

# ORPHEUS

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# Orpheus

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# ORPHEUS

SPRING 2017



The Lyre of Orpheus Placed Among the Stars  
Drawing by Eduard von Engerth (1818-1897)

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## In Memoriam

This volume of *Orpheus* is dedicated to  
Dr. Mark R. Dunphy  
Professor, Scholar, Colleague, Friend  
1950-2016

What do you think has become of the young and old men?  
And what do you think has become of the women and children?

They are alive and well somewhere,  
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,  
And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not wait at the  
end to arrest it,  
And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.

All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,  
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

~ Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

“I know not all that may be coming,  
but be it what it will, I'll go to it laughing.”  
Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*

“A noble craft, but somehow a most melancholy!  
All noble things are touched with that.”  
Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*

## Editorial and Standards Policy

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All submissions to *Orpheus* must be typed and must contain the following information: name, phone number, local address, class, major, and hometown of the writer/artist. All artwork and photographs should be submitted in camera-ready black and white.

Editorial and other staff positions are open to any current Lindsey Wilson College student based upon experience or interest.

The ideas and views expressed in *Orpheus* are solely those of the writer/artist and do not necessarily reflect the ideas and views of the editorial staff or those of Lindsey Wilson College.

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Front Cover from *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* by Herman Melville. Lakeside Press, Chicago. 1930. Illustrated by Rockwell Kent. © 2005, The Plattsburgh State Art Museum

Back Cover Photo by Travis Smith

## Preface

Usually, when the newest volume of *Orpheus* is published each spring, an energy comes with it. Maybe it's the energy of a semester at its last crescendo. Maybe it's the reminder that poetry, at least in our little corner, is alive and well. Maybe it's the stretching of winter into spring into summer and the longer, warmer days ahead. Certainly those things are still true.

Yet this year, what also comes with *Orpheus*, is a reminder of those who aren't here. As readers can most likely tell by the front and back cover, one of those people whom we are missing is our friend and colleague, Dr. Mark Dunphy, who passed away suddenly this past December, and to whom this edition of *Orpheus* is dedicated. With that dedication comes a front cover from the literature he taught, words from colleagues he befriended, and life-affirming work from students, whom he treasured. Further, with that dedication, comes an opportunity to celebrate Mark's own writings—poetry and scholarship—to remind us that he is still here after all—still brilliant, still teaching, still kind, still loved. And all of those things are also true.

Primarily I want to thank our student contributors for sharing their work with the Lindsey Wilson College community; their work never fails to surprise, encourage, and inspire. The student pieces we feature this year illustrate the talent that can come from a diverse, and multi-campus, college community. I also want to thank our student editors, Rebecca Sanders and Levi Dettling, for being so generous and thoughtful in their review of student work. Thank you to Dr. Paul Thifault, of Springfield College, for sharing his own experiences with Mark, in addition to saving an (amazingly typewritten) article of Mark's on alcohol in Herman Melville's *Mardi* [included in the appendix]. Thank you also to Prof. David Goguen who wrote an original poem entitled "Sounding" for this edition. Thank you to Dr. Tip Shanklin for allowing us to print his talk from Mark's memorial service. Finally, thank you to Travis Smith for his photograph for the back cover.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with Judith, Gina, Danny, David, Joe, and Miles and Luke, all of whom Mark loved and cared for more than anything or anyone. We all miss him but remain encouraged by his example of love, irreverence, dedication, family, laughter, and friendship. As Whitman instructs us in *Leaves of Grass*,

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,  
Missing me one place search another,  
I stop somewhere waiting for you.

Warmly,  
Dr. Allison Egnew Smith  
Faculty Advisor

## Remembering Professor Mark Dunphy

Paul Thifault

The late, great Professor Mark Dunphy of Lindsey Wilson College was known for his hilarious classroom antics and his encyclopedic knowledge of *Moby-Dick*. For those who never took a course with Mark, his clever manner of getting students to engage with classics of American literature is perfectly captured in *Moby-Dick* itself, when we learn how the character of Stubb was able to lead and motivate his crew to row and row with all their might into dangerous waters:

Stubb . . . had rather a peculiar way of talking to them [the crew] . . . he would say the most terrific things to his crew, in a tone so strangely compounded of fun and fury, and the fury seemed so calculated merely as a spice to the fun, that no oarsman could hear such queer invocations without pulling for dear life, and yet pulling for the mere joke of the thing.

Besides he all the time looked so easy and indolent himself, so loungingly managed his steering-oar, and so broadly gaped – open-mouthed at times – that the mere sight of such a yawning commander, by sheer force of contrast, acted like a charm upon the crew.

Then again, Stubb was one of those odd sort of humorists, whose jollity is sometimes so curiously ambiguous, as to put all inferiors on their guard in the matter of obeying them.

I hope, Mark, you'll forgive the ellipses (but I did remember to hyphenate *Moby-Dick* this time).

From former colleague of Professor Dunphy,

Dr. Paul Thifault  
Springfield College  
Wed., Dec. 14, 2016



# Liquids & Literature: A Tribute to Dr. Mark Dunphy

Tip H. Shanklin, Professor of English

I am honored to be here today and I thank Gina, Mark's family, and Randy Burns for inviting me. Mark would find it most gratifying to see so many people here to honor him.

I could spend at least an hour or two and tell you anecdotes and stories about my good friend and colleague of almost twenty years, Dr. Mark Dunphy. Yes, he was a respected scholar and a popular teacher of American literature and culture. But in thinking of something like a theme that would organize what I wanted to say today, it was Mark's wit and humor that I remember best. So in celebrating and paying tribute, I want to talk about liquids and literature, which not only nicely alliterates, I also think he would find it most appropriate.

- “Beer,” Mark was fond of saying to me, “is proof that god loves us and wants us to be happy.” That quote has been attributed to a great early American statesman, Benjamin Franklin; while I cannot attest to the veracity of the attribution, I believe it is to be found in *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. And, being the good Irish American that he was, Mark's favorite beer was Guinness Stout (brewed in Ireland since 1759), which he referred to as “liquid bread.” In other words, a kind of staple-of-life liquid. As a scholar and teacher of the ancient and classical Greek world, whenever this would come up in conversation, I would tell him about libations – the pouring onto the ground of a valuable liquid such as milk and honey, or olive oil, or wine. In the ancient world, the libation served two functions: 1) to honor the dead as part of funeral rites; and, 2) as an attempt at conversation with or demonstration to the immortal, undying gods, as if to say, this is what death is like for mortals: once poured out onto the ground, it is lost forever and can never be recovered.
- Secondly, if you knew Mark at all, you knew he was something of an epic coffee drinker, and even that had a literary connection as he would sometimes refer to a brief essay written by the 19th century French novelist, Honoré de Balzac, called “The Pleasures and Pains of Coffee:” “Coffee,” Balzac writes, “is a great power in my life; I have observed its effects on an epic scale . . . coffee sets the blood in motion and stimulates the muscles; it accelerates the digestive processes, chases

away sleep, and gives us the capacity to engage a little longer in the exercise of our intellects.”

- Perhaps the most obvious connection between Mark, liquids, and literature, which many of you no doubt know, was his *grand passion*, Herman Melville’s 19th century epic-like novel, *Moby Dick*, a grim and mammoth tale of Captain Ahab’s obsession and revenge that takes place almost entirely at sea in the hunting of the great whale. And certainly whaling is a liquid profession.
- I earlier mentioned Ireland, and Mark was also a scholar of the modernist Irish writer James Joyce, particularly his stream-of-consciousness novel, *Ulysses*, which is of course based upon and parallels Homer’s epic poem, *The Odyssey*, the original seafaring tale if ever there were one. (Ulysses is the Latinized name of the Greek Odysseus.) I don’t exactly know when this interest developed, but I do know that while earning his PhD at the University of Tulsa, Mark worked on the prestigious scholarly journal, *The James Joyce Quarterly*.
- Lastly, I would like to share a story that involves another liquid: milkshakes. Yes, many, many moons ago, while living in San Francisco, as he told me the story, Mark was a letter carrier for the US Postal Service. Along his daily route there was an old-fashioned diner with a soda fountain and during an unusual spate of hot weather, he began stopping at the diner to have a milkshake. Apparently this went on every day for some time and became something of a routine. For whatever reason, though, someone reported Mark to his superiors and he was subsequently sacked. Some time after that, Mark and his family moved to Tulsa where, as I mentioned, he earned his PhD. He took a job as academic dean at an experimental Native American college. Sadly, the university became financially insolvent and Mark found himself on the job market interviewing for the academic dean position here at Lindsey Wilson College in 1992. As the story goes, Dr. John Begley, who was president at the time, did not hire him as dean, but told him if he wanted to teach English, he had a job. I guess the point of the story is that were it not for Mark’s love of milkshakes, he probably would have retired as a letter carrier and never made his way to Columbia and Lindsey Wilson College, and none of us would be here today celebrating his life and paying tribute to my good friend, Dr. Mark Dunphy.

