

THE INK QUILL

LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE

Bladen Community College 2011-2012



SAMANTHA STITZ—BCC ALUMNI



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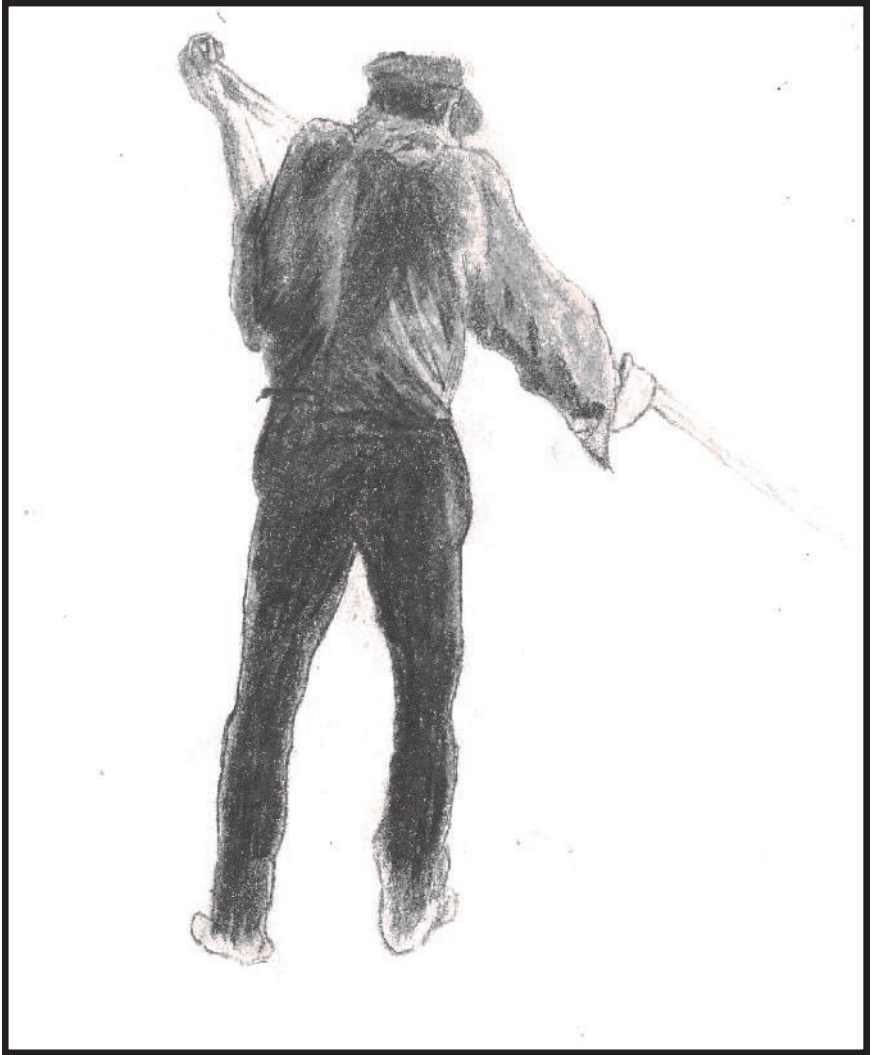
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FIELD WORKER

Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student

PROSE

PROSE

Prose

prose

PROSE

LESSON LEARNED

David Cihla—BCC Student

I remember my youth. The year was 1969, and I was ten years old. If my memory serves me, it was a normal California summer day, hot and arid. The July sun baked the city. I could see heat waves shimmering above the dusty pavement. John and I spent most of the morning riding our bicycles all over the city and through the parks, jumping curbs and doing wheel stands. We both began to get hungry; we decided to head back to John's house. In addition, we were hot and sweaty; I could feel the sweat roll down my back as if someone were spraying me with a water hose. Once we arrived, we rode up the driveway and threw our bikes on the front lawn; he went into the house to eat. While I sat on the porch steps, John's mom brought me out a ham and cheese sandwich and a glass of milk. I watched his dad working on the car as I sat eating. I never thought that one day could have such a profound effect on one's life.

I had overheard John's father's friends warning him about climbing under the car with just a bumper jack; I could see the urgency in their facial expressions as they stressed safety to him. He replied, "I have it under control."

To my young eyes, he was a giant of a man, big and barrel-chested; I thought nothing could ever hurt him. While watching him work, I would pester him with questions, and as always, he patiently explained. This time, he was fixing the brakes. Then I heard John call me, asking if I wanted anything to eat, not realizing his mom had already carried out my lunch.

While waiting for John, I continued watching Mr. Lee. Occasionally, he would ask me to hand him a wrench, smiling as he made a comment about my milk mustache. I giggled and wiped my mouth on my shirt tail. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed him stirring around under the car, maneu-

vering to reach the backside of the brake drum. When the car fell, I jumped back at the loud crash.

He had accidentally kicked the bumper jack! He was not moving, and there was a little stream of blood trickling from his mouth. I froze. I could feel my palms beginning to sweat and didn't know what to do. It was like I entered a void, no thought to be had, and it felt like my feet were glued to the ground.

When I could move again, I went running in the house screaming, "The car fell!"

John and his mother flew out the house to see what had happened. Mrs. Lee ran back in the house and picked up the telephone. I could see her that hands were shaking like a California earthquake as she dialed for help. John couldn't do anything but cry. I stood there helplessly. Unfortunately, by the time the ambulance arrived, the paramedics could see it was too late, and Mr. Lee was gone. This accident forever changed the lives of the Lee family and me.

John and I spent a lot of time that summer reminiscing about his father. We talked about how he loved going to the track and gambling on the horses, playing catch with us and teasing all the kids in the neighborhood. His family was never the same after that day; it was like they had lost the heart and soul of the unit. The neighborhood had lost a good friend, a man who never had a problem lending a helping hand to a neighbor.

Furthermore, this day had a serious impact on my life. I think one of the biggest lessons I learned that day was that life is so precious and how a disaster can take it away in a heart beat. Dealing with death at such a young age left a scar on me. I did take away one important lesson.



THE PIER ON THE SHORE

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

Few places in my childhood could stimulate my imagination as much as the pier at my grandparents' shore house off the Chesapeake. While many characteristics of the pier would make it undesirable to some, to me, it was intriguing. The sights, sounds, and smells engulfed my childhood curiosity. Now that I am an adult, it lends me a safe place to go as I reflect upon those days down the shore, playing on the pier.

To me, the drive there always felt like an eternity. It was as if we had embarked on a journey to Neverland, a place far away from my everyday reality as a child, and an hour seemed like four. I could not wait to explore the knotty boards that waited for me. I knew we were close when I heard the sounds of the bridge underneath the car. It hummed in a rhythmic beat as we passed over the seams in the road. *Bah-bump...bah-bump*. I could smell the salty air and the brackish water. It was pleasant to me even though I could detect the hint of rotting seaweed and left-behind oyster shells baking in the heat of the sun. Recalling my last trip there and the many before, after I began to smell the water in the air, I would soon hear the sounds of the gravel and sand as they crunched under the tires of the car.

As we pulled into the driveway, it was apparent that we were the first relatives there for the summer. In patches around the garage, the weeds were overgrown. Tall bushes of sea grass cornered the edge of the building as if they were guarding the contents inside. The car pushed down small patches of overgrown lawn. This was the first chore that my older brother had to attend. The car stopped just behind the house, and we excitedly piled out, some of us more anxiously than others. There was only one responsibility for me: occupy my little sister while the older kids help-

ed my parents. I grabbed her hand as we ran to the front of the house, which faced the shoreline. My sights set on the wonderland made of timber.

The water slapped against the docks below that retained the front of the yard, slowly going out and quickly coming back in again. A long pier stretched out before me like the arm of a giant, reaching out into the bay waters. Buried into the earth on the hillside were makeshift steps made of large weathered boards. There was a ladder leading down. Like many times before, I lay on the ground and slid down the side of the embankment until my feet found their footing on the rough and uneven boards below. I instructed my sister how to get down. She was much smaller than I was, and this task proved to be rather difficult. Turning over onto her belly, she slowly slid down towards me. With her body braced against the grassy wall, she appeared stuck as her feet dangled in front of my face. She looked so silly to me plastered against the hillside, and she was just too short to jump. I grabbed her and helped her rest of the way.

With our bathing suits underneath our shorts and tops, we quickly stripped our outer layers. The sun felt hot and stung my pink skin, but it felt good, and I did not mind. I wanted desperately to get in the water and feel its silky coolness. That would have to wait until the older ones were down there with us, but until then, exploring the pier would have to do. With awareness of my watery surroundings, I kept my sister close as we walked down the wooden pathway. I was never a brave child but rather a cautiously adventurous one. Slightly anxious, due to my fear of one of us losing our footing, I took her hand.

The boards beneath my feet were hot. Time had taken over their once smooth surface, making them sharp and splintery in spots. Nails found themselves freed from their once tightly bound prisons. Rusty and twisted, they posed a threat for the bare feet that may descend upon them. I carefully scanned the area for any that may impede my way. Since some memo-

ries come with lessons, I had not forgotten when one grabbed hold of the tender skin under my big toe. Every so often, a glimmer of light bounced off the nails placed there the year before. Flecks of silvery metal still shone through the newly reddish tint that was slowly overtaking them. Soon, they too would be like the others.

Pilings, single file like soldiers, framed the sides of the pier. An overwhelming scent of tar baking in the sun filled the air. Every year, at the end of the summer, my father would paint the pilings with the thick black goo. They reminded me of the hair on my little sister's Fisher Price® men lined neatly in a row. Heat blisters formed like freckles on their cheeks. My sister picked up a rusty fishhook and poked one, causing it to ooze its black sticky juice. Looking down, I noticed the remnants of our previous visits adorned their trunks. Tattered crab lines, laced here and there, dangled below the surface of the pier. Some caught in the slight breeze and blew freely like strands of angel hair. Gingerly, I lay down on my belly, my sister close by my side. I grabbed hold of one of the lines that hid beneath the water. Tiny fragments of dried rancid chicken encased a piece of the string, resting just above the waters lid. I quickly dropped it back down; my hands absorbed the mingled smells of fresh seaweed mixed with dried meat and brackish water. While I was trying to find a place to wipe them, a loud squeal of protest and disgust erupted from the little voice beside me.

Sounds coming from above toward the shore interrupted my explorations. I looked up to see my older siblings coming towards us, with all the equipment necessary for a fun day on the pier. Although swimming was on my agenda, the items my oldest brother carried caught my eye. Two crab nets propped over his left shoulder; their metal baskets bounced about with every step as he made his way to the ladder. On the handle of one pole was a large spool of heavy white twine. I could see from where I stood that the corner of the bag was wet from its contents, and the juice from the chicken inside left a trail behind him. The excitement overwhelm-

ed me. I knew it only meant that I too would be leaving crab lines dangling off the pilings marking my day at the pier. I knew that each line I left there only added to the memories and curiosity to the next child who visited.

Our senses allow us to detect our environment, and our memories record these events dear to us. Perhaps there is a hidden agenda as these events work in unison, inspiring us to dream of places tucked far away in our past. When I need a place to go, to escape from my everyday life, I can transport my mind back to the days when I was a child: crabbing, swimming and seeking out adventures on the docks of my grandparents' shore home. One thing is certain: the pier will forever be a source of inspiration to me.



STUDY IN LINES AND SHADOWS

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

CAMP JOY

Christina Atkinson—BCC Student

It is the beginning of the summer of 1988, and I have just graduated from high school. I am so excited! It is the start of something new for me. I was asked to be a counselor at a camp that I used to attend when I was a child. Shopping trips, dining out, and trips to the local amusement parks are all mine for the taking! I get to spend the summer away from home. I am finally going to make my own decisions and do my own thing—well, to a point, anyway.

The camp is a Bible camp, and the founders of this camp hold very legalistic views on certain things. The rules don't allow me to wear pants or shorts or listen to anything other than very conservative gospel music. I cannot date, either. The rules are extremely strict on this. In order to go out with a guy, I have to have a chaperone. I am required to attend church services every Sunday morning and evening and on Wednesday nights. Going to church really doesn't worry me that much. My father is a preacher, and this is a rule that I have had to abide by all of my life.

The camp has divided the summer up into rotation. Female campers will attend one week and male campers the next. The week that the girls are there, I stay in the cabin with my campers. It should be easy to monitor them at night since I don't sleep well anyway. On the weeks that the boy campers attend, the female counselors stay in a separate area of the campgrounds. During the all-male weeks, I do a variety of odd jobs. I wash dishes, serve food, and clean bathrooms. I hate being around a bathroom where boys have been. There are too many smells that sink into my nose and brain and make me feel total discomfort.

Every morning and evening, I attend a daily devotional and prayer time. I pray with five other female counselors. There is always a wide variety of prayer requests. Most of the girls pray for their families and for themselves.

They seem to want prayer because they are so homesick. We pray for the children whom the counselors will be coming in contact with. Sometimes, we pray for a camper whom we had in our cabin the week before. I enjoy these times of prayer, but I always feel so conflicted. I am ecstatic and relieved to be away from part of my family. I don't feel the same homesickness that these girls do. I miss my little sisters and my little brother, but I feel relief being away from my older brother. It outweighs any feelings of sadness. My soul battles against itself.

I was raised to feel compassion and love my brothers, but the core of my being feels anger and hurt. I sit in the circle and as each girl states her prayer list, I can feel the very soul of me wanting to shout out. It is my turn to speak, and I give some half-hearted request about wisdom for the counselors and just melt back into quietness. I sit here looking at these girls, and I know that I am not as good as they are. I am not like them. I bet they go to bed at night without the fear of interrupted sleep.

They worry about new clothes and when they will get to go home and eat dinner with their Norman Rockwell-type family. They think about their upcoming year at college. I worry about going home and back to a life I never want to be a part of again. I dread going back home to sleep in my bed only to be wakened by my nightmare that exists not in my dream world but in my reality.

On the weekends, I reside in a dorm on the campus of the local Bible college. I share this room with two other girls. It is so nice sharing clothes and having mini makeovers! This is like a perpetual sleepover. I never really had an opportunity to have girl friends come over when I was growing up. If they came to my house, then they might find out what I am really like. How embarrassing it would be for them to know that I am afraid to be in the dark.

The campus at the college is awesome! There is a student lounge a

called the “Happy Corner,” with a snack bar and games in it. This is a great place to come to read a book or play a game of Ping-Pong. I come here to sit and enjoy a good book, but I find my head is too busy with thoughts to concentrate. I find myself just watching people. I wonder what kind of home they grew up in. Do they have sisters? Do they have brothers?



LEAVES

Victoria Pait Age 17—BCC Student Family Member

THE DEMON DRIVER

Greg Edwards—BCC Student

It was a comfortable October evening on a Friday in 1985, the kind of fall day that makes a farm beautiful. Leaves were starting to turn, and pecans were starting to fall. Back then, I was just the average high school boy who looked forward to the weekend. There were many reasons for anticipation of fall weekends, one of which was getting ready for deer season. Other reasons were practicing auto mechanics skills I learned in high school, and most importantly, Daddy was still with us. Back then, cars were much simpler, and a person who was mechanically inclined found much pleasure in working on them, unlike today: when anything goes wrong, you need a PhD in computer science to make a repair.

I was always fascinated by the inner workings of mechanical objects. This time, it happened to be an old 1973 Ford LTD. This car was big and weighed in at over 4,300 pounds. It did have a large motor, but the '70s marked the era of smog pumps and other pollution control devices choking engine bays with enough plumbing to accommodate a small house. A car this big needed at least 300 horsepower. I knew just the place I was going that night, and it was not to the club. A good neighbor of mine had a junkyard over on 410 Highway with a good selection of large Fords with even larger motors than the one I had. He even had an old Lincoln that was still running and could handle the lack of 300 plus horsepower issue.

This Lincoln was a very nice car but badly wrecked on the rear quarter panel. The car only had 60,000 original miles on it but ran like a sewing machine, as the old timers would say. It was about 4:00 and would be dark soon, so I decided to multitask, throw my shotgun in the passenger seat, go down to Tar Kill Point and relax, looking for squirrels for an hour or so. Taking off toward the intended destination, I saw my Uncle Rob sitting on his breezeway, reading as usual; he could be reading on any number of

subjects, but my guess is *Outdoor Life* or *Field and Stream*. I gave a short toot of the horn, and his hand rose up though he barely looked away from his magazine.

As I made my way down toward Old Boardman Road, the wind was blowing in through the half-open window, which would be better if it were equipped with the wing glasses of older cars. I made my way down to the yellow gate, unlocked it, drove in and headed to the Liquor Still. Nowadays, that one spot for hunting is called the Liquor Still Stand because of the moonshine still that was located there a long time ago.

Cruising down Liquor Still Road very slowly, I saw blackfish breaking the water and squirrels scurrying to the cover of the oak trees. The place looked much better since the gate; there was almost no sign of the forest fires Daddy and I discovered many years ago. This area used to be open without a gate, but back in the '70s, drinking and dumping trash became so bad that free access to the area had to be stopped to preserve the area. The forest fire in the '70s gave the U.S. forest service a workout that Sunday when the fire jumped the road and headed through the woods, running parallel toward a populated section close to Singletary graveyard.

That day was a good day to be in the woods, observe wildlife, and enjoy the cooler weather that fall brought. I saw a large fox squirrel in the small oaks from where I was relaxing. I already appreciated what is all around me, and no metaphors can describe it; one just has to experience it. The fox squirrel had unique markings and almost looked like he was wearing a lone ranger mask. I was not really hunting that day, and there would be an abundance of venison soon, so the bandit squirrel was safe that day.

The sun was starting to set, and the trees were illuminated with the fading sun. It almost looked like a Bob Timberlake scene that someone needed

to capture on canvas. The squirrels were running along the branches and jumping from tree to tree. It was time to start walking back out before I had to break out the flashlight. Leaving, I saw a few rabbits nibbling on the grass next to Jack Lake Road, and at the end was my old big Ford, waiting for me. I was really in no hurry leaving; I was just enjoying the sunset a few more minutes as I locked the gate.

The next task that should not have taken up much of Friday night was the inspection of that old Lincoln over on the next highway. Leaving, I stood on the gas a little, just to hear the sound of the dual exhaust and the 400 cubic inch engine. Crossing Horse Pen Swamp Bridge, I knew I only had about five more minutes of anticipation. As I pulled up, I saw Derry outside, feeding his animals. As soon as I got out, he said, "How ya doing?"

I replied, "Good and enjoying this cooler weather. You still got that 70 Lincoln back there with the 460 motor?"

He answered, "Yeah, just waiting for you."

As we walked back to the salvage yard, a small baby goat was nudging as if he were looking for food or play. As I walked through the center of the yard, I spotted one of Derry's old cars: a 1966 Olds Toronado with the 425 cubic inch V8, a real car in its day, the type of car Buddy Baker set a 200.447 MPH record in March 1970 at Talladega.

I made a comment that I needed to go back and get my starting fluid out of the car, and he assured me it would be a waste of time. Due to weekly cranking for the last three years, the old Lincoln fired up and never coughed. We got together to decide on a price for the whole car, and he assured he would hold it until we received our corn check that year. He asked as I was leaving, "So what you going to do on this fine Friday night?"

I replied, "Think I'm going to ride over to my Uncle Mac's house in Chadbourn. He just bought a nice '68 GTO Pontiac that needs my approval." I bade my neighbor and friend farewell and headed off to the next town.

The C.B. was quiet that evening other than the few people around the 'boro starting to get on channel 22.

Going down Hwy 410 as I passed the farmhouse at Jimsie Hester Road, I thought of my daddy cruising through here in his 1936 Ford. Getting low on gas, I decided to stop at Newman's Station to get a few dollars' worth. It seems like gas was going up those days, and it was already up to 85 cents a gallon.

Arriving at my uncle's house, I was amazed at the condition of his GTO; it was nice and has a tach on the hood. Other than a few cosmetics, it was all there. We visited for a while. He told me how things were going with maintenance at the hospital, and I discussed school, my new project for the old Ford, and the upcoming deer season. It was dark then, and we decided to go inside for a while and watch TV over a bowl of chili. He told me of one particular car around town that was above average: a 1969 Dodge Daytona Super Bird, the kind of car I had only read about in magazines. By this time, it was getting a little late, and I had seen Dallas for the week and still realized J.R. was just as mean as usual.

Leaving my uncle's house, I decided to cruise town for a while. I felt it was Friday, and that was what people did. As I circled town, I saw the same cars and people as last week, but what I heard was definitely different, a different sounding engine just out of town. As I rode out of town by The Rams Den Bar, I saw what my uncle was talking about: that Dodge Daytona Super Bird. The Driver slowed down just as I met him, and I could actually feel the power of the 426 Hemi Daytona through my half-open win-

dow. As I was turning around, the Charger pulled into the car wash, and I realized that might have been my only chance to see one of those up close. As I pulled up and got out of my old Ford, the Driver of the Daytona was kneeling down at the driver's side quarter panel, applying tar remover.

I introduce myself and asked, "How you doing this evening?"

He replied, "A lot better when I get all this rubber off!"

I laughed and said, "Mine doesn't have enough power yet to leave much rubber." I complimented him on what I thought was his cloned replica of a Daytona. I assumed this because with the options he had, only approximately 93 were made.

He said, "This ain't a clone son. This is the real thing!"

