

# ORPHEUS

The Literary Journal  
of  
Lindsey Wilson College



Vol. XXII Spring 2020 No. 1

# ORPHEUS

Spring 2020  
Volume XXII No. 1

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SPRING 2020



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

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## Editorial and Standards Policy

The editorial staff of *Orpheus* welcomes and encourages submissions of poetry, short fiction, creative nonfiction, artwork, and photography from any current Lindsey Wilson College student. While preserving the freedom of creative expression, responsible standards of decency regarding language and images are carefully observed. The editors reserve the right to edit both the form and, in rare cases, the content of submissions. Final decisions regarding acceptance or rejection of questionable content are reserved for the editorial staff in consultation with the journal's faculty advisor.

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.

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.

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

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## Preface

The 22<sup>nd</sup> volume of *Orpheus* bids forth a new decade through a celebration of existence and a pondering of its meaning. As has become the tradition for this particular entity, diversity and variety are celebrated through themes of conflict as well as unity revealing to a reader that while there is a contrast between oneself and the author, one can often find a resemblance between themselves and the themes presented in various artforms. While reading the submissions for this year's journal, as well as seeing how the photographs fit with the writers' content, a theme began to emerge. Many of the students were concerned with issues of the mind and the body and expressed these feelings through works of poetry, short fiction, and short non-fiction; however, some students proceeded to discuss notions exceeding what one would consider simply within the confines of the human mind and body. For this reason, the theme expanded to a more complex summary of the works: "The Physical and The Metaphysical."

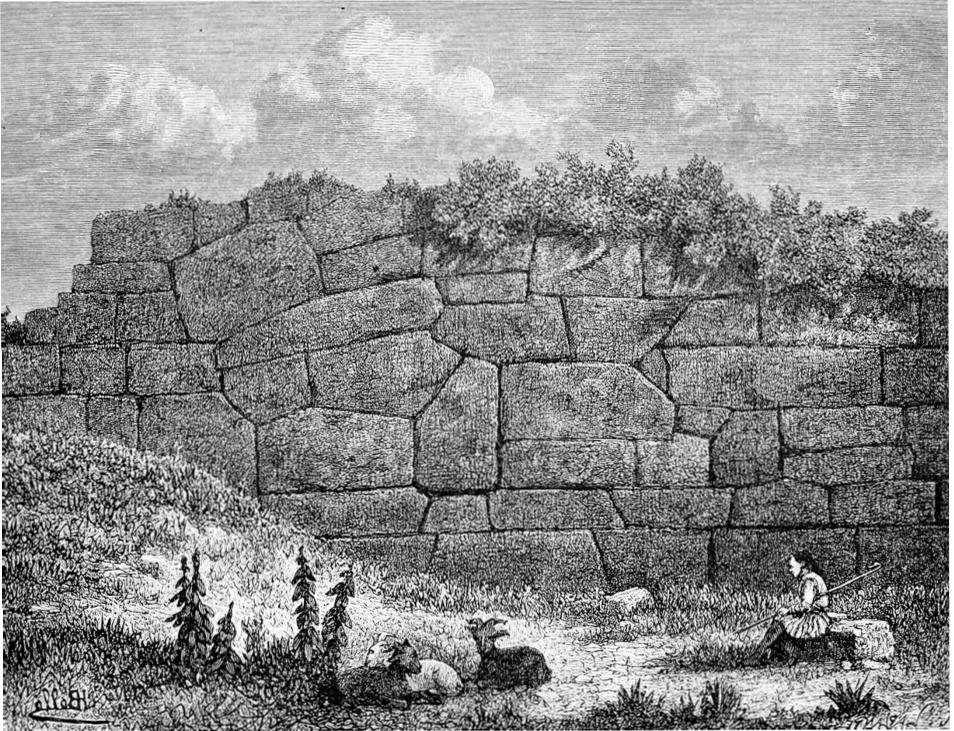
Physical is an adjective describing something that has "material existence." Certainly, writers in the "The Physical" section of the 22<sup>nd</sup> edition are concerned with a number of aspects regarding the landscape of the earth and the human body, both focuses highly concerned with one's material existence. Among the themes students address, nature's beauty, climate change, perceptions of the body—both damaging and empowering—, and physical experiences with the body become prevalent topics that are relayed through the mediums of poetry and short writing compositions.

Metaphysical is a philosophic notion examining facets of reality such as the mind and its relation to reality. Pieces included in the second half of the journal, entitled "The Metaphysical," narrate the individual's subjective experience of the mind that shapes the perception of reality in their work. A pair of the works deal with the psychological effects of living as an individual within a dystopia while other writers have taken an approach of discussing experiences with adversity in personal and observed settings. Others in this section have chosen to address how religion shapes their reality, and, similarly, this is done with works regarding personal and national histories as well.

Through this thematic lens, I hope the complexities of our student submissions are further revealed. Happy reading.



# The Physical



\*"Pelasgian Wall" Stock Photo

## A Precious Goodbye, A Lovely Hello

Chyiann Sexton

I think about the sunset a lot. How beautiful it is, with the wonderful colors and the radiant warmth. Sometimes I watch it; I watch as the sun, what a marvelous beast, willingly sinks down below the horizon in a dazzling display of artistic expression. What is most amazing is that it is never truly the same. One day the sun itself may be a spirited yellow surrounded by deep purples and vibrant pinks, illuminating the clouds lingering in the evening sky. On another day the sun may be dull, allowing the sky to shine a crystal blue, barely there, yellow rays dancing through it making it so bright it's impossible not to look. Some days the sun may be lit a burning orange marking the sky likewise, with yellows and oranges and reds, making the limitless sky above seem like a fire designed to warm the bodies on the earth below.

It's like, for just a moment, everything ceases in awe of the beauty displayed on the most natural canvas, untouched by human hands. It is possibly the most gorgeous sight many may ever witness. There is both a peace and an energy to each sunset that could never be achieved elsewhere. It makes you wonder, why does the sky do these incredible things at days end? The truth: it's not the sky at all. It's the sun saying farewell as it makes way for the night moon. The sun spends all day deciding what the inhabitants of earth need. Perhaps they need the soothing relief that comes from seeing a magenta sky with lavender clouds. Maybe they need the soft energy they will receive when they see the lightly colored sky swallowing up a distantly shining sun. Or possibly they require the warmth that comes from a smoking fire up above.