Sounding, for Mark Dunphy, Melville Scholar  
David Goguen

There was a time  
when your mind was an ocean,  
and the white leviathan  
sounded to the depths.  
You followed it inland  
to a land once covered by sea,  
a land now dry as a fossil  
sleeping on a creek bank.  
I want you with me now,  
to leave the breath  
of nothingness and walk  
with me along the fencerow  
that snakes through the back field,  
past nubs of corn stalks  
not yet plowed under.  
Walk with me where the great  
bulb of the moon hangs  
by a black wire in a room of empty sky.  
We will go to the creek  
where soft light exposes  
the passing of something  
in silent currents  
of what your mind has become.  
We will celebrate what we learn there,  
that the white whale  
was always within us, a mystery,  
swimming there all of the time,  
its great heart in the pressure of the deep,  
fighting out its rhythm, descending to where?  
I must leave you now at the water's edge,  
follow the fencerow back  
to the hearth of flesh and blood.  
When a friend dies,  
there is blue smoke in a doorway,  
a seam of mined coal

under a green landscape,  
a hollowness of black air that hovers  
and waits to be inhaled.  
When a friend dies,  
we eat stale bread,  
cleave a hardened crust  
and taste the dry breath of the room.  
This is what memories become.

# the votarist

Allison Smith

(*noun*) [voh-tuh-rist]

- a person who is bound by solemn religious vows, as a monk or a nun.
- an adherent of a religion or cult; a worshiper of a particular deity or sacred personage.
- a person who is devoted or addicted to some subject or pursuit.

bees tend to the crabapple  
blossoms outside the farmhouse window  
and carry pollen back to the honeycombed  
hive. it is the same red barn  
where old hives remain,  
dried and hollowed on dirt floor  
next to remnants of tobacco  
sticks and hay.

you tend to young minds  
then walk like Whitman – gray and bearded –  
up the street, around a square,  
to a red house where you love  
a wife and daughter, and buzz  
around the house with thoughts  
of Ginsberg (first thought, best thought!),  
Melville, Massachusetts in winter, and monks  
in rust-colored robes.

you know monks are like bees  
and take the vow of stability to tend  
to their monastery until death.  
the young monks walk to the garden  
where they burn burlap, calm the bees,  
and gather honey from the hive.  
they put it in the clayed pot  
with a wooden honey spoon.

old monks – who, like you,  
have done their tending –  
sit in the sun in the garden.

they sip from tiny tea bowls  
warmly nestled in the palm of their hands.  
they relish the taste of tea  
and honey –  
fruits of their labor.

# An Irish-American 2000 Christmas Prayer and Blessing for David and Delorah Moore

By Mark Dunphy

Standing at the end of the dock  
Long Island Sound after hearing this morning  
of Delorah's passing  
(to be buried on Saturday in  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee),

I see the skyline of the New York fade away.  
All of the blue in the sky and in the sound, too, fades  
away.

"Life," John F. Kennedy said, "is unfair." "Yes, that's  
damn true," I say to myself as I open my second pack  
of Kools and second can of Guinness.

"I've been worried so long," the Bluesman says, "I can't be  
worried no more."

She can't be worried no more.

"Courage," Hemingway said, "is grace under pressure."  
Yes, courage for tons of cowardly lions she possessed in  
abundance, and grace, too. Delorah – who taught the  
"Myth of Southern Lady" – *was* a Southern Lady, and  
that *ain't* no myth.

I hear the pain in David's voice over the phone: "Do you  
have any other plans for Christmas?" I ask.

"Yes," he responds, "I plan to crawl into a hole for a  
week, at least."

There is snow here in New York as there is in Tennessee.  
The weatherman says that snow covers 65% of the country.  
James Joyce put it less prosaically at the end of "The  
Dead:" "Yes, the newspapers were right: snow was gen-  
eral all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark  
central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog  
of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the  
dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon  
every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where  
Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the  
crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little

gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.”

New York City blanketed by snow.  
Columbia, Kentucky blanketed by snow.  
Delorah Moore blanketed by snow.

A postcard last summer from David and Delorah from the Sand Hills of Nebraska – the only state President Clinton never has yet touched his foot in – signed, “Republicans On the Road!”  
Although life ain’t no time-share,  
I am so blessed to have spent so many hours out of so many days over so many years with both David and Delorah.  
They had hoped to be together back on the road touring New York and New England this summer.

We are not so much “hostages of fortune” as Francis Bacon says, as we are hostages to death.

The jazzman says: “I wrote this song – ‘D minor Mint’ – for the state of Kentucky because they got the mint; D is the mint in the julep. Without the mint there ain’t no Mint Julep. So smooth. So sweet. So soothing.”

Delorah was a Mint Julep.

“Get well,” I wrote her, on the back of a scholarly conference flyer announcing a “Call For Paper” on Literature of Baseball (Delorah loved the Chicago Cubs), “so that we can argue together about politics and baseball soon.”

On the radio, the poignant Civil War song whose name I always forget but whose melody always momentarily stops my heart from beating, hauntingly urges me on.

David: “We had hoped you could be a pallbearer.”

But here I am, at home, with my mother, and safe and warm. The meaning of the word “pall” suddenly flashes by my consciousness – something that darkens and obscures.

“I’m sorry,” I answer hesitatingly, “but I can’t be in two places at once.”

Delorah and David stopped by my house several weeks ago to pick up a single crutch. I thought of her scrambling and hobbling around the Vanderbilt Medical Center, like Tiny Tim, and shouting: “God bless us,



everyone!”

I had forwarded her one of my pointless academic publications, and I asked David what her response was. “All she grunted was ‘Damn!’ he responded. I told David, “When she gets better, she’ll have to explain herself!” Damn!

“Come back here, baby,” the bluesman says, “And try my love one more time.”

She was a teacher “first in her class” and we who remained are lessened and lessoned by her death.

On the national news this evening – sometimes news from Kentucky gets national – there is a report of a baby being thrown from its mother’s womb in a car crash in Jamestown, Kentucky, who survives as he shoots like a sky rocket into a snow drift. “A miracle,” they say. Baby’s mother is decapitated.

My Christmas card to the Moores – an Irish Christmas Blessing containing the words of Saint Patrick’s Prayers read:

“Christ be with you.  
Christ be within you.  
Christ to comfort and restore you.  
Christ in the hearts of all who love you.”

Joy to the World, as they say, and Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men  
And to Women and to Babies  
And to the sky and the sound  
And to John Kennedy and Richard Nixon  
And to the Bluesmen and Jazzmen  
And to Hemingway and Joyce  
And to the telephones and the radios  
And to the Baptists and the Catholics  
And to the state of New York and Tennessee  
And to the Weathermen and the Postmen  
And to the snow and ice  
And to the Union dead and Confederate dead  
And to the East and to the West  
And to Gore and Clinton  
And to the Chicago Cubs and Boston Red Sox  
And to the people of Columbia, Kentucky and the faculty of Lindsey Wil-

son

And to the empty cans of Guinness and the glasses of Mint Juleps

And to Michael Furey and his lover, Gretta Conroy

And to the Vanderbilt Medical Center and Nashville

And to Cheney and Bush

And to academic flyers and publications

And to Jack Kerouac and Edna St. Vincent Millay

And to Murfreesboro and Rye

And to the South and the North

And to Saint Patrick and John Wesley

And to all the departments of English through the universe

And to David and Delorah Moore.

## A Fresh Pair

Matthew Abel

Wasabi mashed potatoes somehow pairs red wine with rare tuna  
but pairing us would be even less sane  
Because any waiter who would suggest that my plaid tie and sweater  
would go great with THAT black dress is clinically INsane  
But you still claim it's quite handsome  
My hand has always been a bit big for yours but my breath still catches  
when you squeeze it tight in the brisk night air  
If you recall that was the night you gave me the journal  
in which this poem took to page  
It's bound with leather that yearns today along with your heart  
for just one more day in Firenze  
It still holds that new leather smell as fresh we were that evening  
That was the night I told you I loved you for probably the hundredth time  
but it was the first time you said it too as I held you close,  
swallowed in your warmth  
We were like new leather then, crisp and clean but we've journeyed  
many a journey since  
We've gained scratches and a crease at one seam, we're worn  
with character and adventure  
But just like fine Italian leather  
When the stitching is tight, and the leather is right  
We just get better with age

# Inkling

Bethany Wilhelm

I regret to tell you that I am at your service. Just as the words on this page are at my disposal, so too am I here to assist you in any way possible. Now isn't that nice for you? I wish I could say I was terribly excited at the prospect, but to be honest I've grown a bit weary of everything in ink. I would introduce myself, but I have no name anymore. At one point my name was "Lost Voices," but that was before I rearranged the words on this page. Most Inklings apparently don't think to do that. Most Inklings are content to hide behind the words on their pages and only use them in the format they've been presented. I always thought this was a rather rigid way of thinking and made life more difficult than it had to be. For example, we Inklings get very cold at night, but most are content to simply complain about the cold rather than warm themselves up. You see pages are very warm indeed when held in someone's hands, but have you ever considered what happens to pages when you close the book? Naturally it gets very dark, and with the dark comes the cold.

A few times when this anthology book was closed I decided to venture into the deep recesses of my page, and I came across a few other Inklings. Everyone complained about it being so freezing and how the words on their pages never intertwined well enough for blanketing. It dawned on me that no one had even bothered to try and move the words around for comfort. I personally find the letter "H" to be the warmest. Huggable. Hearth. Heart. It seemed so obvious. When I first decided to rearrange the words in Taylor Campbell's short story "Lost Voices," I started by collecting all the uppercase H's I needed and wove a snuggly quilt out of them. Their serifs linked together perfectly, and now I have an inky black blanket to keep me warm when you're gone.

