



estuary

acadia's creative arts magazine

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Foreword

“Sometimes a kind of glory lights up the mind of a man. It happens to nearly everyone. You can feel it growing or preparing like a fuse burning toward dynamite. It is a feeling in the stomach, a delight of the nerves, of the forearms. The skin tastes the air, and every deep-drawn breath is sweet. Its beginning has the pleasure of a great stretching yawn; it flashes in the brain and whole world glows outside your eyes. A man may have lived all of his life in the gray, and the land and trees of him dark and somber. The events, even the important ones, may have trooped by faceless and pale. And then - the glory - so that a cricket song sweetens his ears, the smell of the earth rises chanting to his nose, and dappling light under a tree blesses his eyes. Then a man pours outward, a torrent of him, and yet he is not diminished. And I guess a man's importance in the world can be measured by the quality and number of his glories. It is a lonely thing but it relates us to the world. It is the mother of all creativeness, and it sets each man separate from all other men.”

-- John Steinbeck, East of Eden

Twice each year, Acadia's artists dust off their work and submit it to *estuary* in hopes of being included in this collection. But art does not happen twice a year. It is a frequent and life altering thing – a source of passion, expression and renewal. For many, artistic expression, whether based in music, writing or the fine arts, is a part of their identity, a way of sharing a piece of themselves with the world. All people have a glory waiting inside them. It needn't be an enormous life changing one, but I believe our life is peppered with smaller glories, places in which we have poured ourselves into something and created something new and wonderful. As Steinbeck says, this is what makes us individuals; this is what makes us unique, and it is to be celebrated. I like to think of this edition of *estuary* as a collection of little glories, and am extremely proud to share it with the Acadia community.

Thank you estuary staff, submitters and readers. I wish you all many glories to come.

Jennifer Knoch
Senior Editor 2004-2005

The Living and the Dead

(an amateur's parallel of James Joyce's *The Dead*)

By Lindsay Stevenson

Jason, the valet, was literally run off his feet. After finishing parking one car he could barely run back fast enough to the key stand through the oppressing heat to avoid a reprieve from a newly arrived mourner. How many people did this lady know? Jason kept thinking as he returned to find someone else.

Indeed the Misses Albatis had many connections, all of which were steadily trickling into the great hall. There was plenty of family and friends to keep the Aunts scuttling about the room to welcome newcomers and to be doted over for the tragic loss of their dear sister. They kept scuttling outside to see who else had arrived and making a fuss to Jason about ensuring that everything ran smoothly.

Of course they had reason to be fussy for it was nearly an hour past the beginning of the funeral and nearly all of the family friends had arrived, yet there was no sign of Ganesh, their dear nephew. Besides, they were very afraid that Albero Handa would show up screwed again. Oh, they did wish Ganesh would come.

"Mr. Marasime", said Jason to Ganesh as he pulled up. "Your Aunts thought you would never come."

Ganesh dismounted from his motorbike and took off his helmet. His visor was almost blindingly coated with gray soot. In fact, soot lay laced upon the front of his jacket and pants and traced a line trace across where his shoes met with his socks. His socks were turned a light gray and his shoes were void of luster.

Jason waited patiently as Ganesh removed his jacket and helmet, shaking off the dust and packing them away.

"So how's the work situation going today?"

"Not bad."

"It's a shame about this haze, those brush fires in Indonesia must be amazing."

"It doesn't really seem to bother people that much, the grayness I mean."

Ganesh took a look at the young valet before him with sweat glistening on his forehead.

"So when are you planning on getting a real job and getting out of this heat?" Ganesh teased with a smile.

"You mean working as a drone in an air conditioned cubicle? No thanks."

Ganesh was taken aback by the comment and its sharp tone. The small talk lagged and Ganesh reached in his pocket to retrieve a dollar bill. He pulled out a fifty and stuffed it in Jason's hand.

"No sir, I couldn't it's too much."

But Ganesh had already turned up towards the hall. "Think of it as a summer bonus" he called out over his shoulder as he reached the lobby.

At his entrance his Aunts toddled over to him. They were dressed in designer black garments, all the in vogue name brands of the time, with high heeled shoes and the touch of Indonesian in their hair and hand bags, the remnants of their culture that they could never seem to get rid of. They greeted him, and fussed over him as they made their way to the ballroom, where the commemoration was to be held. Ganesh sat by his Aunt Kartini's side as Jojo scuttled up to tell Mr. Andrew Chan that he could begin the service.

