A close-up photograph of a spider web on a tree branch. The web is covered with numerous water droplets of various sizes, which are highly reflective and catch the light. The background is a blurred, natural setting with green foliage and brown tree bark. The overall mood is serene and natural.

**V
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2006
West Central
Technical College

VOICES

2006

VOLUME III
WEST CENTRAL
TECHNICAL
COLLEGE

Directions:

a coherent set
of ramblings tied
together with street names.

EDITORS:

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West Central Technical College annually publishes its magazine, VOICES. While the college encourages submissions from students, faculty, and staff, submission of material does not guarantee publication.

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Directions

Kyle Taylor

All work appears in the exact form it was submitted. The editors have not adjusted any work from its original form; any brilliance contained herein is solely the responsibility of the individual contributors.

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Reset

David Newton

Pent up emotional feelings clog up the craw; Voices provides a means to purge.



Healing Prayers
Hugh Shinn

Blue Sky Unicorns
Yvonne H. Robinson

Blue sky unicorns high above.
I walked quickly alone
Feeling wonderful, calm.
The only running thing was a cool wind.
At black of midnight, unicorns sleep.
Quickly white mountains fade to blue skies,
Then the unicorns run.
Blue sky unicorns high above.

Memories
LaKyta Nation

As the little old woman sat on her porch and rocked,
She looked around at all the memories in which her
Head was locked.

She saw kids laughing and having fun
As they played under the bright beaming sun.

She remembered her childhood, as if it was yesterday.
She thought in her mind, I used to be like that.
My friends and I also played jacks.

The frail woman looked as a young mother came
Down the dusty road,
With a child in a stroller that she longed to hold.

The memories she thought kept coming back,
I once was a young mother; I used to be like that.

She heard the jingle of the ice cream truck,
It was loaded with treats for less than a buck.

She sat and rocked all day long.
As she heard far way the birds chirping a song.

Soon, a little child came and took her by the hand,
She grinned at the woman and said, "Come on Grandma
I'll help you stand."

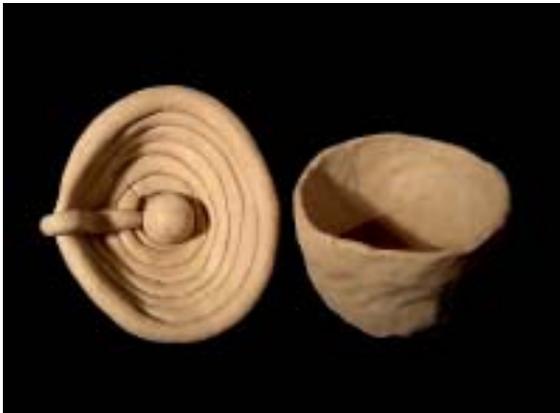
The old woman stood up with a crook in her back,
And thought as she looked down at the child,
I used to be like that.

A Life Unadorned
John Ridley

The old man's record was in his face,
No record of achievement in its place.
No documents and awards in government halls;
No diplomas and certificates graced his walls.
But he lived his life with great dedication,
Giving to others no cause for aggravation.

He worked throughout his life, all day toil,
Living his life so close to the soil.
Doing the best that he could, no government aid,
Lying in his own bed that he surely had made.
Serving his God, his country through war,
He had all that he needed, and nothing more.

His children, heeded the lights of the city,
And his mate was gone; he thought without self-pity.
His furrows had been plowed straight as an arrow,
As he lived his life on the straight and narrow.
But life's hourglass had now almost finished his record,
Judgment to come, by the standard of God's word.



The Circles of Life
LaTanya Rawles
3

A Simple Anatomy of Romance
Jim Winchester

Fluttering excitement
Mind boggling distraction
Desiring

Jubilant anticipation
Reeling emotions
Addicting

Electric desire
Soul piercing
Needing

Melting together
Sweet surrender
Possessing

Sister
Alex Case

Pigtailed girls don't always play fair.
They bite, they hit and they pull each other's hair.
Their mission each day is to start a fight
And resolve it again long before night.
A tattletale, their nuisance may be
But a sister is infinitely special to me.
For you see a sister plays a crucial part
Of the rhythmic beating of my heart

People in Teaching, Math, and Physics
William Rivera

I've got a feeling, I don't know this guy

Edith, "I've got a feeling I don't know this guy."
Sometimes he ends class too early."

"He's always traveling.
If he really cared about this job,
he wouldn't travel so much.
What does he do at those conferences?"

"He's always working on something.
But what does it have to do with what he should be doing-
Our bread and butter- College Algebra?"

"He's not that quick and he makes mistakes.
He's no better than one of us-
He just has different taste."

"If it were up to him, all of our students would be using
calculators.
Then, what would it mean for them to pass a test?"

Just a Woman

Renee Hooks

Bonnie Smith-Yackel opens her essay “My Mother Never Worked” with a conversation between herself and an agent at the social security office. This conversation takes place after the death of Smith-Yackel’s mother, as the author calls to request a death benefit check, which is awarded to families of deceased wage earners. While on hold, she begins to reflect on all the work her did during her life and later shares those details with us, the readers. Sandwiching her memories between her initial conversation with the agent and the final response given is an effective way of giving purpose to the specific details about her mother’s life in order to support her thesis. This technique also aids in peaking the interest and curiosity of readers.

In this comparison of Smith-Yackel’s mother and my grandmother, I hope to show the many similarities as well as a few differences. These two very strong women faced many challenges in life, such as raising successful and well-rounded children, and having to work very hard without the luxury of rest. Moreover, both of them faced the challenge of aging with strength, grace, and dignity, head on, without fear. They were tireless workers in a time when women were not valued for their hard work or their contributions to society. They were not considered equals with men even though they performed the same job.

Smith-Yackel’s mother raised her children to be hard workers. Due to the extreme poverty they faced, they had to help with the animals and the crops. Smith Yackel states, “In the summer of 1930 my mother and her two eldest children reclaimed a 40-acre field from Canadian thistles, by chopping them out with a hoe” (97). Smith-Yackel’s mother gave birth to eight children, but lost another during her sixth

month of pregnancy. At night, while the men rested after day of work, her mother sewed for hours on end to ensure that her family stayed warm, “ripping apart coats, dresses, blouses, and trousers to remake them” (98). As Smith-Yackel writes, she also sewed bedding: “She still made pillows, using feathers she had plucked, and quilts every year [. . .]” (98).

My grandmother sewed for her family as well; however, she held a distinguished degree in homemaking from The Chicago School of Millinery and Design. She made extra money by designing and sewing beautiful dresses and gowns for the local socialites. She made all of her family’s clothing. My father once said, “Until I went to military school, I had never worn an article of clothing that had not been made by my mother.” She also made beautiful quilts from the scraps; I still have a few of them – my most prized possessions. My father and aunt had to help on the farm quite a lot; however, my grandmother believed that a good education was essential in life. She would not allow them to compromise their grades no matter how desperate the need for help was.

My grandmother had many jobs. She worked at Southern Railway as a secretary for twenty years. In the evenings and on weekends she worked the farm. She would feed the chickens and gather eggs, bring the cows from the field and milk them, feed the pigs, and tend to her garden. During the harvest time she would preserve fruits and vegetables. She was also responsible for taking care of her elderly parents and in-laws. This included milking their cows, tending their chickens, and working their garden, cooking, cleaning, and sewing for them. She was a tireless worker.

Smith-Yackel’s mother was also a tireless worker who had a long list of responsibilities. She would raise chickens, “feed pigs, milk cows, plant and harvest a garden, and can every fruit and vegetable she could scrounge” (97). She worked in

the field through the heat of the day without complaint and cared for many types of animals with the same kind of concern she gave her own children. Smith-Yackel's mother had to endure such hard times as the disease and loss of livestock as well as drought. The author writes, "My mother and father trudged from the well to the chickens, the well to the calf pasture, the well to the barn, and from the well to the garden" (97). Yet despite all their hard work, the elements of nature often won. "The crops shriveled and died. They harvested half the corn, and ground the other half, stalks and all, and fed it to the cattle as fodder." (97).

Smith-Yackel's mother lost the use of her legs: "The car crashed into a ditch. She was paralyzed from the waist down" (98). However, she remained the same strong, feisty woman she had always been. Smith Yackel writes, "The therapist told me: 'She did fifteen pushups today - fifteen! She's almost seventy-five years old!'" (98). Although the mother struggled with the loss of her husband only a year after the car crash, she found a way to continue with her same positive attitude and work ethic: "From her wheel chair she canned pickles, baked bread, ironed clothes, wrote dozens of letters weekly to friends and her "half a dozen or more kids," and made three patchwork house coats and one quilt. She made balls and balls of carpet rags – enough for five rugs" (98). Her determination and strength never wavered.

When my father was twelve, my grandfather died of a heart attack. Mto take care of the farm and raise a young boy into a man all by herself. She was devastated, but she knew she had to keep working or they would starve. A few weeks after the funeral, the bank informed my grandmother that, although her husband had left her everything in his will, she was not entitled to any of the money or the farm unless she remarried. Thankfully, my uncle bought

the house and allowed them to continue living there. Although it was very difficult to make ends meet, somehow she did.

Smith-Yackel's mother and grandmother share many similarities. They faced many of the same challenges, both faced raising many children, and both faced the challenges of aging with grace and dignity. They were both strong women. Even though not appreciated by society, both were greatly admired by their friends and family. The author's recollections are carried back to present when the social security agent disallows the death benefit. Ironically, she merely claims, "well, you see – your mother never worked" (99)

Work Cited

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Patterns for College Writing. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner
and Stephen R. Mandell. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St.
Martins, 2004. 96-99.

Grape **John Bailey**

Wine and laughter,
Next day regret,
Too much said, too little done,
Always sorry, never changing,
Promises broken, dreams shattered,
Soberness lost,
life slowly ends.



Ceramic Bowl
Natasha Overbey

Love Me
Kelly Hollis

Love me for who I am.
Do not love me to cook the food.
Do not love me to wash the clothes.
Do not love me to clean the house
Do not love me for the children,
Do not love me for the lust of the marriage bed,
Love me for who I am.

Irresistible Force Meets Immovable Object

Steve Utke

Who has not pondered the ultimate results of such an event? Clearly, such a meeting could never take place: the encounter of an irresistible force with an immovable object is an obvious contradiction. Yet, one could metaphorically describe the Civil War conflict between Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee in terms of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object. Bruce Catton alludes to this at the beginning of his essay “Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts” when he writes, “They were two strong men, these oddly different generals, and they represented the strengths of two conflicting currents that, through them, had come into final collision” (386). By the end of his essay, it becomes clear that these men not only represented their respective ideologies, but that they actually embodied them.

Lee, *the immovable object*, was the embodiment of “a way of life that had come down through the age of knighthood and the English country squire” (387). This meant that Lee embraced the ways of living and viewing the world that were transferred by English immigrants to the new country of America. These beliefs included the idea that “it was somehow of advantage to human society to have pronounced inequality in the social structure” (387). It would be up to the men born into privilege to provide paternalistic leadership, direction, and control to the country. Finally, Lee “lived in a static society that could endure almost anything except change. Instinctively, his first loyalty would go to the locality in which that society existed” (388). He saw his fortune tied only to the region in which he resided without regard to the rest of the country. Ultimately, Lee came to personify the current of ideology that he represented.

Grant, *the irresistible force*, descended from the people who had come to America to escape the tyranny they faced in England, and adopt a new current of ideology: “the rather hazy belief that all men had equal rights and should have an equal chance in the world” (387). Catton writes, “Their society might have privileges, but they would be privileges each man had won for himself. Forms and patterns meant nothing. No man was born to anything, except perhaps to a chance to show how far he could rise” (387). In Grant’s vision for the country, slotting a man into a class or role at birth did not occur. Each man drove his own destiny based on his competitive desire to succeed. However, individual achievement and success were always within the greater context of country. A person who “developed a farm, opened a shop, or set up a business as a trader, could hope to prosper only as his own community prospered - and his community ran from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada down to Mexico” (387-388).

Like Lee, Grant came to personify the ideals of his respective ideology. However, as Catton points out, “it was not all contrast, after all. Different as they were – in background, in personality, in underlying aspiration – these two great soldiers had much in common” (388). It is in the way they fought for their respective ideologies that Catton finds a parallel between the two men: “with, the great virtue of utter tenacity and fidelity” (388). Of their similarities, “perhaps greatest of all, there was the ability, at the end, to turn quickly from war to peace once the fighting was over” (388).