Standing there in awe, I apologized and asked him if I could look closer.

He answered, "Sure, then we will go out to 74-76 for a drive if you want."

This person looked different but familiar in some way. I was almost afraid to ask too many questions, but I did. He looked like a cross between Smokey Yunick and Ed Iskenderian, the camshaft builder. He even wore a hat like Smokey Yunick in all the pictures. As we were standing there talking, I noticed an instrument case in the back seat of the Daytona. Being nervous for some reason, I still had many questions to ask to try to learn how he acquired a car like that.

I said, "I see you play an instrument too; I play a trumpet in high school band."

His case was for a guitar, plainly, and he told me he liked to teach lessons. He said when he was a boy, he and his mother lived with his abusive father, and finally, they fled for their safety. In the place where they mov-

ed, he met an elderly man who knew Smokey Yunick. The elderly man was a wealthy car collector who followed the race circuits but had no children. The man and his wife traveled, and the Driver used to take care of their home, service their car collection, and provide security while they were gone. The car collector had numerous friends with connections who would always alert him to lucrative car investments or other business ventures. The car collector and his wife left the Daytona to thank the Driver for his help because they had plenty of other cars in their car collection.

The driver told me, "I appreciated those elderly people, and I learned a great deal from them about life and what is important."

I told him, "I know what you mean because I was born to elderly parents. Daddy was born in 1914, Mama was born in 1927, and there are elderly people all over my neighborhood. They tell stories of the depression, World War II, Hoover carts, and you name it, and I have heard it."

He asked, "Boy, you ready to ride in a real machine for a change?"

I replied, "You bet. Show me what you got."

I left my old LTD and jumped into the Daytona to head out to 74-76. We left the carwash sideways in the Daytona as he held the pistol grip shifter handle, ready to shift into second gear at the 8,000 RPM redline. I had never ridden in a machine like that, and to this day, I never have again. We rode out toward West Columbus High, and there was hardly any traffic, thank God.

He drove the Daytona as if he were releasing some sort of negative energy with each 10 MPH increment on the speedometer. The G forces felt like someone was standing on my chest. The speedometer made one steady motion to 100 MPH as I observed the tach in the dash hitting 8,000 RPMs easily.

He decided to stop abruptly for some reason. He looked as if he had some deep-rooted anger about to come out. He ranted about how lucky I was to live my life rather than his, and he wished he had a real daddy. He looked at me and asked me to fasten my three-way harness because we were really going for a ride now.

We started to take off again, and just as I tried to say something, he shifted the Daytona to second gear and my head slapped into the seat so violently that I lost all speech processes. The last time I looked at the speedometer, it was at 150 and still moving toward 200. The Driver slowed down enough not to hurt anyone at the West Columbus High School area. Luckily, there was no game at home that evening. We got through the school zone. He stood on the pedal again, and almost as quick as he did, it seemed we were slowing down to turn around at Stone Manufacturing Company in Fair Bluff.

The Driver had issues, and all I wanted to do was get away and go home. We turned around and repeated the process all over, and I was more frightened than before. The whole time on the ride back to Chadbourn, I thought about what was important in life, what was important to me and how my life was much better than most. I was so glad to be back with my car and get out of the car I had admired so much.

The Driver left me with one last chilling statement: "You may learn a valuable lesson tonight on your way back home."

I made haste, firing up my old Ford, leaving Chadbourn, hoping the Demon Driver was gone. As I passed the tobacco warehouse, I turned on my Fuzz Buster and then accelerated hard to 90 MPH to get home. Soon, I would be in familiar territory where I could navigate back roads and hunting roads if necessary to elude the Driver. I was okay until I got to Newman's Station on 410 Highway, and I saw headlights coming. The Fuzz

Buster was quiet, and to my dismay, the Driver passed me, taunting me by slowing down and turning on his flamethrowers like in the movie *Grease*.

His taillights looked like monster eyes, and the dual exhaust looked like nostrils breathing fire. I was approaching Jimsie Hester Road and wondering if there was going to be a tragic story about me in my '73 Ford. I was hoping I could call someone on my C.B. to dispatch a deputy, but nobody was on. I accelerated to 120 MPH: all my old Ford would do on a good day, and the Driver allowed me to pass.

As I went past the Daytona, his right arm was reaching for something in the back seat. The whole time, I was thinking about how he liked to teach lessons with his instrument, a guitar. His interior light was on, I could see that his instrument was a Thompson submachine gun, not a guitar, and it was pointing right at me.

As his trigger finger went to pull, I braked, and 45-caliber bullets sprayed my old Ford from the front of the grille to the passenger side window. My vision was blurred, and I could only see if I closed my left eye. I could taste blood on my lips, and as I looked at my gauges, I could see that the car was overheating fast. The radiator shot out, and the sweet smell of antifreeze filled the interior of the car.

As I stopped the car, I wondered if I would ever get home and see my parents again. My whole life and my worthiness as a human being flashed in front of me. I was thinking what I could have done differently in my life.

With the temperature gauge reaching boiling and the oil pressure almost zero, it sounded like a hammer in the engine. I knew I was done for. I jumped out and tried to run, picking out shards of glass from my forehead, seeing the muzzle flash of the machine gun as I hid behind a tree in Mr. Wilkes Elkin's yard. Bark was flying off the oak tree from the military bullets.

I woke up in a cold sweat, and Daddy was asking if I was all right.

I replied, "I smell antifreeze."

He answered, "No, you smell pancakes and maple syrup."

He asked if I was okay, and I assured him I had had a bad dream.

That night, I learned a valuable lesson about life from the reality of the dream. The words of the Driver are still as real today as the night he spoke them. With every negative, some positive will come. That dream of the war between man and machine on Highway 410 is something I will never forget. That Monday as I left for school, I saw a bandit squirrel on side of the road, looking. I appreciated life's blessings and wonder. The universe held a beauty I had never noticed before, and I would never take it for granted again. Sometimes, I wonder why I had that dream, but I did not wonder long because I know it was a sign from God.

Joel 2:28

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.



SOMEBODY PRAYED FOR ME

Twyla Davis—BCC Faculty

What is prayer? *Dictionary.com* defines prayer as “a reverent petition to God, a god, or an object of worship.” Growing up in a Christian home, I have been surrounded by faith in prayer. I was taught to say my prayers before going to bed, to ask the blessing before each meal, and to be reverent during prayer time at church. I also learned to pray anywhere, anytime, especially if I needed something. However, I don’t think I had ever been touched by a true understanding of prayer until I saw and heard someone pray specifically for me.

In September 2006, my father was stricken with a rare disease known as Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS). This debilitating disease attacks the nerves in the body and causes them to short out much like an electrical wire whose protective covering has been removed. This damage to the nerves causes paralysis that can overtake the entire body. My dad began having numbness in his hands and arms one Wednesday afternoon. By Saturday night, the disease had overtaken him, and he had to depend on a ventilator to breathe. He was moved from New Hanover Medical Center to Duke University Medical Hospital where he would spend the next three and half months.

During this time, my family’s world was pretty much turned upside down. My mother stayed in Durham in a motel, so she could stay with Daddy during the day. My brothers and I took care of things around home and visited Durham on the weekends. These times were the most difficult we had ever experienced. As a result, family members, community friends, and fellow church goers offered many prayers for my parents. During church services, the pastor led special prayer time when people knelt at the altar praying especially for my daddy to be healed and my mother to have the strength to take care of him. Tacked on to the end was the quick,

"help the family also." I knew that included me, but I also knew the focus was on my parents who needed help the most.

Gradually, we began to see the results of answered prayer. By the end of November, Daddy was spending a few hours a day breathing without the ventilator. When we visited at Thanksgiving, he surprised my brothers and me by being able to unhook the ventilator and place a cover over his trachea and talk to us. We had not heard him speak since the end of September. A twitch in a toe, wiggle of a finger, and slight lifting of the head gave us hope that Daddy would get better. It would just take time and continued prayer.

By the middle of December, doctors decided that Daddy could be moved to Fayetteville for rehab. This was exciting because he would be closer to home, and he would start his long journey of physical recovery. However, the first night in the rehab center, Daddy had a relapse. He was transferred to the hospital next to the rehab center. The doctors told us the GBS had returned and our nightmare was about to start over again. This was more than I could handle.

I was sitting alone in the ICU waiting room, swallowed up with shock and disbelief that Daddy was getting worse, and we would have to relive the past two months. It was the perfect time to pray, but my heart was dry. My thoughts were jumbled, my emotions were crushed, and the words just would not come. I knew in my head that God knows best, His plan is perfect, He gives us strength to endure – all of these truths were swimming through my mind, but my emotions were not comforted. I wanted to be angry. I wanted to cry out a great big, "Why?" We weren't a bad family. We were a good Christian family. Why did we have to face this ordeal in the first place, much less go through it a second time?

As I sat in the back corner of the waiting area, a large man walked into

the room. He was well over six feet tall, probably weighed close to 300 pounds and was dressed like a biker. He wore the traditional orange and black common to motorcycle riders in this area. He had on the black leather vest and black boots I would expect a biker to wear. However, he did not act as I thought he would act.

On the back of his vest were the words, "Bikers for Jesus." He went to all of the people in the waiting room, spoke to them, shook their hands, and offered them a small tract which he carried in his pocket. I heard him say that he was a biker for Jesus and that he wanted to come through and offer words of encouragement to those who were visiting the sick. He made his way around the room and finally reached my corner. Instead of giving me the same speech he gave the others, he stopped and talked to me in a more personal manner.

The biker asked me whom I was visiting. I told him about my daddy, how sick he had been, and how we had hoped he was on his way to recovery. However, he had a relapse and was back in the hospital, and doctors thought his condition was worse. The biker asked me if he could pray with me for my daddy. I told him yes, so he sat down beside me and prayed a nice prayer for my dad. I don't mean to sound cold, but I had heard those words so many times over the last two months that I pretty much knew what he was going to say before he opened his mouth. I knew God would hear, but my heart was so heavy that I found it hard to care. I was ashamed of myself for feeling this way, but it was true. My heart was broken, and at that moment, I felt it was God's fault.

When the biker finished the prayer, I tried to manage a smile, and I thanked him for his time. He looked at me as if he knew I didn't feel one bit better than when he first came in the room. Then, without asking and without warning, the biker dropped to his knee beside me, took me by the hand, and began to pray again. As I listened to his words, I found this

prayer was different. This time he prayed for me. There was no mention of Mom and Dad or the family, but just this daughter who was so broken-hearted. This biker led me to the throne of God, to the feet of Jesus, because that morning, I couldn't get there on my own. My heart was overwhelmed, and I considered the vision that for that moment, all eyes in heaven were on me and what I needed. For a moment, it was all about me. I didn't want to be selfish when Daddy needed God so much, but I needed Him, too. That biker showed me, reminded me, that God cared about me, too.

When the prayer was over, the biker patted me on the hand, nodded his head and walked away. He didn't speak to anyone else in the room. I never saw him again. Not too long after that, I was able to see Daddy in ICU. Plans were made to move him back to Duke, which we wanted to happen. The doctors at Duke knew him, and they could take care of him better than those in Fayetteville. When Daddy arrived back at Duke, and the doctors checked him out, they didn't understand why he was there. They couldn't find any signs of the disease returning or that his condition was worse. The only thing they discovered was some fluid in his lungs that required a few days back on the ventilator and some antibiotics.

Daddy spent one more month at Duke. In the end, it proved to be a good thing. The move to Fayetteville had happened too soon; Dad was not ready. But on January 16, when another room came open at the rehab center, we knew the time was right. Daddy was stronger, but Mom was exhausted. She needed to get home and rest. He spent three and a half months in rehab. When he came home in May 2007, he was driving an electric wheel chair, eating full meals, and getting well on his way to recovery.

The journey continues to be long. Five years later, Daddy can walk

short distances with his walker and move all parts of his body. Only his hands have not returned to normal, so he still needs someone with him all the time. Nevertheless, we have seen many prayers answered, and I remain positive about the things to come mostly because a total stranger took the time to care and say a prayer – just for me.



DOUBLE BLESSING

Linda Hester Edwards—BCC Student

AFTER THE DOOR CLOSED AND THE LIGHTS WENT OUT: TWO INTERPRETATIONS

Version One: Ms. Neeley's BCC English 070 Class

After I had locked up for the night, turned out all the lights, and climbed in bed, I heard a loud but indistinct noise coming from my closet. It was not really a screeching but more of a high-pitched moaning. Since I live alone in an often scary neighborhood, I keep a flashlight, a 12-gauge, and a baseball bat by my bed. Because the noise was so horrific, I grabbed the flashlight in my left hand and the 12-gauge in my right. As quietly and stealthily as I could, I swung my legs off the bed, stood, and crept to the closet. In a single smooth motion, I turned on the flashlight, stepped forward, and reached for the closet door to pull it open. However, the door flew open by itself. I felt a bone-chilling wind on the back of my neck and shoulders. The flashlight dimmed and went out. Spooked, I pulled the trigger on the shotgun with the knowledge that I always kept one in the chamber. Instead of the anticipated blast, all I heard was an empty, harmless click. Nothing! Desperately, I pulled the level back to make sure there was a shell in the chamber. Yes, there was! Again, I pulled the trigger. Again, nothing.

Wasting no time, I swung to my left and leapt to the light switch across the room. However, when I flipped the switch, the lights flickered and blew. From within the closet came a sharper, more insistent noise. Immediately, I headed for the open bedroom door. Just as swiftly, I heard the door slam shut and the lock engage.

Turning in the opposite direction, I ran to my bedroom window. Not surprisingly, it was sealed shut although I remembered having opened it fairly recently. With the butt of the shotgun, I tried to shatter the window. Even though I did some damage to both the "glass" and the frame, they

both remained intact. Finally, I remembered my cell! Salvation, I thought! Pressing 9-1-1, I waited. Instead of ringing, I heard static, accompanied by a breathy whisper.

With nothing to lose, I grabbed the baseball bat and headed for the closet. Before I even got to the closet door, I started swinging. Something snatched the bat from my hands. I began to scream as loudly as I could. In the middle of my yells, the bat swung, slammed against my head, and knocked me out cold.

The next morning, I woke up on the floor near my closet. I was flat on my back. As I scanned my eyes around the room, everything looked normal. The gun, flashlight, and bat were by my bed as usual. The closet door was closed; the door to my room was open. There was no damage to my window. Later, when I finally stood and tried my cell phone, it worked. The only thing I could not explain was the huge knot on the side of my head just above my left ear.

Contributors: Kissie Council, Blanca Freeman, Lisa Hall, Tiffany Harrison, Tiffany Hite, Gary Jones, Derrick Lewis, LaQuation McKoy, Sherris McMillian, Michael Mitchell, Blake Rich, Lycreshia Turner, Corey Williams, Victoria Zurcher



AFTER THE DOOR CLOSED AND THE LIGHTS WENT OUT: TWO INTERPRETATIONS

Version TWO: Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

His Story ...

After the door closes and the lights go out, I am alone again. My heart starts racing.

I can hear the sounds of the clock in the background. *Tick tock, tick tock.* It's very loud in my ears.

Over in the corner of the comfy sitter's room, the man in the box is speaking to me again. I do not know my sitters commands. I tilt my head to get a better understanding. It's like gibberish. I look over to my furry little friend to see if she knows what he is saying. I then recall that she doesn't know this language, at least she pretends so.

She looks up and scans the room. I've seen that vacant stare before. I do not think she is from this man-world. She is so void of communication with our master; completely self-absorbed.

She goes back to her obsessive preening.

I walk through the house. I'm ambivalent to my new situation; a repeat of yesterday, and the many days before, when I am left alone.

Is my heart racing because I'm anxious at being alone? Is it because I am alone and of free will?

I eat.

Time passes; *tick tock, tick tock* goes the clock.

I sleep on the cold bare floor.

Like a car horn beckoning me, I am awakened from my

slumber.

"Toilet paper! Toilet paper!" I hear a malicious cry coming from the next room.

Up on my feet like a flash I go.

"My toilet paper!" she commands from the cold room.

She's on her back, her back feet kicking the fluffy cotton roll with a vengeance. Shards of fibers float gently from above. I think it's like snow. I go in for a better look. I know the rule: "No toilet paper snow in the house."

I'm conflicted. Why can't she just follow the rules?

I stare at her and give a threatening snarl—the one that scares her (rarely).

Off she runs to the other room.

"It's all mine," I think gleefully as I tear into the entire pack. "Oh, how I miss winter."

A toilet paper blizzard fills the room.

She snickers from the hallway as she makes her way back into the comfy room. I look around at my destruction.

She did it to me again.

Her Story ...

After the door shuts and the footsteps die, I am alone again. I am indifferent. I don't care that I am alone as I am creature of solitude.

I can hear the sounds of him breathing. Big, stinky and sweaty, he sits there. I stop my preening and glare at him.

His head is cocked, and he's staring at the stupid-box. What is so captivating about that box?

I go back to licking my beautiful silky fur.

He annoyingly paces the floor. I glare again. I don't know why he can't just lie still. He watches me.

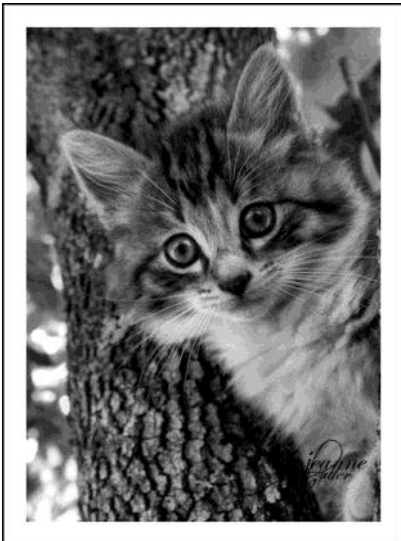
I go back to licking.

Time passes; *tick tock, tick tock* goes the clock. My sleep is continuously interrupted by his constant snoring.

I look down at him, I see drool. I can't stand drool. I think he could use a wipe.

I slowly stretch out from my relaxed position and hop down to the floor. I know exactly what to use.

I smile to myself in my own trademark grin.



SAFE HAVEN

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

MUCH MORE THAN A MOUSER

Sara Neeley—BCC Faculty

He came walking up the sidewalk that led around the house from the woods in the back to the front yard, a young male tabby, strong and virile looking even then, his tail spiked perpendicular to the ground. As he detoured across the grass beside the fishpond and fountain, he cut his head around sharply to his right, to see me sitting on the front steps. For only a moment, he paused, as if thinking. On a mission, he continued uphill without hesitation, circling the pond to the sidewalk at the bottom of the steps where I was seated. There he stopped and sat on his rear haunches. We observed one another, I with my eyes and he with all of his senses. I spoke; he listened. He acknowledged that food would be nice. When I returned with canned tuna, he backed up a short distance, signaling that I was to place it on the ground and return to my seat. He ate every morsel, cleaned meticulously, thanked me, and left the way he had come.

The next day, he returned at approximately the same time and for several days thereafter. I named him Doc, short for the legendary “Doc” Holiday. Like Val Kilmer’s portrayal of the gunslinger and gambler in Tombstone, Doc seemed refined and astute, with a penchant for a dissolute lifestyle. One morning, he appeared early before I left for work. When I returned home late in the afternoon, he was waiting beside “his” water bowl. That evening passed as all others before it, and I left Doc after his dinner to go inside for mine.

Shortly after 10:00 p.m., I heard piercing snarls coming from the front yard. Suspecting that another cat had wandered into the front yard that Doc now claimed as his own, I opened the door. All was now silent. Movement activated the lights beside the garage, and so I stepped out on the front walk. There, beneath my feet, was a small pool of blood on the

sidewalk. Fearing Doc was hurt, I raced inside for a flashlight and returned to comb the yard for him. Our yard was wooded, and I

feared I would not find him. As I panned the light beneath an area thick with azaleas and rhododendrons lining the steps that descended into the side yard, I saw Doc crouched so far under the brush that I could not reach him. Although I was prepared to crawl on my stomach to reach him, I decided to try talking to him first. Reaching as far as I could toward him, I spoke very quietly. I explained the necessity of his trusting me now. More importantly for Doc, I promised that I would never let anything hurt him again. Without another word, he walked to me. When I picked him up, I saw two deep puncture wounds bleeding profusely on his right foreleg. My husband, who was alive at the time, was a physician and helped me cleanse his wounds. Doc spent his first night in our home confined to the laundry room, and the next day, he made his first visit to our vet.

Over the next five years, Doc, although neutered, quite clearly became the dominant male. He “raised” five other cats, three males and two females, which came into our household as kittens. With each he assumed the role of uncle, babysitting, grooming them, teaching them to play, and gently reprimanding them when necessary. Never once did I see him abuse his power. Unlike many humans, he seemed intuitively aware that great responsibility came with his status.

However, one thing Doc always made clear, both to me and to the other cats, was that I belonged first to him. His place in the bed was on the pillow beside my head; if I sat in a chair, his was the seat beside mine. He was first in line to butt heads with me or to rub against my legs. Similarly, he expected me to put his food bowl down and to give him treats first before all the other cats. If there was to be a change in routine, such as boarding, Doc awaited the explanation. If I was in the room, he watched

me intently. The others might sleep, but Doc's solemn duty was to monitor my activities as well as my moods. If I was sad, he walked with me; if angry, he merely observed; if status quo, he resumed his daily activities.

