

# [lamp]

LITERARY MAGAZINE





LAMP is a literary magazine which publishes creative pieces and critical essays written by the students and alumni of Liberty University; the views expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the LAMP staff or Liberty University. LAMP aspires to stimulate readers both within and outside the University with the creativity and critical work of its contributors.



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# Letter From The Editor

—or—

## Liz Cook's Struggle With Dualism

—or—

### A Conversation Between A Grad Student's Poetic and Practical Selves

—or—

#### Why Is This Editor Too Bashful to Write A Normal Letter?

LAMP, like the sea, has tides and cycles—former editor, Andrew Walker, has been swept out by the powerful current of the Gulf of Mexico, and our newest editor, Lizzie Yerke, has been washed ashore, dazed from her journey, yet full of innate wisdom, like some fashionable and distant cousin of Godzilla, shredding literature like mere skyscrapers.

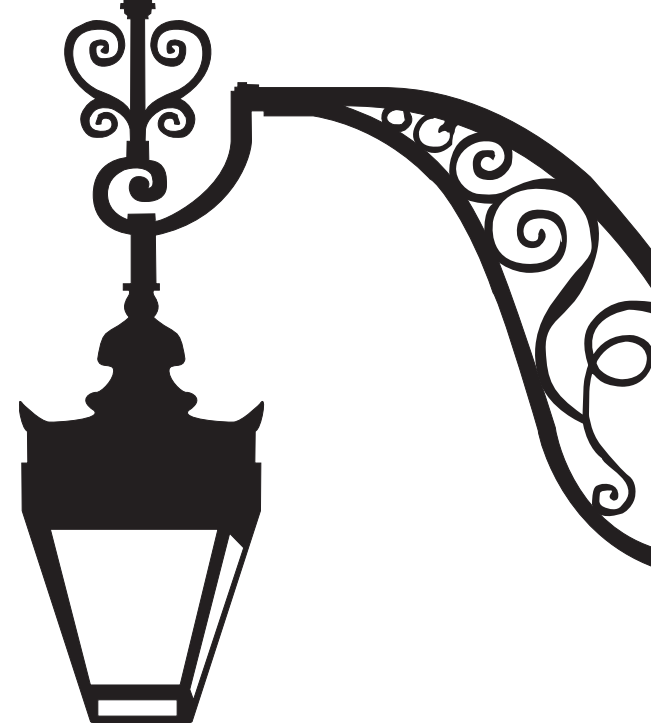
*—Let the literature grow in your bones, so circle every three words, chew this up and digest the words until they are you. Stack the rustling piles of leaves by the rustling leaves of books in piles—*

For whatever reason, even despite our burgeoning presence on the internet (namely, a blog, twitter, and facebook), people keep calling LAMP an “undiscovered treasure”—an appellation I don’t understand for many reasons, but the foremost being that it’s the sort of cliché we would never publish.

*—and your coffee is cooling on the balcony, cooling faster than your first romance, and you finally realize, it’s Fall, but your conscience would rather you say Autumn even though your parents would consider that pretentious—*

But assuming the aforementioned cliché has merit, this semester has proven lucrative in a treasurely-sort of way. Working with Chris Gaumer would bless any young editor, but especially those as concerned with how to match different plaid patterns as Lizzie and I generally are.

*—so align your spine, all notched and living, to the spines of the books, and try to understand you’re pressing against very great beauty—*



I digress. There’s no need to advertise the fact that a LAMP editorial meeting is now a veritable cornucopia of positive fashion choices; we’ve grown in other, more important ways. All along, LAMP has aimed to find and publicize the best literature and art that Liberty students and alumni have to offer. Now, however, these aims are matched by

*—words words words  
and actions actions  
for the community  
that speaks them, and  
your heart is pounding*

*Try to understand  
you’re pressing against  
very great beauty.*

*because they drank your coffee that has cooled on the balcony, but you don’t really mind; it is Fallturnn, and your scarf is blue-plaid and your shirt is red-plaid and your heart is full of happiness and poetry and the letter has been written, so shouldn’t you just turn the page?*