Each day the sun knows it will have to fall out of sight, but it wants to give something to the people it admires from its perch overhead. So, as gold gives way to the silver of the moon, it paints a beautiful picture across the still lit sky as it sinks below the horizon line, making sure that, just before it completely disappears, it gives off one bright flash of burning light. It sends out a promise that, come morning, it will rise up again in another glorious display of lights, colors, and utter magic.

How wonderful. I mean, each night the sun gives us a most precious goodbye, but each morning it wakes us with a lovely hello. So, yes, I think about the sunset often enough, but I think about the sunrise even more so.

## Mindless Mirth

Dalton Robertson

You give us life, we tear you down.  
Young or old, we don't care.  
After all, what's a forest to a town?

Endless peril.  
Countless signs.  
We are feral.  
We are blind.

Rising seas.  
Raging fire.  
Our planet's disease  
is our desire.

For now it's all mindless mirth  
until our children have no Earth.



Candyce Counts

Earthing  
Briann Smith

Trees surround me here  
hugging my soul tightly, and  
I am not afraid.



Kaylie Butler

Holy Wood  
Joanna Tidei

The wood begs a walk. Whispering golden leaves  
lure passing strangers singing a siren's ballad.  
I, unthinking, turn aside from my road.  
Dank and musty, cool air greets me, grasps me.  
Underfoot I trod the long dead remains  
of summer's splendor and then behold  
an arching canopy of ancient oak,  
supported by silver columns of birch.  
Idly I wonder whether this wood  
lulls or frightens me with its strange song  
sung by groaning pines and distant streams.  
The wood rots and decays below a blanket  
of vibrant hues and flitting birds  
leaving me to wonder whether it dies or grows.  
With each passing moment, the shadows deepen,  
the lights glisten. Mosses always brighten  
as the wood grows dim in the eve of the day.  
It calls me far along twisted paths that bring a chill  
and through golden clearings filled with sun.  
Fear and favor both depart as the wood  
sings me deeper, closer to its very soul.  
Its heart is unveiled before me and then I know.  
These golden halls and soaring arches speak  
of a cathedral, consecrated in its youth,  
silent in holiness, sacred ground.  
I was mistaken. No siren's song heard I.  
The sound that drew me on was the soft chant  
of priests, singing in their leafy cloisters  
taking wing as I came near, leading me deeper.  
Dew studded altars and moss-covered pews  
invite me to stay. Holy soil and burnished branches  
exhort me to kneel and perhaps even to pray.  
The wood is the Lord's, and I a postulant.

## Wildflower

Dalton Robertson

How is it that the sun rays shine brighter,  
the rain showers fall harder,  
for a single, wildflower?

Should it be for chance?  
I say not; for take a glance-  
come down from your tower...  
to behold my wildflower.

One amongst many by name,  
this rings true.  
Yet from your tower, down you came,  
to see what the wildflower has for you...

If it is love you seek, I pray you away,  
for this wildflower is mine,  
and here our love stays.  
Forever, now, until the end of time.



Candyce Counts

## Reflected Worth

Kaylie Butler

8 years old,  
wet hair, full of salt and sand.  
She stares at her reflection  
disgusted.

She pokes  
the skin on her stomach.  
She tugs  
and she pulls.  
She tries to sculpt  
the thing she hates  
most into something beautiful.

She prays to God  
one day she too  
will be lovable.



Esther Olson

## Small

Tara McGuire

There are days I want to write about something other than my eating disorder,  
but how can I when I wear  
my eating disorder like mismatched socks?  
Not always visible but always there,  
recovery is the hardest word in my vocabulary.  
On most days it sounds like a lie  
before it ever leaves my mouth.  
Muscle memory is a funny thing—  
the way your body can remember stuff that you forgot you learned.  
My muscle memory is a constant reminder  
of what it feels like to be empty.  
My cup is always half empty.  
It's never been up for debate.  
In my family, food is something we sometimes lack.  
So my cup is always half empty,  
even when everyone else's is full.  
How do I tell my mother I am half empty?  
How do I tell her that her worry about food should not be wasted  
on someone who doesn't want food?  
Someone who is just going to get rid of the food she worried herself  
sick to get?

### *Sick.*

The doctors call it a disease.  
They say it's not contagious.  
But it started as one thing and has now spread to all things.  
I am somehow empty,  
which is weird because I am full of all my organs,  
all my blood.  
Sometimes I wonder how much I'd weigh without my organs,  
without my blood—  
which isn't weird to me because I always wonder how much I weigh  
—  
with a jacket on,  
with a jacket off,  
after an apple,  
before an apple,  
while chewing each bite of an apple.  
I wonder how many calories are in the skin of an apple,  
which makes me wonder how many pounds are in the skin of me,

which makes me feel crazy,  
but I'm not supposed to call my mental illness crazy.  
I feel crazy because I have a mental illness that is crazy  
which makes other people think I'm crazy.  
This is a never-ending cycle of crazy  
which is to say my mental illness is a never-ending cycle  
of wanting to lose weight.

I cannot pinpoint the exact moment my brain decided that my body  
was too heavy.

Sometimes my body is too heavy.

Sometimes it's too heavy to get out of bed.

This makes my brain too heavy

which then makes me think of how much I'd weigh without my  
brain,

which also makes me think that I can't think without my brain

and now I'm confused.

I'm confused

because how can I be heavy without feeling heavy only thinking I'm  
heavy?

Do you understand?

Sometimes I understand.

Most of the time I don't.

I think that's the hardest part.

Not understanding your obsession with being small,

only wondering when you'll get there.

Most days I wonder what it's like to be thin.

*Fragile.*

*Delicate.*

I wonder what it's like to not have to think about size,

because in my head it's a constant conversation

that I don't want to be a part of,

but there are no places to run,

no excuses to make up.

It's as if my brain already knows I can't leave.

Sometimes I wish I could leave or

like the seasons

I could change:

like autumn leaves,

Spring daisies,

the first snowfall,

and summer days,

and everyone would still somehow think I was beautiful.