Grant and Lee represented two separate currents of diametrically opposed philosophies before meeting at Appomattox. With Grant’s victory, the current of ideology that Lee and the Confederacy represented were to be absorbed into those represented by Grant and the Union. Catton writes, “Out of the way these two men behaved at Appomattox

came the possibility of a peace of reconciliation” (388). Their conflict had paved the way for what America was ultimately going to become: a unified nation under one flag.

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Catton, Bruce. “Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts.”
Patterns for College Writing, 9th ed. Ed. Laurie G.
Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. Boston: Bedford/St.
Martins, 2004. 386-389.



Idealized Beauty (The Big Picture)
Robert Saxon

Junkie

Jenni Robinson

The sight of you
Gets my hunger started
I begin craving more
The sound of your voice
The touch of your hand
I am like a junkie
Strung out on the mere thought of you
My drug
Running through my veins
And you have no idea
What you are capable of
I don't sleep for days at a time
Because thoughts of you haunt me
Memories triggered by nothing
What was supposed to be fun
Turned into my worst fear
The deadly addiction
Born out of love
I should not be feeling
Pours into my veins
Making me high
And messing me up
I tumble down
Into the darkest depression
Rising to the ultimate high
Then crashing down
And burning
I am a junkie
Addicted to my love
For you

Soldier's Prayer

Brandy Day

Dear God,

Tomorrow I put down my pride, for those I love

Set aside my honor for those who died before me

I will put You before myself and my personal beliefs

I will be courageous and strong

I will not forget those I love

I will not forget why I am here

God be with me as I take the lives of others

God forgive me for this sin

God, trust me that I will not sacrifice an innocent

As I pray this night for tomorrow's deeds

Be with me as I go into another battle

And give me strength that I will not falter

Amen



Memory Rose

Camerlitta Berry

Anyone Worked in a Laboratory

Nikki N. Smith

with respect to e. e. cummings

Anyone worked in a laboratory

Taking samples, spinning them down

Joe, Tom, Dick, Harry, and Sally

All come in from around the town.

The waiting room smell, so aromatic,

The clock ticking slowing, all eyes on me,

Some walking, some talking, some even frantic

All concerned and waiting impatiently.

Some laugh, some angry,

Some slow, some know,

Some drop, some droopy,

But all have to give to me.

The results are in

Some mad, some sad, some glad,

“Oh, thank you Doctor, you are so kind,

To make me feel better, for I felt so bad.”

Back in the laboratory,

Anyone worked hard

Taking samples, spinning them down

Summer, winter, spring, fall

All come in from around the town

No one sees anyone work so hard.

Traicionero
Melissa Gonzalez

“She was kneeling on the ground looking up at him. Her breast swelled passionately.”
- John Steinbeck *“The Chrysanthemums”*

we met, you were a wonder
you showed some interest
in what I had to say
as we spoke so truthfully
you seemed to understand and care
for my innermost intentions
and this heart of mine-
I was flattered and marveled
at the mere thought
that someone did listen
cared and wanted to know –
it freed me from despair
time went by
and I slowly realized it was not I
whom you wanted to hear
it was not my thoughts
that sparked interest in your mind
it was your own interest
you were trying to satisfy
- how it crushed my heart
as I unraveled the truth
about your selfish intent
it took me some time
but now I know
you were not interested
in me for me -
but only for what
you could take from me

Your Papers, Please!

Steve Utke

Who among us is not familiar with the implications of such a request? Few three-word directives elicit a greater emotional response from their recipients than this one. While not currently a part of common practice in America, the request for papers is immediately identifiable in the implication it conveys. The words evoke images of armed guards at checkpoints with gates that remain closed pending the presentation of proper identification. Fortunately, Hollywood has reserved the images of guards at checkpoints for its portrayals of life in totalitarian countries. Yet, we may be on the path of weaving these very images into the fabric of life in our own country of America. The terrorist events of September 11, 2001, have revived the previously rejected idea of implementing national ID cards. On the positive side of the issue is Alan Dershowitz, who argues in favor of national ID cards in his essay “Why Fear National ID Cards?” when he suggests they present a fair trade: “A little less anonymity for a lot more security” (590). However, he does not elaborate on the details for achieving greater security outside of the belief that “anyone who opted out could be examined much more closely” (590). Dershowitz appears to operate under the assumption that all national ID cards will be authentic, yet what about people who have secured cards through fraudulent application? Those holding cards secured through illicit means would now be subject to less scrutiny than those with no ID at all. Dershowitz admits that a national ID card “would not prevent all threats of terrorism, but it would make it more difficult for potential terrorists to hide in open view, as many of the September 11 hijackers apparently manages to do” (591). Nevertheless, none of the terrorists involved in the September 11 attack on the World Trade Centers used fake identification to perpetrate their crimes. In fact, nothing about the events of that day would have changed with the existence of a national ID system.

On the negative side of the issue is William Safire, who argues against national ID cards in his essay “The Threat of National ID” when he suggests a somewhat less fair trade than Dershowitz: “our ‘right to be left alone’ for the false sense of security of a national identification card” (586). We are currently suffering the effects of the false sense of security we placed in the credit reporting system. Each year, millions of people fall prey to identity theft in this country. Concentrating all of an individual’s information in a single location could be even more disastrous. Safire confirms that with a national ID system, “it can all be cantered on a single dossier, even pressed in a single card – with a copy of that card in a national databank, supposedly confidential but available to any imaginative hacker” (587). Finally, Safire fears the card could be “reduced for implantation under the skin in the back of your neck” (588).

In conclusion, Safire presents a more compelling argument against national ID cards than Dershowitz does in favor of them. This is due, in part, to the fact that Safire’s essay is grounded in the reality of human nature: “in the dreams of Big Brother and his cousin, Big Marketing, nothing can compare to forcing every person in the United States – under penalty of law – to carry what the totalitarians used to call “papers’ ” (587). He gives concrete examples of the pitfalls, backed up by realistic incidents. Dershowitz, on the other hand, appears to presume that everyone involved would play by the rules. He writes, “The fear of an intrusive government can be addressed by setting criteria for any official who demands to see the card” (591). Human nature dictates that there will always be people who will succeed in defeating the system. Yet, the most compelling argument against national ID cards may be the one that each writer has failed to mention: the American people have repeatedly rejected the idea each time that the government has presented it.

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The Natural Light of Insect
Forrest Kinpel

Turning 20

Yvonne H. Robinson

Oh what's a girl to do about turning 20?
I'm getting so old
I've got to give up my silly demure
And act my age
A little more mature
I'm in college now
I'm going to get a career
So it's time for me to be rid
of some things in my youth I held so dear
I guess I'll have to find new clothes
No more Journeys, AE, or Old Navy
I'll have to settle for brands no one knows
Things more matronly I suppose
I won't be able to listen to my music anymore
Bands A to Z
I'll be yelling "Turn it down!"
To all those stupid teenage clowns
I'll have to give up cartoons
Farwell to SpongeBob and Hello Kitty
I have better things to do during my afternoons
(But maybe AdultSwim doesn't count
If it's only a small amount)
I've got to stop creating websites
for every obsession
But maybe I can get away with that
I'll just say it's for my future profession.
I can't read "The Princess Diaries"
Hey, wait a minute

I'm an author in process
And those books inspire me!
Oh what am I to do about turning 20?!
You know what
Maybe it doesn't matter what I wear
I'm not going to worry about it
Unless I have a job interview
Then I'll dress like a millionaire
I think I'll still listen to my music
In a few more years it'll be retro you see
All the kids will flip
When they learn I was there when it was first hip
So maybe I won't give up cartoons
You better believe
When they release Shrek Three
I'll be laughing at Donkey.
Maybe I'll keep up the websites
Continue with the webcomics
and my fascination
with Sir Laurence Olivier from Wuthering Heights
YA books can be enjoyed by all ages
I mean, for real
They're written by people in all different life stages
So it will be fine
If I dog-ear the pages
I'm in college now
I'm going to have the time of my life
I've still got so many years
before I get that degree and become a wife

A little more young at heart
Act my age
From my youth I will never part
I'm staying so young
Oh what's a woman to do about turning 20?

My Jewish Grandmother

William Rivera

Always working,

Never shirking,

A shining light

To those in night

She gave up so others could have

At the end of the first War

There was nothing but turnips

For Austria's poor

Through Ellis Island she was put through

But she treated me like her grandson true.

And finally when I had decided on Math

She started me out on the shining path.

That led to the problem of Navier-Stokes

That could mean a great deal to a great many folks.

Her support-and the courage she had to make this trek-

Inspires me to make a name and then give back.

Her First Bath
Brandy Crouse

The warmth of the flowing water startled her little body. Having been surprised by the repetitive contact of water, her body tensed tight. She cried a high pitch cry, as if someone was hurting her. Her eyes full of tears, streaming down her smooth cheeks, falling into the warm water. Her mother rushed to get the soap onto the wash cloth. She lathered the soap onto the cloth, while singing, "this little light of mine." While washing in between her little fingers and toes, she kicked water onto the counter, her mother giggled. Her mother put the wash cloth into the water to get all the soap out of the wash cloth, then she took the wash cloth and rubbed it all over her body to get the soap all off her body. Her mother held her new born body up to get the rest of the soap off her back and head. She caught a gleams of her little blue eyes, all her feelings brought a joy to her heart.

Her mother grabbed the towel from behind her, and put it over her head and wrapped her little body tight into the towel. She took her over to the changing table, dried her off, and got her dressed. As her little body grows her mother can tell her the story of her first bath.

Leadership
John Bailey

Thoughts raging upward never fail,
Words raining downward never stop,
The two meet,
Ideas occur,
Inspiration ignites,
Crowds gather,
The world changes.

Food For Thought
Brenda Saint Jean

People live their lives differently from one another because of their culture, civilization, and environment. Growing up, I never looked forward to New Years. Not because I had no excitement about entering a New Year, but simply because I dreaded eating the squash soup that my family makes every December 31, starting at 8:00 A.M., to open up the New Year. It was not until this year that I realized why making the soup was so important to my family as well as the rest of the Haitian community.

New Year's Eve is a very hectic time around my house, mostly for the women as we prepare for the breakfast soup. My grandmother, my mom, my aunts, and I throw on our aprons, get down and dirty in the kitchen. Each of us has a task to do, but I get to do all of the easy jobs, such as cutting the limes, cleaning the carrots, peeling the potatoes, and my least favorite, slicing the onions. As I am completing my task, the other women are adding different ingredients to in the pot, such as frozen squash, malanga, spinach, parsley, salt, chicken, beef stew meat, hot pepper, and other spices – to give it a more delicious taste. Every year while the women labor over a hot stove, the men sit around watching football games, screaming, and slapping each other high fives. However, this year it was different; instead, they were cleaning every inch of the house making sure there was not any dust in sight. I was astonished to see them actually making an effort to help. As for the children, they did not bother to do anything. They preferred to run around the house jumping and screaming. As I sat in the kitchen inhaling the great smell of the soup, I looked at my grandma and said, “Can I ask you a question?” She said, “Yes dear, go ahead.”

“Why is making squash soup for New Years so important to the Haitians?”

She replied, “The reason is that before Haiti got its independence, Haitians were in slavery. As such, they used to plant squash, but the squash was so good that their masters did not allow them to eat it. For them it was a very special dish:: the master’s dish. It was not until January 1, 1804, that Haiti finally gained its independence, and since the people were no longer in slavery, they decided to make squash soup as a remembrance of their freedom.”

Knowing now and understanding the significance of squash soup helps me to further appreciate that I am Haitian. I am definitely looking forward to New Years so I can eat, as they say, “Creole soup joumou.” This time I will eat it with pride, knowing the obstacles and hardships my ancestors had to go through in order for the generation before me, my generation, and the next, to be able to sit back every New Years as a family and eat squash together.

Children

Kelly Hollis

Children are our legacy

How do you want to be remembered?

As a frantic mom

A too tired dad

Working all day to come home sad?

How about love and laughter

Baseball games

Shopping trips

Quiet talks and long walks

Happy times just being together

Not letting anything else in the world matter.

Children are our legacy.

Children

Fall, Leaves, Fall
NaKita Thomas

Fall, leaves, fall, die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.
I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.