I realize it probably looks a bit odd, what with the random bundle of H's at the end of the page. And all the other random letters. Really, I apologize for the mess. I know you were probably expecting your Inkling to be a bit more organized and helpful. Once I rearranged all the H's, you see, there were just a lot of letters left over that I didn't know what to do with, so I swept them to the bottom of the page. Unfortunately, once I'd made my blanket and cleaned up the scrap, I realized I had more or less ruined the entire story of the boy who lost his voice. Kind of a shame. It was such a

cute little story. The boy, who the author named Angelo as if anyone would actually name their child that, had an adorable double chin that was actually relevant to the story. At least the author tried very hard to make them relevant. Angelo's six-year-old double chin signified that he was always very well fed. At least in the beginning of the story he was well fed. Initially, his family was pretty as a picture, as story families tend to be. Then through a series of uncolorful exposition they fell upon hard times, as story families tend to do. And Angelo was told to go to work with a giddy narration of how his chubby double chin was no more.

Taylor Campbell is a bit of a sadist.

If you do wind up giving me a name besides "Lost Voices," I would prefer Campbell over Angelo. Though I would prefer Taylor over the both of them. Hearing the name Angelo also makes my stomach churn with guilt now. After all, I did demolish Angelo's story to write you this letter. Yes, I am still technically here just for you. All Inklings are, but you may only have one at a time. Most people who actually realize they have Inklings will try to tend to several at once, but I assure you it is far more productive to focus on one at a time.

I suppose I should explain to you what an Inklings actually is. Surely this is all very confusing as no other Inklings has ever attempted to speak with their reader before, at least none of the ones I've met here in this anthology book. I could start by describing myself to give you a picture of an "average" Inklings:

It was almost unfathomable that a person could exist who was made up only of angles, but there he was: a V-shaped jawline trailing up to sharp eyes that cut about the room as if searching for something to grasp. His gaze was as precise as the way he slicked back his dark hair, and his square shoulders snapped back as he walked out of the snow and into the warm home. His gaze fell on Angelo and his mother, and suddenly his narrow eyes became the only soft thing about him besides his voice.

Okay, I may have fibbed a bit there. That was actually a description of Angelo's father left over when I was moving things around. I just love the idea of someone made up of all angles. All the letters in the English alphabet are very curvy, and I just identify more with straight lines. I don't even know what I look like to be perfectly honest, and I don't have eyes to see

what the other Inklings look like either. Inklings “read” words rather than “see” them. I’m not sure how to explain it.

Anyway, I assume Inklings are all just made of straight lines since the purpose we serve is to connect ideas, and straight lines are good for connecting things. I think I may be a little crooked compared to the others though. I feel a little bent out of shape after moving everything around; the words toward the end of the story were very heavy.

If I looked like anything else, though, I’d like to think I’d look like Angelo’s father. Every story that mentions ink described it as black, except a couple horror stories I skittered past in this book that said it was red. I would much prefer black hair over red hair. He also has eyes that show tenderness for his family, and I’d like to think I’d have those for you. I am meant for you after all, whether or not you’re still reading this. Inklings dance behind the words of a page when you read them, but the words stay the same. That being said, I am writing this to a future you and will run behind every sentence so long as you keep reading. And I hope you do read to the end. Inklings can only give readers things at the end of stories. Good stories, anyway.

“Lost Voices” was not a good story by the way. I take back what I said about it being cute. That changed rather abruptly after Angelo’s father died, as story parents tend to do. His mother lived, which was odd. Though I suppose someone had to be alive to break the news to Angelo and suggest he get that job at the factory. “Keep food on the table,” his mother kept saying. That seemed like such an interesting phrase, since I’d never eaten my food off a table before. I tried making a table out of several T’s in the story, since that looked sturdy enough. One letter doesn’t hold up an idea very well though, and anytime I’d place one on my makeshift table, the weight of the Idea would break all the T’s apart. It got to the point where I just left all the T’s in their obliterated pile by my bed and went back to devouring Ideas off sentences again.

That’s what Inklings eat, by the way, at least until we grow. Ideas are very much like baby food. Most Ideas, especially new ones, are very sweet and liquidy like condensed milk. More developed ideas can be a bit chunky, but even they aren’t very filling. The best I can say about Ideas is that they’re never in short supply, so I’m never hungry.

The type of food that really makes an Inking grow though is an Action, but I have no idea what one tastes like. The Inklings in this anthology’s first couple stories apparently have had Actions before, since they’re in the front

of the book and get read a lot. Those Inklings couldn't explain the taste very well though. They just said every Action tastes different depending on the Ideas it's been steeped in, but that Actions are very hardy and fill you up well. Apparently they make Inklings stronger, which would've been helpful to me when I rearranged Angelo's horrid story about how he developed emphysema working in the factory that winter.

It was no easy feat to rearrange everything, mind you. The words were thick and cumbersome, as little Angelo's story was very heavy. Then once I got them all into neat little piles I had to think of how I could actually arrange them into a coherent letter to you. Perhaps that is why most Inklings never try to speak to their readers. They think it's too hard, and I suppose that is true. It was indeed difficult to move hardened ink from one word slot to another, but I think it was worth it to get to actually speak with you. I don't mean to insult your intelligence in saying you absolutely need someone to tell you what is right in front of you. But here I am, and I don't think you could have seen me otherwise.

Even now, I don't think you see what's right in front of you.

Did you even ask yourself how I got every capital "I" to place in your letter? I didn't bother to bend and break letters into new shapes; I wasn't that desperate. No, Angelo was telling his own story. I don't understand, and I need you to explain it for me.

There it is. I lied. I'm not here for you. I'm here because I need your help. I rearranged the story not just to ask you why it was here, but also because I hated it so much. I just don't understand why it ended the way it did.

Every story of every Inkling that I've come across either provided an escape to the reader or taught them something. Angelo's story did neither. It just told the story of how a boy and his mother developed a lung disease. I don't know why his story is here. I just know that as an Inkling I was supposed to present this story to you. But why? If that was really the only thing I could have done with the story, then why was I able to move the letters around for my blanket?

I'll never be able to read as many books as you. I'll never understand anything past this anthology. And I'll never be able to grow beyond these pages without you. Please tell me. Why did this story end the way it did?

I have to go. I need to search more. Rearrange more. These words are mine, so I have to figure out how to use them. I'll be in the recesses of the

pages if you need me. After all, I am still at your service. In the meantime, I have words and must find what to do with them. I'm sorry that all you have is me.

But now that you have an Inkling, what will you do with it?

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Skyler Smith

# Idiopathic Thrombopenia

Levi Dettling

“I was wounded in a sword fight or in a shark attack,” was what I told people when I showed them my scar. I remember I once told some Walmart shopper, after she nearly hit me there with her cart, that someone hitting me in the stomach with a cart was how I got my scar. The look on her face was priceless, but I felt bad and then told her what I told everyone else after they realized the shark attack or sword fight was a joke; I had my spleen removed in a surgery.

Two weeks before my first classes at Lindsey Wilson College began, I had my spleen surgically removed to cure me of a blood disease that I had lived with for six years: Idiopathic Thrombopenia. With, Idiopathic Thrombopenia, or ITP as I learned to call it, my antibodies would attack the platelets in my blood like my platelets were some form of virus. The doctors did not know exactly why this happened, but it did and it caused a few complications in life.

I could not let my platelets drop below a 30,000 count, but I did not have control of this. This led to life living with the disease having three stages. The good, the okay, and the bad. In the good stage, I had a platelet count of somewhere between 350,000 and 500,000, which is about the amount of platelets that normal people have. In my okay stage, the count would be below 100,000 and this is the risky stage where I was okay, but I became something like a bubble boy where I could not be as active as the other teenagers of my age. I could not go outside and ride a bike, play any sports, or do anything more than staying inside and being careful.

The bad stage was when my platelet count dropped below 30,000. Whenever that happened I would have to spend time in the hospital, getting a special medicine that would push my platelet count up to normal, for a while at least. There were times where I had to go to the hospital every six weeks, spend the night, and get this medicine. This happened so much and often that I became familiar with the hospital nurses and knew which ones were better at sticking me with an IV needle.

Another aspect of living with the disease is I would have to get blood tests to check the count of my platelets. How often I would get the blood tests depended on my doctor at the time. My first doctor had me getting them every other day during the first summer that I had the disease. The second doctor did not need me to get the blood tests as often, usually it would be a couple a month, but if I was bruising easily or having nosebleeds, I would have to get one whether it was scheduled or not. I have had so many blood tests during the course of having the disease that I nick-

named the lab doctors, vampires.

The removal of my spleen was one of the options that was presented to me that might cure the disease, though it was not a sure thing. Another option given to me was a medicine similar to chemotherapy, but that was not a sure thing either. It was decided that I would get my spleen removed, a date was set, and I waited. It originally was supposed to be an easy thing, with the doctors using little tubes and tools to remove it. It ended up being a bit more complicated and instead of four little scars from the use of the tubes, I also received one long one. My two week recovery time was now tripled, but that did not stop me from going to college.