Esther Olson

## Honey and Fire

Rebecca Barnes

I will not always pierce the night  
With the brilliance of my shine  
My glow is soft and golden

I may not quake your very core  
With each measured, labored line  
My voice is small and broken

It will take space.  
It will take time.

Though I am not of lucent pyre  
To learn soft glows are beauty too  
The honey and the fire

a letter  
Joanna Tidei

Today is one of the lovely days, and she is one of the lovely girls.  
She keeps the earth in her pocket and the sky in her heart.  
She breathes the sunshine and drinks the breeze,  
growing every day more wild, more free.  
She dances the rain and sings the stars.  
There's wisdom in her eyes and fire in her soul,  
strength in her hands  
and compassion in her voice.  
She laughs through life,  
and cries sometimes,  
but always rolls up her sleeves and moves on.  
You know her.  
Yes, you know her.  
She is your mother,  
your sister,  
your kin.  
She is the girl over there.  
The one right here.  
She is your rival,  
your neighbor,  
your friend,  
and now, my dear, go and find a mirror.  
Gaze long and know this too:  
she  
is  
you.



Esther Olson



Kaylie Butler

## Dissuasion from a Spirit

Dollee Porter

The thick Kentucky air sat sweetly  
like honeysuckle scent,  
the construction workers' smoke ensnared  
in its cloudy weight.  
I swear there is a ghost in these walls.  
She *whispers* things to me as we creep  
towards the witching hour.  
What does she tell me?  
She tells me *autumns gotten too short.*  
*There will be no autumn left.*  
*When she was a girl she had petticoat breezes,*  
*and harvest days stretched longer than her 6-foot brothers reach.*  
She tells me she wishes the man at my front desk  
*would stop consuming me with his eyes;*  
*He is a no-good suitor.*  
*His presence is like the wolf*  
*in an old fable.*  
She tells me,  
*Woman that ain't no man.*  
He tells me that "girls are nicer in the south,"  
his smile predatory  
to bear his hungry teeth.  
He means that girls are easier  
in the south.  
All the weary travelers are just like this man,  
bags set down with a thunk,  
meeting me at my hotel desk.  
They keep telling me "don't get old" as small talk  
as if they know I dread my inability to get younger.  
The ghost continues to tell me,  
*Don't stop getting older or you'll end up like me.*

## Countdown

Kassidee Bunch

Three minutes and twenty-seven seconds. That was how much time was left on the countdown on her wrist, and it didn't seem to be slowing down in the slightest. Alice could feel her heart hammering in her chest so forcefully that she could almost feel it in her entire body and hear it in her ears. The beating reminded her vaguely of a hummingbird's wings fluttering as they zipped through the air. They were the kind of birds that she remembered watching taking sips of nectar from a bird feeder on sunny summer days with her grandfather on his back porch. She couldn't help but smile to herself at the happy memory, and she tried to hold onto it to keep herself calm. She knew she needed that peaceful feeling more than ever right now because in three minutes and twenty-seven seconds--make that two minutes and seventeen seconds now--she was going to meet her soulmate.

As she grew from a young child, Alice learned of how things worked. She learned of how everyone was born with the timer on the inside of their wrist which would slowly count down to the exact moment in which they would meet the one person they were born to be with. No one could remember a time where they had to face the uncertainties of a relationship. She had heard the story of how her mother and father had met at least a hundred times. She had been witness as some of her friends' timers ran to zero and they would finally lock eyes with the one person that was made for them. She remembered the look in their eyes when that would happen. The looks were always a mix of utter happiness, passion, and the relief of knowing the wait was finally over.

As the timer hit one minute and seven seconds, she couldn't help but think of the stories that had not ended as happy as everyone had hoped. Some timers would get so close to zero only to jump back up again as the excitement would drain from its owner. It was a tedious waiting game that she hoped she never had to endure. There were also stories of how normal, ordinary days would turn into nightmares when the timer would stop counting down and turn automatically to zero, never to start again. No one really knew why, but most couldn't help but think that the worst had happened, and they were never to meet their soulmate. Even if they did, they would never know for certain.

She wiped her sweaty palms on the denim of her jeans as she checked her timer once more. Forty-seven seconds. Her frantic eyes darted to every person on the crowded sidewalk that they could possibly take in. She peered at one man around her age that was

buying a bouquet of white roses from the flower stand on the corner. Maybe that was him. Maybe those roses were meant for her. She started to feel the excitement flood into her body, but it left as soon as the man turned in her opposite direction and walked away. It couldn't be him. She started looking for other potential suitors. There was one man that was wearing gym shorts and a hoodie. She glanced down at his water bottle and gym bag while secretly hoping that it wasn't him. She was never a big fan of the fitness type. There were other men buying hot dogs and sandwiches from food trucks or reading the newspaper on the bench, but all of them looked as if it were a perfectly normal day. They didn't look as if they were nine seconds away from meeting their soulmate.

Despair had completely taken over her body as the clock struck zero and there was no one looking at her. No one showed so much as a glance her way. Maybe her timer was broken after all and there really was no one out there for her. She was almost in tears as she tried to pull her cell phone out of her back pocket to call her mom and tell her that she could put the extra plate away for tonight's dinner. It seemed no one would be joining her. However, her hands were violently shaking from the emotions of the day and she dropped it on the sidewalk as she tried to perform the simple task. She let out a shaky sigh as she turned around to pick it up off the ground, but there was already a set of hands doing it for her. Her eyes traveled from the hands holding her phone to the tanned skin of the arms and finally up the neck and to the face of her phone's rescuer. "Hi, I'm Mia," the woman almost whispered. Mia extended her own shaky hand that contained the phone in an offer to take it. "Sorry to keep you waiting. I'm always running late," Mia confessed in a clearer voice. Alice noticed the voice almost sounded like a bell. "It's okay. I'm guessing we have a long time to work out the issues," Alice replied.

# The One Who Caused It All

Kaitlyn Lyczkowski

## Breath

like sucking air through a straw.  
I'm drowning.  
Every breath might be my last.  
I whimper silently  
so I don't wake them.

## Eyes

pulsing with the fast beat of my heart.  
Swollen from your emotional punches,  
stinging more with every shed tear,  
my whimper turns to a cry.  
I don't mind if I wake them.