Traveling with Murphy
Shelby Rogers

People travel near and far
Planes, trains and the family car,
Checking the luggage and checking the time
And realizing you've been waiting in the wrong line,
You make it to the desk and see the clerk
Then realize your ticket's in another shirt,
Hustling through the line that's long and tight
Approaching the gate, you hear they canceled the flight,
With your head throbbing thinking what to do
You go to the bar to think this thing through,
Going through the lobby and down the hall
The light goes out and you hear "last call."



Tim McGraw
Tim Jackson

After the Storm
Brandy Day

I sit and listen to the sound
Of a July Fly after the storm
In the dark
The power is out
The lights are gone
And the heat pours in
I hear the thunder roll in
The distance, and I hear the trickle
Of slight rain
The dog is calm now
The family is quiet
And the candles flicker
I listen to the radio break
The endless deafening silence
Of the night
There is nothing on the
Radio, so it's just a noise
And I turn it off
My head aches slightly from
Flickering dim lights, and yet I know
I'm not alone
The wind blew violently
And the house shook slightly
And it went as quickly as it came
Thousands are in the dark as I watch
The only light flicker, and I feel the heat
Listening to the July Flies

The Camping Trip

Chris Cangemi

The day we left out for our camping trip was the day that would change my life forever. It was a peak moment for my little brother, Brad, and me. Dad was going to take us to the mountains for four days of long-awaited peace and quiet. The peace and quiet might not have been what Brad and I were looking forward to, but that is what Dad always stated when he talked about the long weekends in the hills. We usually took a group of family members with us, but everybody was busy this time. That did not bother my brother and me. We liked the quality time with our father.

We left early in the morning, right before the sun came up. It seemed like the trip took forever to drive to the parking lot at the base of the mountain. Now I think it was probably the anticipation of already wanting to be there. We eventually made it. After we loaded the heavy packs on each other's backs, we headed into the woods. The trails were pretty worn down from the other hikers. About an hour into our hike, dad decided to walk off the beaten path to somewhere a little more secluded. Nature surrounded and engulfed us. A little further along, we decided to set up camp.

The first thing to do was to get the tents staked down on a nice flat surface. Then we needed to gather firewood for that evening's dinner. While searching for firewood, my brother and I noticed a small cave entrance nearby and our curiosity peaked. Peering in, we could see that the cave opened into a fairly large cavern though the opening was small. Knowing it would soon be dark; we headed back to the campsite with the wood and agreed to explore the cave more the next day.

The following morning we awoke with the warmth of the sun on our tent. Dad was already cooking bacon and eggs over the hot coals from the night before. We hurried to join him by the fire for breakfast because we already knew what we wanted to go to do. The cave was calling us to our first adventure. Dad told us to be careful and not to go too far into the cave or get lost.

It was cold and damp inside the cave. The rock formations jutted out of the floor and ceiling all over the cave-like dragon's teeth welcoming anyone who dared to enter. There really weren't many signs of life at all. Flashlights in hand, we began to explore. We wondered how deep the cave went, so we began to walk deeper into the side of the mountain. We weren't really paying that much attention as we continued to walk through narrow gap and knee-deep water. It was all just fun and games at that point in time, but that would quickly change.

Brad and I were yelling back and forth to each other. He was several feet in front of me when it happened. Out of nowhere he just disappeared. I couldn't believe it. He was just gone. I ran forward to where I thought he had been last standing and found what had happened. There he was, down inside a hole in the earth surrounded by rocks, not saying a word. I called to him to see if he was okay but got no answer. I had to decide what to do and quick. If I went in and got stuck, we might never be found, but if I turned back, he might not make it that long. What should I do? It was killing me. I had no idea what to do, but I had to do something now!

I began to climb down into this hole, my heart thumping with each movement. I tried not to fall too. When I reached him, I could see that his arm was broken, and he

had hit his head. I was going to have to carry him out. We eventually maneuvered ourselves to where I could anchor my legs on each side of the hole and push him up from underneath. After continually trying, struggling, failing, and trying again, we finally made it to the cave entrance. It was almost dark. Dad had come looking for us and found us lying on the ground exhausted and in pain. Brad was taken to the hospital and treated. As for me, I was fine. I proved to my dad and myself that I could do anything I wanted. Many years later, I joined an emergency rescue squad. If I could save my brother at fourteen, then I could save anybody at thirty.



The Poet
Lucy King

Mama's Aluminum Cookware

Eddie Gore

Studies reveal that the five senses play an important part in triggering the recollection of past experiences, almost as much importance as they have in our awareness of the moment to moment experiences as they occur. In particular, the sights and smells of the Christmas season always bring a boyhood memory of mine to the forefront. Would you like to read about it? Then read on. To share this odd story, this story needs some background.

I was born in Heard County, Georgia and grew up on a 60 acre farm there, the middle child of five children. If you're old enough and lived in rural America, you may be familiar with the setting I describe. The matter of "trash management" during the 60's, was pretty uniform and simple. Beyond the yard, but conveniently close, you would find a place set aside for burning trash. This place, either a ditch or shallow pit, in between uses only consisted of a heap of ashes, broken glass, and rusty cans. When the heap was sufficiently big enough, we would cover up the glass & rusty metal cans; and move on to another site... in our case, a little further up the ditch.

We didn't generate as much waste then as we do now, as we ate many vegetables from canning jars and meats from the smokehouse salt box. Groceries didn't come in the wrappings and containers we see today. I guess the advertising takes more room in modern times. No one asked "paper or plastic" at the check out counter. At that time, we only had paper bags or cardboard boxes for the transport of grocery items to home. Well, back to more background for the story...

To understand the significance of the loss, you will need to learn of a typical "Early Gore Christmas". As

stated, I'm the middle of five children. The marked beginning of the Christmas season was the delivery of the Sears and Robuck Christmas catalog. Later, near the middle December we would walk into the woods and find a suitable cedar tree. Often Daddy and I had already located a suspect or two while bird hunting, but the entire family would make this trek, taking the better part of a Sunday afternoon. When Christmas day finally arrived we would find one "big" present under the tree, then smaller presents of clothes, shoes, maybe a board game we could share, like Candy Land or Monopoly. Each of my siblings and I had our designated "space" where Santa Claus would leave the presents, relative to the tree. It was a sight! We all would sleepily rush in from the hall to see what was there and to open any wrapped bags, boxes, and proceed to "trash the place" in a non-orderly fashion. Ten minutes and it was over.

Following the frenzy of Christmas morning, my job was to take out the wrapping paper, bags and boxes and burn them. The tree would usually be left up a couple of more days but never beyond New Year's day. I can attest to the flammability of dry cedar... Poof! Please don't ever risk keeping a dry tree inside too long.

Flash FORWARD to the present time. If you could come December 21st to the Gore Christmas "Get Together", there you would meet my mother and father, my siblings & in-laws, nearest first cousin's family, grandchildren, great-grandchildren; fifty-two persons and two expectant mothers have the makings for quite an event. Gather around noon for a FEAST of a lunch ... burp, put away the leftovers and stash the dishes. Around 2:00 p.m. we will all gather near the Christmas tree, which means in the room with and in the next nearest room. In a rotational plan set about several years ago, the "next" person gives the Christmas

reading, most of Luke Chapter 2. We sing the first verse of Silent Night. It's now 2:25 p.m. and presents are distributed (having drawn names at the Denney reunion in August). We tear open wrapped bags, boxes, and proceed to "trash the place" in a familiar non-orderly fashion. Thank you's are exchanged and the time has arrived to separate the gifts from the trash and you will hear someone tell about the time Eddie burned Mama's aluminum cookware! Yes, the year was 1966... the year of the family's first new car, a four door Ford Fairlane with six cylinder 200 cubic inch engine and radio/heater/white wall tires, low down payment and probably \$1995 sticker price! The "big" gifts under the tree included a Sears 3-speed bicycle, a Chatty Cathy, a Tonka road scrape and dump truck, an Easy-Bake oven, and portable electric hair dryer. Daddy got knee-high rubber overshoes with metal fold-over buckles (January and February are the worst months around the barn and feed troughs) and Mama got a set of nine piece Lightweight Aluminum cookware... **THAT SHE NEVER GOT TO USE! EDDIE BURNED IT! IT'S LIKE I BURNED IT THAT YEAR AND EVERY YEAR SINCE! I DIDN'T MEAN TO!** I just picked up all the wrapping paper and boxes, and carried out my usual chore, burning the trash. The aluminum cookware was so lightweight that I didn't know it was in the boxes. No one knew until Mama started to put it all away later in the morning. The missing Christmas gift set was found in the trash heap, handles burned off, warped and good for nothing (unless you count using the pans for cat food dishes).

I have decided this year, beginning now, I will tell the story... I'm tired of hearing it told... this is the beginning of therapy and today I am on the way to recovery!

The Day I Learned Mortality

Joel Evans

It was a bright, sunny June day in 1984. Two of my high school friends, and I were returning from Panama City Beach. Jason was driving his father's small, blue, Toyota Celica, as if he were flying a fighter jet. On the long straight-aways the power poles alongside the highway sailed by like fence post. On the curves the tires squealed like a pack of angry pigs. Keith and I were joking and laughing as if we didn't have a care in the world. After all, being eighteen years old, we knew we were immortal. Suddenly, we felt the car begin to slow. When we looked out the bug splattered windshield to see why, there in front of us was a long line of cars creeping down the narrow, tree lined road. As the line of cars in front of us slowly inched forward like a line of ants toward a piece of discarded candy, we wondered aloud what the holdup could be. Inch by inch and foot by foot we slowly moved toward the object of our curiosity. When we finally reached the place of our interest, we all wished that we never had. There in the road ahead of us was a horrific sight which changed my attitude toward my morality.

Lights of red and blue reflected from the cars ahead of us, from the trees which lined the road, and from our own corneas it would seem. Men in blue scurried about like bees in a hive, while others stood by with looks of dismay blanketing their faces. A few of the officers looked with disgust as the passengers in the cars craned their heads out windows trying to get a better look.

To the right, appearing oddly evil was a huge truck. It was one of those which carried new cars to the dealership. Like the ones that you stared at wide eyed when you were a child. Dreaming of the day when you would be old enough to drive one of the bright, shiny new cars it carried on its back. But, this beast seemed to have a black cloud of doom hovering over it. As we looked closer we saw what appeared to be red paint smeared along the steel incased front of the truck. On the asphalt in front

of the hulking beast, pieces of its shattered headlight sparkled like diamonds in the hot summer sun. Other than these diminutive scars, this appendage of death was unscathed. To the left was total carnage. Pieces of torn sheet metal were strewn about like leaves from a giant oak tree. Tiny shards of glass glittered like droplets of rain after a brief summer shower. Personal belongings were scattered about as if flung by a spoiled child throwing a temper tantrum. But, the sights that caused our hearts to ache and our throats to suddenly constrict were the lakes and rivers of red in the center of destruction. The lakes were beginning to turn dark, like stagnant water in a small pond. The rivers shone bright red in the afternoon sun. Our stomachs twisted as we saw small, black flies feeding on these remains of some poor soul's life blood. A strong, sickening, coppery scent filled our noses as we gravely passed this grizzly scene.

"I wonder what kind of car it was", asked Keith in a hushed tone. Our eyes followed Jason's pointed finger to where two men were loading a transaxle onto the back of a wrecker.

"A Volkswagen Beetle", replied Jason. We were awestruck with the notion of such a tiny car colliding with such a mammoth machine.

After we had passed this horrible scene of death, the traffic began to clear. Still, Jason kept the car at a slow steady pace. He drove, like we have all seen our grandparents drive, with both hands on the steering wheel and his eyes glued to the road ahead. We no longer laughed and joked, but rather spoke in low somber tones for the rest of the way home. Being young males, with male egos, we did not discuss our feelings about what we had just witnessed. But, it was as if we all felt the same chilling revelation from the hideous scene we had witnessed. Could it be that we were mere mortals, just like the people we felt sure had died in the crash that day.



Go With the Flow
Tiffany Hays

Color Me In
Jenni Robinson

As I stand here all plain and white
I wonder if I'll ever do anything right
I have no color on my face
But I try to keep up the pace
Color me in with bright shining hues
Use reds, greens, purples, and blues
Fill in my soul with bright neon green
Fill in my head with a technicolor dream
Paint my heart a deep crimson red
Then gently pull me out of bed
Paint me every color you like
So I am no longer just black and white
Color me in so I am complete
Color me in so I can stand on my own feet
Fill me in and make me yours
Fill me in so colors stream out my pores
Just color me in so I can live
This is all I ask you to give.