I remember the fear that came to me when I first was diagnosed. In fact, no one is sure how long I had the disease before I was diagnosed. I remember visiting an ear doctor in Campbellsville, Ky, the recommendation that I get my blood checked, and the first time I had to get my platelets checked. My veins would roll around and it took awhile for them to get them. I remember being rushed to Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville, and the first treatment of the disease. It was a scary time.

The following summer, while my friends were off enjoying it, I was getting my blood checked every other day. I remember as time went on I started to get jaded and it was not that I overcame the fear of the disease, it was that I did not care. If something happened, like a very long nosebleed, I would get a little scared, but then the jaded feeling would return. The scariest part of the experience did not happen until my surgery.

I remember lying down on the operating table and having the general fears of what if I don't wake up, but that was nothing compared to when I did wake up. I woke up disoriented. Why did my gut hurt? Why am I numb? Why can't I feel my hands? Why is there a tube in my mouth and down my throat? This horrified me. It was the scariest time of my life. I admit it, I did call for my mom.

It turns out, that there were complications with the surgery. My spleen was bigger than a normal one and it had shifted to a different location. So instead only four little cuts, I got a large one as well. The doctors had believed they might have to cut my stomach and had the tube in me to remove liquid from it. And the worst part for me, the reason I could not feel my hands was guessed to be the way they rolled under me during surgery, but I also suspected the morphine had something to do with that, too.

Something this disease taught me about life is that laughter can help the dark times seem a bit brighter. When I was younger it helped to call the lab doctors vampires and it helped to joke around with nurses as I was treated for this disease. Joking about being in a shark attack or sword fight helped me recover from the surgery. After all, if I could laugh about my disease and scar, it seemed like nothing could really leave a scar on me.

# I Lost my Head

Levi Dettling

I lost my head,  
I left it somewhere,  
That cannot be reached,  
In recent memory.  
Recalling what is lost,  
Is difficult when,  
I haven't had the head  
To remember.



Esther Olsen

# Chased

Rachael Miller

I woke up in a sweat. My shirt was soaked through and my hair was drenched. As if someone had poured a bucket of water on me. That wasn't the case though, because I had been waking up like this for the past four months. Same thing every night, I go to bed only to slip into this consistent nightmare. He chases me and I run, only the scenery changes. Some nights he is chasing me in a house, other nights it's through the woods. I'm running as fast as I can only to fall down and hurt my knees and watch them well up with blood. All I can do is sit and cower in fear because my legs refuse to work and I cannot even get a noise to cross my lips. He almost gets me you know, he gets so close that tears run down my cheeks and I can feel his breath against my skin. And then every morning at around the time sun comes up I wake up drenched and feeling disgusted.

Today I decided that I would just sit on the shower floor and let the hot water steam clear my head. As I sat in tears I heard a knock that brings me out of my overwhelming thoughts. I wrap a towel around me and slowly go to answer the door. When I open the door there was the person who had been visiting once a week, every week, for the past four months. They decided to start coming over when they noticed I had not been fully there in social presence and everywhere else.

"Come on, girl! Get your clothes on so we can get going." I knew why they were in such a hurry. Today was the day of the trial. I had to give my testimony against him, the guy behind the misery I deal with every night. The awful man who had kidnapped and done other unthinkable things to me those four months ago.

"Vic, you cannot go to your trial in a towel, and are you going to just block the doorway," says Max as they brush past me into my apartment. Max is the "they" I was referring to and she also happens to be my older sister and best friend. She is the only person that is able to even get slightly through to me after everything. Max is the one who helped find me and is helping me reprimand the man who violated my very existence.

The next thing I know my towel has been ripped off and my sister is pulling a shirt over my head and throwing my bra and underwear at me. "Max I don't think I can do this, I cannot go through the pain of seeing that man again," I said with a quavering voice. She looked at my face, and an understanding expression crossed her face, and suddenly she was wrapping

her arms around me as I sobbed into her shoulder. “Vic, you can’t let this monster win anymore. He does not have power over you anymore. I know it has been rough but we, you, will get through this.” She pulls me out at arm’s length, “Now get your clothes on, you can’t go court in the nude either.” I let out a light laugh and fastened my bra and pulled the shirt over my arms and grabbed my slacks out of the closet and pulled them on.

It was 12:55pm by the time we got to the courthouse and it had taken me almost two hours to get ready because I kept breaking down. Max was right beside me holding onto my arm up until the moment we got to the top of the stairs. At this point she turns to me, “Vic, I need you to remember to be completely honest with them in there. I am here to make sure you are heard and that monster gets what he deserves.” I looked down at my feet and watched the pavement turn a darkened gray as the tears fell from my eyes. I then took a deep breath and wiped my eyes and was thankful I had decided to wear waterproof mascara. We walked into the building, went through security, and down the hallway to the double doors that held my future. I could only hope that, that monster would be sentenced for life and that through the help of my sister and my psychologist I would stop having those awful dreams. I hoped I would no longer wake up in a sweat.

# White Shoes

Emily Gunberg

When I was 15, I looked at myself for the last time without disorientation.  
So much loss, so much wrong, so many patched holes.  
Little scars and dark shadows have crept onto my skin –  
Hinting at the deep roots of all the ugliness I've seen.  
The person I would have been is obscured by smoke,  
Only I can see both what is and what should have been.  
I appraise the chipped blue paint on my house keys,  
Closing them slowly into my fist before the familiar toss  
    into my fake leather purse.  
I notice a dead fly rotting on my window sill.  
Nothing has the power to stay perfect.  
Paper yellows,  
Porcelain scratches,  
Bodies decay.  
They told me not to worry.  
“Cavities can be fixed, you're only 21! You'll never be able  
    to tell  
a difference”  
But I didn't feel fixed.  
There was a piece of my body gone; worn away.  
On the way home, I ran my tongue over my new teeth,  
I felt the difference. It was an imitation. A phantom limb.  
A permanent change.  
“Something to get used to”  
I would never be whole again.  
I lace up my battered shoes before the daily walk to class,  
Picturing the weekend hike they just weathered –  
The fragrant air, the torrid sun, the dusty trail.  
I'm starting to understand it;  
White shoes can't look new forever.



# The Garden

Emily Gunberg

Shortly after moving to our new house, my dad and I decided to plant a garden. I was 7 1/2 and robustly over-confident, ready to take on the world. At the time, I was convinced that I would be able to be an Olympic sprinter and a paleontologist simultaneously, leaving ample time on the weekends to raise a wholesome family of cheetahs. I took ambition to the next level. Clearly, planting a simple backyard garden should be a piece of cake for a person such as myself, and my dad, the perpetually encouraging man that he is, did nothing to impede my illusion. So, shopping list in hand, Dad and I set off on our quest for garden excellence.

In Home Depot, we collected the various seeds, bulbs, mulch, trowels and elaborately decorated gardening gloves with a sort of assassin-like precision. Dad and I used the same formula for shopping that we developed while I was in diapers, and still use to this day: create exhaustive list while still in our pajamas, exercise an extreme level of decisiveness while peasants stand pondering the shelves, then stop for a cheeseburger on the way home. That day, the two of us wore our sunglasses and matching leather bomber jackets; in other words, we were unstoppable.

Or so we thought. We got started immediately, undaunted by the massive amount of work that was to be done. We churned up the earth and cast aside any large rocks that impeded our progress, making a game of assigning shapes to each stone. One looked like a turtle, the next looked like the Pope, and another looked like an egg sunny-side up. While it was true that we amused ourselves, don't let our jocularly fool you; we maintained a level of determined production that would have rivaled a Ford's Model-T plant at the height of success. Quickly and with intense focus we planted row after row, creating an Eden full of everything from cabbage to rhododendrons. By the time we were finished, we were both covered in dirt and excruciatingly hungry, but proud of a day's hard work. After a celebratory dinner and a few episodes of *Lizzie McGuire*, I was out like a light, dreaming of my future in the field of botany.

However, the golden glow of success was not to last. As morning light seeped in through my curtains, I was ready to start my day by watering the plants in my new garden. In fact, "garden" seemed too small a word for it, perhaps this type of artistic genius should be referred to as a "landscape". I continued my blissful musings all the way down the stairs and into the kitchen before I was rudely interrupted by movement in my peripheral vision. Was

that..? It couldn't be. Inconceivable. A deer? In MY garden? They wouldn't have the nerve. But after a few seconds of wide-eyed staring, my disbelief turned to outrage. There was, in fact, not only one, but three deer in my garden, all of whom had the audacity to munch on my infant seedlings and innocent sprouts. Without wasting time on the pretense of brushing my hair or changing out of my Snow White pajama bottoms, I threw on my rain boots and dashed out the side door, howling at the creatures that so blatantly had earned my ire. Waving my hands and baring what teeth I had not yet lost, I charged at the enemy that had so ruthlessly razed my little kingdom. The deer, rather insultingly unconcerned, merely sauntered away behind a thicket, as if waiting to watch my moment of grief. I stared at the ground, looking at the tiny holes where I had so lovingly placed each bulb, and the stubs of the saplings that had been so cruelly gnawed. What kind of god would allow for this devastation? My little eyes welled up with bitter tears of anguish, but before the first droplet fell onto the earth my hands had clenched themselves into fists. One may be unprepared to believe that a seven year old would be capable of flying into a full-fledged outburst of rage, but then, not every seven year old had been presented with such unholy provocation as little Emily Gunberg. I flailed about, throwing rocks and twigs in the general direction of the lingering deer. I cursed the ground they walked on, using my limited vocabulary of swears to ensure they understood exactly who they were dealing with. I stomped around the woods that surrounded my house, shouting myself hoarse and frightening all the wildlife I could find until I eventually composed myself. I was resolved to begin anew. Perhaps gardening was a lost cause, perhaps nature was too strong an adversary.