## Chest

engulfed in the pain that you've caused  
rising and falling  
shallower each second.  
My whimper turns to hysteria.  
I don't care who I wake.

You caused me pain  
when you promised love.  
I am so torn I have no rhythm in my words.  
I am no longer whimpering.  
I am not even crying.  
No one woke to my sounds of pain,  
not even you,  
the one who caused it all.

# The Metaphysical



## Then There’s the After...

Chyiann Sexton

The night stretched out like ink, swallowing up everything that would be in sight. I remember the Before. Back then night was my favorite time, of course back then it was safe to go out at night. I enjoyed my late walks with the moonlight lighting my path, the stars twinkling overhead. My nieces and nephews don’t even recall the Before, though they did live through it, if only for a few years. All of their memories are of After.

It’s called “The Fall of the Moon,” even though the moon didn’t actually fall, it just stopped shining. We knew it was still there from the way the tides continued to function and because we could see it during the day, but it no longer gave off its brilliant glow. In the months following, the stars slowly started flickering out until there was nothing left except that inky blackness. Science had no explanation despite their quick attempts to find a reason behind the lack of light.

It was recommended that people stay inside after sunset due to the intense darkness, but of course, people were stubborn. Managers still required employees to work after dark, teenagers still snuck out for parties, life still went on. That is until the Attacks started. At first, they were written off as violent animal attacks: a wolf pack killed a group of teens in Washington, a mountain lion got a Burger King employee walking home. That theory only lasted until people started noticing the similarities between these deaths, and the deaths that took place around the globe. They were exactly the same. Not similar, but the same.

With the Attacks came the Panic. People have this incredible fight or flight instinct that takes over when threatened. The Panic came when this instinct took precedence over logic and reason, and people chose flight, to live their lives locked away completely, or fight, going out to hunt for the “Night Demons.” The Panic lasted for a year with millions of lives lost. After the Panic finally ceased, life somewhat returned to normal. There was just one rule: “DON’T GO OUT AT NIGHT.”

People started getting up at dawn to make optimal use of their time, companies shrunk to single shifts to eliminate the night shift entirely, and people’s night lives stopped. When dusk rolled around people started making preparations for the inevitable. It became a nighttime ritual to lock all the doors and shut up the windows, taking

extra care to draw the curtains lest they catch a glimpse of what takes place outside at night. Suddenly, the night became too dangerous for even the most daring of people. No one dared step foot outside for fear of whatever it was that lurked in the darkness, for something they didn't even understand. People speculated, of course, and called them different things such as "Night Demons" or "Satan's Shadows" in an attempt to make sense of what was keeping them trapped like caged animals. The initial wave of "kill what's killing us" died with the first few hunting parties.

Some still felt that something had to be done to get people back to their lives, but they were easily pacified with empty promises from the government. Promises that they would find answers, scientists were on it, life would return to normal. Most believed them, but I was not one of them. I was the only one that still felt that there was a way to return things to the Before, so I made a split-second decision. During what would have normally been my evening preparations, I didn't lock my doors, or shut up my windows; instead, I opened my door, and went outside...

There once was a time, Before, when things were normal. People were safe to wander around at night, or at least safer, and they never had to fear that, in the blinding dark of night, something was lurking, waiting for the right moment to strike. There was a time when the moon and the stars gave off a wonderful glow that allowed light to dominate even the darkest of times. There was a time when humanity was the dominating species, free to do as they pleased. That time has come and gone. There once was a time—the Before—that was our time... And then there's the After, and that... Well, that is ruled by them, and as long as they live, no one is safe.

## Curtain Call

Gilbert Callis

Growing up we all learned two things: “You are replaceable,” and “The show must go on.” These phrases originate from long ago, before The Cataclysm, back to the time of the First Director. We learned that while there used to be many directors, now there is only one. Some of the Historical Playwrights have chronicled the history of our small nation and have written about the most important events. The current Director is of the Atreides Dynasty, after taking it from the Dunkeld Dynasty. I sat in a large theatre alongside all the uncast of my age. The Stage Manager stood on the stage and began to call out our numbers. We weren’t given names at birth, just numbers. We shed those today on our 17th year alive. My number was A3S3. The Stage Manager called it out, “A3S3, thy role shall be Reverend Samuel Parris. Thou shalt learn the words of God and his prophets, his son Jesus and the Divine Playwright Shakespeare.”

I was taken backstage. The Wardrobe Staff fitted me into my costume, an indigo priest robe, a cape, leather boots, and a wide brimmed hat. They gave me a copy of our most complete collection of Shakespearean text along with a copy of the Holy Bible, quill and ink, and then they sent me to the Holy Dramatist Order of the Divine Playwright. The monastery was located in the small town of Grover’s Corner, just outside of the capital of Linsolle. I was greeted by the Abbot to whom I recited my holy vows. “All the world’s a stage and we are merely players. They have their exits and their entrances and one in their time plays many parts.” The entire vow took about one minute and 30 seconds to recite. I was then shown to my quarters in the monastery. My task, I was told, was to either help copy the divine words of Shakespeare and the Holy Bible into a single volume, could take the most important sayings of Shakespeare, Jesus, and Dionysus into a single volume, or I could go into the world and spread the words of our Divine Playwright to the communities around us. He gave me a day to decide. That night, I laid on the bed staring at the ceiling as I weighed my options. Two would lock me away from the world for the rest of my days, while the third would finally let me see the world. None of my teachers growing up would tell me anything about it, so traveling into the world would let me see it. I would decide in the morning after getting a good night’s rest.

The First Director loomed above me, “Thou believes that thy life should be spent abandoning thy divine purpose to ‘see the world’? Thou art a knave, a rascal, an eater of broken meats! Thou shalt

spend an eternity in the Realm of the Forgotten Plays, where thou will perish eternally as a Forgotten Role!”

I pleaded with him, “I beg of thee! Please let me travel. For how may I know the world to chronicle thy divine works? Pity me sir.” I bowed before him. The First Director grunted and pointed off stage. I looked at him questioningly, “Director? Why doth thou send me away?” A growl came from behind me. I turned slowly, hoping that whatever it was wasn’t going to kill me. Alas, the growl behind me came from a large bear with deep indigo fur. I exited stage right, pursued by the bear as flames surrounded my vision...