Who Am I
Robert Saxon

Who am I, to be kindred to others feelings?
Who am I, to be privy, and to interpret their meanings?
Who am I, to choose who and whose ideas are laid to rest?
Who am I, to point and chose what is best?
Who am I, to provide comfort with a reassuring embrace?
Who am I, to pick who to keep and who to erase?
Who am I, to stand as a pillar, in this unconnected oval?
Who am I, to act as a miller and turn the switch on the
disposal?
Who am I, but what they want me to be?
Who am I? Just trying to be me.
Who Am I



Singer/Songwriter - Jakob Dylan
Yvonne Robinson

A Lot Can Happen During an Explosion

Joe Spavone

Cold was new to me. The long Greyhound bus trip from Miami to Chicago was my first great adventure. The life of bare feet was definitely over. I did not understand why there were no swamps here, no tadpoles in mud puddles, no adventure places behind the basement. There were no sudden afternoon rain showers that started the next block over and swept over you while you were trying to race them home. I did not know if the asphalt on the street here burned your feet or not because I had to wear shoes all the time now. Socks, too. I moved up in the world to hand-me-down long pants. I was certain I would soon be a man based on the long pants and full-time shoes alone. I was certain that long pants, and learning how to master shoe laces were my tickets to a new world. Even then, I knew that adults had power and the middle child of a large family had none. Grown-ups always had plenty of change jingling around in their pockets. Paper money, which was worth incomprehensible millions, did not figure in our universe. Why, grown-ups could buy a candy bar, not just penny candy, any time they wanted. These things are important when one is six years old.

Snow was a wonder to me. It still is. It was a wonder to us all, even my mom, I think. The first snow came in November, just before Thanksgiving. It came in the form of great, big, snowflakes that fell slowly. We ran outside to the cries of, "Snow! Snow!" - outside to that place that only exists for children, and a few gifted grown-ups. We ran to that wonder-place where things just should not be possible. Our breaths hung in the air like cigarette smoke. We did all of the obligatory things: we caught snowflakes with our tongues, we watched it gather in our hair and on our shoulders, we touched it and discovered it was cold, we slid on the slushy cobblestones in the alley behind our one-room basement apartment, and we made malnourished snowballs out of the scanty, early season snow. Our hands soon felt painfully cold. I envied my older brother

who had snappy vinyl and wool gloves. He had a paper route, and that kid was loaded. He had little largess, though. Luckily, mom was clever. She never threw out holey socks. Soon we were all outfitted with mismatched, but warm, socks on our hands, like all of the other kids on the block. Our sock-gloves were soon soaked with slush, and my hands were as cold as ever. We went inside, half-frozen, only when forced to at dusk by parental edict. Hot cocoa would have been perfect, but everyone knew they only had that at Boys Club camp.

I wondered why the snow fell so slowly and everything else fell so fast. I mean, rain fell fast. Pencils fell fast. Lord knows, if you knocked over a glass of milk, it fell waaaay too fast to prevent a major disaster. Then the inevitable smack! would come. (Violent noises should always be followed by exclamation points.) Shock and awe would be followed by hopeless wailing, all caused by gravity. Forty-two years later, I don't drink milk. I am not really that fond of gravity, either, although I suppose it has its uses, such as keeping us from flying into space.

A few days later, mom was at work while my older brother and sisters were out. I was at home doing a grownup job of looking after my two younger brothers, Tommy, aged five, and Anthony, still a toddler. Tommy said he was cold. I was cold, too, but Tommy's pronouncement was important because it gave me a reason to do something I'd long been solemnly contemplating: I was going into forbidden territory by lighting the gas heater. It was no problem because I had watched my ten-year-old sister, Charlene, do it at least once or twice. When the heater was lit, the lighter got to do two cool things. First, a match had to be struck.

Everybody knows how much fun lighting a match is for a kid. The other thing that had to be done was to hold the lit match, before it burned your fingers, to the hissing gas, hear the whoosh, and see the satisfying blue flame. Then, you would be warm. Kids do not understand being cold. I mean, there is just

no rhyme or reason to it. It just feels terrible and is the opposite of being warm. I knew, though, that lighting the heater was forbidden, under pain of death, for us younger boys, but surely in this case, the need justified the action. I approached the magic dragon with serene confidence born of utter ignorance. (World leaders often give in to the same feeling so you can't blame me.) I turned the dingy brass lever on the gas hose and heard the satisfying hiss. Hmmmm. The giant box of wooden matches was nowhere in sight. Perhaps it was in the kitchen part of our basement, which consisted of a sink and a hot plate. I rummaged around the boy-clutter looking for the matches. I found the Diamond brand Strike Anywhere matches above the sink and climbed on a chair to get them. I brought the box over and took a match out. The gas was still hissing cheerfully, so I knew I was still good. I would have hated to have to start over. Then, like the maestro I was, I struck the match. I watched the red match head blaze in a marvel of color and light.

Adults love to describe fast, dramatic, things as happening in slow motion. Time, to a child, is more relative than Einstein could ever imagine. What happened next took several hours, or at least a few seconds. It took a long time. It started with a long, whooshing roar. It sounded just like the elevated train passing by overhead. Then, everything began to move. I was happy I stayed still, because motion would have been scary. The blue fireball moved toward me, slowly. I really should have moved out of the way, as I had plenty of time, but the utter blueness was enthralling. The room and most of its contents moved leisurely past me, a loaf of bread, and dishes, the clutter of three boys unsupervised in a room, all mixed in with a chair that gravity was not holding down anymore. I watched with a strange disconnectedness, fascinated. I felt a thump at my back, and all the motion stopped. I looked down at my right arm. It was shiny brown, and covered with three or four big craters, just like the moon. I smelled a smell that would become familiar, even comforting, to me in later years when I assisted in surgery. It was the smell of cautery, but I had no word for it then, not at

six. In later years, that smell meant I was where I belonged, doing something rare and special. On that early winter day, however, it was just one more of too many new occurrences. Then I saw the room. My arm began to hurt, but that was now unimportant. The fear began at that instant, cruel and focused like hot light through a magnifying glass. It was the dead, numb, feeling of doom that only a six year old can understand. I suddenly thought of the trouble I was in for lighting the heater and, worse, spilling the whole room, not just a glass of milk. Abandon all hope. Screaming was yet to come, as was the beating of my life. My older brother, all of twelve, was in charge of beatings, or spankings, and he had been doing it for a while and would continue until I outgrew him. He made a terrifying ritual of it, secretly liked it, and did it pretty much whenever he felt like it.

In my panic, I ran outside as fast as I could. Luckily, running at full speed, I tripped and fell headlong into the snow. This was lucky for two reasons. First, I had so much velocity I believe I would still be going if nothing had stopped me; this would have created other problems later. Of more immediate importance, the cold snow felt great on my burned arm. Now, I hope you are never burned, but if you are, run at full speed until you fall headfirst into a snow drift. You will find it to be well worth your while, no kidding.

The relief was so intense I decided, since things were now going well, that I might as well stay where I was for the time being. It just felt too good. Unfortunately, good things never seem to last as long as they should. The sky was soon filled with a circle of adult faces. The air was soon filled with all sorts of needless commentary, some kind and well meaning, some just plain mean. That was my first experience of the commonality of mean-spirited remarks at accident or disaster scenes. Yes, it may well have been the victim's fault, but, contrary to the expectations of the sayers, cruel words have not been helpful yet. I was whisked away in an ambulance, away from trouble,

away from doom. Ambulances are a great ride if you are six, as there is a lot to see and do in them. Too bad the hospital was only a few blocks away. I did not have the time to explore the ambulance, or its possibilities, properly. I was not a terrified accident victim. I was happy as a clam that I was not going to get whipped, not, at least, for now.

Everything at children's Memorial Hospital was white, white, white, white, white. The floors, walls, ceilings, doctors and nurses, were all white. What wasn't white was shiny chrome. The room was filled with bright, fascinating, and wonderfully breakable things. I had never imagined any place could be so bright, especially after living in a basement with only slit windows at the top of the brick walls. It smelled good, too. A nice, pretty nurse, who smelled of clean laundry, came in and plunged my arm into a big metal bowl of ice water. Oh, that felt so good. Relief was hope. And then, miracle of miracles, she fed me vanilla ice cream from a little paper cup with the paper cover that you pulled off with a tab. It was just like the kind of ice cream you could get if you collected several thousand pop bottles and lugged them over to Mr. Laschuto's grocery store to cash in the deposit. The nurse fed me with one of those flat wooden spoons that you didn't have to wash when you were done. You could just throw it away! Then she left me to soak. While I was soaking, I thought, "Where is the medicine magic?" At hospitals they do mystical and incomprehensible things to you and you get all better, and then, as the piece de resistance, you get a sucker. In fact, I could have done the ice water thing at home, or just stayed in the snow drift and saved all the hoo-hah. Then I remembered that the hoped-for incomprehensible medical magic might involve needles or brain sucking. I realized that brain sucking would be better than the trouble I was in for messing up the apartment.

Presently, a nice doctor came in, picked at my burn and bandaged me from shoulder to fingertips with gauze. I rewarded him with appropriate pomp and howling, so he would not

believe his efforts were unappreciated. He rewarded me with fatherly advice, such as, “Be quiet, I haven’t even touched you yet!” and, “Hold him down!” Then he gave me a sucker. All in all, I believed the sucker was the perfect reward. The accident and I now owed each other nothing.

When I got home, I found that our apartment had been restored to order. The brick walls prevented major damage and my two younger brothers were not hurt at all. They were hugely jealous of me and I lorded it over them. I told them about the ice cream like a king holding court. Another reason for my contentment was that I was now beating-proof. My bandaged arm was better than Kevlar. My mother was free with her tenderness that night, and our lives soon returned to normal. I suppose I aged her ten years or so that day, but at that moment she looked about the right age to me.

The giant bandage did not trump screaming and yelling for long. The bandage got dingy, and so did my heart. The next day I found myself wishing I could live at the hospital. They even answered me when I said things. Everything was so clean and bright, and smelled good. They had kindness-flavored ice cream and little flat wooden spoons.

That day was a turning point in my life. From that day on I knew there were other places besides that basement. Oh, there was school, but who wants to live at school? They made you eat beets, and, the nuns might crack you one just for dropping a hot penny, heated on the radiator, down the back of the shirt of the kid in front of you. From that day, a tiny voice, smaller than a pinpoint, started saying in me, “Fly away, fly away, fly away.” That voice, unknowingly amplified by kindly mentors and teachers, grew louder and louder over the years. That iota voice grew and sang “Fly Away” like a song. Fly away to a place where you did not have to make the bread last until Friday. Fly away from disenchantment, disassociation, discommendation, and disappointment. It was a song of hope and a gourmet dinner

when there wasn't enough food.

It was a reason.

Who Am I?
Salinda Pond

When I walk down the street
You see me,
You don't know me,
You judge me.
Who do you think I am?
Do you think you know,
Who I am?
Do you see the me inside?
How can you think to know me?
If you won't get close enough
To see
The me, who is within.
Who am I?
To you, a stranger,
A threat,
Someone to avoid
A danger.
We could
Be the best of friends.
I could be a doctor,
An inventor, a space explorer.
You do not know,
Who I am.
Sometimes
I wonder,
Who Am I?
You think you know
What I will be like,
Who I will be,
But you do not know
Cannot know,
Unless you can recognize
The me that is in you,
You will never know,
Who Am I?

The Light That Shines Without Burning
William Rivera

Off the northwest coast of Scotland
Lies a now nearly deserted island named Lewis
Which was a home of a branch of the clan MacLeod.
Although now hardly remembered
Their plaid is well known.
Gold and black checks with red thread lining
Form the Pattern.
Their motto is:
The Light That Shines Without Burning.
One's imagination strives for meaning in these times,
Of dwindling energy.
Does it refer to leadership, the Aurora Borealis, or to a light
designed to keep ships from foundering in the Outer
Hebrides?
Like the Pharos it shown far out into night,
Like the light from cold fusion - intensely bright.
A thick layer of ice - the cryosphere;
Could yield more energy or an environment drear.
Could it be a signpost giving direction
as to how we might supply the energy needs of future
generations?
Waiting to be discovered by some Saint-like Emmy Noether?
The light that shines without burning
To which our hearts are now yearning.