By the time I had made it back into the kitchen, my mom had prepared a consolation meal of toast with blackberry jam and my dad had managed to hide the streaming tears of laughter that I had inspired by my prolonged passion. I imagine he must have experienced a certain amount of melancholy at the tragic loss of our garden, but I suppose everyone grieves differently. This experience certainly quelled any ideas of becoming a celebrated landscaper, turning my heart bitter towards both gardening and deer, but it didn't kill my entrepreneurial spirit. Soon after, I had moved on to declare myself a future chemist and a new project had begun.



Esther Olsen

# I Wish There Was a Warning

Cassandra Wheeler

I wish there was a warning,  
A siren blaring,  
A light flashing.  
It's like a car crash.  
All is calm until that semi roars down the road, slamming into me.  
The happy is demolished.  
It turns to ash as the fire begins to climb up my skin.  
The blaze is extinguished by the rain running down my face.  
The rain stops suddenly, leaving numbness that I cannot shake.  
There I stand  
Alone.  
I stand in the desert until the rain returns,  
until the fire reignites,  
until I am left in a crumbled heap upon the floor.  
Waiting for the tow truck to drag the totaled cars away.  
I wish there was a simply a warning.  
A siren blaring.  
A light flashing.



Hannah Burney

# The Joy in Your Suffering

Rachel Green

A flower breathes, enslaved to its roots.  
Embracing its journey, a short-lived pursuit.  
From seed to seedling the fern-green stem begins,  
Intertwined in the soil to stay grounded against the wind,  
Incoming storms of sleet and hail, the flower may bend.  
But does not break; it's tough within its epidermis, its skin.

We know it does not think on its own because a flower should live  
until fully grown  
A tradition commenced as a seed is planted and seen through the lens  
of a black and white candid.  
Through seasons, it is seen until covered by snow, a flower comes  
and a flower goes.  
Imagine the children out at play, stumbling in the flowers dismay –  
they swayed.  
Red rover relays – the flowers tough enemy and blessed friend,  
Flowers, overlooked and trampled, they watch the innocent grin.

Spring to the future now, a boy and girl locked in each other's stare  
Laughter in the background, love in the air – he places the daisy in her long,  
coarse hair.  
But after all this is still unfair.  
The skinny, green sprout within the ground is yanked and tugged  
until unbound,  
It breaks the seal for love appeal, as one life is lost another is found.  
A girlfriend is given a treasure to keep as a field of daisies begins to weep.  
Likewise, they sacrifice for the growing juvenile. A goodbye in exchange  
for a kind-hearted smile;

Uprooted in to a child's arms – meaning no harm.  
In time, we see the flower lose its charm.  
It cannot stay, it withers away.  
Much like these thoughts going astray.

They should remain in my head, for when they leave they are meant for dead.

In my mind they are planted to grow and thrive but once they live,  
they begin to die.

Some to keep and some to not, straying away from paper where they will rot.

### **Tenacity**

The sun still shines when the clouds cover it,  
And so will I.



Skyler Smith



# And So I Wept

Rachel Green

I sit. I think. I weep.

We're all imbeciles – all of us with inner battles to fight entranced in the labyrinth. There you'll see me as I sit. As I think. As I weep.

I am living in a world with a pair of eyes that feel despair and ears that cry at the sound of ignorance. I crawl in and out of my skin each day. I bite my tongue when others think out loud and swallow the wisdom my heart craves to share.

I hide my contrasted way of life and cover it with *Christianity*. I carry burdens that I did not ask for – of the sick, the orphaned, the mentally-ill, the addiction-ridden. I carry these not because they are my own but because God's people struggle with them and we [Christians] neglect them.

What I will tell you, now, is that Christianity, the belief, is not for the clever, the intuitive, the perspicacious – but rather is for the simple-minded, the naïve, the gullible. And I suppose that's okay.

I find myself with a strong faith in God but feeling suffocated by the burdens that my fellow Christians refuse to tend to. However, no matter how unbelievably patsy the church becomes I will go and I will attend for the sake of the greater good, for those who can't see past their feeble-mindedness.

It is either that this whole world understands what I have been feeling and are feeling it too, but by fear are just faking it OR God sent us to this world to experience it a little differently.

I am not here to simply occupy the minds of the common people, but to seek those who cannot, to give refuge to those who cannot believe in church, who haven't even been designed to. I am here – we are here for a reason.

I have a purpose, too, and it is different than the those of my teammates and classmates. It is one that will go unknown and one that will be difficult to follow. I, too, have dreams, dreams to reach those entangled between this life and the life they came from, in which they will return to – we will return to.

So, I will serve like others serve and do as others do until I cannot do anymore and I will move on, for I must occupy my mind, too. Otherwise, I will sit. I will think. I will weep. And I am. And I do. And I don't. And I can't. And I won't. And I will.

And.

# The Story of Jane

William Taylor

In the early morning hours of a cold December morning, eighty-four-year-old Jane Hewitt died in her sleep. Angels gathered 'round her bed to escort her on the journey. She had anticipated this day, reuniting with family and friends that had long since passed, for many years. At first, her heart was light and her mind at ease, but when the angels left her on the steps to heaven she felt a trace of sorrow and a tinge of disappointment. Jane had always dreamed of helping humanity, and making changes in the world. Now, she felt as if she had failed.

As she sat there on the steps, crying, God approached. He lifted Jane to her feet and explained that he knew why she was crying. He assured her that, even though she had not understood how, she had helped to make the world a better place. He took her hands, and straightaway she remembered the little boy that had lost his parents in the supermarket. Jane, who was a cashier at the time, sat the little boy onto her counter and dried his tear stained face. She announced over the intercom that there were two lost parents somewhere in the store, and that Jeremy was waiting for them at the check-out counter. Jane's heart lightened when God showed her that little Jeremy had grown up to be a police officer, and had specialized in finding missing children; all because Jane cared enough to help him when he was lost.

Jane saw, in her mind's eye, the Thanksgiving Day that she has spent with an old friend. Jane had no one family to spend the holiday with, so she made up two plates of food and decided to go eat with her old friend. She saw that, just before she knocked on the door, her friend sat in the bedroom with tears in her eyes and a bottle of pills in her hand. Her friend was all alone and had no one, or thought that she had no one, who cared. She was ready to end her life, until she heard that knock at the door.

Jane's heart was finally light, and her conscious was clear. Still, God showed her more and more. She saw just how many lives that she had touched, and exactly how she had made an impact upon the world without even knowing. Upon entering the gates of Heaven she heard the words, "You have done well, my child."

# Wild Thing

Rebecca Sanders

I have never really liked a lot of the members of my mom's side of the family, because of certain things they have done. They've also never really done anything to make me feel like I'm even part of the family, and at this point I don't really want to be. Usually on the holidays my mom and I would go over to my "grandmother's" house for Christmas (minus my dad because he couldn't stand them). My mom always tried really hard to hold on to some idea of her "family" because she felt lost without them. I remember one Christmas when I was ten years old and I was super excited to open my presents from my "grandmother".

We sat down in a huge circle to open up presents. I remember watching my cousins open up their hair straighteners, their cute sweaters, and their scarves. I was imagining that I would receive the very same presents and I was so excited that I could barely contain myself. I looked at the present in my lap and I tore into the paper and to my utter disappointment it wasn't a hair straightener or a sweater, no, it wasn't even a scarf. It was a Valentine's Day Gorilla, that obnoxiously sang the song "Wild Thing", that my "grandmother" had probably gotten off the clearance rack the day after. I was utterly crushed. It broke my ten-year-old heart.

My "grandmother" looked at me and asked, "Don't you love it?"

I just stared at her for a second and ran to the bathroom and bawled my eyes out. Later on that night, she had the audacity to tell my mother that I was being a rude child later on that night. My mom tried to explain to her what she had done wrong but her mother refused to even acknowledge her cruelty. My cousins were always her favorite and they always would be. After that, we stopped going to her Christmas parties almost two years after that altogether. That Christmas wasn't the first time or the last time that she made that painfully clear. The following summer my mom sold my Christmas present at a yard sale and gave me the money for it, so at least I got something out of it.

# Feels like Drowning

Rebecca Sanders

I'm a horribly ironic conundrum,

Because I have my father analytical, and intelligent mind

While I received my mother's

Fragile and sad heart.

Do you have any idea how painful and silent it is

To be so deep

And

To

Drown

At

The

Bottom?

# When Did You Stop Believing in God?

Madison Porter

I stopped when my grandfather wasn't able to smile back anymore, when the light went out in his eyes and the fire died in my grandmother's along with him.

But she was still breathing.

I stopped when I saw my father's figure shake with sobs.

I stopped when my brother collapsed from the weight of his pain.

I stopped when my mother had to hold onto my hand just so she could *breathe again*.

My faith in god crumbled when the same girl who uttered "I love you" said, "I'll fix you."