*Elizabeth Kaye Cook*

Elizabeth Kaye Cook

Fall 2010



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Balloons  
LAUREN FRY

## Haikus from a Florida Summer

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Jared DiMaggio

1.  
Oak tree leaves hum a  
mantric tone in the cool breeze –  
dark clouds rolling south
2.  
Black mud to my knees  
mangrove forest. Mosquitoes  
dancing on my skin
3.  
In the cat-tail reeds  
an unknown bug emerges:  
some sort of beetle
4.  
The citrus grove glows  
tan with Cuban emigrants –  
a white man watches
5.  
Between oak tree leaves  
the breeze vibrates mantric tones –  
a sweet smell of rain



# An Interview with Sheila O'Connor

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Interviewed by Christopher J. Gaumer

Sheila O'Connor is the author of three novels, *Tokens of Grace*, *Where no Gods Came* and *Sparrow Road*. *Where no Gods Came* won the Minnesota Book Award and the Michigan Literary Fiction Award, and was a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers title. A graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, Sheila is a professor in the MFA program at Hamline University, where she also serves as the fiction editor for *Water~Stone Review*.

*Sparrow Road* is Sheila's first novel for young readers and tells the story of soon-to-be seventh grader, Raine O'Rourke, whose mother suddenly takes a job hours from home at mysterious Sparrow Road—a creepy dilapidated mansion that houses an eccentric group of artists. Together, Raine and her new friend Josie decide to solve the mysteries of Sparrow Road.

— G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publisher

Gaumer: Let's start with a yes and no quiz, ok?

O'Connor: Ok.

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Gaumer: Is blue your favorite color?

O'Connor: No.

Gaumer: Have you ever been skilled at an instrument?

O'Connor: Yes.

Gaumer: Saxophone? Flute? Drums?

O'Connor: No. No. No.

Gaumer: Do you ever wish you were taller? This question in no way implies that you are short.

O'Connor: (Laughs) No.

Gaumer: Is red your favorite color?

O'Connor: No.

Gaumer: Have you ever cried to get out of a speeding ticket?

O'Connor: No - I've never had a speeding ticket.

Gaumer: Really? That's unbelievable.

O'Connor: Have *you* ever cried to get out of a speeding ticket?

Gaumer: No - but I have acted really pathetic. Next question. Do you recall ever believing in Santa Claus?

O'Connor: Yes!

Gaumer: Have you ever resented Santa Claus?

O'Connor: No!

Gaumer: Is green your favorite color?

O'Connor: Yes! (Laughs)

Gaumer: Do you own a half-centaur half-human portrait of yourself?

O'Connor: No.

Gaumer: Is this quiz over?

O'Connor: Yes! (Laughs)

Gaumer: One more question. When this interview goes to paper, may I have your permission to write as if we met at a Parisian café?

O'Connor: Oh yes.

---

September air is always September air – crisp, cool, a welcome retreat from heavy August heat, but in Paris, the transition seems more intense. The summer crowds are thinned out, the newspaper is thicker, and a cruise on the waterways is synonymous with a nap. September in Paris is quite frankly, a good choice.

At the lazy hour of 11AM, I met author Sheila O'Connor outside La Rotonde, for espresso and a slice of sugar-free cake. Sheila appeared rested and happy, and because *Sparrow Road* had been such an enjoyable read, I knew the interview wouldn't be like work at all.

Gaumer: Congrats on the new book – it's fantastic!

O'Connor: Thank-you!

Gaumer: So what is it like to be a writer today, in terms of fostering a career?

Sheila: For myself, the primary thing that feels different these days as compared to 1990 when I published *Tokens of Grace*, was that, back then, the chief method of selling a book was going to give readings or lectures in order to meet people, and

*Do you own a half-centaur half-human portrait of yourself?*

these were set up by the publicist. Now, in 2011, with *Sparrow Road*, everything has moved to the internet. Writers maintain a huge internet presence. This is where the book gets its energy.