I did not realize the depth of our commitment to each other until my husband died very suddenly of a massive heart attack. I was absolutely devastated. My children were both grown, and I felt truly alone, except for my animals, when all visitors returned to their homes after the funeral. My three large male cats had always enjoyed roaming at night. One night about three weeks after my husband's death, I rather numbly let the three cats outside. The next morning, I opened my door to find two little chipmunk bodies on my doorstep. That evening, after his dinner, Doc raced to sit before my front door, once more indicating his desire to go outside. The next morning, there were again two small critters on my doorstep. Doc repeated this identical behavior every night for at least the next four months. He was the only cat who consistently wanted to go out at night. And, every morning, without fail, there were at least two small animals laid at my door. He brought me chipmunks, voles, squirrels, small rabbits, and even two rather large rats. He had evidently skirmished with one of the rats, for it lay beneath my heavy doormat. If he was outside during daylight, he brought birds also. At one point his behavior concerned me so much that I consulted my vet. She assured me that his behavior was normal; in fact, he was providing for me.

The vet's information overwhelmed me. The outpouring of human love that followed my husband's death sustained me. But this powerfully male tabby cat, so in tune with my feelings to read my despair, reached out to care for me in the only way he understood. He brought me food, and with it, love and devotion. He provided for me, his family, unflinching.

Several months after my husband's death, I thanked Doc for his ex-

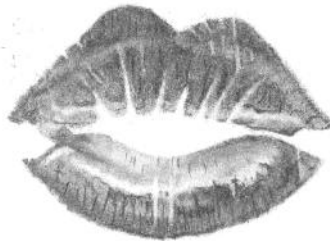
cellent care and declared that, although I was still sad, I was actually fine and could now care for all of us. Over time his desire to roam at night lessened, and he brought home fresh game only rarely.

Over the years, he has remained a most serious cat that takes his responsibilities very seriously. Although he weighs a substantial 15 pounds, his eyes are his commanding feature, for it is those eyes through which he sees into the human soul and from which he engenders a sense of power and generosity. My closest friend confesses, “Doc is the kind of ‘man’ I strive to be.” As a human, my friend means that as the highest of compliments. To the cats that live with him, Doc is the ideal among felines. To those unknown cats that wander into his territory, he is a terrifying avenger. To me, Doc is an ideal being, one that co-exists with mortal beings, of necessity, on our terms, but who often soars on planes above us. His evolution is complete.



LIPSTICK PRINT

Jimmy Tatum— BCC
Student



THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION

Ginger King—BCC Staff

As she stood there, waiting for the doors of the shuttle open, she was yawning, tired by the long trip ahead, even before it began. There was always a chance of delays whenever she entered an airport, and she was aware of that but not looking forward to it. It was actually not that bad most trips, but her timing had been really off lately, and she just knew that there would be a delay today.

The doors opened, and the corridor was full of people, so full in fact that she had to move ahead although Mr. Malcolm and David were no longer with her. They were getting separated by the crowd. Having been through the airport in Minneapolis so many times though, she felt like she would know her way around with her eyes closed. So she pushed on with the crowd.

Passing up one restroom and then another, unable to get out of the stream of people in the terminal, she was getting anxious. Finally she made it to the outside edge of this moving mass and could see only a uni-sex/family restroom. Desperate, she said aloud, "I'll take it." When she reached out and grabbed the handle, she realized that it was locked.

"Occupado," came from the other side.

So she put her carry-on bags on the floor behind her, crossed her legs as she leaned against the wall, and prayed she could hold it.

When the door opened about a minute later, out popped a little blond girl and her mother. The little girl had big blue eyes and stick straight hair. Giselle was reminded of her niece and said, "Well, hello there."

The little girl looked up at her mother, who smiled and nodded in ap-

proval. Looking back up at Giselle, the tiny angel said, "Hi," then waved as they moved along out of the way. So Giselle waved back and hurried in to take care of business, so she could get to the gate in time to make the first boarding call.

After getting back into the throng of people who were moving toward the gates, she could see Malcolm and then David. As she joined them, they decided to grab a quick sandwich from one of the restaurants on the way. Giselle stopped at this particular place each time she was able. The smell of the fresh baked bread always drew her in. They got in line and moved quickly through. She ordered a turkey sandwich and a lemon bar. She stopped and thought, then quickly added, "Please put pickles on my sandwich." For some strange reason, that sounded good to her today. The server added it to her ticket. The green tea she ordered was delicious, so she drank half of it right there, waiting for the sandwich. She wasn't hungry, so she stashed the food in her large grey leather purse to savor later when she had de-stressed a bit.

As they entered the boarding area, the crowd had thinned, and there was only one other person ahead of her. When they both cleared the door, Giselle knew something was different, it wasn't a typical airplane cabin; it seemed as roomy as a train car. She had never traveled first class luxury, but that is exactly what this was. It was very spacious and had a full desk with a lamp and phone, a couple of smallish twin beds, and several plush red seats along the sides. The walls were tan and decorated with fine art that framed nice large windows. The gentleman who entered just before her took a seat along one side. He glanced her way as she sat down on the other side. Malcolm and David were already seated, each on their own twin bed at opposite ends of the cabin. They never spoke a word, nor did she speak to them. Both of them seemed exhausted. Giselle was tired enough that had she lain down, she would be out like a

light.

The section she was sitting in was facing the only other passenger, who was now directly in her line of sight on the right of the cabin. Giselle fidgeted in her seat and got everything just the way she liked before take-off. The other passenger was staring straight ahead, and she thought, *well, at least I will be able to rest and not have to make idle chatter*. Leaning back and closing her eyes, waiting for the attendant to come through or to hear the announcements, she finally relaxed. Usually for her, attempts to go to sleep quickly on a flight were futile. Fidgeting in the seat or flinching at every noise, she simply could not get relaxed enough to go to sleep before take-off. This time was different because apparently she must have dozed off right away. She didn't remember anything after getting settled. When she opened her eyes, her contacts were a little blurry.

As she got her bearings again, she realized that the gentleman across the way was looking at her and so intensely that she couldn't help but smile. He seemed like such a quiet, serious man who had something on his mind, so much so that Giselle had not introduced herself earlier. For some reason, she now found the look on his face funny, as he seemed to be looking completely through her. Her smile and giggle made him smile back and break his concentration. After he focused on her, he looked like he had always known her, like recognizing a long missed friend. They both laughed, and he said, "Hi, I'm Kris," and then told her that he was going to see his wife, and he couldn't wait to get to Washington State.

She said, "Washington State? Is that where we are going? Oh man, I thought we were headed to Atlanta."

He said, "I think so, at least I hope so. It has been a while, and I can't wait to get home. I miss my wife so much, and I'm on my way to see her. This thing better be going to Washington."

He stood up to go find someone to ask since there had not been an attendant circulating. She noticed as he stood that he was wearing green pants, and his shirt was not tucked in. It was a light blue-green summer plaid of sorts with long sleeves, but they were rolled up to be at least three quarter length. This stuck out to her because it was October, and Minnesota in the autumn is usually cool and windy. There were also no bags or a coat around his seat. She wondered how he had gotten this once in a lifetime up-grade. How had she? What was really going on? A cabin like this was usually on a private plane, a very nice private plane.

As she waited for an answer or some clue, she noticed that Malcolm and David were no longer in the cabin. Now she was getting more than alarmed. How had that happened? When Kris returned, she said, "What is going on?"

He replied, "Don't worry love. Everything will be okay."

For just a second she thought, *wait, he didn't have an Aussie accent. What is this calling me "love?"* Then just as quickly as the thought crossed her mind, it was gone and in it's place, calm. This normally would have caused her to back up and move away, a stranger talking to her like that, but for some reason, it was truly soothing. He sat beside her and put his hand on hers. She felt a level of peace that she had never before encountered when just meeting someone. It was unbelievable, certainly happening on this day, which could only be described as one of the most stress-filled times of her life. They still didn't seem to know where they were heading. At least, Kris had not mentioned it, nor did she care, to her surprise. She was just satisfied that when he said everything would be okay, it really would be.

From then on, they sat side by side, and he never let go of her hand as they continued talking about their childhoods, secrets and close calls in

life. She had never really felt this at home with anyone before. It was as if he already knew what she was going to say before it left her mind and crossed her lips.

Giselle asked him about what he wanted when he had that first taste of life on his own terms. She told him that her closest friends in school each had their lives mapped out, but for her, it was more of a big picture kind of dream she wanted to achieve. It was more about living a life full of experiences and travel, meeting all kinds of people. When her life was through, she wanted folks to say, "Man, she really lived." He looked away for a second and then smiled a sheepish grin and said he knew exactly what she meant. His whole life he had only wanted to do one thing. Over the years, the reasons for choosing the career he had changed several times, but the big goal of his life had not. Even now, he realized how it was woven into his career in a way that he couldn't even verbalize. What he could say was that he had always wanted to help others in a very real way, to do something big for them that they were not able to do for themselves. When he was a child, it was to help elderly neighbors with chores, and later, it was to work with a local after-school program, helping his fellow students with their homework.

In their talking, a bond was forming and transforming their conversation. She was so interested in what he had to say. This was both urgent and settled, the way a good excitement leaves the heart and mind. It had been a while since someone was this interested in the "deep" thoughts of her heart, and it felt good. She never wanted it to end. The fact that he wanted to share his heart with her made Giselle miss someone she loved, although she wasn't sad. There was such a complete satisfaction in allowing Kris an outlet for what he was feeling.

They continued sharing, more about their careers as this was where her current burden lay. They both had spent time away from their families,

and they could never get it back. He said, "You have to understand. This was never about being away from my family. I hate that part of what I do. I love her so much it hurts to even think about it. So while I am working, I don't. You do what you have to do in order to get through it. I put up walls, and they're pretty thick. She can melt them though. One smile and wink, and it's over. She wins, and she always will. I just wish she knew that the most important thing to me is my family. Sometimes I see little ones in the places I go, and it breaks my heart. Because I can't be with my family every night, I will protect them the best way I know how."

She smiled and touched his arm. He seemed like he urgently wanted to say these things, like they were something he'd wanted to get off his chest for a long time. He continued, "I want all families to have the peace I know from home and how I was raised. I wish I could give them the chance to grow up understanding freedom and responsibility. I pray my family will one day understand that is why I spent so much time away from them. I always thought there would be more time to hold them; I always wanted that. I am going home to tell her that I love her the most, so she knows for sure now that I won't go back, that she won't ever be second fiddle to my job again." There was so much passion and a purely selfless love in his voice. There was a special way his voice would soften when he spoke about her, and his eyes would widen and become so deep blue that the pupil would disappear. Giselle squeezed his hand and gazed back at him with such respect and concern. He chuckled, then continued.

"My wife, she is one in a million. Is it possible to love one woman so much? I never knew when I would make this trip back to her. I am glad that I met you and shared this with you. Maybe she will know when I get home just how much I love her."

Giselle said, "I am sure she knows." She shared with him that she had

been in love with someone whom she could not be with and how much that hurt her heart on a daily basis. She knew that this man loved her but could not be with her because it simply was impossible.

Kris said he knew about impossible, and that he also knew how much it hurt to be so far removed from the most extraordinary person in your life, wishing, dreaming what could be if only you were together. He sighed lightly and then commented, "You know, really, nothing is truly impossible, it's just levels of difficulty and whether or not you have the strength required for that situation."

He added, "Never let anyone you love go without a fight. Don't ever let go of love. Even when it seems impossible that you would ever be together again, there is still a chance that it will happen. Tell him you love him. Take the risk, never mind looking like a fool for love's sake. It is the one risk that is truly worth it, and I know a lot about risk."

She sighed and nodded in agreement.

Kris said, "All I know is that if you have a passion, a soul-mate, you cannot hide that love or anything about yourself from that person. It's like having a tell when playing poker. They will always see right through you."

He straightened in his seat and looked up for a moment and then put his arm around her. She knew something was about to change because of the look in his eyes. She worried that he had sobered to the reality that they were merely strangers, even though it never felt that way to her. She said a silent prayer, *Please don't let him realize how he has opened up and stop talking*. She closed her eyes and braced for the moment to come when he said, that was enough, and their goodbye would begin.

However, he said, "I want to close my eyes and pretend she is here in you and tell you all things that I want to tell my one true love. I feel that

these are also some of the things your soul-mate would share with you if he were able to open his heart to you right now, without feeling weak for expressing it. Just know that he isn't able to tell you and be open with you about it because if he were to start telling you all the ways and reasons he loves you, he could never stop. I just have a strong sense of how purely he cares for you, and I want you to know it, to feel it."

After that, he began to talk to her as if she were the woman he spoke about loving and wanting to come home to. The way he talked to her and held her hand, looking deep into her soul as he spoke, it had to be. She felt as if he were the man she loved. That man was here with her somehow through the way Kris was treating her; she knew it. She was the only woman he wanted to love like this, and she felt the same about him.

He said, "I love the way your hair smells and how it looks when it falls across the pillow just right. It makes me want to roll around in it." He laughed a huge belly laugh, like it was an inside joke. "I like the way you try to hide your smile from me when you are mad, and I want to make you laugh instead. I love the little secret ways that you know make me melt when you are next to me and the way you held our babies that first time."

She said, "Share this sandwich with me. There are pickles on it, just for you." They moved from their seats to the desk and used it as a table. "I wish we had been on more picnics. Did you know I have a country soul?"

He said, "Most people are one or the other, city or country, and I have always been able to adapt anywhere and be happy. Well, I am happiest when I can see the big night sky and hike in the woods or row in a lake."

She said she was the same way. To be outside doing something, seeing everything, feeling the wind was the best way to know you were really living.

He said, "A lot of my friends like to fish, and I sit out there and pretend to fish just to spend that much time outside in the quiet."

She told him about one of the most beautiful things she had ever seen. It was on a hike in Lynnnville Gorge, Virginia. There were millions of Monarch butterflies hovering over a small waterfall at the bottom of the gorge. The hike in and climb out were worth it although it took her a week to walk without pain after that 22-mile hike. He shared with her some of his crazy fun antics with his friends and said there had been times when he thought he was in love, but looking back, he saw that they were just stepping stones to her, his true life love.

She found herself touching his face and his hair as they talked. His short brown hair was so soft, and he had a smile that would knock you over. His eyes were very expressive, and she wondered if they always were like this. He kept talking, and she knew more about him by what he didn't have to say than any one sentence he uttered. As the hours passed, neither of them wondered when they would arrive at their destination.

They grew sleepy as they were leaning against one another now, and he pulled her closer to him. She felt so good, so loved and safe. Her eyes grew heavy and closed as she said, "I remember that there were two beds here. Maybe we should take a nap." They moved from their seats at the desk and went to the end of the cabin and sat on the twin bed there. Both lay on their backs looking at the ceiling and holding hands. He pulled the blanket up to their waists, and that was all it took; both went quickly to sleep.

When she woke, she said to herself, "Are we there yet?"

She looked around for Kris but didn't see him. There were other passengers now too, people whom she didn't recognize from before.

David said as he passed, "You glad to be closer to home? I sure am."

Then, Malcolm passed in the aisle, and said, "We will wait for you at the escalators."

For a moment, she sat there, still trying to figure out where Kris was and what had happened since she had been asleep.

As she deplaned, she asked the stewardess and pilot, "Where are we and where is the gentleman from luxury class?"

They smiled yet looked confused. The pilot responded as he arched his back, "We're in Atlanta miss, and there are no luxury seats, even in the cockpit. Believe me."

The stewardess asked if she was okay. Giselle shook it off and scooted out the door.

At the escalators, she met David and Malcolm, and they went to baggage claim together. She stood there waiting for her bag, thinking that must have been just a weird dream. The same leaking bag went by again, and she realized that she didn't even know if her bag was out. She had been trying so hard to remember even falling asleep, but she couldn't remember anything but Kris. She waited for Malcolm and David in the terminal parking lot; they put their bags in the trunk. David drove home. She was still tired from the trip but also now had a warm contented feeling within her that everything she had been worrying about would somehow be okay. Although they normally would have insisted she ride in the front, these southern gentlemen allowed her choice to ride alone in the back.

Soaking in the day, she lay her head back and closed her eyes, trying hard to put it all together. She remembered only bits and pieces about their conversation now but remembered something new. She could see a

short pew section on the right hand side of a church. There were arches made of dark wood with beautiful scroll work around the top. A man she seemed to know very well stood from beside her, and she remained seated, turning to follow him with her eyes. She was now looking toward the back of the church, and then Giselle realized it was him, the same man from the plane. More was coming back to her now. He held her hand and looked so sad. As he touched her, she could feel his pain and whispered, "Don't go."

His look cried that he didn't want to. His hand slipped from hers, and then, she saw a young woman, thin with light brown or dark blond hair, slightly curly, pulled back at the nape of the neck. This woman had him by the other hand, and as he looked longingly at both women, he was being led by the other to the back of the church. When his hand slipped from Giselle's, he smiled a tiny, thin smile in the direction of the other woman and simply said, "I'm so sorry, but I have to."

She watched as this other woman, whom she assumed to be someone he cared for deeply, walked away with him down the aisle of a church Giselle had never been in before. That was the last image that she remembered from the dream. Earlier, she had wondered why there wasn't anyone else on the flight. And why were there no attendants? Realizing it was just a dream now explained all of the disconnected pieces from her memory. Kris's name and face, however, were strong memories from the dream as was the feeling of being loved, adored. Those and the peaceful feeling stayed with her all day.

The drive home went by pretty quickly. They arrived back at the office, dealt with a few time-sensitive items, and went home early for a change. After all of her work items were in their rightful place, Giselle noticed that her sandwich was missing. Because she figured she'd slept through the

flight, she thought she would find it in her bag and need to toss it. *Whatever*, she thought. Exhausted, physically and emotionally, she just wanted to shut everything down for a while and recharge.

That night, after eating, she turned on her computer, and her Internet home page headline read, "Army Ranger on his 14th deployment, killed in Afghanistan Saturday."

That many deployments are very impressive, she thought. She clicked on the link just to glance at the article before going on to the site she needed. The link connected and displayed a photo of the soldier. She nearly lost her breath. It looked like the man she had dreamed of just hours before. She shook her head and blinked her eyes. That didn't change the face looking back at her with the same eerie sadness she remembered from their parting. She said out loud, "There is no way." As she read the article, she stopped at a single word that was insignificant to any other stranger who would read it. *Washington*. He was from Washington State. The tears rolled now uncontrollably as she saw his name. Kristoffer - the memories from the dream were coming back, stronger and more vivid than before. She figured most of the details would have faded over the day as they always do with remembering a dream. She sat there, read about this man in the article, and knew without a doubt that it was the same man from her dream.

In the days that followed, she read online about his dedicated service in the Army and the praise of his fellow and commanding officers. She hung her head and pondered the meaning of the dream. She wondered why, of all people, he appeared in her dream. She never knew him in life, she hadn't heard anything about his service awards or passing, and in fact, she never recalled him saying he was a soldier in the dream.

The last time she looked over information about his life and passing,

she decided she would never know why this happened or what it meant. Just as she looked up and clicked on the last item, her eyes fell to a photograph on the screen. It was the loving and devoted wife whom she was certain Kris loved beyond all measure and whom he wanted desperately to travel home to. The notes said, "Please pray for this country, for those who have volunteered to protect it, and for the families they leave behind." The notes also said the photo was from a session that was booked before his passing.

Giselle expected no less from the woman Kris loved; she was a courageous woman brave enough to pull her broken heart together and record these memories for her children and in honor of their father who loved them tremendously. The caption reminded, "Time is short, and life is unpredictable. Hold on to those you love." Giselle thought, *Kris told me basically that same thing.*

It was as if she were listening to him again, hearing him say, "You can't give up, no matter how much the situation or the other person makes you feel like you are the one with a problem. If it's love, it's love, and you feel what you feel. Love is, was and always will be the best thing you can ever do for yourself or others. I mean, it sounds simple and sappy, but it is the truth. Some people just see expressing it as a weakness. Life isn't fair, but you can't give in and do nothing. You have to keep living and loving people because it is the only way you can have honor to keep moving. It's the way you make a difference in how you feel, in how others around you feel. You laugh, they laugh, you love, and they love. That's how the world changes, the way God built it. We take or make what may seem like small insignificant moves to us, but they are the workings He has created for us to do. Together, they stir enough energy under the surface to create a wave across the entire human race."

He told her that she should never feel bad for having shared her feelings

with people who seemed closed off or unresponsive, no matter how hard the situation was. He had said, "Don't give up, no matter what. Few truly understand how precious every second is, and so they think there is always time to tell someone you love them, to spend an hour or two in deep conversation. They look at those of us who do understand as if we are crazy because we try to take the time we are given to show how we feel." He told her, "Cherish and nourish that love no matter what. Even if you couldn't be together now, you should try to keep hope because real pure love is so rare."

As she cried, she thought, *I have to thank him and his family for what he did and ultimately what they lost in service to our country.* She recalled the big goal of his life, wondering if he felt he had achieved it. Was that why he was not planning on going back to Afghanistan? He had provided for her the thing she could not do for herself. Kris had protected her nation at a level that the individual citizen didn't even realize was needed. Not only this, but he had done it over and over and over again, which made her think of Lincoln's letter to Mrs. Bixby and his words in Gettysburg. The text came to her as she realized her sense of loss would only scratch the surface of the pain felt by a mother or wife. So comparatively few truly understand what Lincoln meant by the phrases "so costly a sacrifice upon altar of freedom," and "they gave the last full measure of devotion." Only those who felt the void of a loved one lost in this way could truly understand.