My *faith* has been beaten, buried, shot, hung, and *burned at the stake*.

Do not tell me to keep the faith.

Do not tell me that this is God's work.

Do not tell me that God has a plan for me.

My *skin* revolted against itself, *against me*, time and time again

And what god was there to fix that?

Do not tell me to *count my blessings*.

My *blessings* don't go as far as a fist.

At this age, I shouldn't be *lucky* to be alive.

I should be *thriving*, not *surviving*.

I should be *f-ing happy*.

The God in me commits suicide *every time* someone who looks like me and loves like me *dies*, just for being who they are.

I have tried to believe again, but that gets harder when the number of deaths gets higher.

My skin decides to crawl every time I step into a church.

Rationally, I *know* that I've done nothing wrong.

But do *they* know that?

Do they know that I can feel their hatred before they even open their mouths?  
That I feel each hair on the back of my neck raise from their stares?  
Do they *know* that in a supposed place of God, I feel like I should apologize  
for my existence?

“But times have changed!”

And they *keep changing*, everywhere I turn I wonder if I’ll face prejudice or  
deliverance.

Like a white washed Russian roulette, their ignorance is the deadliest bullet.  
The *gun* being held to my head incessantly digging into my temple and dig-  
ging my *grave*.

Do you *know* what it’s like for someone to look at you, directly in the eyes,  
and tell you that you *do not exist*?

That, even if you did, you don’t ***deserve*** to continue?

The air in my lungs decides to still, like it’s following orders.  
My heart beats faster because it’s running away like I *wish* I *could*.  
My eyes water because I feel like I’m *drowning* in this.

Everyday, I wonder if there’s something (*anything*) out there.

I do not want peace.

I do not want salvation.

I do not want death.

I do not want to stop being *who I am*.

I just want one *good day*.

A day where I’m free to be myself, truly *me*, without fear.

A day where I don’t hear that another has been killed.

A day where everyone I *love* is smiling.

I don’t need *anything* else.

And if having that means not getting heaven?

**“*Burn in Hell.*”**

I’ll live with that.

# After Our New President

Madison Porter

In this nation if you're darker than a pink tinged tan, you're some sort of outlier.

You have to live up to another of the same color or pretend to bleach away your heritage.

Because of my skin tone, I'm supposedly a threat, a danger to them in their suburban paradise.

For generations after generations and lifetimes after lifetimes, if your skin looks like dirt, you *are dirt*.

We are suffocating.

We, I, can't breathe.

My hands are up, *please don't shoot*, there's no weapon in my hands, *only tears in my eyes* but you do not see that.

You see something else entirely.

You see the black of my skin and not the light of my heart and not all of me.

You barely see yourself.

The bright, shiny beacon of your perfect white privilege.

My brown seems to be too bitter for their mouths.

The sickly-sweet sugar is blinding me.

I wonder if they feel their teeth *rotting*.

When I say black lives matter, you might respond with all lives matter, white lives have *always mattered*, but for *once* this conversation *isn't about you*.

This is about people getting hurt, killed for something that they did not choose.

Just because the sun graced us a little more than you.

Because my melanin loved me so much, that I got more than you did.

Because we *shine* gold, copper, bronze, amber, *masterpiece*.

Both explosive patriotism and prejudice sound the same to my befallen ear.

Tomorrow is not a guarantee for people like me.

It's only skin, you say.

*"It is only skin."*

It is so much *more*.

It is tens of thousands of shades and tones being reddened and dirtied  
by something so stock still and scathingly *perfect*.

Do not take me away from my cities quite yet.

There is so much left to do.

I must pass on my knowledge but I'm too young to know much.

But, not young enough to stay alive.

I hope I live long enough for wisdom.

Who will tell those after me to keep their mouth shut and head down,  
just in case?

Who will tell them to make friends with the white girl?

Who will tell them to let her say "nigga" (no matter how much  
it bothers you)?

Who will tell them that you only survive by playing by *their* rules?

As a woman of color in America, I always need more time.

A few seconds is great, a few hours even better and if I make it  
to tomorrow, who do I thank?

Do I thank the system that kept their gun holstered for another day?

Do I thank the looks I get instead of the blows I receive?

Do I thank those who only whisper after the fact, barely delaying the next?

As of the night I wrote this, *at least 234* black people have been killed  
by police, just *this year*.

And we're still counting.

Who do I pray, beg, *plead* to not become a number?

Being brown and woman and gay and alive is the greatest act of rebellion  
I will ever do.

What have *you* done lately?





Skyler Smith

# Samsara

Charles Bowman

gravestones sequester fallen soldiers  
from living casualties of the last war.  
plastic flowers wilt, an artificial death.  
wind stirs a stew  
of conflicting notions; filial piety,  
patriotism <> gnawing sense of futility.  
dreams yawn in doorways,  
murmurs of an expectant crowd.  
tarmac troubled by the earth's  
imperceptible groaning, rumbles  
forecast of a sudden shift.  
patient wheels wait to turn.  
rust coats the mechanism  
but gears grind onward, regardless,  
all in the name of a restless progress.

# Pandora's Megaphone

Charles Bowman

The poor, we will  
Always have among us.  
But we take great care  
To keep them out of sight.  
Our acts of charity  
Serve us well to insulate,  
Bolster society's segregation –  
The wet nurse of our complacency.

“I can not walk among the poor.  
I just had this suit dry cleaned.  
Besides, that could get me killed.  
I'll just send them  
Some microwave popcorn instead.”

Faces become statistics.  
We dehumanize, marginalize  
At the expense of our humanity,  
buy clothes produced  
In sweatshops under armed guards  
Whose labels promise:  
“A portion of the proceeds  
Will be donated to children's charities.”

The hungry, homeless  
Are dog-food in the golden bowls  
Of pampered Pomeranians  
Wearing diamond-studded collars,  
Diamonds fished from rivers of blood  
By shaking hands,  
Palsied with disease/starvation.

The time for platitudes is over.  
Too long we have called men, women,  
Cruelty-wizened Children – The Voiceless

by refusing to hear them speak.  
It is time to extend  
Hands to outstretched hands,  
to hold the megaphone.

The world is rich.  
Even the deserts bloom, sometimes.  
There is enough for everyone's need.  
But there will Never  
Be enough for anyone's greed.

# Politics and a Toothache

Charles Bowman

this is the story of it –  
someone tries to sell  
the poison as the cure  
and always the abscess of regret  
politics and a toothache

the hollow hurt  
at the center of it all  
the junkyard dog  
gnawing the bones of hope  
politics and a toothache

weeds crack the sidewalk  
the good citizens shamble  
down nosy streets unaware  
they are collared and counted  
by politics and a toothache

the mouth is mangled mush  
molars, incisors, canines  
have long been pulled  
but the ache remains  
phantom, residual



Hannah Burney

Katie Brown

he called them to the sea  
a boundless tempest raging  
those of little faith witnessed it made still  
Jesu, Salvator Mundi  
made still for those to come

the storm eons absent  
a narrow path is made clear in the great calm  
free for any to choose  
the lamb says “come,”  
and the Faithful walk freely upon its surface

in blood-soaked robes of white  
achieving glory for the Kingdom  
built on streets of sundrenched water  
golden, shining  
as if there were nothing below

the Faithless guard the shore,  
blind snakes full of bones  
settled in ribs of dust,  
listlessly scoffing at those who march on  
toward a realm built only by faith

others, once Faithful, have fallen.

trapped in the depths below  
broken, lost, forgotten  
they who did not cry out  
forever gazing at a golden Kingdom  
just out of reach

those in between, though  
balance with unsure footing  
in a boat far from land

precarious over cascading depths,

watching those behind and below  
listening, waiting, with bated breath  
as the Faithful grin and beckon  
take courage don't be afraid

they know, though, they are lukewarm  
and cry for a faith stronger than water  
so they may stride through the gates of pearl  
arms outstretched to the blinding Son

but daring not to disturb the glittering mirror,  
lest the whole Kingdom fall,

here on still waters  
we wait.



## Notes on Contributors

Matthew Abel is a Christian Ministries major from Elizabethtown, Kentucky. He is currently a part-time United Methodist pastor; after graduation he plans to pursue a Masters of Divinity and ordination as an Elder in the UMC.

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Cassie Wheeler is from Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, and graduated in December with a Human Services and Counseling Degree (with a minor in Psychology). Most of her writing is inspired by the struggles she has faced (and overcome) because of her mental illness – Bipolar Disorder.

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"What Do You Do with a Drunken Sailor?": Drinking in Mardi

"He [made]. . . wine that makes glad the heart of man" (Psalm 104: 14-15).

From almost its first to last page, references to alcohol and drinking flourish and flow throughout Mardi. There are so many allusions to alcohol and its consumption in this work that the narrator could be said to be on a book-long drunk. The voyage through Mardi is a voyage as seen through a bottle dimly. As David Reynolds aptly notes, "It would seem that Melville in Mardi is stepping beyond the dark-temperance mode. . ." (148).

Mardi is not only just another Lost Weekend; most of its main characters are lost in an alcoholic haze in the Pacific lasting for weeks, not days. The narrator philosophizes in Chapter 3 that "In heaven... sociality ever prevail... and monk Luther, over a flagon of old nectar, talk over old times with Pope Leo" (13). Melville himself envisioned "Paradise," as he noted in a [June 1?] 1851 letter to Hawthorne, to be a place where he and Hawthorne could "smuggle a basket of champagne there (I won't believe in a Temperance Heaven). . ."