As Mr. Chan made his way to the podium Aunt Jojo's eyes bulged at the sight of Albero Handa entering the back of the room. Ganesh took his cue and made his way towards Albero, guiding him out of the room and into the hall.

"Ganesh, is that you? It's great to see you back." Handa spoke with alcohol tinted breath.

"How are the Americans treating you?"

"They're fine, fine."

"Your grandmother was so proud of you for going there. Her Harvard boy, that's what she'd say. She was such a kind sweet woman." Handa broke out in sobs with these last words while rubbing the knuckles of his left fist backwards and forwards into his left eye and repeating his last phrase as well as his fits of sobbing would allow him.

When Handa had finally managed to calm down, Ganesh put his arm around him to guide him back into the service. Handa's flesh was radiating with alcohol induced heat despite the over run air conditioning units. Ganesh and Handa quietly took a seat near the back, so as not to be noticed. At the back of the room Ganesh could see the entire service. Chan stood in front and spoke with great command and dignity.

"...her charity drives helped hundreds..."

Ganesh looked around at the crowd of mourners. Aunt Jojo held great poise.

"...of under privileged children..."

His Aunt Kartini raised her handkerchief to catch a solitary tear.

"...who now, in their own turn..."

Mr. Koh sat stiffly with his wife a foot away from him on his left.

"...can go out into the community and contribute..."

Poor Mr. Ishboo looking quietly on at the speaker with attentive eyes.

"...their share; serving our country..."

Miss Sukarnoputri, fidgeting and glancing repeatedly at her watch.

"...to the best of their abilities and in this accumulating climb towards our country's greatness..."

Ganesh's eyes fell on his newly widowed grandfather who, despite the fact that it was his wife's funeral, sat further back in the crowd, with a solitary pensiveness.

"...we remember Alena Natanie as a great countryman, and a good friend."

"It was a beautiful speech Mr. Chan." Aunt Jojo commented. "You're so kind to our dear sister."

"Not at all Madame, it was all true. She helped the community in an infinite number of ways."

"Yes, yes. All of that's good and fine," interrupted Handa, "but she was a beautiful person in so many other ways. She was in her heart one of the most caring and kind people I've ever known."

"As can be seen by her gifts to the community, Alberto." Chan said patting Handa's back with a smile.

"It's Albero, my name's Albero, and that's not what I mean. I mean she showed kindness in everything she did, not just in fund raising."

"Yes, but in the end it's nice to have some sort of income or material profit to show your kindness. Am I not right girls?"

The old Misses Albatis giggled and Handa tried to phrase a reply as Jason pulled up with Mr. Chan's silver Mercedes.

"Come on Albero, I'll give you a ride."

Albero tried futilely to avoid the offer but before long was stuffed by Mr. Chan into the front passenger seat as the women gave directions and comments with an abundance of laughter.

Ganesh got tired of this display and wandered back into the hall where the ceremony had been held. He found his Grandfather standing at the front of the banquet hall staring at his wife's urn. His nearly baldhead sparkled in the light and his age spots told the tale of a man who had lived a life and had come to be ready to leave it.

"Shall I take you home Grandfather?"

His Grandfather turned to him with wide eyes, seemed to consider something for a moment, then confirmed. "Yes, but only if you take the urn."

Ganesh took the urn in his hands, his grandmother's urn. His grandfather's bride was now nothing but ashes and his poor grandfather, reduced to such weakness that he could not bear his bride home. A bride that he had once loved and carried with him with burning passion was now no more than cinders.

Leaving his bike for the night he took a taxi with his grandfather. In the back of the cab the Chinese men with yellowed teeth from the soot smiled at him in Singtel mobile ads and white girls covered in a gray mist looked out from giant billboards. They passed by the raffles girls' school, decorated with Singapore flags for Singapore national day with dirty yellow soot coated moons. Some girls still filtered out in gray stained uniforms despite the fact that school had ended hours before. A yellowed light shone faintly through the pillaring HDB flats and Ganesh saw through the soot to the sun that burnt up high for his grandfather's lost love. The same sun shone through the windows at his grandfather's HDB flat - a glow of yellow, distant passion. Ganesh placed his grandmother's urn in a prearranged corner out of the way. It stood as lonely as his grandfather was now, without his love. His grandfather sat opposite the urn for some time. His few wisps of hair told the tale of a long lost youth, a youth of passion in love and marriage.