I woke to a scream. The monastery was on fire. I grabbed my cape and ran from the room and outside of the building. Attacking the building was a small military force that belonged to the Al-Dubyewse Republic. They were stealing away all the precious metals, papers, and a few of the other reverends and priests. I watched as one of the barbarians turned to face me. He was clad in blue and wielded a sabre. He charged at me. I turned to run and felt a sharp pain in my shoulder. I looked ahead and saw the First Director. He shook his head and pointed at me, projecting outward one sentence, “Thou hast brought death to these people and thou shalt destroy our fair nation because of thy desires.” I went to scream at him, but my vision blacked out, leaving me to face my curtain call. I will be replaced, and the show must go on.

## The Cultivation of the Soul

Dollee Porter

The true heroes and martyrs blossom  
under the small yet infinite  
number of splintering  
growing pains.  
The irrevocable power  
of blissful moments of agony  
where we become our authentic selves—  
the passion of pain—  
is far more maturing  
than summers swan song.



Zachary McFall

## Self-Made

Benjamin Duncan

When all of a sudden I am caught red handed  
with nothing to hide my sin.  
We learn how to mask ourselves with blandness,  
this insecure made self.

The life that we choose to take for granted was given to us free.  
We change all of ourselves to fit the image of wealth.  
Is it heaven or hell?  
Do we know our ending?

Self-made to love hate are we.  
Righteous is selfish to thee.

I don't want to be alone,  
it tells a story of its own.  
People in the world today  
are giving up on love.  
We're self-made.

Self-made to love hate are we.  
Righteous is selfish to thee.

But when can we live in peace?  
Without our judging hearts,  
we cry, we fight, we plea  
for unknown souls.

Everett  
Rebecca Miller

He can't be real.  
He is 27 and the most fascinating person I know.  
All the leads in school plays.  
A full ride to Vanderbilt.

He's so much older than me.  
There's so much distance.  
My perspective must be so distorted.  
Whatever's going on over there reaches me in blurs.

A few years ago, Mom said a song I was playing reminded her of  
you.

*Grow up, you're nearly twenty-five.*  
*What happened when you were a child?*  
What's going on all the way over there?

What happened when you were sixteen  
and you didn't like Mom anymore?  
You said the trauma had caught up to you.  
I don't know what happened, I don't know  
what happened.

But he writes, and he writes, and he writes,  
and it's never enough for him.  
He's a veterinarian, a poet, a New Yorker,  
but he's still a son.

I wonder, is that what he's running from?  
Being her son?  
I can't remember what's real.  
He's so far away.

I remember you calling her from Alabama, not knowing what to do.  
You were supposed to be your friend's man of honor  
and you were kicked out of the wedding,  
so Mom drove six hours to bring you home.

But I remember screaming and crying, too.  
I remember the lyrics you scribbled on your wall,  
Because you wrote songs too—what couldn't you do?  
Tally marks labelled: "Days Gone without Hurting Myself"

But I was so far away.  
What's going on all the way over there?  
You got so much thinner after college  
and I didn't know why until last year.

A song I played today reminded me of you  
but I'm not sure which version of you it was.



Avery Crews

## Artifact

Emma Turner

I think everyone is conspiring  
to chip away  
at me with pickaxes, chisels, and hammers,  
and I can feel them slowly crumbling,  
cracking my facade.

I tried so hard  
to be stone and strong,  
but I've collapsed;  
there is no reprieve  
from what everyone is searching  
for and what I have to give.

I've been  
put in the shittiest situations  
by those who claim they love  
me most,  
and my shame grows  
from my inability  
to articulate the grief  
the exchange bestows.

I didn't think they'd damaged  
me this badly,  
yet the best pieces  
of me are missing.

Idealism skewed.  
Creativity stolen.  
Soul tarnished.  
*Childish innocence turns  
into adulthood regrets.*

I am sorry  
I am someone who only sees  
the bad.  
I've tried to be better.

I am sorry  
I am someone who censors  
her feelings and vulnerabilities.

I've tried to peel away the mask  
and disconnect  
the filter.

Belated emotions bleed  
out by laughing a little too enthusiastically,  
smiling too much,  
crying too quietly.

Growing has been a discord  
of learning  
my limitations  
and recognizing my strengths.

I am tape and glue  
and wood putty and paint  
and flour and eggs and sugar  
and paper and ink.  
I have tried to heal myself with hobbies.

Optimism is a novelty,  
but I am learning  
to covet  
every moment I possess  
its absurd existence.

Failures hurt  
more than ever  
before, but victories  
whisper a promise of transformation  
of becoming more  
than what I expected myself  
to be.

Better things are coming.  
The restoration  
is not complete.  
I will be whole  
again.  
*Soon.*

Living in My Skin Should Be Easier  
Tara McGuire

When I try and think of all the times I've ever been scared

in a public place only one cause comes to mind:  
being surrounded by boys,  
by men,  
by a group of people.  
I think about how my breath catches,  
my chest tightens,  
and suddenly I feel like I'm drowning,  
like the oxygen is being sucked from the inside out.

I have so many questions about this form of muscle memory.  
I want to know why I get so scared,  
why I can't seem to breathe,  
why my whole body stiffens.  
When did my body learn to react to the opposite sex?  
When did it learn that it was in danger?  
I'm shocked that society is okay with girls being too scared  
to walk outside,  
or inside  
or anywhere.  
Why are girls afraid to walk anywhere?  
Why are our bodies plagued  
by muscle memory of being frozen with fear?

Tell me how long girls have been frozen,  
been put in uncomfortable situations.  
How long have girls been brushing off this type of fear?  
How long have girls stayed indoors for the sake of their own safety?  
Tell me how long till something happens and it's the only thing their  
body will remember?  
Explain to me why we're still blaming girls.  
Why do we keep coming up with creative ways to say it's our fault  
for being girls?  
Why can't guys be at fault?  
Why do we keep telling girls they're overreacting,  
that they're somehow making a big deal out of "nothing"?  
Tell me why we aren't angry.  
Why haven't we started riots,  
changed laws?  
Why aren't we fighting?  
Tell me why we aren't angry.  
Why aren't we angry?