Through this brief encounter in her dream, she knew with certainty that Kris was an exceptional man. She knew she would never forget him, nor would she ever forget the last words he said as they parted and the sad look on his face as his hand slipped from hers.

She said it out loud. Although she was alone, she felt like it was being said to the whole world at the same time: "'How precious our time and freedom really are.' In his passing, we find proof of that very thing."

FRUITS AND VEGETABLE WAR

Sheana Stitz—BCC Alumni

Heading in the *Anti-Oxidant Newspaper*: "Tomato Declares War."

The Evil Rotten Tomatoes have joined forces with the Maniacal Mashed Potatoes, Devious Deviled Eggs, Cannibalistic Cucumbers and Putrid Pickles in a war between good and evil. The ones that will suffer the wrath of these so-called outlaws are as follows: Pleasant Plums, Angelic Apricots, Glorious Grapes, Peaceful Prunes and Kindly Kiwi.

Several members declined to comment on what started this furious rampage.

Lord Squishy Seeds of the Evil Rotten Tomatoes has been heard to say, "Death shall befall those who stand in our way, no matter how good they are for cleaning out bowels. For we are the superior ones. None of our enemies will ever surpass our weaponry or intelligence."

Still, the questions go unanswered: What the hell is wrong with everyone? Is this what our world has come to—Fruits and vegetables fighting each other over a superiority complex?

Sir Clean Your Colon of the Pleasant Prune tribe has been cooperative with the local newspapers and chooses to comment on these questionable times: "We will unite forces in the hopes of bringing peace amongst all fruits and vegetables. We will not sway from these battles; we will triumph. Our only hope is that one day, these evil ones will see the error of their ways."

When prompted with the question, "What started this war?" Sir Clean Your Colon was at a loss for explanation.

"We believe that our enemies are jealous of the wonderful digestive powers that we have. Everything was fine one day, and then the next, it

was a declaration of war. We do speculate that all of our enemies are acting under the brainwashing influence of King Loads of Fiber of the Cannibalistic Cucumbers. We believe that he feels slighted by the FDA for being a lesser source of fiber than prunes. Then again, this is only our speculation."

After our interview with Sir Clean Your Colon, Master Pickled for Life from the Putrid Pickles came forward to set the record straight.

"We do not care who gets a better review from the FDA. All we care about is that these foods with their holier-than-thou complex get fried in a wok and served in a Chinese dish. We are tired of living under the fear of purgatory in the Bog of Eternal Stench, also known as a compost bucket, for not conforming to the way of the elders. Until then, no fruit or vegetable is safe in this region. If we still don't get the result we want, then we will move on to world domination."

With this new information obtained by our reporters, we must conclude that there is no longer a safe place for anyone. All will suffer one way or another from this war. Already, our water has increased to \$4.00 a gallon from the \$1.00 it was a year ago. Lord Squishy Seeds says this is the way to weed out his enemies by depriving them of their of their natural juices thus leading to dehydration—a deathly tactic that will cause a genocide of many fruits and vegetables.

Due to this rise in water prices, many live in fear of what will come next. Children in the streets are using weapons of mass destruction such as the pea shooter and food processors. Our children have been thrown into a tailspin by compromising their innocent nature in order to survive.

For now, this reporter will be running for the hills in hopes of being spared this horrific scene. Until next week, be safe and wise.

Written by Princess Squash of the Sweet Squash Tribe: A neutral party
Anti-Oxidant Newspaper

PO'BOY'S TELL-TALE HEART—*A PARODY*

Mark Butler—BCC Alumni

Yep, I was scared. Terribly, terribly scared I was, and am. But that don't mean I'm crazy. My ailment made me see, hear and smell better. I think my hearing was made more better than the rest though. I heard all kinds of stuff on earth and in heaven. I heard a lot of stuff in Hell. But if you think I'm crazy, then you are just ignorant. Look here how I can tell you all I did without goin' all postal on ya. That ought to show ya I ain't crazy.

I can't say how I first got the notion, but once I got the notion, I latched onto it like a bull dog on a ham bone. It bothered me all the time. I really didn't have no reason or rhyme. I thought the ol' coot was pretty cool all things considered. He didn't give me no heart ache or pick on me too much. I didn't want to steal from the old man (though it would have been a sweet haul). I tell ya what bothered me: he had a creepy lookin' eye. It was a cloudy, pale blue lookin' eye that would have looked just fine on an old buzzard. Yep, that is what bothered me. Every time that ol' buzzard eyeball looked at me I would get goose bumps, and not the good kind neither. Well, I guess I had enough of this dude scoping with his evil buzzard eyeball and I decided the only way to get rid of his eye was to get rid of him, and thus the scheme is borned.

Now look here. You think I ain't got all my dogs barkin', but listen. Crazy people don't know nothin'.

I know'd that if I was gone pull this thing off, I got to be extra careful and cover my tracks. So, the whole week before I killed him, I was extra nice. Even though I was being extra nice to him, I was plottin'. Every night, just at midnight, I would sneek to the door outside his room with a lantern that was all closed up. Then I would turn the door knob real, real slow so

as to not make noise and wake him up. Then I would open up the door really slow too, just big enough to put in my head. Would a crazy man take this kind of caution? No, I don't think so. Now, before I put in my head, I would slowly thrust the closed lantern in. Then I put in my head and open up the lantern just a little bit so, like a laser pointer, I would shine the light on his buzzard evil eye. For seven nights I did this, and every night he was asleep, so I couldn't see that evil eye, and I would lose the urge to kill him. But I did watch him sleep.

Well, on the eighth night, I was feelin' especially cautious, and really feeling my new powers that I got from my ailment. I could hear so good and even feel every little change in temperature or air pressure. I was like a walkin' weather station or something. Anyway, I did the same thing I always did with the door and lantern and all, when all of a sudden, my thumb accidentally jiggled the latch on the lantern and made a slight sound. The old man shot up in his bed and said "Who's there?"

I could hear and feel him breathing a terrified breath. I didn't even flinch because he was afraid of robbers, and his room was buttoned up tighter than a Mason jar. No light could get into the room, and I was cloaked by darkness.

He was not aware of my head in the room. I stayed there, not moving a muscle, listening with my super hearing, and I could hear the old man's heart beating. The sound of his heart beat got louder and louder, and I listened for him to lie down, and he did not. He was sitting there, trying to comfort his self, thinking that maybe the sound was the wind or a cricket. He was unable to calm his self as I heard his heart beat louder and faster

After standing there a bit, I decided to open up my lantern just a crack, again as a laser falling on that nasty lookin' eye. Unlike the seven nights prior, on this night I found the buzzard eye wide open in terror, and upon

seeing the thin beam of light, the old man let out a small shriek. This sound and the evil eye, set me to movin'. I quickly lurched forward and pulled the old man to the floor, along with his mattress on top of him, and the shrieks were now muffled, as was his evil buzzard ugly eye. I was rid of the evil eye, finally. Bye Bye wicked eye!

So, if ya thought I was nuts before, this next part will put all doubt from your mind. I am well trained in the art of cleaning up a murder scene as I have studied it my whole life watching crime dramas on TV. Using this vast training, I was able to amputate all the limbs and scoop out the vital organs, leaving no mess at all to be found. I wrapped it all in plastic, lifted up the floor boards and put the old man in his house, ya know, "in" his house, forever. I put all the floor boards back so neatly that even that wicked eye could have seen nothing amiss. I had all of this finished by 3:30, and just in time, as a knock fell on the door.

I was sure that I had everything cleaned up real good, so I wasn't at all scared to go to the door. I opened the door, and there stood a Barney Fife wannabe. He said a neighbor called in a complaint that they heard a scream. I explained that I was on a new medicine to stop smoking. That medicine gives me wicked nightmares, and I had screamed. He asked about the old man, and I told him that the old man had gone up yonder to visit relatives. These answers satisfied him and he was about to leave, but I was all into being confident about the work that I had done, and I did tempt fate. I invited ol' Barney in for coffee.

I give the officer a cup of fresh coffee, and he sat on the sofa. I, feeling bold and boastful, sat in a chair, directly over the floor board that kept the old man's heart. We talked of huntin' and fishin' and such and my confidence did not fade. As I thought of how I had fooled the police, I thought I heard the faint beating of a heart. Surely it was not my heart as I was cool

as a cucumber. We continued to chat, and the heartbeat got louder. Oh my, the old man's heart was beating in its termite infested grave! The chat continued as did the heartbeat. Louder and louder it got. Surely this here babblin' buffoon could hear it. He continued on and on about his stupid boat, how he caught the biggest walleyed south of the Cape Fear. As the heart beat was practically bursting my ear drums. Would this idiot not leave? He had to hear it and was mocking me by not acting on it. I could bear this no longer and confessed to my wicked deed. I tore up the floor board to reveal the murdered old buzzard.

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THE SOFTER SIDE OF GRAN TORINO:

A MOVIE REVIEW

Mike Edwards—BCC Student

A 2008 film, *Gran Torino* was produced by Warner Bros. Pictures; Clint Eastwood directed and starred in the film. According to “Awards for *Gran Torino*” on *IMDb.com*, *Gran Torino* won the American Film Institute’s Movie of the Year award for 2008. *Gran Torino* is a film about an unhappy and openly racist Korean War veteran named Walt Kowalski whose wife has just passed away. The only possession Walt keeps close to his heart is his 1972 Gran Torino, which he keeps in mint condition.

In the film, Walt struggles with his spoiled children, his religious beliefs, and, most of all, the changes occurring in his Michigan neighborhood. Walt despises the Hmongs who have taken over his neighborhood, and especially the Hmong family that has moved in next door. The family is comprised of a well-educated and mature Sue, her younger brother Thao, who is socially awkward and in need of direction in his life, and their family. Walt’s hatred for the Hmongs grows after he catches Thao attempting to steal his Gran Torino to become a member of a gang, which is run by Thao’s cousin. For punishment, Thao is sent to help Walt around his house and in the neighborhood because Thao’s family feels indebted to Walt for saving Thao from joining a street gang.

During this time is when the real journey begins for both Thao and Walt as the unexpected duo grows fond of one another, and an unforgettable friendship ensues. *Gran Torino* is an excellent film that shows no matter how much we resist, change is inevitable. Roger Ebert, a well-known film critic with the *Chicago Sun-Times* agrees, “I believe it is about the belated flowering of a man’s better nature.” The movie does an exceptional job of illustrating these changes through the use of movie setting,

the actor's dialogue, and the characters' actions in the film.

The setting of *Gran Torino* can tell a story of change on its own by first developing a character and then gradually showing the changes that take place in his or her life. The film starts in a church with Walt attending his wife's funeral. The funeral really sets a dark mood. The film also depicts Walt at the funeral of his wife, showing no emotion. This setting really shows how Walt is a bitter old man with much hatred in his heart.

Another time that setting really aids in the development of Walt's character occurs after the funeral. At a gathering at Walt's house, some kids are playing in the basement. Upon exploring the basement, the kids come across a box with various medals and awards from Walt's tour in the Korean War. One of the awards is the prestigious Silver Star, which is the third highest award exclusively for combat valor ("Awards of the Silver Star" 1). These awards clearly show the sacrifices Walt made fighting in the Korean War and explain his extreme prejudice towards the Hmongs in his neighborhood.

Setting also shows the turning point within Walt when Sue invites him to attend a social gathering at the Hmongs' home. At first Walt is reluctant to attend, but he decides to attend the gathering only because he has run out of beer. At the gathering, Walt is at first a bit confused by some of the Hmong customs but eventually grows comfortable enough to sit down and eat with the family. As the movie goes on, Walt actually changes his feelings for the family next door. This change really becomes apparent when Walt has his Hmong friends over to his house for a barbeque. Finally, the setting explores changes within Walt in the evolution of how his neighbors treat him. In the film's beginning, Walt receives scowls from his Asian neighbors as he calls them racial slurs; as the film progresses, the Asian community bring him food and other gifts to his porch steps.

In addition to the setting, examining the actor's dialogue can also paint a picture of change between Walt and the Hmongs. In the beginning of the film, Walt's son comes by his father's house and worries about how his dad will take it that he drives an Asian-made vehicle. As soon as he pulls up to speak with his father, the first exchange between them is not a greeting; instead, Walt says, "Can't buy American?" This exchange reveals Walt's deep-seated hatred towards anything that is not American. Additionally, when Walt is first invited over to his neighbors' home, he continues to call them "gooks" and "chinks" while visiting them in their own home. Walt, showing his blatant racism, comments upon first entering the home, "How many swamp rats can you fit into one room?"

Whereas some of the dialogue is out front and apparent, other parts are subtle. Small things, such as Walt changing statements like "you people" to "we" portray the change from alienating the Hmongs in the beginning of the film to accepting his neighbors as his own by the end of the film. Another subtle change in dialogue is Walt's pronouncing Sue and Thao's names correctly. In the beginning of the film, he calls Sue, "Shoe," and he calls Thao, "Toad." This small difference in dialogue exhibits Walt's indifference to saying his neighbors' names correctly to his desire to pronounce them correctly. Although the change that marks Walt through his dialogue is subtle at first, later, the change becomes more drastic. As the film opens, it paints a picture of a man who is an unhappy bigot, using words such as "gooks," "chinks," and "zipper head" to describe the Asians in his neighborhood. But as the film closes, the most evident change through dialogue occurs when Walt tells Thao, "I'm proud to call you my friend."

The last element of the film that elucidates change is the actions of the characters themselves, Walt in particular. Near the beginning of the film, Thao approaches Walt and asks him for a set of jumper cables to jump his

family's car. Walt tells Thao he does not have any jumper cables, and the film immediately cuts to Walt using a set of jumper cables to jump his son's car. This scene in the movie conveys Walt's dislike for his neighbors: he is not willing to lend them even the smallest of items. Another example of an action depicting change transpires when the Hmongs bring plate after plate of food to Walt's doorstep after he saves Thao from joining a street gang. In this incident, Walt dumps all the plates of fresh food in the trash can. However, later in the movie after Walt dines with his neighbors, when they bring him more food, he decides to eat the food. Also, as Walt grows closer to the family next door, he sees that Thao needs direction in his life and takes him under his wing to teach him to be a man.

During this process, Walt and Thao become friends, and friendship blossoms not only between Walt and Thao, but also between Walt and the entire neighborhood. As the movie continues, the gang that tried to initiate Thao continues to harass him. Seeing this, Walt decides to intervene because as he has grown close to Thao, and he wants a better life for him. Walt beats up one of the gang members in defense of Thao, and in retaliation, the gang beats and rapes Sue. After discovering that Sue was a victim of a brutal attack because he beat up one of the gang members, Walt returns home and cries by himself in the dark. This scene depicts the true inner change that has occurred within Walt, for it shows his transformation from a hardened war veteran to a plain man showing emotion for the people he cares about.

The final depiction of change through actions comes in one of the final scenes of the movie when Walt sets out on a suicide mission to the gang member's house for revenge. Before leaving, he locks Thao in his basement to ensure his hands are clean of the bloodshed and heads towards the house. Upon his arrival at the house, the gang members notice Walt on their front lawn and all come out wielding guns. Walt then reaches in his

coat for what they think is a gun, and all the gang members unload their weapons on Walt, killing him instantly. The scene is described by Peter Travers of *Rolling Stone* as “Walt exorcising his demons” (Travers 4). This scene is one of the most powerful scenes in the entire movie and really shows Walt’s peak of change as he is willing to lay his own life down to ensure a better life for Thao and his family after all of the gang is sent to prison.

Some might watch *Gran Torino* and take it at face value as simply a movie demonstrating reasons to avoid racism. However, it is more than just an anti-racism movie. Stephanie Zacharek, a movie reviewer for *Salon.com* agrees, “While *Gran Torino* explores some predictable notions of racial prejudice, it tiptoes into some more complex territory, too” (7). When dissecting the film and getting below the surface of the anti-racism message, the viewer realizes that there are deep-rooted morals to be found within *Gran Torino*.

Gran Torino is a movie with a clear anti-racism message and an underlying message of inevitable change that takes place within us. The movie introduces the audience to Walt Kowalski and puts viewers in his shoes, on his journey to becoming a changed man. The underlying message of Walt’s change is depicted through the use of setting such as his neighborhood, where Walt goes from being a hated man to being loved throughout the community. The film shows change through character dialogue as Walt progresses from using racial slurs to telling Thao he is his friend. However, the largest change is shown through Walt’s actions as he lays his life on the line to save Thao’s. This is a movie that compels viewers to examine their own feelings and motivations to see what changes they can make in their own lives to make not only their own lives better but also improve the life of someone else.

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MY GRANDFATHER

Elizabeth Lennon Diaz—BCC Alumni

My grandfather, Poppy, was around five feet, four inches tall with coal black hair and one curl that hung in the front of his square face. His eyes were emerald green. They lit up with tiny flecks of gold when he was excited. His lips were thin but covered by a small, well-kept mustache. His frame was small and muscular.

Poppy was a veterinarian for thirty years in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He worked diligently beside his peers to invent dental tools for the animals at the Philadelphia Zoo. He mainly worked with an orangutan named Hurky; it was part of his job to work on Hurky's teeth.

Poppy had a way with animals. I remember going to work with him on a particular day in the summer of 1977. Hurky was upset, and my grandfather pulled up a stool and started talking to him as if he were a person. After a few minutes, Poppy sent me across the street to the local dime store for three ice-cream cones; one was for Hurky. I sat in amazement at the patience and love he had for this animal. They sat there as Poppy talked, and Hurky licked at his vanilla cone. They were best friends as Poppy had gained Hurky's trust. Later that day my Poppy told me, "Without trust, there can be no bond for friendship."

Poppy also had a compassion for people. He would sit out on the stoop in front of his apartment and socialize with the neighbors. The upstairs neighbor was from India, and my grandfather spoke the language fluently. The neighbor directly beside him was German, and he would spend hours sipping German beer and talking in German as it were his native language. The lady who lived down below him was Filipino. When she first moved in, my Poppy did not know the language, but within six months, he was

speaking it. He enjoyed his friends on a daily basis, no matter what their culture or race. He did not see the color of their skin, only their hearts.

Poppy enjoyed painting, writing stories, music, and writing poems to my grandmother. I can still remember Engelbert Humperdinck playing on the turntable as my grandfather sang to my grandmother. Poppy was talented in many ways, but his greatest talent was with me.

I lost my Poppy when I was only twenty four years old; I am now forty nine. I can still close my eyes and see him sitting on that stool talking to Hurky as if it were yesterday, the two of them licking their ice-cream cones and communicating to each other like they had their own language that no one else could understand.

I had never felt a stronger love than the love he freely gave to others and me on a daily basis. My best childhood memories revolve around my grandfather. Memories of him still fill my heart.



THE OLD FARM

KC Melvin—BCC Student

She walked to the old farmhouse because of the child on her back. It was night. The stars and moon were out, watching over her. The soft moonlight caressed the air and the land and shone between the trees that cast shadows on the house. It looked like a black and white still from a movie.

She thought, "I should go back to the car and get my camera." But the child was heavy on her back, and she was almost there. Still she voiced her desire to take a picture. "This would make a great black and white photo. The house looks alive in the moonlight. I could blow it up and hang it with the others in my house."

The child on her back said, "This is a house of secrets. Its image does not belong in your house."

She opened the side door and walked into the dark kitchen. She hit the light switch and looked around.

The child on her back said, "I can see Grandma now, cooking over there on the stove. Close your eyes. Can't you smell Thanksgiving? Remember how exciting it was, coming here for Thanksgiving? The uncles and aunts would carry the big extensions and put them in the table, and all of the adults would fill their paper plates high with food, their plastic cups with Pepsi or Mountain Dew, sit down at the big table that almost filled the whole kitchen and outtalk and outeat each other. The children would sit in the next room and eat at the little table. But I never did."

"No you didn't. You sat there on the floor against the wall and listened to all of the adults. For hours and hours."

"I don't think the adults ever even saw me," said the child on her back.

"Grandma saw you."

"Yeah, she saw me."

She walked through the kitchen, hit the hall light switch, and then walked down the hallway to the front room, the biggest room in the house. She hit the room's light switch. The single bulb in the middle of the room was caked with thick grime. The bulb illuminated a small area underneath it that danced with dust. The rest of the room was shadowed.

The child on her back said, "Looks like a spotlight on a stage. That spotlight could be for Grandma. Remember how she loved to sing and dance, here in this room? She'd put a record on the old stereo console. She put on a show."

She walked to the old stereo console that almost ran the length of the side wall. She could see outlines of bells that covered the surface of the console, over one hundred bells, not one broken through the years. She picked up a bell, felt the grime and dust, and heard a dull swinging tap of metal on metal. She put it down, turned off the light, and walked a little way back down the hall to a doorway.

The child on her back whispered, "Grandma's room."

"I miss her," she said. The room was still, soft light from the hallway crept partway in. Frames filled the top of the dresser and nightstand, but it was too dark to see the pictures. Heavy, frayed quilts covered the iron railed bed.

The child on her back said, "Remember those quilts, so heavy I couldn't move?"

She walked down the hallway to the back room and stopped at the

closed door.

The child on her back said, "Go on now. I want to see it."