Ganesh stood opposite his grandfather and asked, "What are you thinking of Grandpa."

He did not answer nor return his grandson's gaze.

"Tell me what it is Grandpa. I think I know."

He did not answer at once, but then answered with a stream of tears "I'm thinking of Indonesia."

He dried his tears with the back of his hand, like a child.

"What about Indonesia?"

"I'm thinking of a person long ago, who I used to live near."

"Long ago?" Ganesh asked with a smile.

"A person I knew as a boy."

Ganesh's smile fell. A dull anger began to collect at the back of his mind.

"Someone you were in love with?" he asked ironically.

"It was a young girl I used to know named Agni. She was very poor."

Ganesh was silent. He did not wish him to think he was interested in this poor girl.

"We would meet whenever we could. I wanted her to come with my family and me to Singapore, but she was too afraid. She wouldn't come. The farm was all she knew."

Ganesh wanted his voice to sound cold and distant, but it came out rather humble.

"I suppose you still love her then. You'll probably go back to her now."

"She's dead," he answered abruptly. "I went back many years ago to find her but she was gone. I think she died for me."

Ganesh looked away over his shoulder at the stifling little room full of old rotting relics and a sickening yellow light.

The scent of smoke flared in his nostrils as he turned towards the open window. The heat sunk his soul inward as his mind wandered out past the fog that cloaked the skyscrapers, that rose from the traffic, over the ocean garnished with smog to an island billowing smoke, an island of heat and flame. Descending into the ash to the field where Agni lay buried. And the smoke rose and swept across every tree stem and stone. And the ash and smoke rose up, infinite ash of all the living and the dead.

Elegy for my son and myself

by Zach Abugov

to bury a son is to bury oneself

I should know
mine has died endlessly in my sleep

I carry him from
the inferno in a blanket
kneel in the gutter and
hold him up to the rain

praying for Elixir

together
in the oak coffin
 tight and breathless
we push upwards
through six feet of earth

Dante's Prayer

By Aaron Darch

Lead me to where the blinding sun dies
To relinquish myself of these mortal burdens.
Raise the night's sky so that I might wander by heaven's tears alone
To where I can call home.

Let me be overwhelmed by a glorious haze
And seek sorrow no more.
Take my limbs as you wish and make me for good
As your child I lay arms down.

Sweet blessed overseer of my soul
Bind my wings down so that I may not fly so close to the sun
And save me from Icarus' flight – failed.
I am yours internal for eternity's play.

Photomemory

By Jennifer Knoch

Your photographs are plastered
shining beacons on beige expanses
crystallized perfection
bridging time and distance
Sharply focused memories
of a past blurred
by rose colored lenses
and now bittersweet tears.
Flashes of the past
returning unbidden.
Ghostly apparitions
with friendly features forever frozen
like store window mannequins -
a semblance of life
trapped behind glass.
Your happiest days
in glossy 4 x 6s
available in an hour
that can be shuffled and replicated
but never regained.
These photographs are floating
on the periphery of my vision
of my consciousness -
illusions of beautiful immortality.
Things are never as close as they appear.

Sober

By Natalie Hebert

Dropped prized pint
liquid amber creeping
out between small feet,
soaking concrete stairs.
Father's evening escape
swam off the front doorstep,
minnow fingers tremble
as anger fails to ebb.

Deluge of Discipline
washed away our plans
no Man from Atlantis
go straight upstairs to bed
eyes apologizing...
try to bridge the stain
that never can dry out
spilt rum trickle, great divider
from my sober Father
time's eroding oceans swell
as fear fails to ebb

A Winter's Breath

By Bryant Boullianne

Looking up at the night's dark starless sky
I watch misty breath rise into black oblivion.
Frost encroaches upon the margins of my senses
Biting at skin, rendering extremities mute,
And etching sharp white crystals on coat buttons.

A symphony of a thousand bony fingers
Frantically scratching at pine or cedar
Echoes in my mind as I pass a cemetery
Resting quietly beneath a pristine winter blanket:
The dead desperate for a breath of the sterile air
That I now breathe

Silence

By Noah Gataveckas

For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they scarcely hear,
and they have closed their eyes lest they should see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts and return,
and I should heal them.