Time's Brutal Passage
John Bailey

Looking back through melting ice,
Watered memories are hard to see,
Faces lose their brilliant shine,
Blankness rises,
Falling backwards into time,
The right words never come again,
Names flee,
Death slowly quickens its pace.



The Blues II
Lucy King
49

The Unveiling

Matthew Sunrich

In Tudor England there was a buzzword that expressed the ability of an individual to create the illusion that wit, knowledge, and manners came to him naturally, i.e. they were not the result of constant study. Courtiers worked hard at this technique, which was designed to differentiate the genuine members of the nobility from the contemptible social climbers that sprung up in the wake of the collapse of feudalism. Ultimately, a master of this discipline would never, regardless of the circumstances, appear anything other than thoroughly in charge.

I cannot recall the word for this just now, but the modern equivalent of it probably involves, at least in part, sitting in a delicatessen doing the crossword with ostensible ease.

I had received an invitation to the Friday-night opening of a new wing in the museum. The letter assured me that it included the best exhibits that the museum had ever featured. Moreover, refreshments were going to be served, which was always a plus since I hadn't had much luck selling any paintings in the past few months. I dug my nicest pair of trousers and only button-up shirt out of the wardrobe and scrubbed the acrylic from beneath my fingernails in order to make myself uncharacteristically presentable.

The new wing was dedicated to ancient Greek sculpture and architecture. The local literati were all in attendance; I recognized a few of them from previous soirees. I leaned against a column and listened to their pedantry for a few minutes, quietly giggling to myself, before crossing the room to snag some victuals. I voraciously filled a plate with finger sandwiches, cheese and crackers, crab-stuffed mushrooms, prawns and cocktail sauce, and baby carrots and

broccoli with ranch dressing from the resplendent refreshment table. A steward offered me a flute of tepid champagne, which I graciously accepted.

I recognized a girl from some of my college art classes standing near the end of the table, likewise holding an overflowing plate. I could not, however, remember her name. Had we been at school the odds would have been favorable that she would be carrying a notebook with her name written on it, which I could have surreptitiously eyed. Indeed, this was a stratagem used by Sir Philip Sidney himself.

“How’ve you been?” she asked through a bolus of ham salad.

“Not terrible. I haven’t moved a lot of paintings lately, but there’s a dealer who’s expressed interest.”

“I’ve been concentrating mostly on performance art.”

“How’s that going?”

“Well, it’s pretty competitive; you really have to come up with something brilliant. I’m working on a piece where I paint my body orange and dump a garbage can full of curried rice and golf balls over my head to Rossini’s *The Thieving Magpie*.”

“You know, ‘golf’ is one of the four words that are the same in every language.”

“Really? What are the other three?”

“I’m not sure. I think one of them is ‘harmonica.’” She nodded and shoved a cheese-laden morsel into

her gob, chasing it with a vermillion libation. “You should try the brie; it’s magnificent. Are you still dating that same girl?”

“No. Things were going all right until we got into a conversation about the muses, and she told me that her favorite was Melpomene. I had no choice but to terminate the relationship.”

“I see.”

At this point the conversation was becoming unwieldy, so I told her that it had been nice seeing her, good luck in future endeavors, etcetera, and excused myself to the restroom.

On the way back I wandered into the Egyptian wing and stopped in front of a mummy case containing a queen of the Middle Kingdom. As I stood admiring the hieroglyphs, my sinuses began to tingle, and I sneezed rather loudly. As I wiped my eyes, the case creaked open a few inches, revealing four desiccated, bandaged fingers.

“Hey, buddy, you got a smoke?” the mummy asked.

I was understandably rattled, but I didn’t let on.

“Sure.” I snapped my cigarette case open and extended one toward her. She slid the coffin lid aside and emerged from the musty shadows. In the dim light of the sconces, her entire body resembled a copy of the Wall Street Journal that had been left in the backseat of an abandoned Pinto.

“Thanks,” she said and clamped down on it with lips so dry that I had to stop myself from instinctively fishing a tin of Carmex out of my pocket. There probably wasn’t one there anyway.

“Light?”

“Please.”

“Careful,” I warned as I eased the flame of my Zippo toward her mouth.

“Oh, you mean because my dehydrated state has rendered me highly flammable.”

“Well, yeah.”

She took a long drag, and her eyes rolled back as she exhaled. “Man, that’s fantastic!”

“I roll them myself. It’s much cheaper that way.”

She studied the cigarette while moving it around in her fingers. “I suppose that’s sensible. The tobacconists probably aren’t thrilled about it, though.”

“Well, I mean, I still purchase the loose tobacco and the rolling papers. I can’t very well produce those things on my own.”

Her teeth shifted slightly, which I took for an attempt at a smile. “Not the agricultural type, eh?”

“I’m a painter, actually.”

“Oh, that’s a great line of work. There’s always a pharaoh who needs a tomb painted. It’s really quite surprising just

how much turnover that job has. Pharaoh, I mean. I can't be the only one who's noticed this."

"Given it a lot of thought, have you?"

"Being sealed up in a burial case gives a person plenty of time to reflect."

I nodded.

"What's this for?" she asked, indicating the velvet rope that boxed her in. The novelty of it appeared to consume her as she reached down and playfully swept her palm across the top of it.

I glanced down the corridor and found the party still in proverbial full swing. It somehow seemed impossibly distant. I longed for the mawkish discourse I had abandoned just minutes before but wasn't sure whether it were possible to return. Everything had changed.

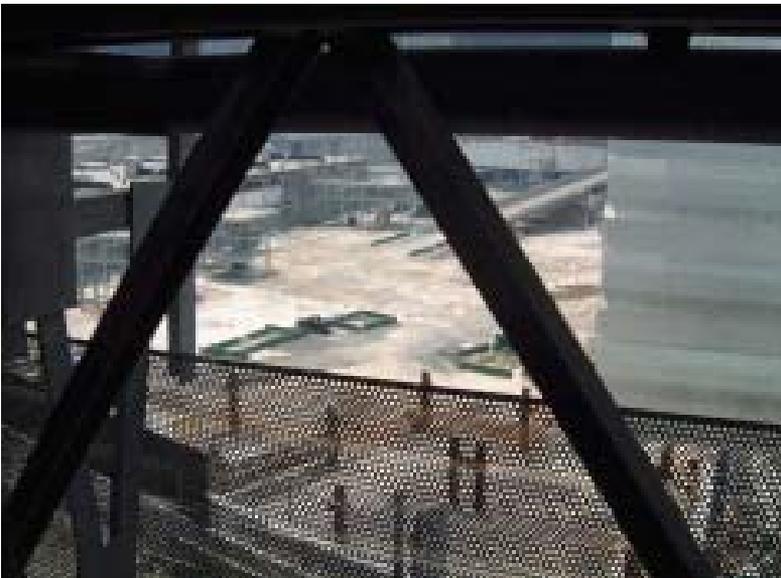
A sudden shriek drew my attention back to the queen. Her hand had caught fire. She desperately thrashed her arm back and forth, causing the hand to snap off at the wrist. It sailed across the room like one of Icarus' wings before coming to rest at the base of a display case. Thick black smoke filled the chamber, and icy water descended from the ceiling as the fire extinguishers went off. Spotting the crimson sign through the stinging blackness, I dashed to the emergency exit and threw myself against it. The doorway opened into a brick alley filled with cardboard boxes, splintered wooden skids, and fluted aluminum garbage cans. Numerous stray cats fled at the sight of me. After myriad labyrinthine turns I emerged several blocks from the museum.

When I got home, I gessoed a canvas and painted a mummy smoking a cigarette, knowing full well I'd never be able to sell it.

An American, I Am...

Robert Clemente

An American, I am, set before time
When freedom was but a notion sublime.
I grew and became more than wishes true
As my fathers believed they could do.
A country formed of blood, hardship, and glory,
Its patrons mused of balancing their dreams;
They fought out—numbered and lived to tell the story,
Living each life to share their schemes.
We struggle still to peak our sullen November chills,
It stills our souls, pondering those far away,
From embers cold upon the night still bright on hills
That bleed freedom's cry of those who die today.
I glean amid wind—swept sands to see my face embrace
Sunlit stars to light my way upon this place.
My heart grows large to meet the chances found,
With time and space this place to me abound.



Cornerstone, Ground Zero

Carol Pearson

The Journey from Boy to Man

Trish Riley

The narrator of the story “Greasy Lake” by T. C. Boyle is a nineteen-year-old boy. Although his age does not change through the story, his outlook on life does. He begins the story as a rebellious adolescent looking for some fun with his friends. The story describes places and events that compare the crazy night to war. Those frightening events change the way the narrator thinks of his lifestyle and how he views nature - and himself.

The narrator first describes himself and his friends as “bad” (124). The boys engage in “bad” behavior such as drinking alcohol and “sniffing glue and ether and what somebody claimed was cocaine” (124). They drive around at night in their parents’ Bel Air, looking for fun and excitement. On that night, they end up at Greasy Lake. The narrator describes the decomposition of the lake in a way that compares to the decomposition in his life. He says the lake was once pure and clear but is now “glittering with broken glass and strewn with beer cans and the charred remains of bonfires” (125). This condition is comparable to the lives of the characters in the story because as the boys get older, their morals are also in a state of decay. They are no longer pure, as the lake had once been. The narrator can describe his own values in the same words he uses to describe the lake - “fetid and murky” (125).

As the story unfolds, many references to war become obvious. The first one is the “chopper” motorcycle that stands at the side of the lake when the boys first arrive, bringing to mind the helicopters that were a predominant image of the Viet Nam War. Next, when the narrator loses his car keys, he says, “This was a tactical error, as damaging and irreversible in its way as Westmoreland’s decision to dig in at Khe Sanh” (126). His comment is another allusion to

Viet Nam. Later, when the boys are trying to escape from the car that catches them trying to rape the girl, she screams, reminding him of ‘the Sabine women, the Christian martyrs, Anne Frank dragged from the garret’ (126).

This is a reference to the Italian women who were forced to marry Roman conquerors and the young girl who died in a concentration camp during the Holocaust. Boyle uses these images of war to describe the events of the night to show that the experience is as traumatic to the young boys as going to war, causing them to grow up and look at the way they are living their lives.

All the traumatic incidents that happen to the boys on this night cause them to change the way they look at life. At first, the boys seek out trouble. They are rebelling because they think it is trendy. After getting beaten up, hiding in the dark muddy lake all night, and finding the dead biker, their view on being “bad” changes. At the end, they turn down a chance to party with girls who arrive as they are leaving. The narrator says, “I wanted to go home to my parents’ house and crawl into bed” (131). The changes in the narrator are also apparent by his description of nature before their arrival at Greasy Lake and his description as he is slogging out of the lake the next morning. Before the events of the night, the narrator describes the reasons they go to the lake as “nature.” They go to “snuff the rich scent of possibility on the breeze, watch a girl take off her clothes and plunge into the festering murk, drink beer, smoke pot, howl at the stars, savor the incongruous full-throated roar of rock and roll against the primeval susurrus of frogs and crickets” (125). However, as he is crawling out of the lake, he begins to notice the sky. He hears the birds and smells the flowers. He says, “Everything was still” (130). Now he realizes this peace and beauty are what nature really is. His views become more grown up and mature. He now sees nature as

pure and no longer something as disgusting as the “bad” activities that Greasy Lake has to offer.

Life for the narrator is changed forever. He can now appreciate his life and no longer look at being bad as being trendy. The war-like events that might even change his views on nature, and he realizes that he is fortunate to be alive. Although he may not completely become a man overnight, this life-changing experience may have put him on his way to a more responsible and knowledgeable adulthood.

Work Cited

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My Classmate
Grechia Prestwood



High Museum - Series of Four
Carol Pearson

New Orleans
DeAnna Drever

I can remember when I was a small child, playin' on the levies, fishin' & swimmin' in Lake Pontchartrain too. When Mardi Gras was safe and the people were friendly, no drugs ran rapid: the food is what was to die for, gumbo and hot boudin.

Not the greed of money that started our fights. The fais-do-do's when Cajuns partied all night. New Orleans was boomin', and the voodoo, well, it was all right. The most dangerous storms came from Bourbon Street, a hurricane from O'Charley's, now that right there would knock you off your feet.

What has happened in 2005? Many good people have lost their lives; the levies have breached while President Bush stands by and watches the Great City of New Orleans as she dies.

Don't get me wrong, listen to what I say, Bush is not at fault that Katrina came our way, he just showed his face five days to late. The people holler racism is to blame for the lack of help, that's a shame: it is the lack of a color that has caused the delay, for the poorest of the poor in New Orleans remained.