She opened the door and walked into the room, all around the room, into the darkness, to the darkest place. She stood there, listening to the silence, feeling the weight of the child.

The child on her back said, "The night is light. The moon and stars are out, watching over you. Walk down the path behind the house, past the trees that border the field. Take me to that place in the field."

She walked from the room, leaving the door open. She turned off the hall light and walked through the hall to the kitchen. She turned off the kitchen light. The night light breaking through the window panes guided her to the side door. She opened the door, stepped outside, and shut the door behind her.

She found the path behind the house and walked down it to the end where trees bordered the field. She stepped through the trees into the field. The child was very heavy on her back, so heavy in the field that she stumbled forward onto her hands and knees. The grass was all around her, scratching her, smelling of things that creep, hidden things.

"Just a little further," said the child on her back.

The child was light, close to the ground. She began to crawl through the tall grass. She crawled all the way to the place in the field, and stood up, turning around and around. She could not see the house from the field. She could not see anything but the trees that bordered the field, the tall grass covering the big field, the big sky with the moon and stars, watching over her. There was no sound of creature or cricket. There was silence. A breeze touched her bare places and moved through the cover-

ed places, so that she felt the breeze all over her.

Then, the child on her back fell off as seeds. The breeze lifted the seeds over her, danced them through the night light, and then released them down into the tall grass in the place in the field.



DANDELION

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration

CODE BLUE

Elizabeth Lennon Diaz—BCC Alumni

The call light in Room 113 was flashing above the door. The night nurse entered the small dark room, lit only by the light beaming from the hall. She walked quietly towards her elderly patient. In a soft spoken voice, she asked, "What do you need Mr. Spielberg?"

He did not respond.

She gently reached out and touched his hand, realizing that it was cold and clammy. Frantically, she checked for his pulse, but to no avail: there was none.

She ran to the hall yelling, "Code Blue."

I watched the nurses racing towards the room with the crash cart; they entered the room and began working on their patient. Like a smooth running clock, they did not miss a beat. Each nurse knew exactly what to do. The head nurse, Maria, was in charge. She was a tall auburn-haired woman in her late thirties; her petite figure filled her white nurse's uniform.

Maria ordered the staff to vent the patient as she prepared the defibrillator. Maria yelled "Clear!" She shocked her patient's heart.

The night nurse replied, "No pulse."

I watched them work on their patient for a while. Maria turned to the wall looking at the clock and said, "Time of death 1:03a.m." She then pulled the sheet over her patient's body .

The night nurse went to her nursing station to inform the family of what had just transpired. Within thirty minutes, his wife and son were standing at his

side, grieving uncontrollably. As I stood there watching, I could not help but feel the pain and sorrow fill the room. I had no answer for all of the questions they asked.

The son left the room, so his mother could say good-bye. I watched her gently kiss him on the lips and tell him she loved him; his job was done here on earth. While holding his icy hands, she quietly wept as she prayed the Lord's Prayer over his now still body. She said her goodbyes in one final kiss and then fell to her knees sobbing out loud, "You are my world, Charles. I have nothing to live for, and I don't want to live by myself. Why did you leave me? What I am going to do?"

The son entered the room to check on his mother and found her collapsed on the floor. "Mom! MOM!" he screamed. He ran to the door yelling out for help, "Nurse I need help in here. It's my mother. There is something wrong. Please help her. She's all I have in this world."

Maria was at the nurse's desk filling out the incident report of what has just transpired with Mr. Spielberg. Maria and the night nurse ran to the room. They checked Mrs. Spielberg for a pulse, and to their disbelief, there was none. Maria ran to the door once more yelling, "Code blue." The scene before me was as if it were a movie stuck on rewind.

The crash cart came once more. They worked on her forever it seemed. I stood there beside her bed while holding her hand and whispered in her ear, "You are loved by many, and your time here on earth is not done. You see, I know a secret: our son is going to be a father, and our granddaughter is going to need you in her life, so she may know what the greatest love of all is. The love of a grandmother is like no other. She will grow up helping others. Look over there. Do you see her? Her name is Maria. She is our son's future wife, and in a little while, we will be blessed

with our first grandchild, one of four. So you see, they need you here with them." I then told my wife of twenty-five years, "I will see you when it is your time, in many years to come."

We kissed and said our goodbyes once more.

Maria replied, "I have a pulse! Let's get her stabilized."

Maria went to the son and said, "We have her back. We're admitting her. She is not out of the danger, but I believe her chances are good."

Our son was crying, and Maria gave him comfort as he sobbed on her shoulder. She felt compassion for him. Maria told him in a whisper, "If you need anything, this is my cell phone number; please call me anytime day or night."

As I watched my son take the slip of paper from Maria's hand, I smiled. I turned and walked into the brightest light. I could see a figure standing there with her arm extended towards me. My heart filled instantly with joy. It was my grandmother. She greeted me with the greatest love that I have ever known. The warmth of her surrounded me as we walked towards Heaven's door.

My grandmother told me my journey had just begun. She said to me, "It is now your job to watch over your family as I have done. Your grandchildren will be a delight to your wife for many years to come. The knowledge and love that she possesses will be passed onto our family, and you, my dear grandson, will be their guardian angel to give them guidance in times of need."

As I looked into the future, I saw unselfish love in the arms of my wife as a grandmother, surrounded by love, and missed by me.