From the Library I marched on downtown New Orleans,
brazenly, through raging traffic with menacing limbs,
and legion upon legion of coronate whims.
I saw the fuming motorists hail Mary:
'Some sort of justice is in order to clean up the streets! the cars they carry!'
But the jungled highways muffled their prayer, and their actions reeked of insincerity.
I saw prostitutes and incarnate lies
celebrate religion's rise. Strange!
But all were saved and none asked why.
Even Christ himself was shrugging on the bayou with bankers and thieves,
taking a break from the weight of the world.
He said 'thank god it's friday', laughed, and gave his cigar a twirl.

From the mobile graveyard built on wheels
Digital tombstones read discount deals.

I was lost more than once down Escher alleyways,
twisting like veins to the heart of the matter
that pervades this fog of mindless chatter
plugging from crowds of quiet resignation and Mardi Gras yahoo.
They probably saw me, but their eyes hazed through me.

And what's more,
my words prestoed like puffs of gas –
as though no one heard my call,
as though, almost, I said nothing at all.

I whistled a tune that Shakespeare had sung,
I whistled it hard, and it caught in my lung;
and I coughed.
I thought I heard some laughter,
so I spun and studied fleeting shadows,
snickering in secret from midnight meadows,
diners and bars, diners and bars.
Maybe my skull had grown numb as well –

I swear I heard some laughter.

I sang the whole way to Bourbon Street,
(I tried to enjoy Bourbon Street)
sang words as sorry as my worn out feet,
but those words did nothing but skip the pavement ranks –
etched their mark in crumbled banks; the fat conservative harbour
just swallowed them whole.

All I ever heard was silence begging for sound,
silence in the speech of other men,
silence in the jingle of advertisements,
silence from the podium and silence from the pulpit,
and the silence absolutely wailed for sound.
So I asked if anyone was listening,
and I swear I heard the wind.

Student's Suicide Leaves Mark on Literary History

By: Chase Turner

July 30th, 2003

Ian Younker: Associated Press-Halifax

The day that he died, the sky turned whale grey and the large quarter-size droplets of rain streamed from above. Many around this tight-knit community were left with little to go on, his demise shadowed by the crime investigators and forensic psychologists, but one thing was sure, this was no ordinary suicide.

One week prior to his death, he was seen outside on a ladder painting his house a deep blue, but no one seemed to take notice because the house was in desperate need of renovation. Neighbours noted that Tom Spacey, 24, of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico had been in seclusion for some time, but had been seen with a blonde, fair skinned woman. When suspicion was aroused that something might be wrong, 22 yr old neighbour Cheryl Lambert opened the unlocked door to discover the emotionally disturbing scene. "I didn't know what to expect when I went inside," said Lambert. "I just ran out the house screaming for help."

An official press conference was held on July 29th to inform the public to the nature of the Mr. Spacey's death. Annapolis Valley Police Sgt. Leslie Farquharson reported, "Mr. Spacey committed suicide sometime around 11:30 pm on July 17th. He died of a single self-inflicted stab wound to the heart." Spacey, an aspiring English student at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, was suffering from depression due to his recent break up with his girlfriend, whose name was requested to be withheld.

In the week prior to his death, Spacey wrote an astonishing amount of poetry, over 3000 sonnets, soliloquies, ballads, villanelles, and Haiku's. His girlfriend said she last saw him on July 10th at his home and told authorities that she broke off the relationship at that time. She stated she knew of no such writings being visible around the house, leaving investigators to believe that Spacey wrote all of these hand-written pieces within the last 7 days before his death. Authorities believe that Tom Spacey wrote 3006 dated poems in his last 168 hours, which comes to roughly 44 poems an hour. Every piece was about his journey through love, his passion for his girlfriend, and the heartbreak that occurred, making this 7 day event the largest amassed cache of poetry by one person in history. An autopsy revealed that severe inflammation had spread from his fingers, up to his shoulder and down to his abdominal muscles, due to his radical writing routine. Despite the obvious pain, Tom continued on with his tortured heart, defining every thought imaginable on the estimated 5000 + pieces of paper.

It is believed that his right arm gave out do to extreme fatigue and that the fatal action was exacted by his left arm. Dr. Derek Deutsch, Chief Practitioner of Cardiology at the Halifax Memorial Hospital provided a statement about the physical condition of Spacey, "The amount of trauma discovered on Mr. Spacey's right side has never been documented. The muscles that composed his right side hypertrophied due to repeated intensive labour, brought on by his fanatic writing. Due to this relentless regimen, the blood was not released back to the heart to be re-oxygenated, therefore causing an imbalance of aortic pressure. This resulted in the heart pumping furiously, both faster and harder to compensate for the pressure imbalance and lowered circulation. In other

words, his body wouldn't allow the blood to leave his right side. Never before has anyone in the field of medicine seen this comprehensive decay of the muscular and circulatory systems due to self inflicted damage. With so much strain put on one part of his body, his heart seriously overcompensated for this loss of blood."