Open your eyes Mr. Bush, careful what you say. Drinking tea on Trent's porch is not a comfort to the people of Louisiana today. "We'll build it back better" is what you had to say, but what about the poor who lost their homes and everything they ever owned? Maybe it is a racist thing not for the color of skin, but the color of green. What happened to the monies that Clinton tried to set aside to build the levies strong, to make the levies wide? People one week later continue to die.

FEMA dropped the ball; sorry, no horse shows here today, just water and fire and more deaths to appear. Mary rock the babies and kiss our children good night, Jesus hold the hands of moms and dads real tight. Cries of help, baby don't let go, don't leave me now I love you so. Take care of my children and grandkids too as Lake Pontchartrain takes her, she cries I love you! This is what rings in my head all night long, as the tears for this family roll down my cheek, Mr. Brown how the hell do you sleep?

As the waters continued to rise, kindhearted souls began to help, tried to take control of a national disaster that harshly unfolds.

Clinton was punished cause someone kissed and told, while Bush remains in office as the death toll on his table daily grows.

Racist for the color of skin? I don't think so, racist for the color of money, most defiantly, don't you know! People of New Orleans stay strong another night. Louisiana will never forget Mardi Gras and fais-do-do's, Bourbon Street and the French quarters too; New Orleans will laugh and sing again soon.

She'll be bigger and stronger than ever before, drugs and prostitution not allowed through her doors, but Cajuns of all colors will party together once more.

Hold on to your faith and cradle it tight, Americans pray for New Orleans each night. Know this and know it well New Orleans WILL rise again the way she use to be, when you didn't have to worry 'bout the kids playin' in the street, and your neighbor was your friend not just someone you greet.



Aaliyah
LaShayon Kirby



Lost Lichen in Alaska
Forrest Kinpel



Happy Couple
LaTanya Rawles

Who Will?
Salinda Pond

When I am gone,
who will be here to tell
I was here?
This marker above me
just a name,
and a few dates,
cannot speak.
Nothing to tell
who I was,
what I was,
where I went,
what I accomplished.
Who will
pass on my stories,
tell of my gift of laughter,
honor my love of God,
sing of my beauty?
This marker above me
cold stone,
flat, shiny surface,
reflections of trees.
When I am gone,
this marker above me
is all that will remain
as a sentinel against time.
When time erodes
this unfeeling stone
and all my loved ones
are gone,
Who will know,
I,
was?
Who will know,
You,
were?

Journal Entry...

Robert Clemente

31 July 2003, Dad's 80th birthday, Thursday morning
I really don't have the time to call him, I have to finish this paper and get to class for the final exam, oh, and study, too. But, I must. I cannot get to Michigan this weekend as hoped, no money to put it all together. So, I call...
...He sounds the same to me. His voice is not raspy, actually it is quite clear and pronounced. Eighty years, what must be going through his mind as we talk? We never really talked much, Mom and I did enough of that for the whole family. But, I miss him living down here and he up there. There is something about a dad, the years on the planet, the awareness of things that do not matter any longer, the words behind the words... We talk of stuff, not memories but neighborly things and plans and what we are going to do today, just as if we were never really apart. I must call him more often. He likes me to call and talk to him, I like me to call and talk to him.

I hope my children call me later...

I might Lose Weight
(But Nature has Decreed)
Alison Payne

my moon-shaped face will still be round
no topography of cheekbones will define
a perfect path for rouge
to suggest alluring shadows –
no concavities will dramatize
a lean and hungry look
which I will never own
but nature has decreed
it is a face made right
to buzz the naked belly
of a bath-warmed baby boy
to mirror back the goofy grins
that teach him life is good
before he's taught to think it isn't
a face made to encompass
the complexities of trust
in all the fright of peek- a-boo
a face which disappears in phases
but always will come back to you
(I may lose weight)
but nature has decreed
these hips will cut an ample swath
rocking like a cradle
on the swing of my gait -
how else to hammock baby boys
in the months till they get born
how else to helmet fragile skulls
as they cycle round the track
of my pelvic velodromemy
girth is meant to be a mine so large
its small prospectors know for sure
they've hit the mother lode

(I might lose weight)
but nature has decreed
those Miss September double D's
I envied secretly, on me
would be more like the feature spread
of the National Geographic
the proudly unencumbered teats of
a dark-skinned tribal mom
who gathered, pounded, plucked, and cooked
for a brood of hungry kids
one slung even now across her chest
like an infant bandolier -
my breasts were made just right
to nourish fledgling boys
with the milk that puts some muscle
on the arms of love
and builds a lifetime of resistance
to diseases of indifference
I claim them gladly for
they hold the secret pleasure
of a tiny dimpled hand that fluttered
at the edges of his fountain of delight
like spring's first butterfly
gone tipsy with its first sweet draught
of honeysuckle wine
(I may lose weight)
but nature has decreed
these big flat size nine feet
will walk with me through all my days
and carry me no matter what I weigh
and carry, too, the infant
swaddled in my arms
and the toddler clinging to my back
for one last gallop
round the kitchen table

these feet will walk these children to their beds
and with an hour, maybe two, of sleep
they will likely rise and walk again
till even though my weary bones
declare "Enough!" my feet, (thank god!)
will turn a deaf ear
to my own cries of fatigue
and someday they will walk me to my grave
with tenderness and they will
lay the body down
that wasn't perfect, but was mine
then I will give my body back
as nature has decreed -
oh, I will be a sumptuous feast
let the earth grow fat with me



Young Mother With Black and White Beads
Eddie Gore

I Have a Garden
Alison Payne

my heart quickened
when I plucked the season's
first strawberry from my garden
swollen with readiness
as flush with daystar heat
as a baby swaddled into sleep
I could have served my yield
to anyone who happened by
yet I meant it to be yours –
I washed off the grains of soil
still clinging to the fruit
as though averse to let it go
I peeled away the tiny leaves
caressing the crown
like a mother's hand
on a dear child's head
and last of all
I dressed the ruby fruit
in a sugar-powdered vest
so that its tart contrast
could be more richly savored
on a plate of purest white
I offered it to you
the breath caught in my throat
when you took it in hand
it looked at home against
the sunny color of your skin
you slowly brought it to your mouth
until a brush of sugar touched
the incurved swell of your top lip
I imagined how delicious
tasting with a kiss the salty
tang of your own body's sweat

fused with the sweetness
melting on my tongue –
but you stopped and did not eat
in fact you dropped it underneath
you as you walked away
and crushed it in
the heel of your boot
I folded – wounded – mystified
I would have knelt like a dog
and lapped up the grimy pulp
to get you back
I wanted you so much –
instead the pink flesh deliquesced
and darkened on the floor
like an ugly spill of blood
shed in a meaningless war
cautiously I eased
out of my doleful crouch
and freed my limbs to stand
and walk – for a garden is mine
where another fruit
will soon be sweet enough
to harvest from the vine

SOMEBODY told EVERYONE

Robert Clemente

SOMEBODY told SOMEONE something about ANYBODY. Well, you know what happened. ..SOMEBODY told SOMEONE else and pretty soon, EVERYBODY was adding to the story and EVERYONE knew something about SOMEBODY. ..so they thought. The problem is that what SOMEBODY told to SOMEONE was a distortion of the truth about ANYBODY, so EVERYBODY thought they knew something about SOMEONE. So really, SOMEBODY ended up telling EVERYBODY everything about EVERYONE.

What EVERYBODY didn't know was that what SOMEBODY had told SOMEONE was an untruth and could hurt ANYBODY. SOMEBODY didn't realize that a stone rolled, rolls back. NOBODY knew that presumption causes strife and now EVERYONE has a little bit of information about SOMEONE who got some "news" from SOMEBODY. NOBODY is aware of words that destroy. If SOMEBODY would have stopped creating "news" about ANYBODY, and SOMEONE would have stopped listening to the fabrications; then maybe EVERYONE would have heard nothing about ANYBODY, and the verbal infection surely would have stopped. So, NOBODY gains, NOBODY has a sense of right. But, alas, EVERYBODY is mad at SOMEBODY, and SOMEBODY now feels they have to tell SOMEONE again, and the cycle continues. Soon, EVERYBODY has lost respect for SOMEBODY, and NOBODY sees what's really going on. ANYONE could have refused to hear SOMEBODY tell them something about ANYBODY, but did not. The real problem is that SOMEBODY is going to get hurt, and pass that on to EVERYBODY, and then NOBODY will feel good about ANYBODY. NOBODY is the real winner. ANYBODY should not have passed on the "news" because it was only a story

SOMEBODY started that. ended up hurting **SOMEONE** and, eventually, **EVERYONE**. And we all know that **NOBODY** takes the blame for spreading criticism and stories about **ANYBODY**, because it conflicts with perceived truth that is no truth at all. Well, evil is **ANYBODY**, who evil thinks. So, when **SOMEBODY** tells something to **SOMEONE** again about **ANYBODY** or **ANYONE** and denies that anything bad has happened, bad will come to **SOMEONE**, or **ANYONE**. **ANYBODY** can see that **ANYONE** can avoid the problem. Eventually, **NOBODY** will get involved with the gossip that **SOMEBODY** is trying to spread if **ANYBODY** will just tell **SOMEBODY** to stop **SOMEONE**. Maybe **NOBODY** will stop, we can only hope that **SOMEBODY** will, and that **EVERYBODY** will realize that gossip is harmful and useless to **ANYBODY**. Of course, **NOBODY** can take back what has already been said by **SOMEBODY**. **NOBODY** may read this, **EVERYBODY** should, **SOMEBODY** might, and **ANYBODY** can benefit from its message; but, **NOBODY** should ever tell **ANYBODY** anything about **SOMEONE**. **SOMEONE** wrote this, **SOMEBODY** had to.



Shadow
Ruthie Wheeler

Ransom Notes from Poetry Class
Kyle Taylor

Creativity creeps around in dark comers
like terrorists in Northern Ireland
blowing up grocery stores and
leaving random ransom notes
expecting to be liberated immediately
following every explosion of effort.
Times like these
are when an idea in a ragged ski mask
says, "Bang, bang, you're dead."
Oh, if I had a bullet for every time you _____ ,
One of us would have died a long time ago.
I'm glad that's not a phrase I use often,
someone would have probably killed me
while filling in the blank.
Tears are the all-purpose emotive gesture
written out in pieced together newspaper clippings while
the telephone makes you feel betrayed
by the very instrument intended to
bring you closer together.
A poem to be read fast
A poem to be read slowly
Complaints do not come at a premium
and I don't want your life experiences,
I've got my own, thank you.
I get to write about them every day
but somehow they all have the same dates in common.

The Lost Tribe of Citronia

Prologue:

The following project was the summer long creation of Alison Payne's Murphy Campus Humanities class of 2005. It is one part history, one part imagination, and one part whimsy. Some highlights are included here. The students' goal, as they began the study of how ancient civilizations developed social constructs, artistic modes, and spiritual beliefs, was to invent a fictional society with its own history, geography, religion, dance, mythology, and art. In naming the tribe, the class was most inspired by Rob Saxon's description of swirling citronella candles around his mosquito-filled patio on a summer evening . . . and thus was born the Lost Tribe of Citronia.



West Central Anthropology Association (WCAA)

Pictured from left to right, back row: Joey "Leaky" Spavone, distinguished visiting Polish Minister of Anthropology Krysztof Kochanowski, Robert "White Anglo" Saxon "Buddhist," Cathy Boemanns, Alison Payne; center row:: April Trice, Sheena "of the Jungle" Anderson, Natasha "Goodall" Overby, LaTanya "heat-stroke" Rawles; front row: Wes "Indiana Jones" Jordan, Brandon Wyatt, and Sonya "Margie Mead" Cobb.

The Lost Tribe of Citronia: Historical Background

Why the Neanderthal people perished some 30,000 years ago is still a mystery. Most experts believe they were driven to extinction by the arrival of *Homo sapiens*, modern humans. The Neanderthals had broad noses and thick brow ridges. Their skulls sloped back low over their brains. Current perspectives, however, disregard the outdated belief that they were brutes, for recent excavations proved they cared for their ill, carved tools and weapons, and practiced ritualistic burial of their dead. Falling temperatures associated with the Ice Age forced the Neanderthals to migrate from Eurasia toward Spain, where the last traces of them have been discovered in isolated seaside caves. The Rock of Gibraltar, pocketed with some 140 caves, may have been their final refuge. To the north and east, plentiful herds of elk and aurochs grazed. Africa was just a short strait away, but Neanderthal man did not explore. They seemed to be incurious and incapable of change. These very qualities may have spelled their demise.