ART

Art
Art
ART
ART



**SOMETIMES A WEED IS JUST A WEED, AND OTHER
TIMES—ART.**

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



SNOW BIRD SILHOUETTE

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



SNOW BROWN BIRD

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



FLOWER

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



FLOWER

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



AZALEAS

Victoria Pait Age 17—BCC Student Family Member



WISTERIA

Victoria Pait Age 17—BCC Student Family Member



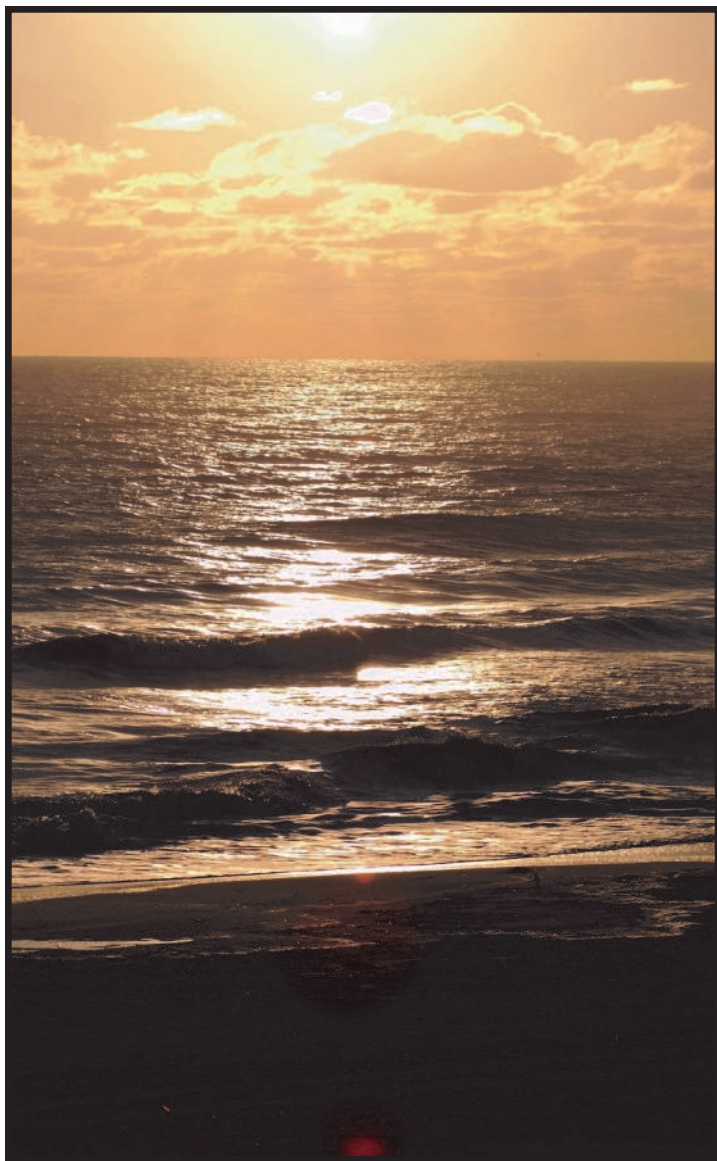
FROZEN LEAVES

Victoria Pait Age 17—BCC Student Family Member



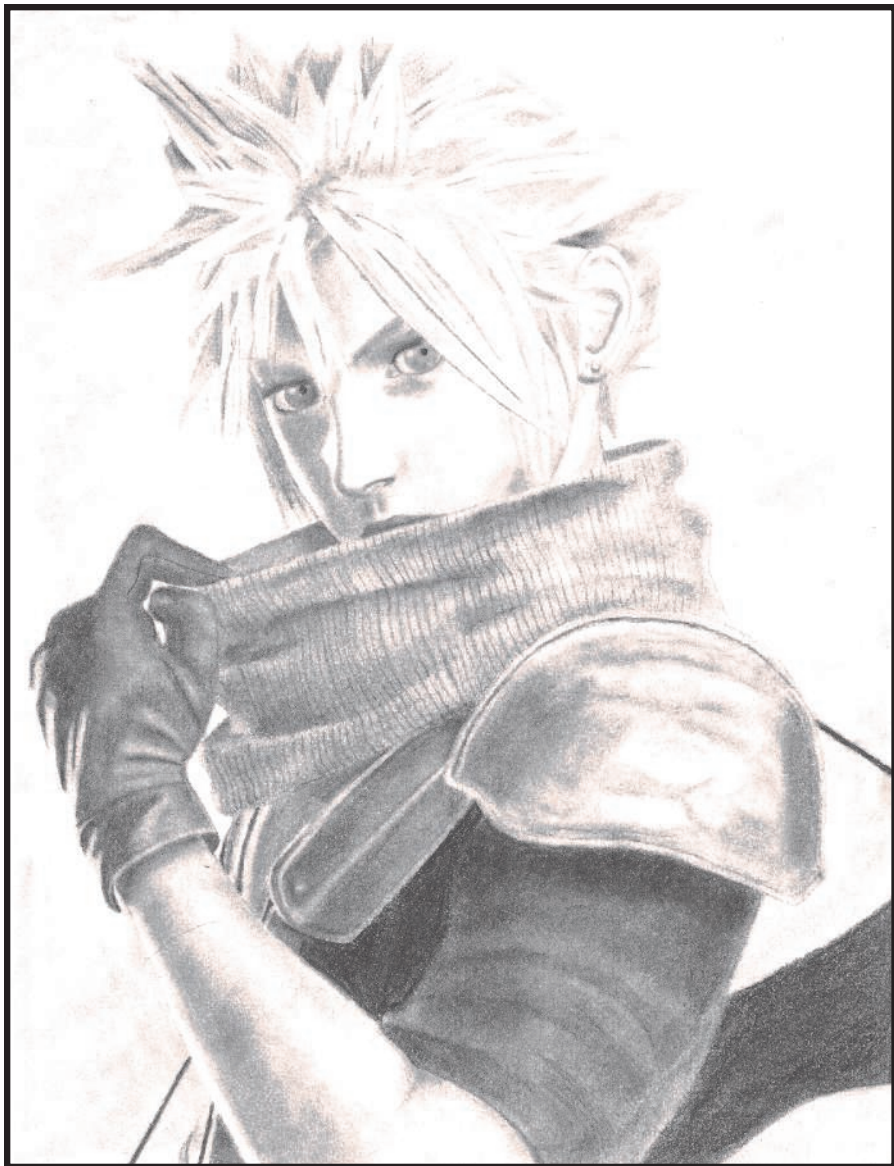
‘MATERWORMZILLA

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



VIRGINIA BEACH SUNSET

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



CLOUD

Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student



RAINY DAYS

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



HOSTILE TAKEOVER

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



GIRL

By: Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student



OCEAN VIEW

Morgan Pait—BCC Student



MICHELLE

Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student



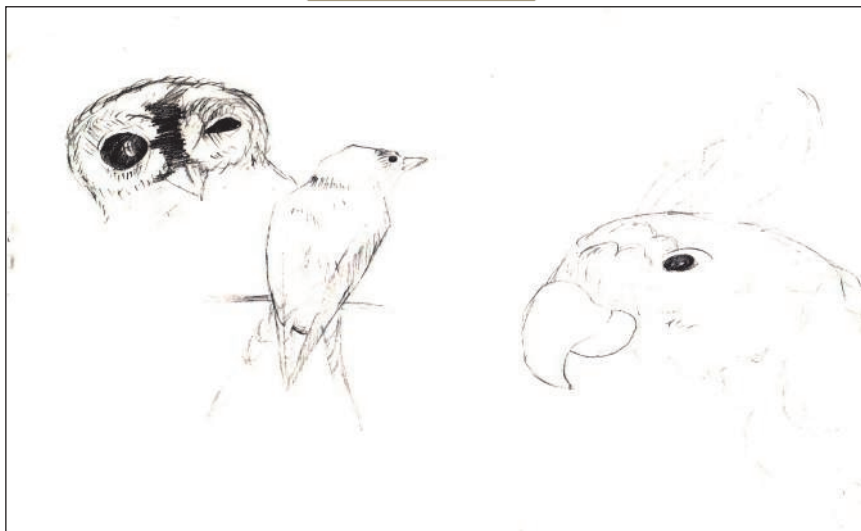
CLOCKWORK OREO

Samantha Stitz—BCC Alumni



THE CAR

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



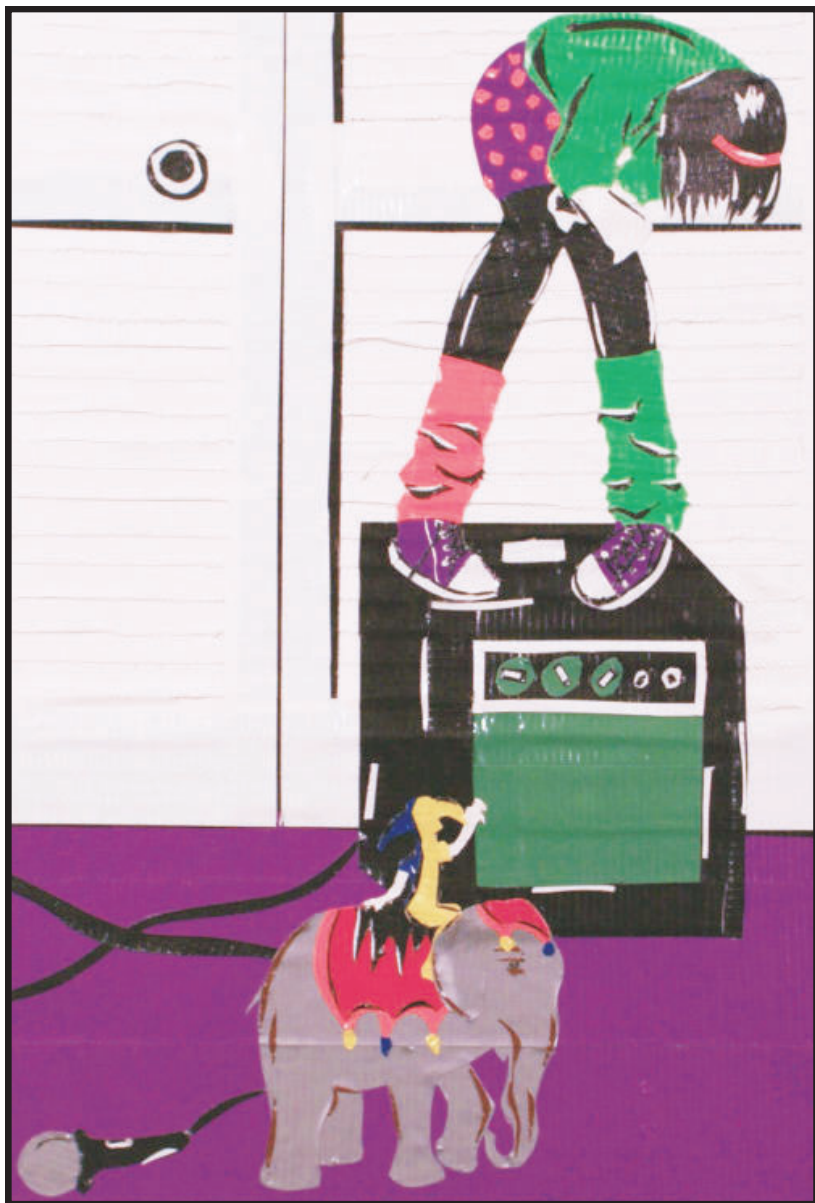
ERIN'S BIRDS

Erin Pait Age 13—BCC Student Family Member



OCEAN CITY MARYLAND

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student



DUCT TAPE ART

Samantha Stitz—BCC Alumni



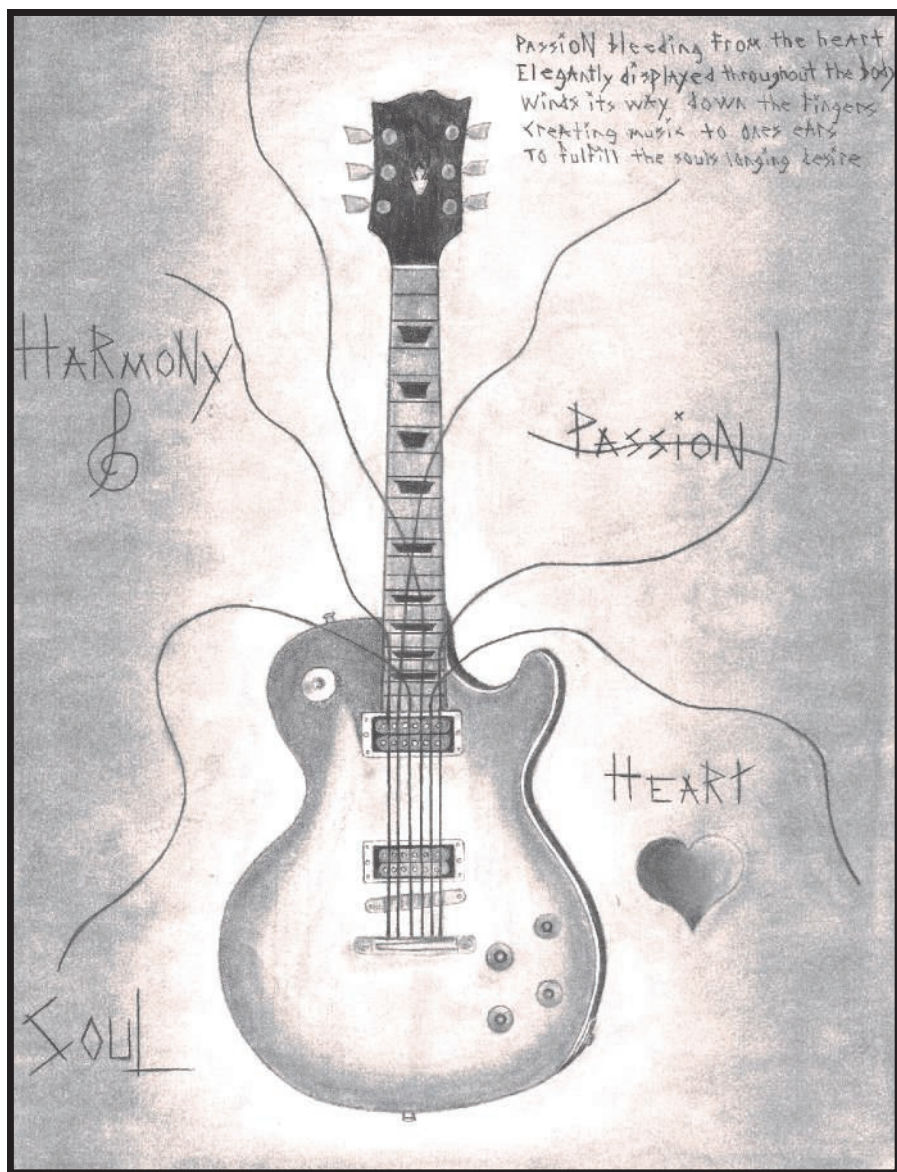
LOST INNER-CHILD

Samantha Stitz—BCC Alumni



KISS

Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student



LES PAUL GUITAR

Jimmy Tatum—BCC Student



FOX-TISHA: DIGITAL ART

Tristian Stitz Age 10—BCC Alumni Family Member



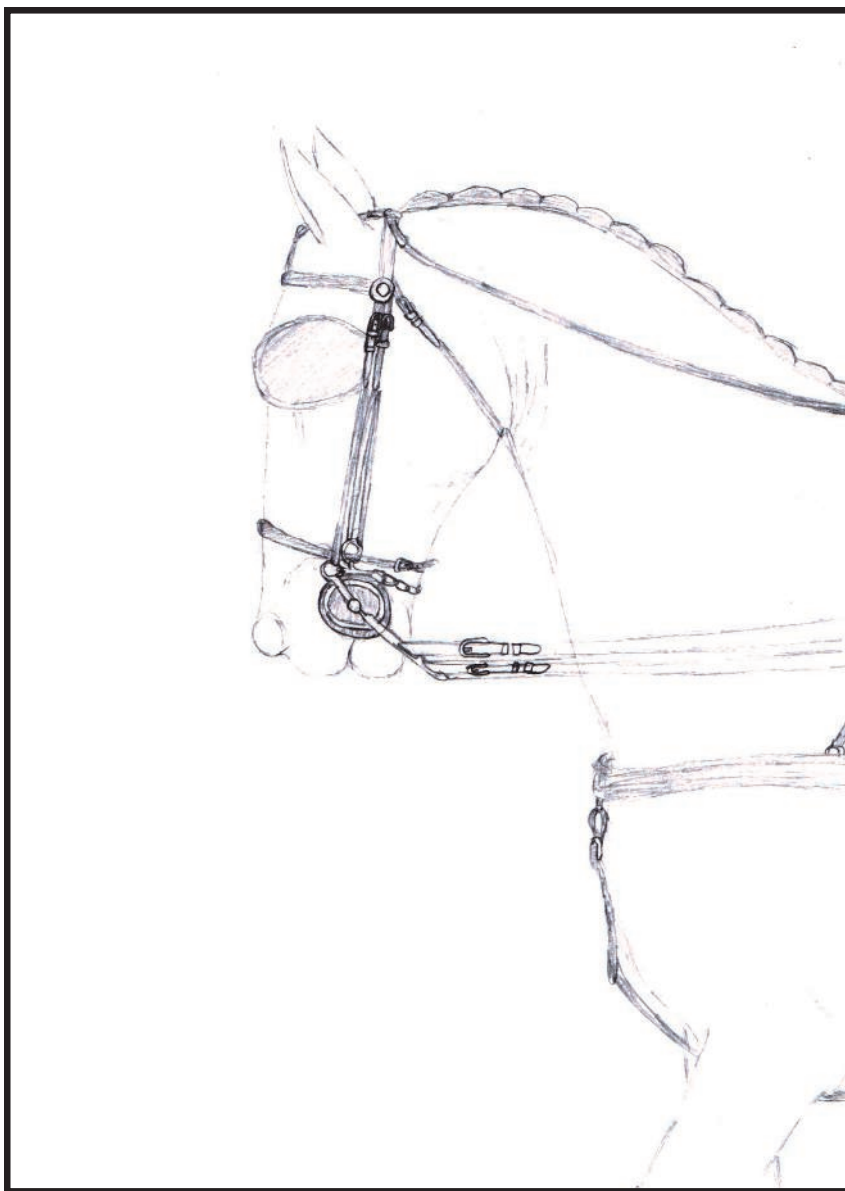
SEAHORSE

Taylor Cutler Age 11—BCC Student Family Member



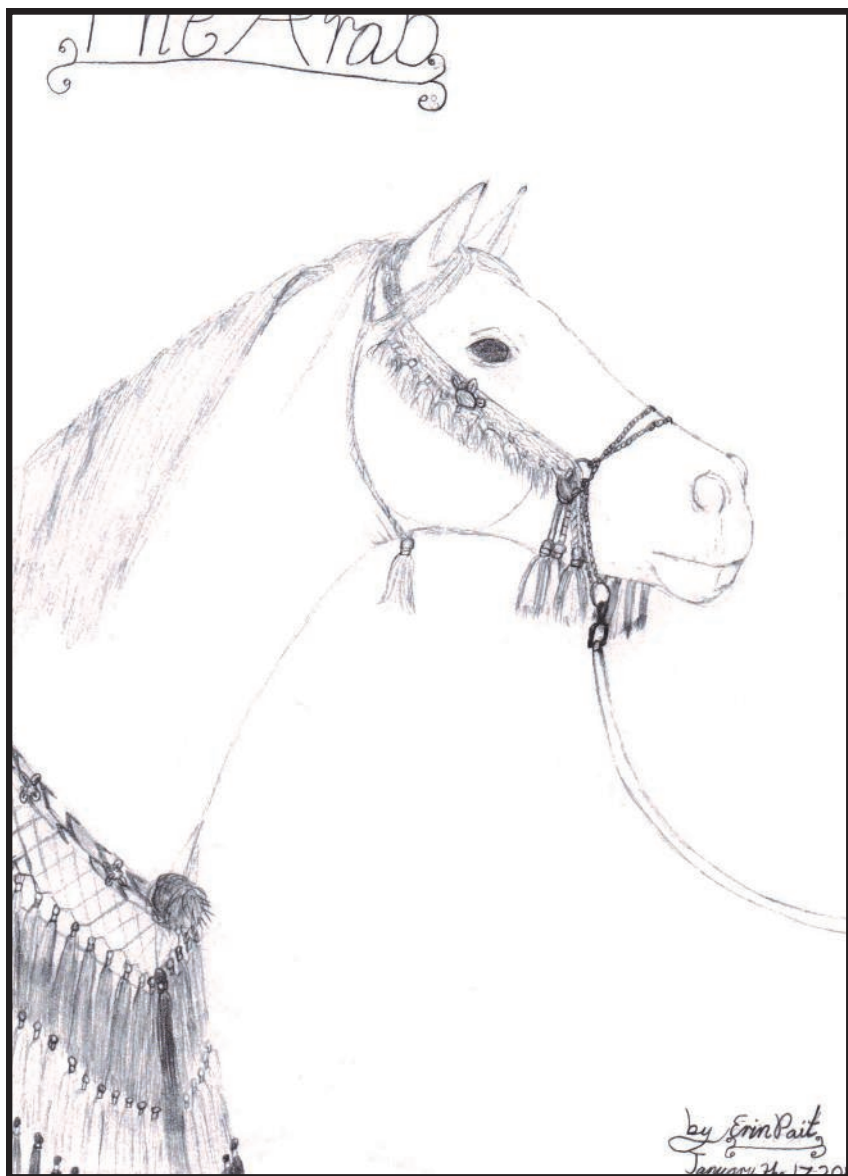
FENCE IN WINTER

Morgan Pait—BCC Student



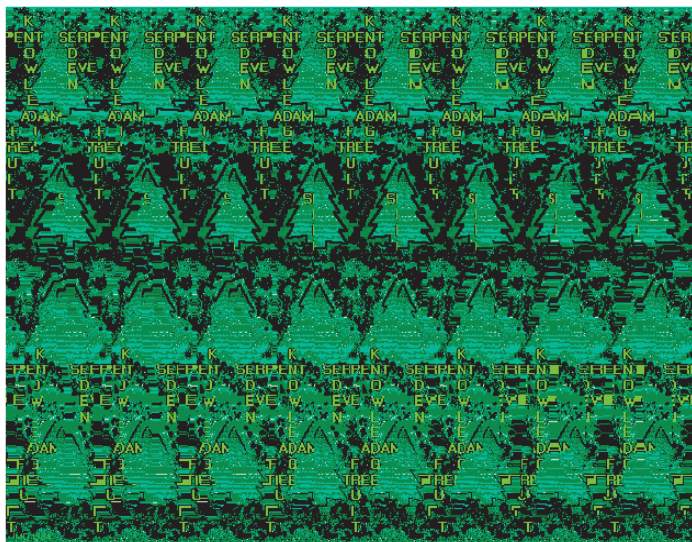
HARNESS HORSE

Erin Pait Age 13—BCC Student Family Member



THE ARAB

Erin Pait Age 13—BCC Student Family Member



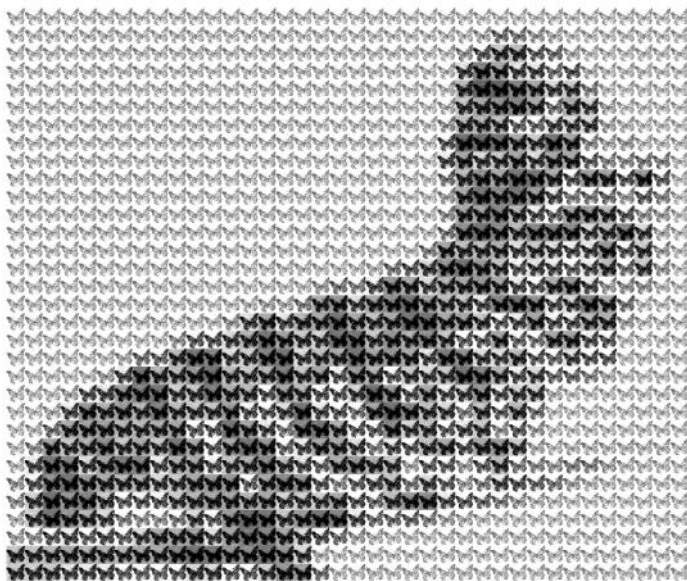
July 2011

Symbols

Is it a skull peeking out from behind abstract
evergreens or a random play on words?
A deeper look shows the hidden three dimensional
image of the tree of life behind profiles of Adam
and Eve with the serpent at their feet.

SYMBOLS

Michael Dickey—Former BCC Faculty



Judd — 2004

Metamorphosis

*Is it a field of butterflies or a caterpillar?
It all depends on how you look at it,
but you can't see one without the other.*