Gaumer: And the review process has changed as well, hasn't it?

O'Connor: Oh, yes. The people reviewing books no longer come with a certain set of credentials or from a certain newspaper; they are general readers who review on blogs or on goodreads. So when you Google the book, you are just as likely to read a review from a casual reader. Authors today are in the hands of their audience in a way that we weren't before.

Gaumer: Are you one to actively seek a community of writers, or do you avoid that sort of thing?

Sheila: I teach in an MFA program, so I feel like I am firmly "in" with a community of writers, but that being said, I am a solitary writer. I do not have a writer's group, and I never have. I prefer to write alone and do many drafts alone, and then, when I give the work out to be read and critiqued, I have two or three trusted readers, and they are not necessarily fiction writers.

Gaumer: Just good readers.

Sheila: Yes. Good, critical readers. There is a spectrum of people who like to surround themselves with a strong community of writers and consistently exchange writing, but I would say that I do not fall into that category though I do love the community of fellow writers and my writer colleagues at Hamline.

Gaumer: As you just mentioned, you teach fiction writing in Hamline University's MFA program. Is it challenging to be both a teacher of writing and a writer?

O'Connor: The biggest difficulty is time. As you know, teaching writing takes a tremendous amount of time. And it's not just the hours, it's the attention. If I am giving the proper loving attention to my student's work, it's hard to feel like I have any attention left for my own, so I tend to do most of my writing in the summer time, and then I will do revision or manuscript work or editing during the school year, which is a different kind of thinking. But the actual process of dreaming a book to life, I tend to accomplish only when I don't have other things pressing on me. Gaumer: You want to feel good about the job you're doing.

*Authors today are in the hands of their audience in a way that we weren't before.*

O'Connor: Yes. Other teachers have found a way to do it, but I have not, and I have been teaching about twenty years. To teach well is a highly creative process involving emotion, intellect and imagination. Those are also the three things I need for my writing; unfortunately, they are not endless resources.

Gaumer: How would you compare the process of writing a children's book with your process of writing adult fiction?

O'Connor: It's mostly the same. In terms of plot, thematic concerns, and layering, I tried to leave all of that in *Sparrow Road*. It's a children's book, but I wouldn't say *Sparrow Road* is simpler than any of my other books, but it is, perhaps, more hopeful.

But that being said, it was in the later stages of *Sparrow Road*'s revision when the editor's eye for children's literature came to bear. The editor helped me make sure that I didn't lose children due to pacing. The editor wanted to move much faster into the action of the book - that's where I was primarily aware of a difference.

Gaumer: Author John Gardner says that writers can do lots of things, but they can't tell the readers the character's emotions, and so emotions must take the form of events. Do you feel this is true in the same way for a children's story or can you get away with more overt explanation of feelings?

O'Connor: For me, the power of reading is that I am decoding and deciphering something that I am witnessing. I don't need anyone to step in and tell me what I am witnessing; I just want to be left to witness it. In life, in film, in literature, I want to be a witness. I want to watch something and draw my own conclusions. Many people who read for pleasure also get that satisfaction. Part of telling is taking that away from the reader. A writer needs to trust their readers to be able to read between the lines and interpret for themselves. Children do this every day. Children survive by reading subtext all day long. What are the grown-ups doing? What did that other child mean when he did that to me? Children are adept at reading subtext. They are keen observers.

*To teach well is a highly creative process involving emotion, intellect and imagination.*

Gaumer: *Sparrow Road* is set in a very magical place, an artist's retreat complete with its own rules - no speaking until dinner time, a big pink house with a tower, and many secrets buried within. Do you recall how this vision appeared for you? Have you been to an artist's retreat?