We should be angry.

# I Keep Saying I Am Sorry to Everyone But Myself

Tara McGuire

I am sorry for the days when I am more sadness  
than I am person,  
and I am sorry for the days I don't apologize for that.  
I know you're getting tired of me using metaphors to describe my  
life  
instead of actually describing my life,  
and I'm sorry I don't know where to start.  
I am sorry for the days when I am wrapped  
in so much self-hatred not a drop of love can get to me,  
and I'm sorry that I don't know how to tell you I'm broken.  
I never meant to hide my feelings behind poetry or pretty words.  
I'm sorry that this is the only way I know how to talk.

I am sorry for being more like a clenched fist instead of open arms,  
and I'm sorry I never learned how to hold you correctly.  
I'm sorry this poem is more about the things I can't do  
instead of the things I can do,  
but on days like today there's not much I can do.

and I'm sorry

I'm sorry that my pages are ripped,  
and I'm sorry that I don't have the time to fix them.  
I'm sorry I've always been too much,  
I'm sorry that I've always been not enough,  
and I'm sorry that I can't tell the difference.  
I keep trying to write my own story instead of living it,  
or ending my own story instead of finishing it,  
and I'm sorry I don't know how to finish it.

I'm sorry that I've used every way in the world to change you,  
to not make you mine.  
I'm sorry that I've beaten you until you were blue and starved  
you until you didn't look like me anymore,  
and I'm sorry I liked you better that way.  
I'm sorry that I don't know how to love you.  
I'm sorry that I'm still trying to love you.  
I'm sorry that it's so hard to love you,  
and I'm sorry that this is still a problem.  
I'm sorry there are days when I don't feed you enough,  
or days that I look at you and cry.

I'm sorry that you always felt like the problem  
and I always acted like the victim.



Zachary McFall

## A Friend That Saved Me

Michelle Cardwell

She was so much more than a small-time friend. She taught me what it meant to live and how to live fully. She was the friend that brought me back to life. I was drowning in the pool we call life, completely overwhelmed by everything. My anxiety had taken over and my fight was coming to an end. It was not something I discussed with anyone, but she instantly changed me.

Everyone dreams of a friend like her. A friend that cares deeply. A friend that loves regardless. A friend that is your shoulder to cry on. A friend that does not judge. A friend that allows you to live. A friend that wants to adventure with you. A friend that is the absolute greatest.

I had never experienced a love from a friend like I did from her. With her I did not have to hide, I did not have to pretend. I was allowed to be whoever I wanted to be, and she completely supported me. I did not have to hide the painful past of a father that abandoned me or a life that had never gone right. I did not have to hide my anxiety or depression because she did not judge. She did not leave me in the dark in times of despair but stayed by my side and fought my fight with me. She accepted me for who I am, not who she wanted me to be.

I will forever be thankful for the friend she is. I will forever be thankful for someone that allowed me to talk freely about the disaster my father caused in my life. I will forever be thankful for a friend that makes me laugh on the worst days. I will forever be thankful for the simple things. She will forever be a friend that I go to.

To the greatest, I thank you for being you and allowing me to be me. I am grateful to have you in my life and cannot express enough how thankful I am for you. You have brought me back from the dead. You saved me and gave me reason to believe that not all people are bad and that not all people that you love will leave. Thank you for always being the absolute greatest.

## My Natural Reaction

Daniel Holder

I looked into His eyes, and they were a deep blue. They told me more in that moment than I had heard in my whole life. Somehow these eyes held more weight than the entire universe. There was this reality about them as if He knew pain but was not marred by it. He was wounded yes, even damaged and beaten, but recovered, not made evil by it. His face had this peculiar look to it as if He wasn't sure whether to laugh or to cry, and I saw something in those eyes that merely said three words. Three words I had longed to hear for my whole life.

You are safe.

For the first time, I believed it.

I fell into His chest wrapping my arms around His back, gripping at His cloak, grasping the fabric with my hands. I plunged my face into His right shoulder as He wrapped His arms and hands around my head tenderly telling me, "It's okay, it's okay, it will be okay, it will always be okay."

For the first time, I believed Him.

It seems my natural reaction was to start to cry. I whimpered as tears rolled down my face onto the fabric, my saliva started to pool on His cloak. My whimpering turned to weeping, weeping to sobbing, and sobbing to yelling in relief.

We held each other so tightly that our muscles ached; He held me so as to never let me go, and somehow I came to believe He felt my pain more deeply than I did.

I felt all the anxiety, all the planning, all the control, all the angst, roll off of me. It flowed out from me like a rushing wind, as if chains had fallen off my shoulders all the way to the ground.

"The weight is off your shoulders," He told me, and I cried till there was no need to cry ever again as nothing would ever have to be released again. No more of my soul would ever have to be untangled.

Jesus  
Joanna Tidei

Frequently wounded  
Endlessly healing  
Always giving  
Never failing

Song of ages  
Reason for earth  
Written in blood  
The story of worth

Divinity selfless  
Imagine if you can  
The glory of that time  
When love became a man



Avery Crews

Is It the Fourth?  
Chloe Paddock

*Jefferson*

I am afraid my hour is near,  
  
but I have no fear  
even as this ailment takes me  
from this world.

Indeed,  
The Lord has blessed me  
with a long and plentiful life.  
Monticello.

Martha.

America.  
“Is it the Fourth?”  
Fifty years of freedom  
and we are all the better for  
it.

It seems just yesterday  
we declared independence,  
John and I.

I hope he’s faring well.  
As the room goes dark,  
I am prepared to pass on.  
“No, doctor. Nothing more.”

*Madison*

I’m afraid my hour is near.  
Debility has threatened me,  
but I have no fear.

From this world  
I shall go, and to the Heavens  
ascend.

The Lord has blessed me  
with a long and plentiful life.

Boston.

Abigail.  
America.

Fifty years of freedom—

Are we any better for it?

I’m sure Thomas will be  
celebrating.  
I hope he’s faring well.