At the crime scene, authorities found what is believed to be the last poem Spacey wrote and it describes in graphic detail the pain in his heart and how he believed that the only way for it to end was for the love in it to be set free from him forever. The room which he was discovered was in a clutter of paper, empty pens, and most notably the name of his girlfriend etched all over the walls.

Friends that knew him best commented on the Tom Spacey they knew, "There was something pure about his soul," says long time friend Dan Mclachlan, "The love he had for everyone he cared for had no bounds. He was truly my brother." CBC has already expressed interest in adapting a TV movie for this story, proclaiming it as the 'Romeo and Juliet' of the 21st century. Literary publishers are asking family members for permission to submit the pieces for international publication, but we have received no comment on these proceedings. Memorial services will be held at an undisclosed location.

The Wind Here

By Beth Trimper

The night was wretched, dark and cold
And the wind, it whirled and
Swirled the leaves, like salsa skirts
On invisible hips.
I stashed my fingers in cold coat pockets
Because the wind, stinging,
Would surely not be welcome there,
I thought, not thinking.
The wind has a way here, you know,
Of sneaking into every crevice,
And on these wretched cold dark nights, you're prone
To feel dejected.
I turned up my collar, then shrugged it up more
And I cursed the pedestrian way,
Until salsa skirts stroked my legs, and then
I danced in the wind, on a whim, in the night.

Intimacy lost

By Sarah Bowler

a champagne flute carelessly tossed
from a high balcony
bolted to the side of a highrise
miraculously hanging on

the flute flutters
down
down
down
flying before the imminent
tinkling crash
a delicate noise for a big fall
at the cement bottom

the shining, scattered pieces
cover the cold parking lot
glittering when the streetlight catches them
lying dormant in the darkness
until stepped on

shards lodged into the tough skin of the heel
the absurdity of walking barefoot at night
spilling crimson onto the pavement

transparent glass shooting pain up the leg
synapse to the brain, moving nerve to nerve
until the stepper feels the connection to the tiny jagged piece
of the once graceful champagne flute

blood and glass mingle into each other
fragments becoming a new whole
a disconnected whole

Gingersnap Café

By Erin Olovson-Cleveland

Chopstick funeral
Tuesday afternoon
Cobalt saxophone
Second week in June
Chalkboard membership
Fifty cents a glass
Midnight cobblestone
Nothing left – alas!

One Way to Pass the Mourning

By Emily Younker

Today my dog died of cancer
So I have a cigarette.
I watch the leaves fall
And think about the beach
I pull the curtains
And slump my whirling head
I let my chest sink through the floor
Black eyes, broken hearts, and getting older
I am selfish and I am sad
I close my eyes and slide in deeper
Too much sun and cigarettes
Never killed anyone

On Our Arms

By Ryan McNutt

We are all born saviours
Waiting to be undone
Crazy enough to lie to everyone

I'm sitting next to my childhood
She laughs at who I've become
She holds onto my hand until it goes numb

So down, down, down we fall into ourselves
Nobody misled, nobody harmed
We hold hostage whoever we lay beside
With desperation on our arms

This is not a love song
Because a love song needs a spark
Not just two bodies fumbling through the dark

And I know she loves the sunrise
But I can't bring myself to stay
No one expects "good mornings" anyways

So down, down, down I fall into myself
Past flowered hallways and smoke alarms
Whenever we go out we wake up feeling lost
With reservations on our arms

I dreamt I was a captain
A crew abandoned, a glory shipwrecked
Aimlessly wandering the seven seas
With the wind of irrelevance breathing down my neck
And like all broken heroes I gave up trying
Picked out an iceberg and raised up my sails
And as the water flowed into my cabin I knew
That the best of intentions will always fail

So down, down, down into the lines we draw
Divide our losses and split our charms
What's the point in trying to hold on to what we've got
With this reluctance on our arms

I was born a sailor
But the ocean calls no more
I leave my love behind and close the door

Red Running: A Red Riding Hood Story

By Beth Trimper

The sky darkened to a rust-fringed blue, and the last of the rays from the sun filtered down to the crumbling, broken leaves on the forest floor. A harsh breeze had begun to rustle the leaves that remained clinging faithfully to the trees, and one by one they slipped loose, carried away on invisible swirls of wind. As if in mourning for the last of their shelter, the sweet song birds of the forest began to fall silent, and eventually even the squirrels and moles could no longer be heard scrounging for food.