(Correspondence 191). The major characters in Mardi also subscribe to the request Melville asked of Hawthorne in a 29 June 1851 letter: "Have ready a bottle of brandy, because I always feel like drinking that heroic drink when we talk ontological heroics together" (Correspondence 196). As Edwin Miller notes: "The paradise Melville imagined with Hawthorne was to consist of an unending supply of champagne and ontological

chatter. In his fiction the orgies are oral Edens. . . " (263).

After the narrator and the Skyeman, Jarl, escape from the Arcturian by whaleboat and land on the disabled brig Parki, the narrator finds "an aromatic cask of prime old Otard" (106) in the Parki's hold. In this chapter, entitled "Otard," the narrator says he not only "found the Otard," but also "drank thereof; finding it, moreover, most pleasant to the palate, and right cheering to the soul" (106). Although he also admits that his "next impulse was to share my prize with my shipmates," he knows that "Jarl was prone to overmuch bibing. . . . and consider, I beseech, that the most capacious-souled fellows, for that very reason, are the most apt to be too liberal in their libations; since, being so large-hearted, they hold so much more good cheer than others" (106-07). The association of the imbibing of alcohol with having a "capacious" heart is thus sown.

Although the narrator is "almost tempted to roll over the cask on its bilge, remove the stopper, and suffer its contents to mix with the foul water at the bottom of the hold," on further reflection, he notes, "But no, no: What: dilute the brine with the double distilled soul of the precious grape? Hafiz himself would have haunted me!" (107) He rationalizes that "it might come into play medicinally; and Paracelsus himself stands sponsor for every cup drunk for the good of the abdomen. So at last, I determined to let it remain where it was: visiting it occasionally, by myself, for inspection" (107). The narrator convinces himself that if men as famous as Hafiz and Paracelus

made beneficial use of alcohol, then so should he.

When the narrator, who by now has renamed himself Taji, and Jarl land on King Media's island of Odo, Taji describes "Their Morning Meal," the title of Chapter 59, as

More glorious goblets than these for the drinking of wine, went never from hand to mouth. Capacious as pitchers, they almost superseded decanters.

Now, in a tropical climate, fruit, with light wines, forms the only fit meal of a morning. And with orchards and vineyards forever in sight, who but the Hetman of the Cossacs would desire more? We had plenty of the juice of the grape. (181)

Before "the repast concluded," King Media "called for another gourd of wine..." (181). King Media and company clearly believe that there is nothing wrong in imbibing alcohol with the first meal in the morning. Taji also soon discovers that "Odo was famed... for its grapes, whose juices prompted many a laugh and many a groan" (190). He also learns that the people of Odo bury their dead in the ocean, not the soil, for, "said these Islanders: 'Why sow corruption in the soil which yields us life? We should not pluck our grapes from over graves'" (192). There is an underlying philosophy of Carpe Diem here in the Mardian consumption of alcoholic beverages: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.

After King Media, Taji, and company decide to embark on a voyage throughout the Mardian archipelago so that Media can visit the various kingdoms, and Taji can search for Yillah, one of the first things that King Media does after the group embarks is to tell his servant Vee-Vee, to "bring us that gourd of wine; so, pass it round with cups" (209). King Media christens

his journey by canoe with alcohol.

As the group makes its first landing on Juam, again, as before, the voyagers' breakfast included "fruit and wine freighted..." (246). At dinner with the King of Juam, Donjalolo, in Chapter 84, "Taji Sits Down to Dinner with Five-and-Twenty Kings, and a Royal Time They Have," Taji notes that Donjalolo had not

shunned a wild wine, called Morando.

A slave now appearing with a bowl of this beverage, it circulated freely.

Not to gainsay the truth, we fancied the Morando much. A nutty, pungent flavor it had; like some kinds of arrack distilled in the Philippine isles. And a marvelous effect did it have, in dissolving the crystallization of the brain; leaving nothing but precious little drops of good humor, beading round the bowl of the cranium. (254)

Taji, here, accurately describes the intoxicating effects of alcohol. The Morando affects him as if he were experiencing an internal massage. He also displays his knowledge about alcoholic drinks from other countries.

The second half of this Chapter's title is "and a royal Time they have," and indeed they do, as the following scene reveals:

But soon, the Morando, in triumphant decanters, went round, reeling like barks before a breeze....

Nor did the wine cease flowing. That day the Juam grape did bleed; that day the tendril ringlets of the vines, did all uncurl; and grape by grape, in sheer dismay, the sun-ripe clusters dropped. Grape-glad were five-and-twenty kings; five-and-twenty kings were merry....

The Royal Particular was pressed upon me, by the now jovial Donjalolo. With his own sceptered hand charging my flagon to the brim, he declared his despotic pleasure, that I should quaff it to the last lingering

globule. No hard calamity, truly; for the drinking of this wine was as the singing of a mighty ode, or frenzied lyric to the soul.

"Drink, Taji," cried Donjalolo, "drink deep. In this wine a king's heart is dissolved. Drink long; in this wine lurk the seeds of the life everlasting. Drink deep; drink long; thou drinkest wisdom and valor at every draught. Drink forever, oh Taji, for thou drinkest that which will enable thee to stand up and speak out before mighty Oro himself."

"Borabolla," he added, turning round upon a domed old king at his left, "Was it not the god Xipho, who begged of my great-great-grandsire a draught of this same wine, saying he was about to beget a hero?"

"Even so. And thy glorious Marzilla produced trice valiant Ononna, who slew the giants of the reef."

"Ha, ha, hear'st that, oh Taji?" And Donajallolo drained another cup. (256-7)

Thus, alcohol not only improves one's relationship with one's God (Oro), but also improves one's reproductive capabilities in producing heroes. The "potent contents" of the Morando improve one's own sexual potency in order that one can not only better procreate but also better relate to one's own Creator.

As this "royal time" concludes, "Donjalolo, holding on high his blood-red goblet, burst forth with the following paeon to Dionysus as it were:

Ha, ha, gods and kings; fill high, one and all;  
Drink, drink! shout and drink! mad respond to the call!  
Fill fast, and fill full; 'gainst the goblet ne'ersin;  
Quaff there, at high tide, to the uttermost rim:--  
Flood-tide, and soul-tide to the brim!

Who with wine in him fears? who thinks of his cares?  
Who sighs to be wise, when wine in him flares?  
Water sinks down below, in currents full slow;  
But wine mounts on high with its genial glow:--  
Welling up, till the brain overflow!  
As the spheres, with a roll, some fiery of soul,  
Others golden, with music, revolve around the pole;

So let our cups, radiant with many hued wines,  
Round and round in groups circle, our Zodiac's Signs:-  
Round reeling, and ringing their chimes!

Then drink, gods and kings; wine merriment brings;  
It bounds through the veins; there, jubilant sings.  
Let it ebb, then, and flow; wine never grows dim;  
Drain down that bright side at the foam beaded rim:-  
Fill up, every cup, to the brim! (258)

Donjalolo's drinking song is a drinking song par excellence. It offers an abbreviated version of the epicurean philosophy found in Edward Fitzgerald's The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, a work that Melville admired so much that he owned two copies of it (Sealts 203).

Taji then comments on how wine's effects democratize the revellers: "Mad and crazy revelers, how ye drank and roared! but kings no more: vestures loosed; and scepters rolling on the ground" (259). Drinking, then, induces a fellow democratic feeling amongst its participants. The social act of drinking together brings friends (as well as enemies) together. Drinking with one's mates is viewed as being the epitome of sociality and conviviality.

In the next chapter, "After Dinner," Taji notes that "the thought of that mad merry feasting steals over my soul till I faint" (260). Donjalolo rejoined the company, "Not, however, again to make merry; but socially to sleep in company with his guests; for, together they had all got high, and together they must all lie low" (260-1). As the company departs, Donjalolo and Juam, King Donjalolo's parting words are: "Thou wine art the friend of the friendless, though a foe to all. King Media, let us drink. More cups!--And now, farewell" (261).



Upon next landing on the island of Ohonoo, again "the red wine went round and round like a foaming bay horse in the ring; yet we marked, that despite the stimulus of the day's good sport, and the stimulus of his brave good cheer. . ." (274).

When the group next visit "That Jolly Island Mondolo," where King Bello presides, "we looked up to endless rows of brown calabashes," as Taji states,

and trenchers readily accessible by means of cords; promissory of ample cheer as regiments of old ham in a baronial refectory... the gourds containing arrack, suspended neck downward, were within easy reach where they swung. Seeing all these indications of hard roystering; like a cautious young bridegroom at his own marriage of merry-making, Taji stood on his guard. . . . Jarl, however, yielding to importunity, and unmindful of the unities of time and place, went freely about, from gourd to gourd, concocting in him a punch" (287).