The pain has yet returned;  
I am sure I cannot take much  
more.  
Many have gone before me. I  
will scarce be remembered  
like Washington.  
Still, who can preserve this  
Union if I ascend to eternal  
peace?  
Oh, there is someone still  
yet!  
“Thomas Jefferson still  
survives.

# Philosophizing Tragedy

Emma Turner

A magnet for disaster,  
I ruin  
the things I love  
leaving the bones  
charred,  
broken,  
and  
sp  
    lint  
        ered.

I am the decaying  
carcass of tragedy  
and catastrophe  
bound in an indistinguishable  
form.

I feel unexplainable grief,  
unconfined and unbound.  
Am I damned  
to a fate of tearing  
my own life apart?

Contentment  
is a lie.  
Divinity  
is man's greatest curse.

## Uncaptured Moment

Justin Sturgeon

“Ok everyone, look this way!” said Jerusha as she held her phone out from her chest looking through the camera before pressing the button. On the other side of the lens, Saul, patriarch of his family, or at least what’s left of it, stood in the middle holding his newest baby granddaughter, Annie. To his left, his daughter Esmerelda, mother of Annie and Mia stood with firm footing as she struggled to keep a firm grasp on Mia who was wailing, her squirming torso draped into Sonya’s shoulder. On Saul’s right was his younger son by a different marriage that also no longer prevailed, Nash. Behind Nash was Saul’s own mother, Deborah, the only woman left that both truly knew him and was still in his life, and she had recently lost her own husband of almost 58 years.

“Mia! Here girl! What’s wrong?” Saul tried to calm her with his nibbling, slender fingers as he ran them over her back in hopes of drawing her face into the camera’s view. Mia had not wanted to leave her chair inside where she could watch television on her tablet and come out into the crisp, fall air to take this picture. It was likely that she would not even remember this moment or hold it in very high esteem compared to memories of playing and breathing at her grandmother’s house on the other side of her family, of whom she was more accustomed to spending time with.

At the touch of his fingers trickling over her back, she could not help but smile slightly before regaining awareness of the mood she had been trying to portray. Almost instantly, the smile disappeared right before she buried herself deeper into her mother’s side that was opposite to Jerusha who got closer to Mia with the phone ready to capture the right moment when a reaction was garnished out of her. “Mia! Look at me. What’s that over here!?” Nothing would move Mia from Esmerelda’s fold. Esmerelda herself could not scold her enough or shift her body enough to produce an appearance. All the while, her sobbing continued quietly.

Here, in the wire fenced in backyard that faced an uphill trail on both sides to reach the deck that overlooked the yard from above, while standing in front of a newly painted red storage-sized barn that continued to chip off as frail, faded yellow chips despite the newly applied coat of paint, stood the remaining sheaths of the Marley family through the lens of Saul as its patriarch. All three of his previous wives had come and gone through that very same yard over the course of a few decades. It was now, surrounded by his two children, with years between them that could almost resemble a parents’ age to their child’s, his aging mother, whose health would

outlast them all, and his two young granddaughters, that he sought to think of his recent misfortune of his third wife leaving as a freeing opportunity to find a new focus in life.

Each one present in the photo could feel the tension released through the yard as they held the pose waiting for Mia to resume her otherwise calm and curious manner. This moment never really panned out to Jerusha or Saul's liking once she finally clicked the picture into a forever cherished moment of everyone smiling awkwardly, half looking to Mia who had for a split moment peered a glance from her mother's side that met the view of the phone's lens. As soon as Jerusha's arms fell back in indication of the picture being complete, almost everyone released their tense pose and mired concentration to the scene of the yard that encompassed the area all around them as if they had not seen it for quite some time.

Jerusha smiled as she clutched the phone in her hand, proud of the moment captured that found Mia at least half looking at the camera, which to her didn't quite ruin the shot as it would have if she had been depicted as retreating into her mother's side. Saul, in a somewhat automatic fashion, handed baby Annie back to Esmerelda and made his way to Jerusha to see the finished product.

His eyes grew devilishly large and round as he marveled at the screen which contained a still frame capturing a slight moment of his rebound and redemption as he continued to navigate this new aspect of his life. One could almost picture the caption that would garnish this image once it was made public on his profile, showcasing his new independence and the empty space that there now was for someone new to come fill. It would likely read, *'Thankful and Blessed. Love my family.'* As the thought fluttered through his head, Jerusha took back the phone ready to send the photo to him.

Meanwhile, Mia had not stopped whimpering, but had ceased all signs of a tantrum once Esmerelda let her to the ground where she could stand and walk about as she pleased in the yard. *'Ok, we have the photo, now it's time to go. I still have two more family dinners to attend after this.'* Esmerelda's mother had been expecting them later that afternoon for their family Thanksgiving meal, an occasion that everyone had gotten used to since Saul's divorce from her had happened when she was only three years old. Esmerelda had Annie and was wrapping her back up into her carrying car seat in an attempt to signal it was time to leave and keep the tight schedule she had been held to so long that it now had become tradition, even within the short time that she too had now started a family.

Mia had now completely forgotten the memory of discontentment that was expressed during the picture as Deborah's

small dog ran out into the back yard, excited to see all of these somewhat familiar faces in his play time. Immediately, Mia began to chase and chase him around the yard, never fully capturing him, but still determined and happy all the same in that moment. The dog hadn't had a running mate in so long that he began to tire from being chased, not wanting to give it up.

In this pure and precious moment, Mia seemed as happy as she ever had been. The sun had been shining from over the clouds as they were passing away, carrying last night's rain with them and Mia's slim, brown curls shimmered as her eyes widened each time she brushed the dog's back in her attempts to catch him. After the dog became tired, he finally succumbed to allow her to catch him as he lay panting on the ground, legs open as she began to pat and rub his belly and uncontrollably laugh. The slightest movement from outside their shared orb of bliss and joy caused instinct to overtake him and his small ears perked upwards as he turned his torso over onto his feet all the while still nestled to the ground.