O'Connor: Oh yes. The vision of the enchanted artist's retreat came from being at The Anderson Center in Red Wing, Minnesota, which I thought was the happiest place on earth. And while it's not a big house with a tower and had no silence rule, I was left in silence, and I could keep it. Because I so loved the artists that I was there with, I think *Sparrow Road* is infused with the deep love I have for the Anderson Center.

Gaumer: Sounds inspirational.

O'Connor: Very much so. While I was at The Anderson Center, there was a Richard

Hugo poem on the wall, and there was a line in the poem that read, “There are some places that are forever afternoon.” When I was writing *Sparrow Road*, the idea that there are some places that are forever afternoon was a feeling I wanted to capture.

Gaumer: *Sparrow Road* is often about what’s missing – gaps in history, or gaps left by people. It also seems to be about the filling of those gaps. What do you make of these gaps?

O’Connor: Things that are missing often have the strongest imaginative pull. What we don’t know is what the imagination fills in, what we don’t know about people or the past or the future. All of us, I think, imagine people that are missing – what they would have been like, or what it would be like if they were here, to wonder if, say, my grandmother knew my daughter. Absence is in many ways what fuels the creative process.

*Absence is in many ways what fuels the creative process.*

Gaumer: How do you keep a novel first draft focused and moving forward? Do you have an idea of where you’re going at all times? It seems like it would quickly lose any sort of cohesion if you didn’t.

O’Connor: I have no idea where it’s going and it does quickly lose cohesion. (Laughs) I lose cohesion all the time. For me, I go by the last thing that gets laid down, and I wonder what consequences it will have for the story. It’s a patterned way of thinking about life. I think of causal relationships naturally - this leads to this leads to this. When I leave off writing for the day, I think, what might happen next?

If Raine just asked her mother if she could ride her bike into town, I’m immediately thinking, “Why does she want to go to town, and what will happen when they get to town?” Sometimes my answer works the first time, but sometimes the avenue I choose doesn’t pan out, and I go back to that decision and go forward again.

Gaumer: What are your hopes for this book?

O’Connor: I hope to have written something beautiful and full of hope for young people. I hope there is something in this book to sustain them, either about imagination or creativity, or the presence of good adults in their lives, the possibility that something broken might be healed, that forgiveness is possible, that if our parents fail us, there are other people to help us. In my bigger dreams, I hope it is read across generations, between adults and younger readers.

Gaumer: And you have another book coming out, right?

Sheila: Yes – in the fall of 2012. It’s also for young people. We’re doing final copy edits now. The new one is called *Keeping Faith The Stars*.

Gaumer: I look forward to it. Thank you so much for your time.

Sheila: Thank-you!

## Hint Fiction\*

### Old People in the Park

He whispered in his companion’s ear.  
He stroked her wispy, white hair.  
The afghan hound looked like a lady in a choir robe.

–Chenoa Freeman

### The Grand Armée’s Retreat out of Russia in 1812

Seeing him brought us l’espoir. Safe in his sleigh. But we began to disappear amidst the wolves’ cries. The Emperor. Untouched in his sleigh.

–Jill Johnson

### The Newly Born Widow

Economy Dentures were just the start. Ethel began wearing leopard print and playing dirty scrabble. Eventually, her daughters stopped asking her to babysit.

–Elizabeth Cook

\*Hint Fiction: a story written in 25 words or fewer, both complete and intriguing—the necessary scoop of cookie dough that is, without fail, better than the cookie itself.





## Lakeside

STEPHANIE MCGINN

## Why I Prefer Winter

Derek Via

I trudged up, past blizzard-beaten trees;  
the limbs all saddened by wars past hung  
like frozen fingers in retreat.  
When it's so cold, the heart  
will wander and I began pursuing the path  
where deer parade each night, climbing  
through impossible places,  
each hoof print a step of faith—faith that  
sustenance is somewhere, even when the forest  
is stripped to bare-bone essentials.  
The natural side of me hoped to be seen  
by their black-laced eyes.