Who replaced the Neanderthals of Gibraltar? The West Central Anthropology Association (WCAA) based upon on-site excavation and intensive research, has arrived at a provocative conclusion – a previously unknown tribe of *Homo erectus* whose wanderings brought them to Spain in search of shelter and richer hunting grounds. Coming face to face with the Neanderthal, they would have found the difference startling. The new species was taller, lighter of limb, more nimble of body, broader of forehead, and more advanced in their special, artistic, and social structures, not to mention advanced weaponry and warfare. The WCAA has determined that the name of this tribe was Citronia. They, like the Neanderthals whom they replaced, left behind a few valuable artifacts, and then they, too dropped off the face of the archeological time chart. What, then, happened to the Citronians?

We have no certain answers, but their remains lead us to speculate that their brains grew so much larger than the Neanderthals', so large that, in fact, their skulls could not contain such excessive brain mass, and their heads simply exploded. What we

do know conclusively, though, is that their intelligence was structured for invention and innovation, and they left behind an impressive body of artifacts as testament to their lasting contribution to the development of Western Civilization. We do know conclusively, though, is that their intelligence was structured for invention and innovation, and they left behind an impressive body of artifacts as testament to their lasting contribution to the development of Western Civilization.



The Lost Tribe of Citronia . . .
Too smart for their own good?
You be the judge.

Discovery

Gibraltar is located in Southwestern Europe adjoining the southern coast of Spain, a strategic location that links the north

Atlantic with the Mediterranean Sea and also places it between Europe and Africa. Evidence of human inhabitation of the Rock date back to the Neanderthals. A Neanderthal skull was found in Forbes' Quarry in 1848. In 1926, the skull of a Neanderthal child was found near Devil's Tower. A recent discovery by the West Central Anthropology Association has shown that Gibraltar may have also been the home of the Lost Tribe of the Citronians.

Cave paintings, pottery tiles and bowls, alphabet scrolls, and rock effigies and among the astonishing discoveries which the WCAA has brought to light.

Rock Effigies

Most Georgians have seen or know about Rock Eagle, Georgia. Archeologists believe it was constructed about 2,000 years ago. Other Native American rock and dirt mounds exist throughout North America, but none as well-preserved as Rock Eagle. Sometimes the mounds were built to honor prominent warriors or chiefs. Other times, they were built as burial markers. And just as we have built battlefield monuments, the Native Americans may have had the same intent. They may have also served a religious component in ceremonial rites.

Though rare in Europe, a few remaining dirt mounds and rock formations suggest a similar purpose. In the Citronian region of Gibraltar, the West Central Archeological Association unearthed mounds obviously related to the primary concerns of the culture: the mosquito and animals which destroy it, the fish and the snake. Other formations may have simply served as directional markers.



Flying Idol Rock Formation : Discovered by Natasha Overbey, Rob Saxon, and LaTanya Rawles. “Showing the movement and the natural resilience of the mosquito.”



Citroconda : Discovered by Cathy Boemanns, Sonya Cobb, Wes Jordan, and Kris Kochanowski. “This rock effigy shows the Citronians as snake worshippers, since snakes consumed many of the disease-carrying mosquitoes.”



IKÈUS : Discovered by Brandon Wyatt, Sheena Anderson, and Joe Spovane. “The Fish of Life eats mosquitoes on the water.”

What did Early Man Fear?

Maybe you have an image of a hunter whose luck has suddenly turned bad, and he is fleeing frantically from the pursuit of an angry cave bear or a saber-tooth tiger.

Have you considered that the real enemy may be much closer and much smaller than one of those ferocious beasts? The Citronians based their culture on mosquitoes. Early alphabetical stone etchings show a rudimentary knowledge that the insects were not just a nuisance, but actually a carrier of disease. By the discovery of citronella, they found a natural way to repel the insects. We also know that the “Citronella Dance” – which seems to have been composed of swirling, hypnotic movements while holding the citronella pots in each hand – was an essential part of any significant ceremony. One of the remaining cave paintings found in a 200’ deep pit by WCAS member Wesley Jordan depicts the stately importance of the dance, not limited to age, gender, or social station.

In his article “Bugging Out” nature photographer Joel Sartore recorded how matter-of-factly the native population in remote Bolivia deal with flesh-burrowing maggots, sting-ray bites that make grown men cry, fungi which erode people’s hands and feet, parasitic stomach worms that make their host scream and writhe in pain, and ants with jaws so strong they can be used to clamp the sides of a wound to stem bleeding.. Sartore returned to American from his Bolivian excursion unaware that he had been infected by a sand fly bite, resulting in a leg wound that would require surgery, followed by three weeks of intravenous medication. (National Geographic 2000). As the Citronians knew so well, never underestimate your enemy!

Rosetta Stone : Grandparent to the Citronia Stone?

Carved in 196 B.C. E., the Rosetta Stone was found by French soldiers in 1799, in a small village called Rosetta. The writing on it uses two languages (Egyptian and Greek) and three scripts (hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek). Hieroglyphics were used for important government or religious documents, demotic script was the common writing style of the Egyptians, and Greek was the language of the Egyptian rulers at the time.

The Rosetta Stone is a text written by a group of priests to honor the pharaoh. It lists all the things that the pharaoh has done that are good for the people of Egypt. After many years of studying the stone , Jean-Francois Champollion deciphered it in

1822. Just as the Rosetta Stone celebrates the good aspects of being Egyptian, the Citronian Stone also praises the quality of life among the citizenry of Citronia.

The Citronia Stone

Because the Citronian alphabet has been decoded, we can translate the inscriptions on this carved stele, which was discovered by the WCAA in a cave where religious ceremonies took place.

Top 10 Reasons Why We Love Citronia

10. Marta of Stewart has shown us how to beautify our caves with garlands made of seashells and the desiccated skulls of our vanquished enemies.
9. Blockbuster no longer charges late fees for busting blocks after hours.
8. Native Citronian Lance of the Strong Arm has won the famously arduous chariot race, the Tour de Citronia, for the unprecedented seventh time.
7. Since discovery of citronella has made life with mosquitoes bearable, we soon hope to discover equally efficient cave bear repellent.
6. Two musk ox platters for the price of one at Denny's Cave.
5. Although we shall always miss Ruta and Bega, we now know which mushrooms in the forest are poisonous.
4. Every night, when the shadow of the rock has covered the beach, clam bakes and fermented beverages for everyone.
3. Tax-free weekends twice a year.
2. Domesticated wolves make good cave pets.
1. Special summer dispensation: clothing optional.

Reading and Writing

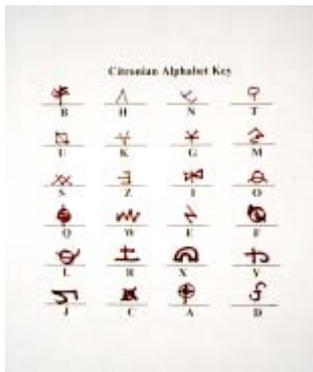
Question: What is the greatest invention in the world? Did you even think about saying the alphabet? Most of us take it for granted.

The earliest alphabet was invented around 2000 B.C. in Egypt by Semitic soldiers who needed to mark roadways and geographical locations. Areas like Mesopotamia and China had written language, but they were non-alphabetic, and therefore not as efficient.

Today $\frac{3}{4}$ of humanity using a writing system based on an alphabet. Our alphabet derives from the most popular one on earth – developed by the Romans in the height of the Roman Empire. About 1000 languages branched off from the Roman trunk line.

The remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population use non-alphabetic writing: China, Japan, Taiwan. They use logograms, in which each symbol denotes a whole word. When that symbol shows the actual object it is depicting, it is called a pictograph.

A letter sound is called a phoneme. A language would need to have enough phonemes with the right sounds to produce all the words it speaks. That might seem like a lot, but the number is surprisingly small – for most languages that means fewer than 30. Our alphabet has 26. Compare that to the over 20,000 symbols needed for simple Chinese (out of a possible number of 60,000 for advanced Chinese). With only 26 letters we can write the over half a million words that comprise the English language. What is the main advantage then of an alphabetic system over other types? It needs fewer symbols, and that makes it easier to learn. Thus, having an alphabet made mass literacy possible. Some suggest an alphabet was invented because the humble people of Egypt were angry about being excluded from the mysteries- and the difficulty – of hieroglyphics. The alphabet gave the power to read and write to the “little people” and contributed to the great rise of civilization in the Western World. The Phoenician alphabet of 1000 B.C. would become the great-grandfather of our own. Like the wheel or the telephone, the alphabet was an invention that changed the world.



Papyrus scroll of Citronian
alphabet - Wood-burned
charcoal on barkcloth
by Rob Saxon

Key to the Citronian alphabet

Citronian Music and Dance

Although we are unable to reproduce the instruments or musical rhythms or notation of the tribe, clearly music was an essential part of its spiritual belief and daily existence.

Music Moves the Heart

Sonya Cobb

Music makes the heart rejoice in many different ways

It makes us laugh, sing, and helps us through the day

Music makes the heart happy

Or it makes the heart cry

Sometimes it makes you feel you could touch the sky

Music makes you tap your feet

It makes you do a joyous prance

It will even make you do an unexpected little dance

Music makes people sing and shout

We all love music without a doubt

Hey! That's my song, some will say

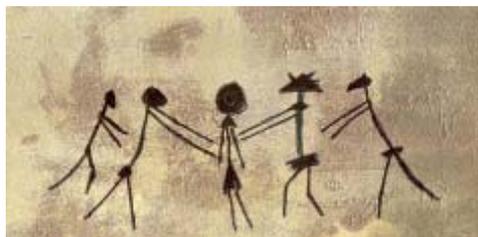
While reminiscing about the good old days

Music makes the savage beast become mesmerized
This, I have been told
Knowledge that is true, not just some fool's gold
Most of all, music makes us fall in love, over and over again
Twisting and turning it never seems to end
Where will the world be without music?
Maybe lost in a cryptic triangle or in a hell below
Thank God that is not the case
Music has been a precious gift to our human race
From all the most distant ports and places of depart
Music will always Move the Heart.

Citronian Cave Art

The caves of Lascaux, France, preserve the creativity of Paleolithic artists who painted and engraved hundreds of images about 17,000 years ago. Their discovery is quite a story. On a September afternoon in 1940, four teenagers exploring the local woods notice a hole they have not seen before. They squeeze, slide, and tumble in. They light the lamp so that they may see, and to their great surprise, painting of animals – deer and bulls – emerge from the rock. The art of Lascaux was forever etched into history. It was reported that the great modern artist Picasso, upon first viewing these caves, exclaimed, “We have invented nothing!”

The stylistic diversity of Citronian cave art suggests many artists participated. They preferred to paint on walls that were fairly uniform in surface and color. Discarded lumps of minerals show their color palette: brown, brick red, black, white, and yellow. Remnants of personal ornamentation show that ceremonies probably took place at the site of the paintings, and it is believed they were related to magic rituals.



Sheena Anderson



Natasha Overbey



Wes Jordan



Natasha Overbey



Cathy Boemanns

Citronian Mythology

The History of the Oral Tradition

The first great stories ever told came before the written word – they were based on oral tradition. These early stories were called myths – traditional stories reflecting a culture’s beliefs. The word is Greek, meaning “anything uttered by way of mouth.” Everywhere man has lived, mythology has flourished. All cultures have common elements that have crossed the boundaries of time & place. These common themes & symbols are archetypes.

Examples:

1. the triumph of a hero over adversity
2. a quest or journey motif (recurring theme or image)
3. initiation, death, & rebirth
4. symbolic images such as a maze, a Mandela (circle) or cross

Joseph Campbell has been our most widely read interpreter of myth. In his widely read *Hero with a Thousand Faces*, he says that the primary function of myth is “to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward” as opposed to all those that would hold it back. The story of the hero is the most enduring myth of all.

According to Campbell, the hero is symbolical of the
“divine and redemptive image which is hidden within us all, only
waiting to be known and rendered into life.” WCAA member Rob
Saxon here responds to the universal question: what is a hero?