Jerusha and Saul had been taking turns examining the picture and discussing photo editing that they each would like to try on the photo. Both thinking of different filters that would promote different aesthetics that satisfied them best before the anticipated reveal of it to the public. Not that his most recent divorce to Nash's mom hadn't reached all who know the family, but it had been some time since he had appeared on social media as 'thriving' and 'happy'. Several minutes passed in this way until their attention was captured by Mia's laugh. Both Jerusha and Saul heard it at the same time and moved their heads to the source of this music. They began to walk over to Mia and the dog. As they did, Jerusha instinctively took out the phone and turned it vertically ready to capture another moment of Mia, this time, without crocodile tears and red- strained eyes.

As approached, the dog turned over laying into a defensive stance with his feet perched under himself, forgetting Mia's presence. Mia hesitated when this happened, but then moved to rub his head between his ears and smiled slightly. The dog gave out a meaningless triple bark as they came nearer, and he quickly turned his defensiveness into eagerness when he understood who it was. It was then that Esmerelda who earlier had gone inside with Annie to begin packing called out from the back doorway on the deck overlooking the yard, "Mia! It's time to clean up! Come on in." When hearing her summons, she hesitated again not wanting to leave, but then droopily walked up the shallow end of the hill back to the deck that was annexed to the back of the house.

Jerusha and Saul now looked at the photo that she had captured of Mia as she almost laid her soft hand on the dog's head. Not even noticing that Esmerelda was about to leave, they both stood there a moment looking at the photo and decided to put it in the compilation of the other family portraits to be posted later.

Having seen this entire scene unfold before me from the deck, I pondered briefly over the rolling, green hills that were scattered out beyond the yard and the fence, and I reflected on what I had seen. As they each passed me going back into the house I stood there still, thinking of what I had just seen, wondering what had happened? What could I do? Each replaying of the scene brought out a melancholy image to me. After a while I became hopeless that we would never be able to heal our wounded family from the sores that we had pressed into. I then turned back towards the door of the house preparing to begin cleaning up after the remains of the family meal.



Kaylie Butler

## Notes on Contributors

**Rebecca Barnes** is a Russell County native and Human Services and Counseling major at Lindsey Wilson College. She plans to graduate in May of 2020. In her free time, Becca enjoys various art forms such as book illustrating, performing music, and writing poetry.

**Kassidee Bunch** is a sophomore English and Journalism major from Edmonton, KY. She hopes to do something in Political Journalism when she graduates.

**Kaylie Butler** is a junior Communication and History double major from Munfordville, Kentucky. She is the 2019-2020 Student Government Association Treasurer and is actively involved in several other organizations on campus.

**Gilbert Callis**, or Gibby, is a junior from Sedro-Woolley, Washington. He is pursuing a double major in History and Theatre with a minor in English. He hopes to one day publish something like a novel, play, or a book of short fiction.

**Michelle Cardwell** is a freshmen double majoring in English and Political Science. She is from Bowling Green, Kentucky and came to LWC to remain close to her family. She is a member of the soccer team and the track team.

**Candyce R. Counts** is an elementary education major with a minor in Journalism. She is a member of Delight on campus, and she enjoys photography as a hobby.

**Avery Crews** is a senior English major and Women's and Gender Studies minor. She is a Bonner Scholar, Peer Mentor, Writing Center Consultant, Sigma Tau Delta member, and a member of the Honors Program. She enjoys books, soft things, and exorbitant amounts of caffeine.

**Benjamin Duncan** is a senior from Monticello, Kentucky. He will soon be graduating with a degree in P-12 Integrated Music Education. The poem "Self-Made" is an excerpt of a song of the same title from his latest full-length album, available on all streaming platforms.

**Daniel Holder** is a Christian Ministries and English double major. He is from Georgetown, Kentucky and plans to become a Professor of Theology.

**Kaitlyn Lyczkowski** is a Human Services and Counseling major with a minor in Psychology. She is from Grayson County, Kentucky. During her recreational time on campus, she takes part in the LWC Dance Team.

**Zachary McFall** is a Math Secondary Education major in his junior year of study. He is a peer tutor in the Math Center on campus and also has a passion for studying maps. Zach has spent the Spring 2020 semester abroad visiting the French Riviera.

**Tara McGuire** is a Criminal Justice and Psychology double major. She is a December 2019 graduate of Lindsey Wilson College and has three featured poems in this year's journal.

**Rebecca Miller** is an Elementary Education major. She loves working with children. In her free time, she loves to read, draw, or listen to podcasts. Her favorite book of all time is *Anne of Green Gables*.

**Esther Olson** is from Glasgow, Kentucky. She is a Christian Ministries major with a minor in Communication. She received the *Orpheus* Award for Photography in 2019.

**Chloe Paddack** is a History and Theatre major from Leitchfield, Kentucky. She is a member of the Lindsey Wilson Players and the R.V. Bennett Honors Program. After college, Chloe wants to become a historical interpreter.

**Dollee Porter** is a sophomore nursing major from Shelbyville, Kentucky. Even though nursing is a challenging major, poetry has been her outlet for stress relief and self-expression through her college journey.

**Dalton Robertson** is a senior Education and History double major from Russell Springs, Kentucky. Following graduation, he plans to become a Social Studies teacher so that he is able to share his love of history and reading with his students.

**Chyiann Sexton** is a senior English and theatre double major from Albany, Kentucky. Her passions include singing, writing, and acting. Her ultimate dream is to one day publish her own novel.

**Briann Smith** is a Sustainability and Psychology double major from Somerset, Kentucky. Among her many commitments on campus, she is the President of the Student Activities Board and a board member of the Sustainability and Environmental Club.

**Justin Sturgeon** is a junior English and Business Administration (HRM) double major from Horse Cave, Kentucky. He is a Writing Center Consultant and a Resident Assistant on Lindsey's campus. Justin sometimes does and sometimes does not.

**Joanna Tidei** is a senior from Lawrenceburg, Kentucky double majoring in Christian Ministries and Human Services and Counseling. She enjoys being active in campus ministry and working in the Writing Center as a consultant.

**Emma Turner** is a senior English and Women's and Gender Studies double major from Monticello, Kentucky. During her time at LWC, Emma has been a part of many organizations such as SGA, Sigma Tau Delta, Young Democrats, and the R.V. Bennett Honors Program. She also works in the Writing Center. This spring, Emma served as the editor-in-chief for campus publications *Orpheus* and the *Alpha Kappa Phi Review*.

## 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.