The slope descended and then leveled,  
the small grey house nestled predictably  
at the mountain's great white foot.  
A sort of dread ensued, like  
when a gem of snow falls into your hand—silent—  
the heat of skin erasing each crystal forever.  
Lead hooves and thick brown bodies  
spoke to me in a wild way, winter's way,  
and I wished I could peer through  
those black pools, wished to feel their hunger...  
and I knew the heaviness of my return.



## John Hawkins

So you did it to save the jobs of the crew?  
 You did it because the foreman told you you couldn't?  
 You did it because it was 1873.  
 You did it because you hated the machine, its nonsense  
 chains and turbines and puffs of  
 exhaust shackling and shoving and cranking for no reason; hated  
 how it broke down rock  
 because rock was before it, how it couldn't see the train running  
 through the tunnel one day,  
 couldn't see the hobo living in it one day,  
 couldn't see the eight children eating from the flesh  
 man's cutting of the rock, just shut down when it finished and waited  
 for a new rock to cut.  
 You did it because it felt good, the muscle tearing muscle, the river  
 Jordan pooling up behind  
 you, the hammer beating out a path in the darkness for everyone to  
 follow?  
 You did it because you could.

They still fight about that day in the mountain.  
Talk of a blood vessel in the brain, an intellectual collapse in the  
wake of your discovery that a  
man can blow through the side of a mountain and die, and the next  
day be replaced by another.

I don't believe it. Honest to God,  
                   Bill and all the others know it:  
 That rhythm split through your nerves;  
 you sang that song your mother taught you, one last time you sang  
 that song and felt the wall  
 give at the pounding and the rich man's drill shut down and pale grey  
 crumbled into daylight  
 with a bleeding smile you saw

All that lay behind you,  
All that lay before you;

And your beautiful brown heart plain exploded.



# A Provençal Incident

---

Haley Graydon

“We had heard stories about the Mistral. It drove people, and animals, mad. It was an extenuating circumstance in crimes of violence. It blew for fifteen days on end, uprooting trees, overturning cars, smashing windows...moaning through houses like a cold and baleful ghost.”

— Peter Mayle

The starry night was fading fast, and a coral sun was rising on the French countryside, splaying shy rays of light on the tiny farmhouse. The sun turned the stucco goldenrod – the shutters the intense hue of neighboring lavender fields. The light rose and rose and Henry stared at the pitchfork, standing like an exclamation point from the cat’s torso.

“Well, this is inconvenient.” he said, “Right in the cabbage roses too.” The furry, grayish mass stretched under the budding shrubs like a tumor. Early pink globes tangled with the rusted pitchfork prongs and droplets of blood stained the petal folds. Around the prongs were delicate rings of coagulated blood and yellowing pus.

The cat’s face was rigid with lingering horror – its glassy eyes wide and staring, its mouth drawn back, teeth exposed as if mid hiss.

The wind began to blow against Henry’s thin frame, and he looked up for a moment at the cloudless sky. His head was thrown back, his black eyebrows furrowed, and the white skin under his chin stretched as he lifted his face. The wind was coming from the north, and would begin whipping through the valley in a matter of minutes.

“Mistral.”

He looked back at the cat, sipped his coffee, and eased across the garden to the wooden side door, his blue robe flapping in the wind. The sun, higher now, made Henry’s black hair shine like a sunning cat’s as he tapped damp earth from his boots and ducked inside. He picked his way down a canvas strewn hallway to the small room Lottie used as a studio. He announced:

“I know you’re mad at me, but there’s a corpse in the garden.”

Lottie stood in front of the window, her long auburn hair a swirl of red-gold highlights in the morning sun. She did not stop whirling her brush in a glass of water:

“What? Another one?”

“Yes, a cat this time.”

“Not in the roses, I hope.”

His eyebrows raised. “Come and see.”

Lottie sighed, but followed Henry into the garden. She stood staring down at the scene, head cocked, barefoot in the dark soil. Then she too looked at the sky, exposing the soft flesh of her neck as she stared heavenward. Her hazel eyes were squinted. “Do you think we made a mistake moving here?”