Hero? Hero!
Rob Saxon

So you ask who is my hero – without a pun.
Under no circumstances can a hero be limited to one.
As a hero is crowned for more than a singular action.
It takes more than luck or simple physical attraction.
My hero is of the everyday sort.
Doesn't matter how well he plays a sport.
Here are some examples of heroic measure.
These whom I reveal are done from pleasure:
The child who questions why
The soldier that refuses to die
The battered woman who does not stay
The idealist who finds a way
The mom with both a job and school
The dad who's loyal and not a fool
The one who doesn't lie just to save face
The who with much who shares a place
The people who don't judge on appearance
And all who believe in giving others a fair chance.
There are many other heroic actions,
To which others can adhere,
But far too often overlooked moral infractions
Are mostly caused by fear.
So it is that I contend
Don't fear what your fellow humans think
Just do what is right by you / by them
And you will become my hero.

In the Beginning: A Citronian Creation Myth

Translated by Joe Spavone

In the beginning, the Creatress Mosquita sent her buzz of enlightenment throughout the universe. She lived in the white glow of the stars above our ancient home. The flowing clouds in the skies were rooms of her house, touching the stars.

On foggy mornings Her clouds touched the grounds, bringing her descendants, the Sacred Mosquitoes, to the earth. The earth was barren, and the mosquitoes held dominion and lived in joy. The ponds were for breeding and Mother Mosquita created lush pastures and valleys for Her descendants to live in harmony and peace. This fertile land stretched as far as the eye could see and was filled with the fruit of the earth for the Mosquitoes to partake of. The land was filled with grain, milk, and honey, though the Mosquitoes knew not what they were for. A Mosquito could rightly fly for three days without coming to the end of the Mosquita's domain.

One fine morning, Fubared, son of Mosquita, elected to extend the domain of the Mosquitoes further than even the end of the earth. In this manner he would become greater than his peers, yea, a God himself. He commenced flying, full of confidence, along

the horizon. Mosquita, upon spying Fubared so far from her home in the Clouds, asked, "My son, why dost thou fly so far from home?"

He answered, "To have dominion over all the earth," and, fearing his mother's wrath, slyly added, "and to give you greater glory."

Mosquita knew her son's greedy nature and riposted, "My son, I fear this hubris has overtaken your heart, and you are trying to become God. I will oppose this!"

Mosquita then sent Buzzy Snafued to pursue Fubared, but the determined renegade's lead was already large. Buzzy implored his Celestial Mother, "Oh, divine Mosquita, my wings grow heavy with fatigue, and my heart is heavy with despair." Mosquita sent

a beacon of light and nectar to Buzzy and told him, “Have courage, for my Holy Heart is with you.”

Mosquita, in her fury, sent a furious squall of her life-giving water from her house in the clouds. This impenetrable wall of water dashed Fubared from his flight into the flood of water below. Buzzy Snafued saw his plight and swooped low over him. “Grasp my leg and save yourself!” he called.

“Never!” answered Fubared, holding stronger to his pride than to his life. He vowed, “From the depths and the cataclysm and the abyss, I curse thee!” As a result, Fubared was washed away out of Mosquita’s land.

Bitterness led Fubared to gain power over the other Mosquitoes by draining the water from their Ponds of Life. Buzzy saw this in a vision and said, “I rue the day I offered to lift my leg to him.” He battled Fubared and denied him the birthright in Mosquita’s domain. Leaving the scene of his victory, Buzzy came upon the same shaft of nectar-filled light. The voice of Mosquita buzzed in his ears, “Partake, my son, and touch the light.” Buzzy metamorphed into the first man, and his descendants filled the land and prospered, partaking of the abundant grain, milk, and honey, and forever held dominion over the land.

The only annoyance in this grand society was the curse of Fubared. His descendants, consumed with jealousy that they could never be human, bitter at their loss of birthright, constantly bit and buzzed the humans. They sang:

Oh, Mother Mosquita, your diadem is in the trees
Your girdle the blue skies
Your heart is ours
Mother of all
Save us from the wicked curse of Fubared
And the affliction of the biting of our brethren!

Mosquita, in her divine compassion, instructed Buzzy, “Send your daughter Citronella into the woods.” Citronella went into the dark forest and saw a blade of sunlight in the distance. The

light illuminated a family of plants. Citronella marveled at the wondrous odor of these new plants, and not sure of her purpose, brought them home. As the outcast mosquitoes came on their mission of evil, they found they could not abide the lemony odor of Citronella's plants, and left the humans alone, looking for other prey. The people of the Rock forever celebrated the divinity of Citronella, begat by Buzzy Snafued, by naming the wondrous plant after her. And, of course, the people of the Rock became known as the Citronians.

Citronella's Feast Day:

How the Custom of Trading Gifts Began

Translated by Alison Payne

Citronella became the Goddess of Gifts for the people named after her, the Citronians. Her festival day was celebrated on the first day of spring, the vernal equinox. The people had built a spectacular altar in her honor and adorned her statue with gold, ivory, and jewels (unfortunately, it was pillaged and destroyed long ago). Only written descriptions remain of her great beauty, with a face "so gentle and kind of feature" that it could move even the most hardened heart.

Even the youngest children brought offerings on Citronella's Feast Day, each according to his or her ability: a shell, a pretty stone, a feather, flowers, berries, and nuts. Adults made their most skillful objects to bestow upon her: jewelry, pottery, baskets, and amulet charms made of precious jewels. At night, if all the Citronians slept and no one tried to spy on her, Citronella would descend into the heavens with her gifts, where they would be offered to the gods and treasured forever. The Citronians all know that if they attempted to sneak an illicit peek, Citronella would not return, and then the tribe would be cursed, so needless to say, everyone slept soundly that night.

As another Ice Age began to move across the land, the celebration was gradually moved to the beginning of winter, about three moons after the autumnal equinox, in order to bring joy and festivity to a time when the tribe would be preparing for and dreading the colder, darker days of winter. It soon became

customary for tribe members to create special gifts for one another, not just for the altar of Citronella. Children particularly looked forward to Citronella's Feast Day because their parents would make special playthings to show their love and families stopped their petty squabbling to come together in a spirit of unity and celebration that was enjoyed by all.

The Citronians and the Light

Commentary and translation by LaTanya Rawles

It was believed that the Citronians thought that rain came from "the light above." They feared rain because it was thought to be a warning that the dreaded mosquitoes would soon attack. They also believed the mosquitoes passed deadly diseases to some of the humans who were attacked. While it was raining, the Citronians would stay in their caves and engage in a ceremonial dance that involved using citron in its rarest form (which is the same citron we use today to ward off mosquitoes). From what can be translated from cave drawings, the dance involved some sort of swirling motion in which the chemical's scent would infuse the air to protect the people from being bitten. After a heavy rain, the Citronians would stay in the caves and wait out the mosquitoes. The Citronians would never understand why "the light above" would send these warnings, but they did believe they were being watched by the light and thought it would punish them for any wrong-doing by a thunder storm (which they called the Big Boom), prolonged rain, or periods of extreme heat. The Citronians believed that these events were all warnings. When the light turned to dark, they believed that the light was sleeping, so they only had to worry about the hardiest mosquitoes that were still on the prowl.

Sheena, Queen of the Mosquitoes

Translated by Sheena Anderson

Long ago, when our tribe first came to be, we were not liked by the mosquitoes. They tried to run us from the land. We are not talking about the average mosquito either – these were vicious, enormous, snarling, and grumpy insects. They chased out young ones, threatening to give them the itches for years to come, unless we left their land. We almost lost hope and even

began packing, for we felt defeated by the mighty mosquitoes.

Then one day, out of nowhere, she came swinging from the trees, towering from branch to branch. Sheena! She fearlessly came face to face with the mosquitoes and gave them fair warning to leave our settlement alone – or else. Being the stubborn mosquitoes they were, they laughed in her face! That is when the magical Sheena pulled out a special potion from her amulet and threw it at them. They fell to the ground in agony and soon met with their death. The others who remained flew for their lives. Sheena walked over to the rest of us and proclaimed, “I call it Citron, and it will help you find peace with the mosquitoes.” She then handed the potion to the leader of the tribe now known as the Citronians. From that night on, the Citronians were at peace with the mosquitoes and never were they to see or hear again from the goddess they reverently named, “Sheena, Queen of the Mosquitoes.”

Sunshine’s Valuable Lesson

Translated by Sonya D. Cobb

Citronia (now more commonly known as The Rock of Gibraltar) is surrounded by moist wetland and tropical foliage and warm water beaches. Many species of insects flourish there. Some species of insects are harmless, while others can do great harm to humans. Of all the insects, the mosquito is known to be the most dangerous, for it may carry disease which make the people very ill, sometimes even to be carried away by Grandfather Death. The children must therefore learn to keep away from them, so each morning Sunshine’s mother told her not to play in the fields of dense vegetation where the mosquitoes lived most frequently.

One day, in a rebellious mood, Sunshine decided to play in the vegetation field her mother had warned her about. Suddenly, she heard a buzzing noise. The mosquitoes were banding together to make their attack. All Sunshine could think about were her mother’s words of wisdom. She also remembered another choice saying: “If you encounter the dreaded mosquito, run away as fast as you can!” Finally, Sunshine did exactly what her mother told her.

From that day forward, Sunshine was careful to mind the words of her mother. At last, she confessed everything that had happened. The little girl learned that her elders had many valuable lessons to teach, and the children had just as many valuable lessons to learn.

Citronian Pottery

In the late Neolithic stone age period, pottery was invented (c. 5000 B.C.E.). Early people discovered which kinds of local clay could most easily be sculpted into objects of both necessity and art, as well as which composites could best be fired in order to harden and preserve them. The surviving Citronian pottery remnants indicate that while undecorated pots were used for utilitarian purposes, the decorated remains are of two primary types: first, ceremonial bowls in which the mosquito repelling citronella was burned during ceremonial dance; and second, tiles which were used to line boggy footpaths to keep the passageways dry and free of mosquito breeding pools. The early botanical imprints – probably used to personalize the tiles – may have influenced the subsequent development of their cuneiform-style of pressing alphabetic letters into clay with a carved stylus.





Translation for the Magic of the Kouros
Cathy Boemanns

Written upon findings in the caves of Citronia the remains
of statues remarkably similar the Kouros of ancient Greece, c.
600 B. C. E., known for the carefully balanced design of the
body, the rigid stance of strength, and the eerie smile which gazes
placidly into the future.

Each day that goes by holds questions for me

Many of these questions are regarding the Kouros.

It is said that the Kouros holds the magical power of the gods.

(I do not understand what these powers are.)

It is said that the Kouri represent the faultless features of the god
Apollo.

Could the perfection of the statue's physique be the actual magic?

I strive to be like the Kouros.

But am I already the young man of the statue, or will I ever be
that man of the Kouros?

The body with rippling muscles that appear so strong
it looks as if the rock could burst forth with life.

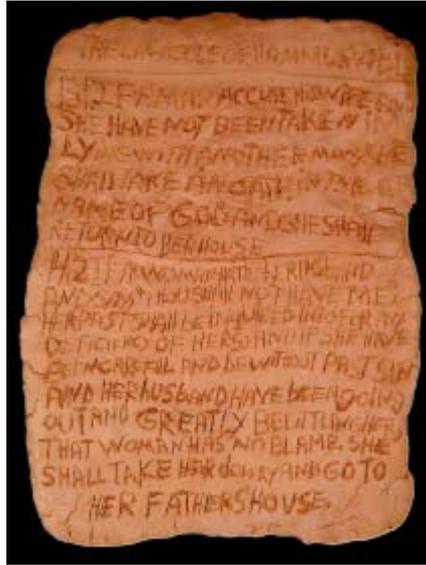
The best young lady will want to marry one of these men among
men.

She will want to wed the man who will give her strong children
with the best possible chance to survive in the world.

She is looking for the man of the Kouros.

Can I become that man – or is the dream unattainable?

Everywhere I turn I see a Kouros more perfect than the one
before for each statue rests with the all-knowing smile as if he
knows the magic of the gods which I will never own.

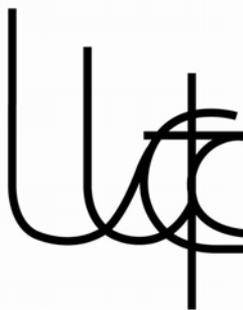


Clay Tablet Reproduction Of Citronian – Honored Hammurabi Code of Law
April Trice



Completed Exhibit: "The Lost Tribe of Citronia"
Murphy Humanities Class 2005

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