METAMORPHOSIS

Michael Dickey—Former BCC Faculty

One Thousand

A Graphic Essay by J. Michael Dickey



Regiment



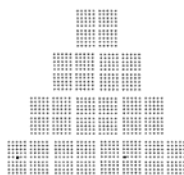
Stealth



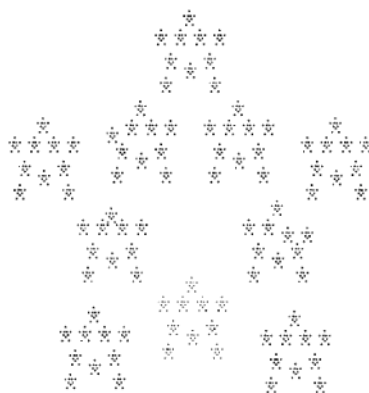
Serpinski



Quilt



Pyramid



Star

March 2010

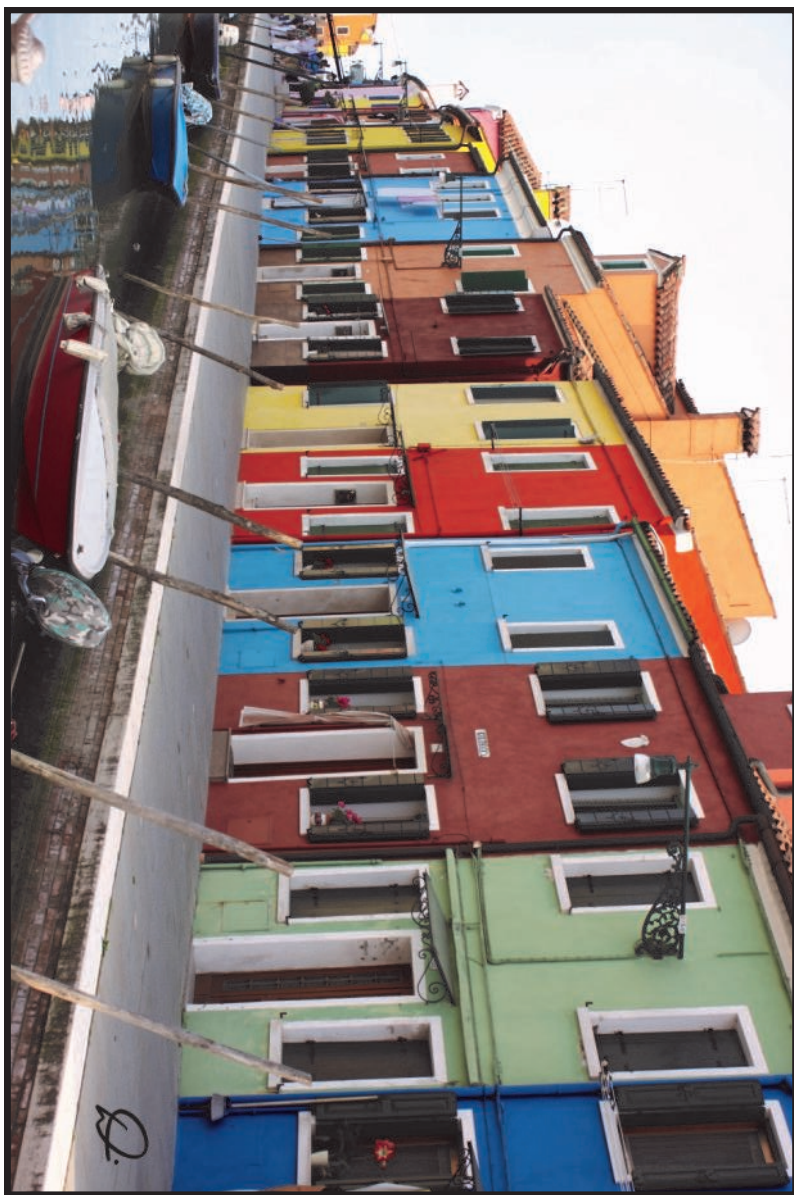
A GRAPHIC ESSAY

Michael Dickey—Former BCC Faculty



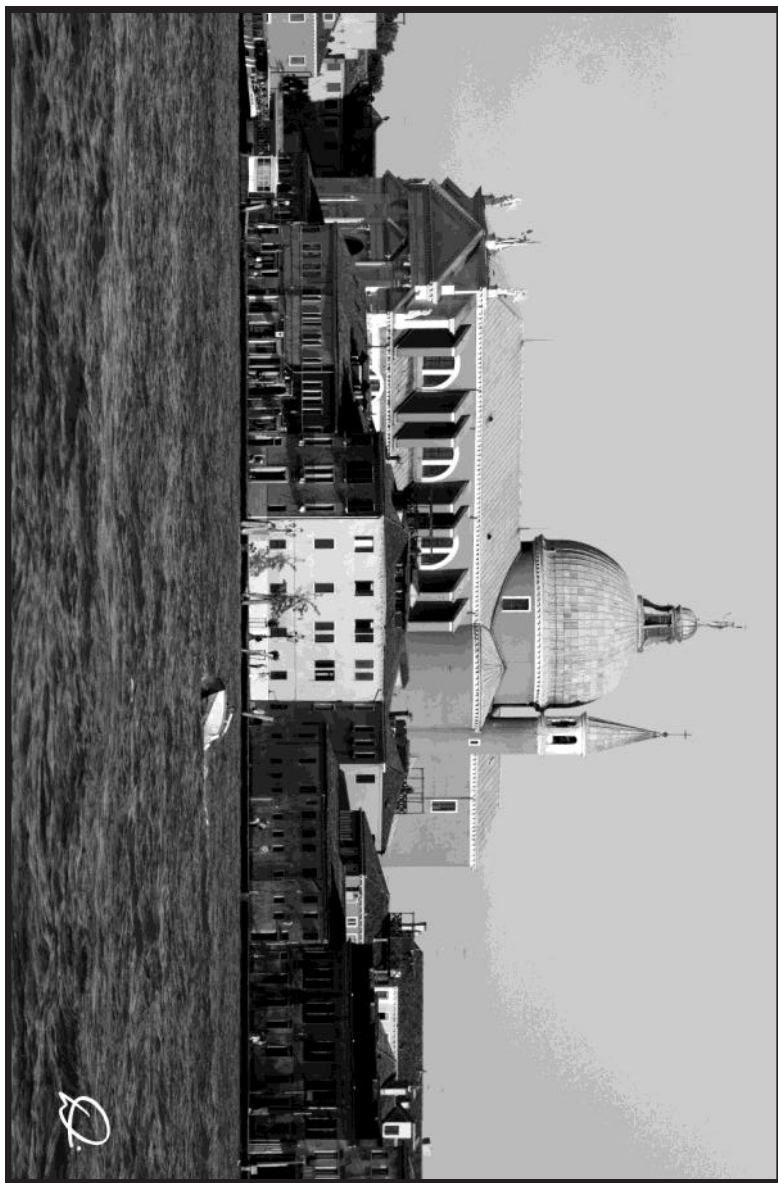
TRAIN

Morgan Pait—BCC Student



VENICE BY THE WATER

Diane Vitale—BCC Administration



VENICE CATHEDRAL BY THE WATER

Diane Vitale—BCC Administration



THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

by Kathy McGurgan—BCC Staff



DOUBTFUL SOUND

Kathy McGurgan—BCC Staff



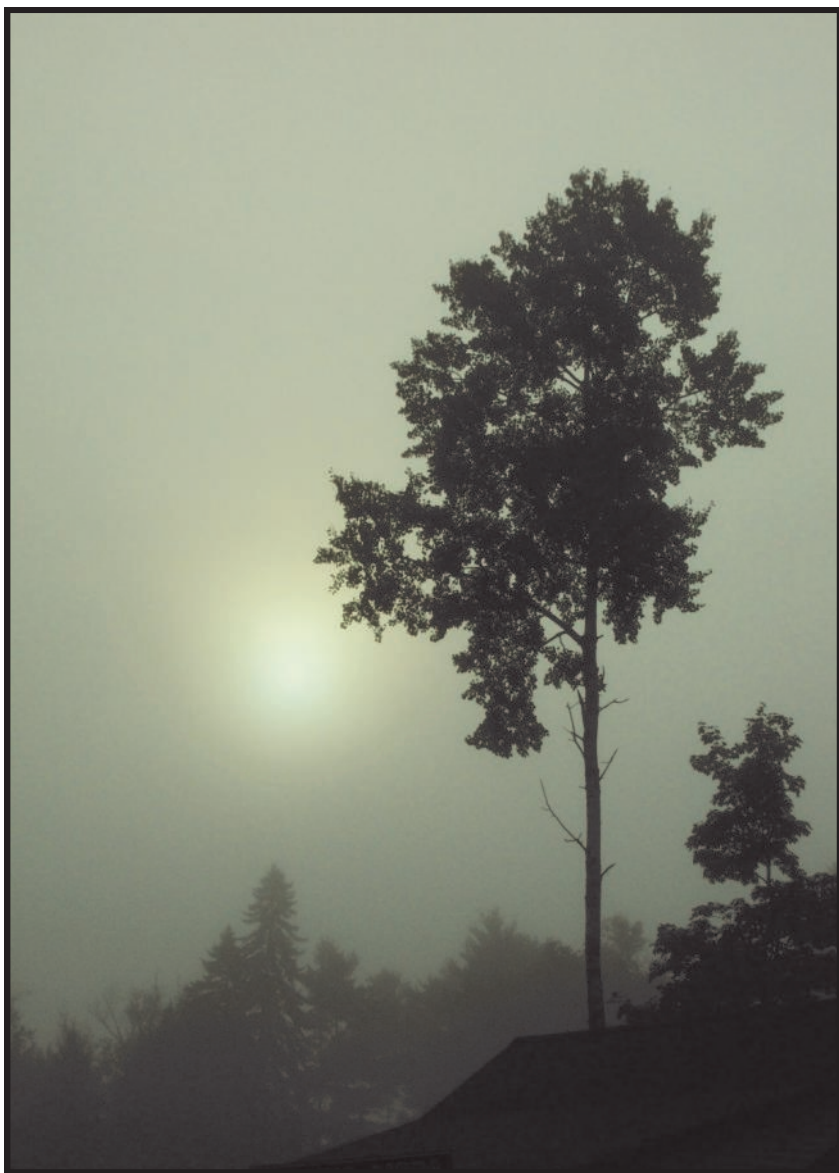
OIB

Kathy McGurgan—BCC Staff



BUTTERFLY

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



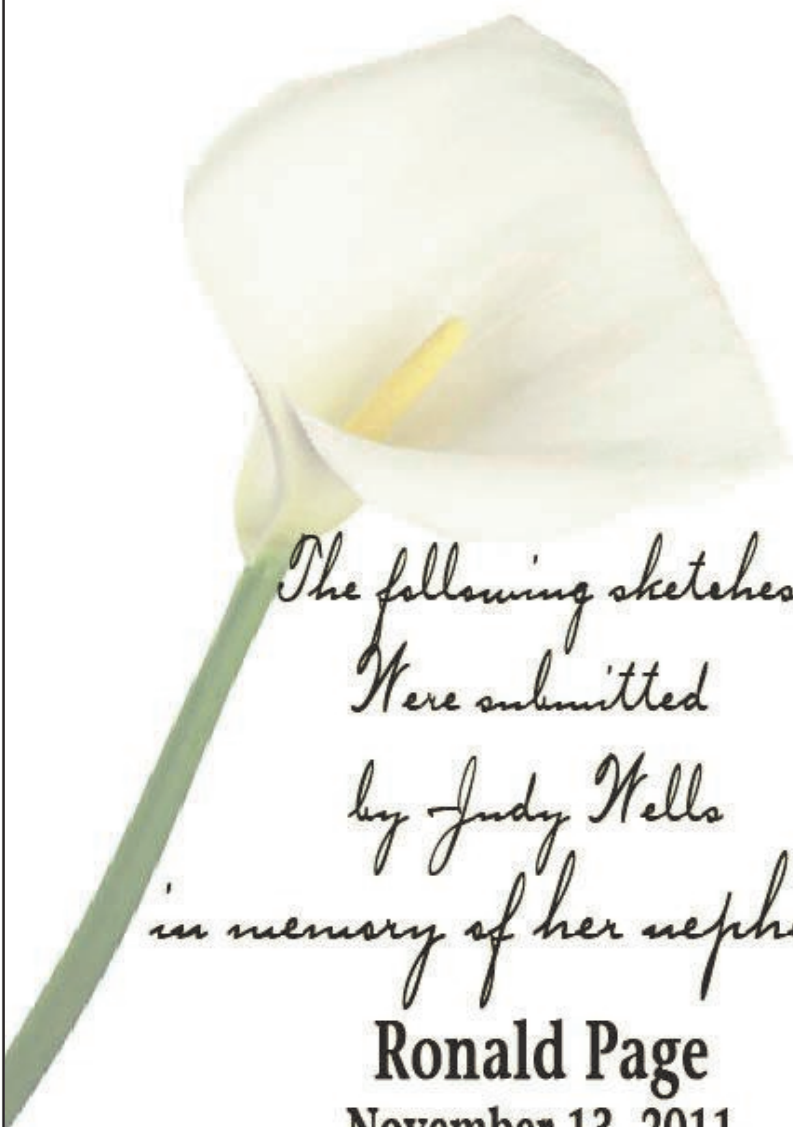
TREE IN FOG

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



ROSES

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration



*The following sketches
Were submitted
by Judy Wells
in memory of her nephew*

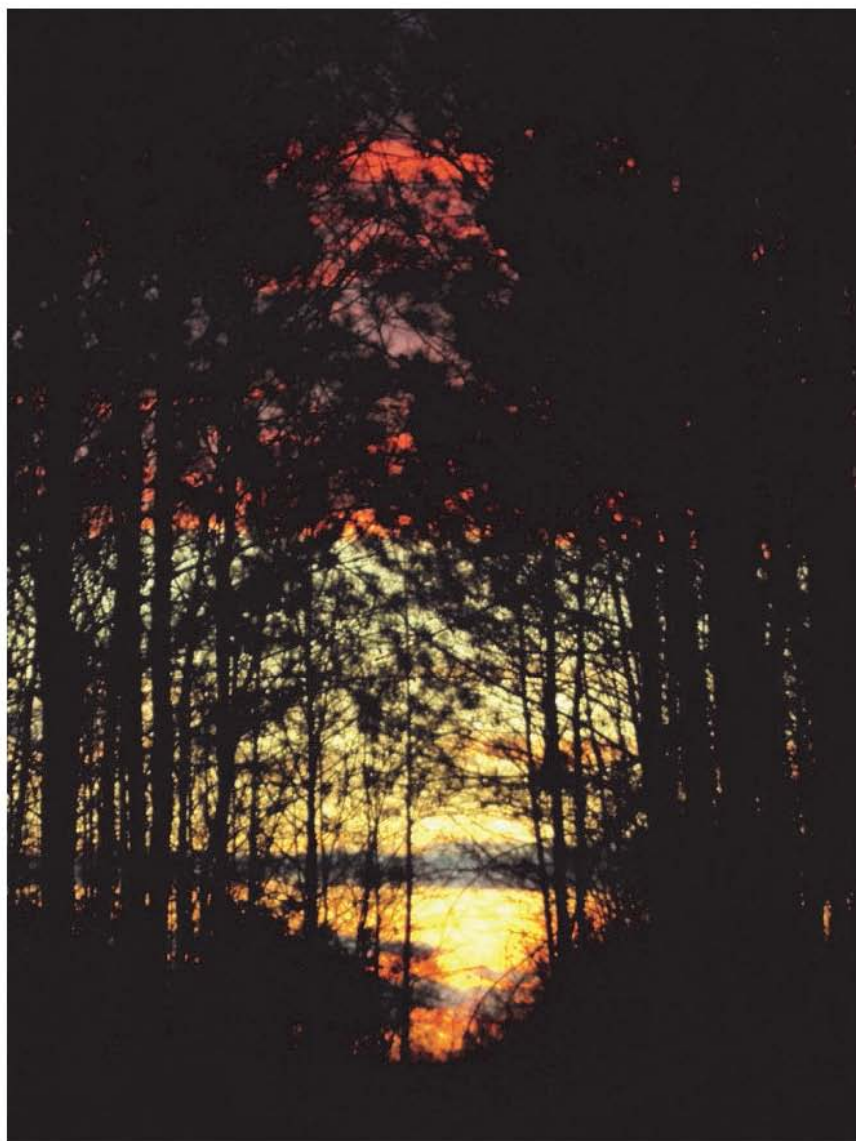
Ronald Page
November 13, 2011



LANIE AND SAMMY

Ronald Page—BCC Student





SUNSET

Karen Cecil—BCC Administration

THE INK QUILL
LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE

POETRY

Poetry
poetry
POETRY
POETRY

MY WEEKEND IN HEAVEN

Note from the Editor: Slam poetry and performance poetry focus on rhythm, internal rhyme, and attitude. The grammar and spelling in this piece are the author's stylistic choices.

Tyesha Moore—BCC Student

So I'm having a dream and I can hear myself talking but I just don't know what to make of it. This dream is so familiar. So I'm slowly just embracing it. This writing doesn't come natural so just bear with me. 'Cause for me to pick up talent this here could take a bit.

I feel my dreams are who I'm racing with but I'm just steady pacing them so that I'm always chasing them. Just like I race against myself but I'm always a couple steps behind. I wish I could find the perfect brush so I can paint what's going through my mind.

My fifteen minutes for this dream just started an hour ago. This dream is bigger than I'm living. Don't know what it is but I keep just having the same dream. I think I'm realizing just what it mean. I wonder if cupid gave me shots to the brain 'cause I think I'm in love with writing this dream.

Well anyway this is how it goes: like I said my minutes started an hour ago. See in my dream money just changed everything. I wonder without it how life would go. From the concrete who knew that a flower could grow.

It's a dream it's a dream so look for anything. Ya'll check it out I brought a ticket to heaven. I was invited there by an angel named Kevin. He told me that yesterday when he was flying high I was invited. He knew I would have liked it. He said yes, Tye, I know you all too well. It's safe for you to give the past a big kiss goodbye. Tye, I know you excited. There's really no way that I know you can fight it.

I had my whole life packed into a suitcase. I was taking off to heaven.

Me and Kevin like some fireworks. Kevin took me by the hand and so out of the window we go. I know it's in the October zone, but outside right now it's looking like July 4th. Man the flight's up me and Kevin so high. It took a minute for me to realize that I was in the sky at first. I'm looking back in the sky behind us. This is what I see. I'm seeing fireworks. Me and Kevin flying there was love in the air.

I think this is when I went missing. See at home I live by the advice that people told me. The other day I had a friend tell me she miss the old me. So I questioned myself about just when I went missing. She said I fell off but well I needed that. My friends wanna see me pick back up. Well I'm trying to find out where I leave it at.

I just reached heaven 'cause I'm looking for a purpose. I am looking for that feeling. Tell me where is the magic? Kevin said let's stay together 'til we both ghosts. I wanna witness love. I never seen it close. So I guess I gotta find it first. Then he smiled. And I looked down from the sky at the earth.

I'm looking down from the top and it's crowded below. I wish that I could have had that moment for life. I'm living in the moment. So I took a picture 'cause it was my last look. I couldn't never forget 'cause my memories has never faded. Being in heaven I couldn't relate to bad times. I see my enemies they never made it here. But I'm still happy.

I am up here with Kevin 'cause this is who I started with. I can see this place is filled with many money trees. And I see they planting like a hundred more. This place is like a florist. This here garden is big, huge, it's gigantic enormous. I see a million people coming up like little Kevin did.

My weekend in heaven makes me wanna do better than just good enough. I don't understand what is it that I'm so afraid of. Because I know that this suppose to be what dreams are made of. Then Kevin said to me

to get a permanent place here you gotta promise me that you will never change putting the good over bad.

From the heaven top I can look down at earth and see my situation. I can shine a light on it. Clap it on and off. I put a lamp on it. I can see I been through a lot down there but down there I just get used to it. I see a lot of stories. I'm up here amusing myself with it.

I see Kevin looking. I keep hiding how I feel inside. I have a lot of feelings that are not reversible. I know that knowledge is pain and sometimes it hurts to know. I just rewind back my life movie where I'm the mean one cast. I can see how my first love was the sweetest, but my first cut was the deepest. I needed a first aid 'cause I was cutting up the day. I realize that I was just young and unlucky.

I came to heaven for the weekend 'cause I'm looking for a purpose. I wanna pick my dreams up from off the ground. Still looking from the sky at earth I feel like I got the cheat codes to my life. My life is like a book and I'm just flipping the pages. Now that I'm gone I don't really wanna worry about getting back home. Because the heaven list this is what I wanna try and stay on. I'm trying to get the ones who were left behind to come on.

Kevin tried to get me to use the heaven payphone. He said to me your family is worried so here you should call home. I'm just acting like I don't even know how to work a phone. So I just said I should call just to say I'm having a ball. 'Cause I'm so high right now. Having the time of my life right now. But I'm still trying to figure out what am I afraid of. I know this is what dreams are suppose to be made of.

I gotta pass the line. I talking finish line. I think I found a purpose now it's future time. I looked at Kevin and said I came to heaven with half of me. Now I gotta leave. I gotta get the rest of me. Kevin said all right don't spend too much of tomorrow's money. Remember if you need connections

well I can be your plug. Then he told me well go ahead. I know you gotta go. Then he pointed his hand just up right straight ahead and I turned and saw a spotlight door ahead. The spotlight made me nervous. Kevin said again, well Tye just go ahead. Don't let the spotlight make you nervous. Your weekend trip to heaven is now over. You only visit here looking for a purpose.

So I burned it all cause I'm starting fresh. I turned all my problems into ashes. This dream need life, so I put my heart in it. Into the spotlight I exit the door and feel the closure. There's no turning back for me. Now I'm back on earth and that's it. This dream is over!



NIGHTMARE

Samantha Stitz

—BCC Alumni

BETWEEN THE SILENCES

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

Between the silences, they do a dance.
Anger shows in their expressions.
The words not spoken are very clear
Fear of hurting more, keeps them hushed.
Marriage can be lonely at times.

PAÑUELO

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Del cielo se cayó un pañuelo bordado de mil colores.
Eso es cómo el amor y el cuidado afligen el corazón,
porque es el consuelo de toda mi inspiración y la creación.

HANDKERCHIEF

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

From the sky fell an embroidered handkerchief of a thousand colors.
That's how love and care pains my heart,
Because you are the consolation of all my inspiration and creation.

SATURDAY LUNCH

Sara Neeley—BCC Faculty

“There’s something so civilized
About having a glass of wine with lunch,”
She breathed. His eyes smiled.
The heart stopped, jump started, seized
The chair dumped him--stiff, face down--on the floor
All civility vanished.
She rolled him, rigid, onto his back
Trembling, she struggled to unclench his jaws
Finally pried them apart with a spoon
She pushed air into his lungs
Saw them fill
Hope anchored her there on the floor.
Time—seconds, minutes, a lifetime--passed
Ephemeral, he watched, wanted to stay,
Knew he couldn’t
Saw the moment reality vanquished her unspoken plea
The only time in all those years
He could not protect her dreams.

JOSIE'S DINER

Sheana Stitz—BCC Alumni

Seated at a filthy table full of dirty dishware
I was wiping up the mess that was left there.
Across the smelly diner was Hairy Joe the Bear
staring at the television looking for an answer.

On the sticky floor lay slimy used flatware
I bend to pick it up and think life is unfair
Buddy the hobo scratches the lice in his hair
plopping into a seat caking mud on the chair.

I don't want to become such a whiner
But Hell is here, in dirty Josie's Diner.
I wish to be a place so much finer
Then here scrubbing the table liner.

I would rather be happy and die a sinner
And I'd rather my wallet be thinner.
I would start taking classes for a beginner
Than to stay at Josie's for one more dinner.

HAVE YOU SEEN MY SANITY?

Elizabeth Lennon Diaz—BCC Alumni

Have you seen my sanity?
Excuse me, have you seen my sanity?
I had it last night when I went to bed,
But woke up this morning, it's gone from my head.
Something has changed deep within me,
Everything's different I surely can see.
Am I dreaming all this up? Surely not.
Coffee's brewing, I just need one cup.
As I glance across the kitchen table,
My husband's all cheers and smiles, "Good morning Mable."
Thinking to myself, "Just let me be...
Maybe two cups shall set me free?"
My brain is burning of not so good thoughts,
Cheerful people in the morning, just piss me off!
My head turns 360 and a greenish glow expels from my eyes.
I struggle to utter a kind word from my sighs.
The coffee kicks in starting at my feet
Moving upward at a rapid beat.
As it slowly reached to my face,
I replied to my husband, "Good morning," with grace.
Then thinking back at what just took place was nearly a disaster.
My sanity was never lost.
It was just in the bottom of a coffee canister.

GOOD GOD

Marquita Gentry—BCC Student

O' taste and see that God is good
He can make the difficult easily understood
He is our light and our salvation
He loves us all as one nation
God's love is the best sensation
When you're thirsty he is the ultimate hydration
If your body is sick he is the best healer
From all of your sins he is the greatest deliverer
He is far greater than mankind
If you're in search of anything, seek God and you shall find
If you trust and wait on him he'll strengthen your heart
He will put things in your reach that once seemed so far apart
Everyone should try him, go ahead I dare!
When man forsakes you God will always be there
If you give him a chance you will be
Eligible for everlasting life eternally
God will give you love that is forever true
So give him your life and praise him in all you do

A BEST FRIEND

Marquita Gentry—BCC Student

A best friend can be so dear
When they are around they bring so much cheer
When you are down they will lift you up high
To you a best friend will never lie
A best friend will always give you a helping hand
A best friend is always there no matter how big the land
Through thick and thin they will always be there
No matter the situation they will always care
A best friend is fun to be around
They will say the right words of encouragement when you are feeling down
A best friend will be there to wipe the tears from your eyes
They will also hug you and hear all your cries
A best friend will help mend your broken heart
They will make you feel like you are at the top of the chart
A best friend is always there through thick and thin
They will never leave you and will be by your side to the very end

LOST LIES

Jackie Faulkenberg—BCC Alumni

Turning, twisting, wrenching she feels as the torment slowly reaches into
her soul to unleash the negative once again.
Her life, spirit, and love fade to return no more.
The passion, heat, and moment all but a mere lie.
Who made the rules so selfish in disguise?

MINNIE'S DILEMMA

Jeanne Butler—BCC Student

This is the story of Minnie D. Purcell
who no longer fit in her size 30 girdle.
Poor Minnie cried out to her dear sister Myrtle
to help overcome this spandexuan hurdle.

Oh that Minnie she huffed as she pulled on its band
and let out a loud groan when it ripped in her hand.
“Myrtle!” she cried, “Please help me stand,
for I’ll surely fall over, on the floor I will land.”

Well Myrtle she straddled atop Minnie’s feet,
clutching the calves, her face red as a beet.
The two of them fighting a task to complete
as poor Minnie’s waistline’s no longer petite.

Minnie, disgusted and about out of wind.
thought that her waistline was sexy and thin.
But that wasn’t the case much to her chagrin.
Myrtle just sat there. Her smile was a grin.

“I have an idea,” Myrtle shouted with glee.
and grabbed from the shelf petrol jelly.
A handful of liniment shiny and smelly,
she slathered it over that robustious belly.

The two tussled and pulled at the garment below
that Minnie's volup-girth upon her bestow.

Minnie sucked in her air, Myrtle gave a heave-ho
and stuffed into the panties... Minnie's cargo.

"At last," Myrtle screamed a cry of rejoice,

"I can see that the goo was the obvious choice."

Minnie turned to respond, a cry rose from her voice.

"The bottoms they ripped, with that great final hoist."

FREE

Jackie Faulkenberg—BCC Alumni

The wind blows in her face

The sand beneath her feet

This is how free feels

The chirping and cawing of the seagulls

The smell of the ocean

This is how free feels

The hopes and dreams come alive with every breath she takes in

The life that she once had is seen again

This is how free feels

SINCE YOU LEFT ME

Marquita Gentry—BCC Student

When you left me your spirit stayed here
And the winds been calling my name
Since you left in my life there is no more cheer
Nothing will ever be the same

In love with you I am still head over hills
Our love flows as wide as the sea
Sometimes I hear your voice and I get the chills
With me forever I know you will always be

Our love is a whippoorwill
So beautiful and so dear
Your presence beside me I still can feel
Even though you are no where near

As long as I live
You will always abide about in my heart
Sweet memories is all you give
In our time apart

EVERY TIME

Elizabeth Lennon Diaz—BCC Alumni

Every time it rains
And the sun shines no more
Deep inside my heart it pains
For I can hold no more.

Every time it thunders
And the lightening zaps across the sky
Do you too see God's wonders?
Or is it only for my eyes?

Every time it snows
And the flakes flutter to the ground
The pain in my eyes show
Because you're no longer around.

Every time I close my eyes
And hold your blankey tight,
I question God with my list of *why's*.
He then shows me a perfect little angel with wings of white.
Who is sick no more and surrounded by God's eternal light.

PAPA ROOSTER CROWS

KC Melvin—BCC Student

Papa rooster crows
Get up to mama hens
Feed you and your youngens
Before Big Mama rises
You ain't got no meat
But you still got some bones
If Big Mama catches you in the shed
She'll ring your scrawny necks
And freeze your bones for
summer soup
That old mama cat out hunting
To feed her baby kitties
Get on in the storage shed
and eat those kitties' eyes
Those kitties' eyes ain't
Doing no good just sitting
In their head
But they're tasty going
down and better than
pecking dirt
Rise and shine mama hens
Don't die before the
summer
We still got the winter months
Before the insects come

THE WORLD FORGOTTEN: A VILLANELLE

Stancey Roshell Brayboy—BCC Student

A rare flower or flowering tree
With every seed there comes a new birth
This is what nature seems to be.

Snow on the ground, soft as Brie
Nature is the soul of the Earth
A rare flower or flowering tree.

The steady creek like the color of Chablis
The colors of the sunset are vibrant mirth
This is what nature seems to be.

Honeysuckle and Gardenia like potpourri
Rays of the sun, warm like the hearth
A rare flower or towering tree.

A wonder of the world, the Yangtze
If you could measure, what would it be worth?
This is what nature seems to be.

Sounds from the rainforest like Tai Chi
Wonders that the soil brings forth
A rare flower or towering tree
This is what nature seems to be.

THE SKY IS MORE TORNADO-ISH SINCE I GOT MYSELF SO FARAWAY

Lauren Fuhrmann—BCC Faculty

Montana is a lonely state and I am deep in it.
Here, rocks are great white teeth uprooted,
flung from some giant reptilian mouth.
Deer vertebrae litter the earth's scaly skins.

When my father dies, I will wear a dress of gray feathers.
I will sit upside-down in rocking chairs, speak often of bravery,
paint pinecones with peanut butter and glitter,
hang these on orange strings in trees near his grave.

These geysers are the exact color of Spumoni ice cream.
His voice is a lost ribbon flipping quiet violence through the air.
And in this, the most family-friendly of all places,
razor-blue beetles jump into springs of near-boiling
water, and live.

**BECAUSE YOU SAID THAT IF I EVER STOPPED
BEING AFRAID OF MAGAZINES AND AIRPLANES
I SHOULD WRITE TO YOU**

Lauren Fuhrmann—BCC Faculty

At the grocery store I stand in the check-out line,
cradling my bottle of carrot juice as if it is a baby.
All those paper eyes stare at me from the covers of magazines.
I stare right back.

I have moved close to the mountains, even closer to an airport.
The planes fly above me all day; I've learned to barely notice.
Also: I've changed my name.

I didn't pack many of my favorite things
to prove how short-term this arrangement would be.
The printer and scanner, for instance,
I knew I would miss them daily. I needed some reason
to return home

EVERLASTING

Ms. Neeley's—BCC's English 080 Class

Raucous, grating cries of seagulls
Advancing, retreating feet at water's edge
Majestic pelicans scanning silver depths. . .
And the waves crash against the shore.

Jagged rocks, the death of many a ship
Standing sentinel for life on shore
A buffer to advancing armies. . .
When the waves crash against the shore.

Powdery, hot sand, the silicon of ages
A blanket for ages of lovers
Oblivious to all surrounding them. . .
As the waves crash against the shore.

Nations of species teeming in the waters
Fish, whales, porpoises, sharks, giant crabs
All living and dying in the ocean. . .
While the waves crash against the shore.

The ebb and flow of eons of tides
The same water man first saw
Known both to kings and the powerless. . .
Still the waves crash against the shore.

Contributors:

Angela Barden, Leanna Callahan, Courtney Clark, Jasmine Currie, Kelly Deaver, Marcus Freeman, Pam Henry, Marlana Johnson, Anna Lowry, Jewanda McAllister, Eden McDonald, Maranda McRae, Saketa McRae, Jamica Moore, Blair Prevatte, Suzanne Riley, Lateesha Wilson

MANNEQUIN GIRL'S ERRATIC LOVE SONG

Lauren Fuhrmann—BCC Faculty

Angry oceans are his eyes.

I cannot swim.

Like the cicada, I leave who I was
behind.

IN BLOOM

Jackie Faulkenberg—BCC Alumni

Clouds on a sunny day like light fluffy cotton candy.

Romance blooms again as the heart heals.

Nothing lost though nothing gained.

Waiting for the sun to fade

For the rainy days will come again.

BOOK ENDS

Rebecca James—BCC Faculty

Sometimes identical, sometimes mirroring,
we hold together whatever we have.
Without the other, all falls over.

But sometimes there is nothing, and we,
grain to grain, touch,
one seemingly seamless sculpture.