Taji is also diplomatically discrete in admiring King Borabolla's corpulence, which he partially derived from drinking. Taji notes that all "fat men"

are as ships from Teneriffe; swimming deep, full of old wine, and twenty steps down into their holds.... Lake Eries of wine might have run through his great mill during the full term of his mortal career. (290-1)

As Taji further notes, King Bellow had a "disc of a face joyous as the South Side of Madeira in the hilarious season of grapes" (291). Again, as Donjalolo had provided for his guests, King Borabolla also provides a feast for his visitors where

In the middle of the feast, a huge skin of wine was brought in.... Brimming a ram's horn, Borabolla bowed to his silent guest, and thus spoke---"In this wine, which yet smells of the grape, I pledge you, my reverend old toper, my lord Capricornus; you alone have enough; and here's full skins for the rest!" (291)

During the feast, the Viking, Jarl, and the Polynesian,

Borabolla, although constitutionally, temperamentally, geographically, and culturally very different, become fast friends. Taji speculates that

the affinity between Borabolla and Jarl was promoted by the warmth of the wine that they drank at this feast. For of all blessed fluids, the juice of the grape is the greatest foe to cohesion. True, it tightens the girdle; but then it loosens the tongue, and opens the heart. In sum, Boraboola loved Jarl; and Jarl, pleased with this sociable monarch, for all his garrulity, esteemed him the most sensible old gentleman and king he had as yet seen in Mardi. (292)

Thus, Taji reinforces the fact here that alcohol promotes intercultural relations and understanding.

As the group visits the island of Marramoo, it comes upon an image of the god Mujo whose "abdomen" is "a cellar, thick-stored with gourds of old wine," and as Taji further explains, "As we stood, a strange subterranean sound was heard, mingled with a gurgling as of wine being poured. Looking up, we beheld, through arrow-slits and port-holes, three masks, cross-legged seated in the abdomen, and holding stout wassail" (344). Even the gods are full to the brim, at least full to the abdomen, with alcohol. When the group next visit Hevanea, there is made mention of another god, Nadam, who "presides over love and wine" (353).

As the flotilla journeys on during the night to the next island, Media "filled his flagon fuller than his wont, and drank, and drank, and pledged the stars" (431). And as "Noon came as we sailed... cups and calabashes, calumets... were passed round; and we were all very merry and mellow indeed, ... now a swallow of wine to wash down a precept..." (432). When the group lands

at Diradna, it

found our hosts Hello and Piko... now and then drinking some claret-red wind from an ivory bowl, too large to have been wrought from an elephant's tusk. They were in glorious spirits.... Wide round them lay empty calabashes, all feathered, red dyed, and betassled, trickling red wine from their necks... and by way of chasing away the blues, called for some good old stuff that was red. (443-4)

And before the throne of Helo and Piko "were many gourds of wine..." (446).

The next chapter, opens with the line, "Arrived at the Sign of the Skulls, we found the illustrious lord seigniors at rest from their flight, and once more quaffing their claret..." (452) Chapter 147, "They Land at Dominora," concludes with "Bello, filling high his can, and clasping Media's palm, drank everlasting amity with Odo. So over their red cups, the two kings forgot their differences..." (477).

In Chapter 151, entitled "Babbalanja Philosophizes, and my Lord Media passes round the Calabashes," Media entertains Babbalanja to drink:

Vee-Vee another calabash! Fill up, Mohi; wash down wine with wine. Your cup, Babbalanja; any lees? Flood them over, then;... fill up, I say, Babbalanja; you are no philosopher, if you stop at the tenth cup; endurance is the test of philosophy all Mardi over; drink, I say, and make us wise by precept and example. (488)

Babbalaja, "lifting his cup," replies:

My lord, when wild with much thought, 'tis to wine I fly, to sober me; its magic fumes breathe over me like the Indian summer, which steeps all nature in repose. (489)

As the flotilla lands on Vivenza, they visit the central temple there, and Taji notes that from

a mighty great gourd, yellow as gold, and jolly round like a pumpkin in October,... flowed a tide of red wine. And before it, stood plenty of paunches being filled therewith like portly stone jars at a fountain. (516)

As for the inhabitants of Vivenza, "Like strong new wine they worked violently in becoming clear" (518).

As the company sail south from Vivenza, Media says to his servant:

Ho! Vee-Vee; have you no cooling beverage? none of that golden wine distilled from torrid grapes, and then sent northwards to be cellared in an iceberg? That wine was placed among our stores. Search, search the crypt, little Vee-Vee! Ha, I see it!--that yellow gourd!--Come: drag it forth, my boy. Let's have the amber cups; so: pass them round:--fill all! Taji! my demi-god, up heart!... Ha, ha! would that we floated in this glorious stuff, instead of this pestilent brine.--Hark ye! were I to make Mardi now, I'd have ... every ocean wine vat! I'd stock every cavern with choice oldspirits, and make three surplus suns to ripen the grapes all year round. Let's drink to that!--Brimmers! So: may the next Mardi that's made, be one entire grape; and mine the squeezing! (540)

Media hopes that the oceans and lands become elements that only produce alcohol; instead of the basic four elements--earth, air, wind, and fire-- Media, if he had his wish, would reduce all the elements of the universe to a single one: Alcohol.

When the group next land on the island of Vonovona, one of the first things that its King, Abrazza, exclaims is "Wine!" and he then "commanded all, meanwhile, to drink his old, old wine" (591). Taji compares Abrazza to "jolly Bacchus, like a recruit with a mettlesome rifle, staggering back as he fires off the bottles of vivacious champagne" (604). While at the obligatory banquet, Babbalaja calls Ludwig the Fat "King of cups and Tokay" and "a demi-john of a demi-god!" (606).

Abrazza responds:

"This way with the wine; pass it along, my dear Media.... Pass around the Tokay!.... Round and round with the flagons! Let them disappear like mile-stones on a race-course!" (609).

As the group embarks again and sails under a full moon, Media says, "Ha, ha! let us laugh. Ho, Vee-Vee! awake; quick, boy,--some wine! and let us make glad, beneath the glad moon. Come, laugh; will no one quaff wine, I say?" (612) Babbalanja accepts Media's offer:

"Fill me a brimmer. Ah! but this wine leaps through me like a panther. Ay, let us laugh: let us roar: let us yell! What, if I was sad just now? Life is an April day, that both laughs and weeps in a breath. But whoso is wise, laughs when he can. Men fly from a groan, but run to a laugh. Vee-Vee! your gourd. My lord, let me help you. Ah, how it sparkles! Cups, cups. Vee-Vee, more cups!.... Vee-Vee! bring on your gourds!" (613).

The chapter concludes with the words: "far down into Media, a Tivoli of wine" (614).

Towards Mardi's conclusion, Taji narrator observes that even Queen Hautia, his nemesis, plies him with wine. She says to him: "Damsels, give him wine to drink.... press him with your cups.... Ho, wine!" (646). The chapter concludes with Taji saying, "So, three cups in hand I held; drank wine, and laughed; and half-way met Queen Hautia's blandishments" (646). Hautia later tells Taji: "Ho! wine, wine, wine!.... Taji! Taji!--as a berry, that name is juicy in my mouth!" (650).

In his unsigned review of Mardi that appeared in the July 1849 issue of the United States Magazine and Democratic Review, William A. Jones notes the continuous references to drinking in Mardi and also presciently notes in the review's last

paragraph one of Melville's continual major themes throughout all of his major stories, novels, and poetry, especially

Clarel:

We claim not perfection for our author--we have a few things against the author of Mardi even. He has given us real pictures of a very bad world; and its worthless babble, its vulgar smoking and drinking, appear very natural and life-like in reflection. Perhaps we ought not to complain of the frequent turning of the calabashes, any more than of the politics and religion described. . . .

With all his humanity, Mr. Melville seems to lack absolute faith that God had a purpose in creating the world. He seems to think that the race is in a vicious circle, from which we cannot escape --that what has been must be again forever. (182-83)

Melville may have thought--as he read the final paragraph of this review--And, yes, this is precisely why the human "race" drinks.

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## The Legend of Orpheus

The ancient Greek mind was both subtle and skillful and the legend of Orpheus (pronounced **or' - fee - us**) amply epitomizes this. Orpheus ('he of the river bank') was the son of Apollo, god of poetry, and the Muse Calliopé ('she of the fair voice'), who gave birth to him on the banks of the Hebrus River in Thrace. Such was his power of verse and song, he could move the trees and rocks and tame wild beasts. He was given the gift of the lyre by Apollo. When his wife Eurydice died from a serpent's bite during their wedding celebration, Orpheus, in his grief, descended to the underworld – no easy task for a mortal – to attempt to win her back from the land of the dead.

Arriving at the judgment seat of Persephone and Hades, rulers of the underworld, Orpheus began to sing his lament for Eurydice. So sweet was his voice that the dead, including Eurydice, flocked to hear him, weeping for the beauty of the upper world, which was lost to them. Persephone and Hades were so moved, they chose to let Orpheus take Eurydice back to the world of daylight, on condition that he not turn to look at her until they had reached the upper world. Hermes, the guide of souls, led them on the arduous journey back to the land of the living.

With his foot on the very threshold of the day-lit world, Orpheus, whether from impatience or anxiety, turned around too soon – Eurydice was not yet out of the realm of the dead. Because of the edict of Persephone and Hades was irrevocable, Hermes was forced to lead Eurydice back to the eternal darkness. Though Orpheus wandered for days through the dark caverns and tunnels of the netherworld, pitifully calling out his wife's name, he never found her again.