“Course not. It’s only been three months. And if you mean that,” Henry nodded upwards, “A little wind never hurt anyone.”

“But the stories...”

Henry emptied his coffee mug on the irises. “Lottie, we’re not superstitious nuts.”

Lottie threw her shoulders up, her hands out, barrier fashion. “Well this is just crazy. Murdered animals in the garden? That dog last week. Every time the wind picks up, the Blanchards yell at each other. Their chickens try to peck each other to death. The other night, the wind was howling so loud I thought the house was going to fall down around us. I hear people’s voices at night, outside the house.”

*I know you’re mad at me, but there’s a corpse in the garden.*

They were silent for a moment, exchanging quick glances as if asking, who had done it this time?

“Monsieur Blanchard?” Lottie whispered. “He hardly ever comes out of his house anymore.”

They glanced at the yard adjoining their own. A few stray chickens scratched at the earth, and the large windows were shuttered.

“Or Madame DuBois?” Henry said. “She never really seemed to like you. You didn’t like her Coq au Vin, remember?”

Lottie sighed. “I’ll probably never really enjoy these roses again, you know.” She gave the cat a nudge with her toe. She frowned and looked closer. “Henry, that’s

Van Gogh.”

“I thought his ear looked a little funny.”

“Don’t joke.”

“Alright. Who’s Van Gogh?”



Lottie nodded her head towards a faint trail of chimney smoke rising over a distant hedge. “You know, Jean Reynard’s cat. He loves this thing. We have to bury it. After you chased it up that tree last week, Jean will never believe we just found it here.” Her voice rose. “I have this art show in two days. I don’t have time to play patty cake with the neighbors over something I didn’t do. This art show is why we came here.”

“I thought we were here because it was good for both of us. Your painting and my writing.”

“What writing?”

The husband and wife stood by the garden – his blue robed figure hunched over, her kaleidoscopic smock swishing in the breeze. Scents of baking croissants vibrated through the trees. The neighborhood was waking. The wind tossed a shutter, slapping it loud and flat against a stone wall. The sound rang in the air for an instant, and the wind whipped it away.

“What writing, Henry?” Lottie repeated. Her hair was swirling with the wind now.

“Let’s not argue, okay? We went through all of this last night. He spread his large hands open. We seem to fight about everything here!”

Lottie stared back at the house with its slanted tiled roof. Her voice was soft. “I know. I’m sorry. I’m not sure what’s wrong. I miss home, I guess. Mom and Dad. Southern English.” She paused. “Drinks with ice cubes in them.”

Henry laughed at that. Around the couple, the garden showed beginnings of irises, poppies, and sunflowers.

Lottie crossed her arms in the cold wind, her small body tense.

Henry said: “Well, I suppose we should bury the little fellow somehow, before Jean misses him. But where?”

Lottie bowed her head into her hands. Her long fingers were spattered with evidence of long nights in the studio – the graceful fingertips looked bruised and inky with charcoal and paint.

*The sound rang in the air for an instant, and the wind whipped it away.*

“Hey.” Henry grasped her hands suddenly. “Hey Lottie, let’s get out of here for the day.”

“I have to work on my collection.”

“You need a break, I can tell.” He was persistent. “Let’s go to Arles for the day. We haven’t seen those Roman ruins yet. You wanted to sketch them so much, remember?”

“What about...”

“I’ll take care of him. Try to forget about it for awhile.”