I hope that we can pull between us
one tiny book of verse—
newest leather, breath-soft—
who will grow tall in our grasp,
then fly forth for higher shelves,
and on whose inscription we will scribble
all the sweetest words we know.

BEHOLDER

Jackie Faulkenberg—BCC Alumni

Who truly hears the sounds of the heart?
Enjoy the gentle language,
but search your soul for strong sound.
The meaning not always clear,
but like gentle music surrounds one's heart.

LOST IN LIMBO

Sheana Stitz—BCC Alumni

Here I lie beaten and broken with tattered remnants of a love departed.
Still trying to find exactly when and why the pain started.

Could you not stay to see me finally admitting defeat
Instead of turning and running in a hasty retreat ?

Excommunicating me from a congregation of supposed security.
Trying in desperation to sanctify your empty validity.

Shattering like glass my once stable life. To bring me all this pain and
strife. Lost to it all and searching for my way amid a darkened hallway.
The Maker's biggest mistake shrouded in fading gray.

Dying to see a light among the dreaded obscurity.
To find a once abandoned sense of purity.

Bringing me back from this, my hatred and heathen filled purgatory.
To embark on a untainted journey into my new life story.

Happiness, love, and adventure filled I hope it so.
Until then my love, I am Lost in Limbo.

PETE AND THE GANG

Elizabeth Lennon Diaz—BCC Alumni

I was woken from my sleep,
As the stairs began to creak.
I sprang upon my little feet,
Scared to death, my legs were weak

Upon the nightstand should I find?
My friendly flashlight it did shine.
My shaken arm it did extend,
I heard a yell from no where's end.

As I turned towards the scary sound,
The moaning seemed eerily abound.
Was it coming from the wall?
Or was it coming from the hall?

I could not move or make no sense,
the screaming was incredibly intense.
I aimed the light around the room.
I heard a noise, a big KABOOM!

Within a flash I made a dash
towards my bedroom door,
Thinking to myself,
I'm not staying here no more.

Now I'm standing in the hall
I see scary shadows 50 feet tall.
Out of nowhere rolls a ball.
Upon my knees I did fall.

Praying to the lord out loud.

I looked up and saw a crowd.

This tiny voice it said to me,

Time to play, are you free?

My words were shaking as I spoke,

My throat closed up, I began to choke.

The littlest ghost of all said to me,

Do you see us, do you believe?

I calmly shook my little head,

Who are you and are you really dead?

One by one they began to greet,

Sue, Tom, Sally and then little Pete.

They told me their stories

Of how they passed.

They were on an orphan train

When they crashed.

Into the icy river they laid.

It was too late,

They could not be saved.

Their water grave was instantly made.

I began to weep,

As I listened to the gang and to little Pete.

Do not cry our new found friend,

Though our fate was a tragic end.

But now we are free

To roam and play.

As a loving family

Every day.

EVEN THOUGH I SHOULD, I DON'T

Wesley Logan Wayne—BCC Student

Even though a fire is hot,
And a single touch should scald,
I do not feel the burn.
Even though ice is cold,
And a single touch should chill,
I do not feel the freeze.
Even though a punch is strong,
And a single blow should hurt,
I do not feel the sting.
Even though a knife is sharp,
And a single slash should cut,
I do not feel the bleed.
Even though insults are cruel,
And a single word should anger,
I do not feel the hate.
Even though a heart is sad,
And a single thought should depress,
I do however feel the tears.

WHAT & IF

Wesley Logan Wayne—BCC Student

What doth life mean; if it is to be ended by death?

What reason is in thine love; if lost it can become?

What is the purpose of thy hate; if sate it can be?

What power is in one's fear; if it can be cured?

What bravery is there in courage; if cowardice can consume?

What point is our sadness; if happiness can rectify?

What is the purpose of bleeding; if the wound can be sealed?

What reason do we cry for; if tears can simply be dried?

What is the concept of time; if it constantly passes us by?

What hurt is there in pain; if it can be soothed?

What happiness is in a smile; if it can be changed into a frown?

The chaos all around me is the subject known as life. I don't understand it
in the slightest, yet live it all the same.

But, I'm left to ask;

What is the meaning in anything; if there is a chance of receiving the re-
verse?

PERFECTION IS LACKING

Wesley Logan Wayne—BCC Student

My mind is turning,
A vortex of my design,
The cogs and gears turn.
But never mesh,
And tend to grind.

My Happiness is shining,
A brightness of my design,
The light does glow truly,
But never brightly,
And tends to dim.

My thoughts are wandering,
A drift of my design,
The thoughts do weave,
But never will,
And tend to tangle.

My heart is beating,
A rhythm of my design,
The feelings pound,
But never the same,
And tend to miss a beat.

My body is strong,
A structure of my design,
The strength pours out,
But never is sustained,
And tends to grow tired.

All I am is me,
A being of my own design
Who has many an aspect,
But never are they grand,
And tend to be imperfect.

BATTLEFIELD ENEMY

Wesley Logan Wayne—BCC Student

The blood has been spilled upon the ground.
It soaks into the sand.
The drums of war sound nearby.
My heart pounds in rhythm to its beat.
I hear the march of a thousand feet.
The approach from East and West, and as they start approaching me,
It is time to take my leave
For I am on neither side; a lost soul wandering I be.
I take no side in foolish wars.
But stalk those of corrupted souls, and with deathblow end their terror.
I am the unknown phantom of the battlefield.
I have no formal name, but if a name be desired,
Then Justice is my name.
You came upon my kill.
But be careful if you approach.
For you may be the next to taste my steel.

CONTAGIOSO

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Tiene la gripe,
yo tengo una tos.
Elizabeth me dio un beso,
y ahora yo tengo los dos.

CONTAGIOUS

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

You have the flu,
I have a cough.
Elizabeth gave me a kiss,
and now I have both.



HECHIZADO

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Dejar caerle es orgullo en el olvido,
libera la emoción en una entrega sensual.
Y en la subida mística de la nueva piel,
yo hechizaré suavemente es sentidos.

BEWITCHED

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Dropping your pride into oblivion,
Liberates your emotion into sensual delivery,
and in the mystic rise of the new skin,
I will bewitch gently your senses.

LA PASIÓN DEL AMOR

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Venga más cerca, pero hágalo lentamente.
Dé un momento que dura para siempre.
Es brillos de amor con un brillo,
inalcanzable, deja de fluir de usted es esencia.
El más deseable pone su magia e impresión y pasión inconfundibles en un
beso eterno.

PASSION OF LOVE

Antonio Diaz—BCC Student

Come closer, but do it slowly.
give a moment that lasts forever.
your love shines with a brightness,
unattainable, ceases to flow from your essence.
The more desirable you put your magic and unmistakable imprint
and passion in an eternal kiss.



SNOWY PATH

Karen Cecil—BCC Alumni

VISITING AUTHORS

Visiting Authors
visiting authors

VISITING AUTHORS

NAMESAKE

Cathy Smith Bowers, North Carolina Poet Laureate

*for Cathy Fiscus, 3,
who died in an abandoned well the summer of 1949*

From the face of the earth
is how they put it
when someone disappears
so all day your father paces
among bulldozers and cranes
as your mother sits in the car
muttering to the visor.

I hang in my own mother's womb,
little turtle, zeppelin of skin and marrow.
The chipped ice she craves
grinds in her teeth
like pneumatic saws.

And because television that summer
will be the closest thing to miracle,
she gives in to the sloppy recliner,
to the window fan's rattle and clack
to watch as hour by hour
hope fails in black and white.

Down there you must have heard something queer.
A scraping at earth, some ancient burrowing.

And what word can name the descent of midgets
armed with buckets and spades?

You lived two days, your voice
tamping at the surface, that one song
rising now and then into the suspended mike.

Then—air, light. The blood
hammering at the soft closure
of my skull, they lifted
me out, all slag and sediment,
sludge of another life,
and gave me your name.

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Original Publications:

Georgia Review

Bowers, Cathy Smith. *The Love That Ended Yesterday in Texas*. Dallas: Texas Tech U P, 1992 and Oak Ridge: Iris Press, 1997.

**EXCERPT FROM *UP WHERE WE BELONG: HELPING
AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDENTS RISE
IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE***

Dr. Gail Thompson

I've spent much of my life in classrooms: first as a K–12 student, next as a college undergraduate, then, eventually, as a master's student, and much later as a doctoral student. More than two decades ago, as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, I also visited an elementary and a secondary school and observed what was going on in classrooms there. When I returned to the United States, I spent fourteen years teaching in "urban-fringe," predominantly minority junior high and high schools, and since 1998, I've taught graduate students—mostly individuals earning education degrees—fulltime. Moreover, a few years ago, I created and ran an after-school literacy program for struggling third, fourth, and fifth graders at two schools, including a low-income, predominantly black school. Despite the extensive amount of time I've spent in classrooms, teaching wasn't my first career choice; writing was. The truth is, I entered the teaching force out of necessity at a time when I was a single parent who needed a steady income in order to feed my child.

So, thinking that it would only be a temporary job, I started working as a substitute teacher in 1984. After I "subbed" for a semester, a junior high school principal offered me a long-term position that was contingent on my immediate enrollment in a teacher certification program at a local university.

Because her offer equaled job security, a regular monthly paycheck, and medical benefits for my daughter and me, I couldn't refuse it. But even though I became a full-time teacher "by accident," when I accepted the

principal's offer, I made two promises to myself.

First, I would strive to provide my students with the best education that I could. Back then, and even today, my model of outstanding teaching was wrapped in nostalgic memories of my sixth-grade teacher, Mrs. Susan Tessem. Not only was she effective in making the curriculum comprehensible to the students at our predominantly black elementary school, in which many of us—including myself—were on welfare and from single-parent homes, but more important, Mrs. Tessem had a lifelong impact on me and others. In fact, even though I was only in elementary school, she was instrumental in convincing me to go to college, which changed the course of my life.¹ What is most interesting about Mrs. Tessem is that as a young white woman from suburbia who taught at a low performing inner-city school, she faced many of the work-related problems that numerous current teachers aren't able to handle. Yet, in spite of these problems, she made a decision each day to teach to the best of her ability. She refused to let the problems plaguing our community, and inner-city communities nationwide, prevent her from doing an outstanding job, or force her to lower her expectations. Neither poverty, community problems, the low prestige of our school, the low expectations of many of her colleagues, nor widespread teacher apathy could convince Mr. Tessem that we were anything less than "college material."

The second promise I made to myself when I accepted the job offer was to set a personal goal related to payday. Each month when I collected my paycheck, I wanted to be able to look squarely at myself in the mirror and say honestly, "I earned this paycheck. I'm not merely collecting money that I don't deserve."

Even though my K–12 teaching career was often rocky, painful, and disillusioning, for the fourteen years that I taught, I tried to keep these two prom

ises foremost in my mind. For me, they were the “big picture,” and despite the fact that I made many mistakes during my journey to become an effective teacher, when I left the K–12 system to teach full-time at the university level, I left with my head held high and the belief that I’d lived up to Mrs. Tessem’s example of excellence—but not perfection. Perfection is an elusive goal for human beings, for none of us is perfect. This is an important message for all teachers, especially idealistic new teachers, to remember.

Today, in my graduate school classroom, I continue to hold the same definition of teaching excellence that I learned from Mrs. Tessem: subject matter competency; a cohesive, comprehensible, challenging, and relevant curriculum; high expectations for students; multiple means of assessment; an engaging style of delivery; and the overall objective of not only equipping students with the skills they need to advance toward their personal goals but also encouraging them to use their education to bring about social justice....

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FIRST GRADE

Emily Herring Wilson

More wide awake than we will ever be again,
we wiggle to the front of our little desks,
gripping our new pencils, ready to learn:

Miss Mary goes to the chalk board,
turns, smiles, turns back, and reaches high,
and pulls down a wondrous
invention:
a map of the world.

look, see

then she grips her pencil, a long one, more like a stick, and points.
The class turns this way and that, from ocean to ocean, pole to pole,
land, and cities, rivers, mountains, so much expanse, and there we are!

I slip into the cloak room and run to the back, burying my head in my scarf,
my feelings hurt: the place I live so small it looks like an ant.

Miss Mary already telling us to open our books.
The adventure is on, she promises. I look, I see.

WHITE LAKE, BLADEN COUNTY

Joseph Bathanti

At the verge of White Lake,
I lean against a pier stob and stare

at stars raked over the Bladen sky.
A sun-murdered sandbar

boasting the continent's oldest Magnolia,
this string of lakes, spring-fed.

Not even a boat ripple
this time of night –

only the gurgle of phantoms
at its rim slipping in like lovers

at moonless midnight, the water
invisible, crystalline, the shore

a makeshift of silent lights fizzing
from cheap getaway thatches.

At the Silver Sands, my family
waits for me in our kitchenette

where we'll fall asleep
in front of an unfamiliar TV.

I wonder who we are. But the water
does not wonder. Nor the sky,

nor the stars, nor the half-trees
sunk in the shallows,

wearing in their fractured branches
wings of Spanish moss.

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Original Publications:

Pembroke Magazine

Bathanti, Joseph. *Land of Amnesia*. Winston Salem: Press 53,
2009.

WHY I WRITE ABOUT AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORY?

Dr. David La Vere

I'm a writer, author, historian, and a university History professor at UNC Wilmington. I mainly write books and articles that deal with American Indian history, though that is also a branch of American History (or North Carolina history, Texas History, Oklahoma history and such). When I meet people, they often ask me questions and usually they're asking the same questions. So I thought I'd give some answers here.

"How did you get interested in American Indian History?" I was a copywriter at a Dallas advertising agency and I soon realized that the *Mad Men* life was not for me. But I did enjoy reading history and my colleagues often asked me to tell them history stories. So when I got a chance to get my Master's in History back in Natchitoches, Louisiana, I decided to take the chance. I found myself drawn to Natchitoches' French colonial history – it's the oldest town in the Louisiana Purchase, built around 1714. But it didn't take me long to see how important the Caddo, Wichita, and Comanche Indians were to French colonial and Natchitoches history. It was Indian horses, deer hides, and friendship that made French and then Spanish Natchitoches prosper. While the French and Spanish may have talked about how they were in charge, in reality, they usually danced to an Indian tune.

The next question is similar: "Why Indian history?" The simple answer is: because it is fascinating! Here you have all these different Indian peoples, as diverse as the different peoples of Europe, and then in the early 1500s they are invaded by an alien, technologically-superior people. And for the next 500 years, Indian people develop all sorts of strategies and agendas for coping with these alien people. They engage in trade. They try to adopt the new technology and often the new beliefs the Europeans bring with

them. They make alliances with them. They go to war against them. They try to manipulate the Europeans as much as the Europeans try to manipulate them. And through it all the Native Americans have to deal with new diseases they've never experience and so don't have any immunities. Sometimes these American Indian strategies work. Often times they don't. Still, what amazes me all the more is not that Indian peoples had horrible things happen to them, but that after 500 years and despite all the European and American attempts to wipe out them and their "Indianness," that Indian peoples survived and are still here today.

Maybe it's that I'm a sucker for the underdogs. Or maybe it's that I'm fascinated by the clash of cultures. I like to imagine American History from an Indian's point of view. Once you do that, everything shifts, and it becomes a different story. And that's the stories I like to tell. I hope you'll enjoy reading them.

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La Vere, David. "David La Vere: Why I Write About American Indian History?" *davidlavere.com*. 15 July 2011. Web. 13 Mar. 2011.

THE ECLIPSE

Alan Michael Parker

Having never been to a drive-in movie
I can only imagine the god-size

of the owl's shadow across the screen,
the great bird soaring in front of the projector,

obliterating hugely with a slow swoop
what had been a comedy

and promised a car chase.
Every person in every car

like a cherry in a bonbon.
How the soundtrack seemed to hold its breath:

out of the light, over there,
something smaller was sure to die.

The popcorn held its breath;
the rows of marooned cars

rusted deliberately in the sea air,
everyone's evening eclipsed by the owl.

Such ferocious majesty,
the bird of prey immense, wing-tips

feathered with cinematic light—
in the moment you look up from a first kiss

with the boy who will be your first lover.
It was June or July, you are sure.

What film? Who could remember.
All anyone who was there could want

is to be filled again
with the owl's shadow.

The cars nose home.
A teenager in the back seat,

you turn to the passenger side window
where stars beat against the glass.

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Ltd., www.boaeditions.org.

Original Publications:

Laure-Anne Bosselaar, Ed. *Never Before: Poems about First Experiences*. New York: Four Way Books, 2005.

William Walsh, Ed. *Under the Rock Umbrella: Contemporary American Poets from 1951-1977*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 2006.

Parker, Alan Michael. *Elephants and Butterflies*. Rochester: BOA Editions, Ltd., 2008.

VISITING AUTHOR BIOS

Cathy Smith Bowers is the current Poet Laureate of North Carolina. Her most recent book of poetry is *Like Shining from Shook Foil*. She teaches in writing programs at Queens University, UNC Asheville, and Wofford College. Visit her on *Facebook* and at *ncarts.org*.

Dr. Gail L. Thompson is the Wachovia-Wells Fargo Endowed Professor in Education at Fayetteville State University. She is the author of several books, including *Through Ebony Eyes: What Teachers Need to Know but are Afraid to Ask About African American Students*. Visit her at *drgailthompson.com*.

Emily Herring Wilson is a poet and biographer with a special interest in gardening. Her books include *Becoming Elizabeth Lawrence: Discovered Letters of a Southern Gardener*. She has earned many major awards and grants. Visit her at *nchumanities.org*.

Joseph Bathanti is the author of several books of poetry and fiction, including *Land of Amnesia* and *The High Heart*. He teaches creative writing at Appalachian State University. He has earned major awards and fellowships. Visit him at *nchumanities.org*.

Dr. David LaVere is a professor of history at UNC Wilmington. His specialty is American Indian history. His most recent book is *Looting Spiro Mounds: An American King Tut's Tomb*. Visit him at *davidlavere.com*.

Alan Michael Parker is the author of several books of poetry and fiction, including the forthcoming *Long Division*. He is the director of creative writing at Davidson College and has earned many major awards. Visit him at *amparker.com*.

THE INK QUILL

Literary and Art Magazine

of Bladen Community College

**We are currently accepting
literary and art pieces
for consideration
for our**

Spring 2013 Publication

**Please submit all entries to
theinkquillsociety@gmail.com**

**For entry guidelines and updates,
follow our blog at theinkquillsociety.blogspot.com.**

**Students interested in helping
with the publication can contact:**

**Mrs. James at rjames@bladencc.edu
or**

Jeanne Butler at theinkquillsociety@gmail.com



BLADEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HISTORY CLUB

DO YOU LOVE AMERICAN HISTORY?
DO YOU LOVE VISITING HISTORICAL SITES?
DO YOU LOVE MEETING NEW PEOPLE?

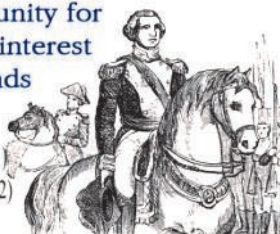
The History Club is open to the entire college community
(students, faculty, staff, and alumni)

The History Club provides an opportunity for
students to meet others with similar interest
and a chance to make new friends

Contact:

Mr. Cliff Tyndall at ctyndall@bladence.edu (Bldg. 17, Room 101, 879-5651)

Mr. Ray Sheppard at msheppard@bladence.edu (Bldg. 1 Rom 141, 879-5542)



Coming in Fall 2012

ART 240: Painting I with Ms. Melvin

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Do you like making gifts instead of buying them?
Did you love holding a paintbrush when you were a child?
Do you want to try something new?
Do you love color?*

We use a variety of painting materials and techniques.
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This class is for both new painters and experienced painters!

This elective will look fantastic on a transcript!



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SIGN UP DURING EARLY REGISTRATION

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looks great on a transcript!



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Do you want something different in your schedule?

Do you want to see how creative you can be?

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Do you like writing?

Do you want to learn to enjoy writing?

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Do you want to try something new?

Do you want to express yourself?

HORROR
SCIENCE FICTION
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STUDENTS SEEKING A TEACHING DEGREE

PSY 263 WILL BE OFFERED ONLINE IN SPRING 2013

This is a required course for those who wish to pursue their careers as teachers since it discusses how psychology can be applied in the classroom.

It deals with learning and cognitive theories, teaching and learning styles, and motivation and assessment.

PSYCHOLOGY CLUB

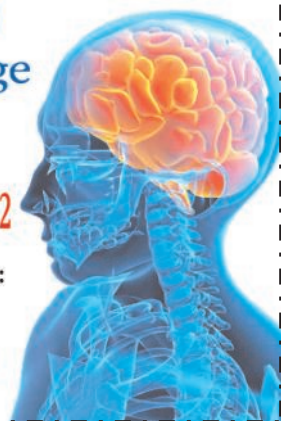
Are you interested in meeting new people?
Do you like helping others?

Then the Psychology Club
of Bladen Community College
is the place for you!

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Students interested in joining can contact:
Mr. Hinson at jhinson@bladencc.edu

*Please use student e-mail when corresponding
with BCC instructors*



COMING IN FALL 2012

the INK QUILL SOCIETY
Creative Writing Club
Head of the Ink Quill Publication

Seeking students who want to assist
with creating, designing, and editing the
Spring 2013 Ink Quill Publication.

Students who are interested can contact Mrs. James at rjames@bladencc.edu

You don't have to be a poet to help out!