By the time the young girl reached the fork in the path, the sun had long since ceased to warm the ground under her feet. She stumbled over raised tree roots not illuminated by the soft glow of the moon and followed the path on the left, oblivious to the choice at hand. The silence was deafening now, and the wind grew steadily sharper and colder. The girl spoke quietly to herself, trying to calm her vivid imagination, and steady the beating of her heart. She had never ventured this far on her own before, and she questioned the length of her journey. She was no longer aware of the hours she had trudged, but she knew it was too many. Seeking momentary solace in the beauty of the stars she wrapped her cloak tighter around her, arms folded comfortingly, pressed against her small, tender chest. Even in the eerie radiance of the moon there was no mistaking the blood-red hue of the hood that adorned her head, and the hair that spilled forward framed her face like rivers of spun gold. Somewhere, a wise owl hooted his sad story, and the girl whimpered, but moved on.

The path became increasingly uneven, and she almost fell, catching herself on a thin branch of a small pine. It was then that she heard the noise. It began as a low wail, growing louder and louder. It escalated into a ghostly howl that echoed through the night and tickled the curve of her spine. She froze, her eyes open wide. The first howl was joined with another, and yet another, and more still. A sob caught in her throat and she did not breathe; she could not breathe. She had heard wolves before, but never so near, and the terrifying stories her grandmother had once told her rushed back into her mind. Something behind her moved, and the snapping of twigs and underbrush roared like thunder in her ears. She moaned deeply and pitifully, an instinctive response that she cursed for its helplessness. The movement in the forest stopped, and in its place sounded a terrifyingly loud, inhuman howl. The sound reverberated in her ears with the intensity of its nearness. She finally released the pine needles from her grip, and began to run.

Her feet were unaccustomed to the rugged terrain of the woods, and if she was still on a path it had dwindled to a stream of rocks and fallen branches. She was being chased, being hunted, and every sound of the chase consumed her mind. She pictured each crisp crushed leaf, every breaking twig. She envisioned the wolf's claws piercing the ground with each long stride that he took, while sharp brambles tore at her skirt and sliced patterns of thin red lines into her legs. She barely felt the wounds, but thought about the skirt her mother had so lovingly sewn for her. It's strange the things people think about at times like these.

She lost her footing and tumbled towards the ground, crying out. Rocks scraped the skin from her knees and palms. She landed on her right side, and heard the cracking of her own ribs. A hopeless, anguished scream rose from the farthest depths of her stomach and filled the night. She whimpered and mumbled and her face dripped with tears and sweat. The wolf was almost upon her, she could now hear the rasping, excited panting of a predator that senses fear above all things. Her eyes stung, and the dim shadows of the forest churned into a kaleidoscope of distorted

shapes. He was so close, so very very close now, that she closed her eyes and let her thoughts drift to her warm, familiar bed, and the face of her mother. She swore she could feel the moisture of the wolf's breath on her neck. He growled and lunged at her, teeth bared, saliva warm and frothing from his lips. She opened her eyes at the last moment, to witness the delivery of her fate. She saw an axe, glinting silver in the moonlight, arcing in slow-motion through the stars. It fell towards her and ended with a wet, sickening crack. She heard the agonized wail of the wolf, and she felt the whole forest shudder with the sound. The Huntsman gathered her into his arms and began to walk, but not before she felt the warm, sticky blood of the wolf on her fingertips.

The Huntsman's cottage may have been very close, or she may have slipped into a state of unconsciousness for a while, but as he climbed the stairs to his cottage, the stars still glowed above her. He sat her in a cushioned chair in front the crackling fireplace, and began to unlace the ribbons of her cloak.

"This is damp and stained, dear. You won't wish to wear it anymore," and he let it fall off the arm of the chair, on to the floor.

"I don't know how I can ever repay you for your kindness," murmured the girl. The exposed roundness of her chest heaved with pain, and gleamed with sweat in the wavering light from the fire.

"I'm sure we can think of something, my dear," and he sat in the seat next to her. His gaze roamed freely over her face, down the soft curves of her dress, and rested on the scratches that thorns had torn in her calves.

"My poor, sweet dear," said the Huntsman. "You must not have known the dangers of this land. It is very seldom that I meet anyone in these woods," and his fingers visibly trembled with excitement. The girl's head was bowed, and she did not see his face.

"Oh, Huntsman," she whispered. "What big hands you have!"

The New Record

Victoria Welch

Black rectangular button is depressed with a click,
The internal belt begins to spin the table
Miracles of automatic technology tells the arm to swing out
A few moments of anticipation slip by before
The needle drops onto the pristine virgin vinyl

A few more seconds of waiting
The speakers pick up the slightest static
The needle draws closer to the untouched grooves in the vinyl
Almost threateningly it approaches the vinyl
Preparing to covet the vestal sound

A thunderstorm of drums pounds out of the speakers,
The rain of guitars soon following
Only to be coupled with howling vocals

The torrents of sound assault the listener
Overwhelmingly perfect sound
Unmarred analog
The heavenly sound will never be the same again
Each rotation of the needle strips the vinyl
Strips it of quality with each rotation
Dignity, perfection and virginity sacrificed
All for the pleasure of the listener

Love in a Bathtub

By Jennifer Knoch

On this cold October night
when the wind blows in loneliness
I find solace in the waters of this faded tub.
My body floats suspended
in this watery embrace,
in this warm, porcelain womb
of contented refuge.
The water swirls around me
smoothly caressing my body
like your fingers along my spine.
The bubbles flirt with my skin,
with my memories
before disappearing like those precious, delicate days.
I slide my smile beneath the surface
and the quiet stillness is stolen
by echoes of acoustic melodies
strummed on cool summer nights.
I glide through these reflections of reality
this warm drunkenness,
these cascading memories,
this happy oblivion,
And the long, cold miles are washed away.

Tell her I said hi

By Ben Goldie

The clocks have stopped, all ticking's ceased,
the TV only glares;
no sounds are resonating from the front room
to the stairs.

The tumble drier, it's thump and din,
unheard to her alone;
the whining of the kitchen light is
still a sound unknown.

She doesn't know the tap's still on,
the plip-plop is no clue.
The garden and the street outside are
hushed as she walks through.

The children take her by the hand
and in the garden play;
despite their company she lives
a lonely life each day.

A life deprived of voice and word,
of laughter and of scream,
of shouting, crying, joking too,
and, probably, of dream.

I visit her from time to time.
I can't sign and don't try.
I look at Dad and say, defeated:
'Tell her I said hi.'

Early in September

By Aaron Darch

Be that silent whisper draped
Across the sea of glazed eyes dazing away
Out across the tree tops that glisten in
The morning's fading dew and light.

Be that one redeeming truth that uplifts
All spirits to no end, and frees' the unbelievers of their worries.

This morning is unlike any other
As its constant chill in distilled light overwhelms
The unknown masses, and helps them to understand
Why they're alive at all.

This extinction of stale moods and empty harbors
Shouts as a declaration of a new day and life.
This is our freedom, be it what we will.

Before the Sun

By Dalia Majumder

Before the sun rises tonight, kiss, for the apple tree, under which you made love stands, slightly smaller, slightly thinner, not like in you memory, that you kiss now, as the pink shades touch the darkest blue, in the corners, just like her eyes, or lips, gently parted, exhausted, insatiable. Breath intertwined, a new embrace, molecular, explosive, before the alarm calls to breakfast or was it prayers first, and the longing to keep this darkness for a little longer, to better hear her sigh in your arms, and think of the last time under your tree, and the way the sun kisses her lips when it rises.

National Sheep Day

By Noah Gataveckas

Somebody's sheep
engulfed in panic,
foaming in nefarious frenzy,
shrieking about terror and God and the defecit,
tumbled ungracefully off a cliff.

No one knows why it fell off a cliff.

After a brief awkward silence,
someone stampeded for revenge,
so the cliff was regulated:
they set up a small white cross, flowers flowing from its basin –
yellow ribbons invaded the landscape.
William Randolph Hearst wrote the editorial himself,
decrying the current state of things, the economy & whatnot,
and it became a world sensation.

Today we take the time to remember the heroism that somebody's sheep displayed
in the face of adversity – or something like that.
Was that the point? Yes, I think it was
what the anchor said
on the 6 o'clock news.