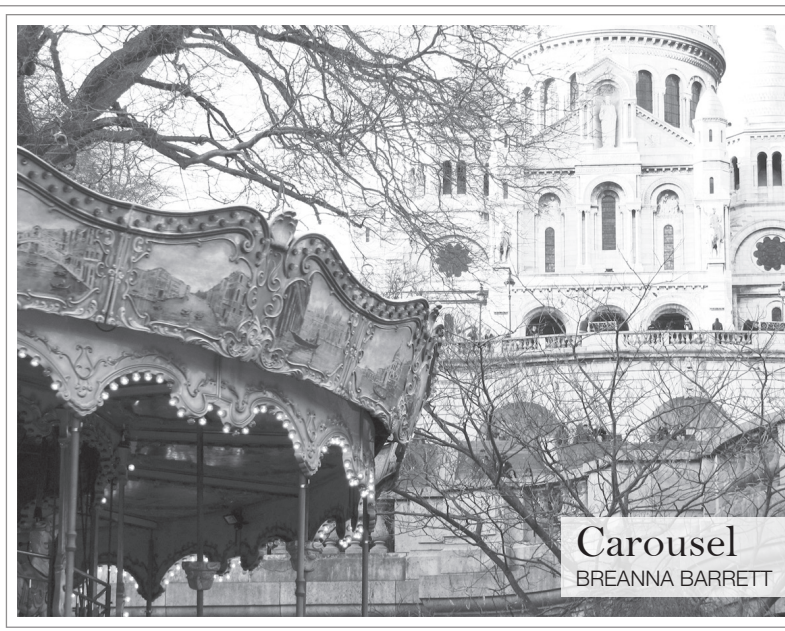
She paused, but then nodded, “Okay. I’ll go get my sketchbook while you clean this up.”

“Go.” Henry urged. “Don’t worry about it.” He waited until she disappeared through the front door before stepping on Van Gogh’s tail and slowly pulling the pitchfork upward. Van Gogh’s body raised a little before thudding back into the dust.

Twenty minutes later, their small, tired Citroen sputtered past colorful French landscapes. Lottie looked out of the window.

A field with two rabbits, cows in the meadow, a cottage with a decrepit barn.

The neon aura of the early morning had faded into a classic Provençal sky and the wind pushed the Norfleets towards Arles with Van Gogh in the trunk.



Carousel  
BREANNA BARRETT



# The President of the Bare Arms Society

---

Keegan Bradford

I do not fit in my grandfather's watch:  
a gift for my sixteenth birthday.  
I am a thin-wrist-member of the Bare Arms Society—  
those of us who never need to know what time it is.

When my grandmother moved to Florida, she covered every clock.  
The microwave eternally blinks 12:00, 12:00, 12:00, and a sticky note  
converted the oven from a kitchen timer to pure convection—  
“it's done when it's done.”  
The bright honesty of beginning and ending the day with the sun.

The beer came and went, but my grandfather always had  
his chair and a TV guide, planning his day around  
“Everybody Loves Raymond.” I jokingly called to console him  
when they cancelled the show, his evenings now eerily empty.  
When it wasn't baseball season, left without Raymond  
or the Rays, the nights ticked on, a minute at a time.

I don't know how long he hung on after the cancer set in—  
We didn't measure weeks or months.  
Grandma sat by his bed from when the day began to  
when she was done. The sun set on her sturdy frame,  
she kept watch but never kept count,  
letting the minutes and the years melt like wax then  
flake away, their firefly-glow briefly silhouetting her:  
The President of the Bare Arms Society.



# All I Want for Christmas

---

Lydia Rollins

All I want for Christmas is a man.  
Not a Fischer Price boy toy  
— Play, Laugh, Grow —  
but a man with a bow,  
a beau with a bow.

On sale after Thanksgiving,  
Black Friday mobs rushing in  
to Men's Warehouse.  
Half-off new arrivals,  
Italian or French styles,  
accents included —  
No buy one, get one free.  
That, I think, is polygamy.  
One size fits all  
or custom ordered—  
Dapper, Snazzy,  
Gangsta, Classy

Delivered just in time,  
wrapped in the trimmings  
of gaiety and holiday joy.  
Golden ribbon curls bounce in excitement,  
outlining the edges of my present,  
waiting underneath the tree,  
arms spread wide out to me.

All I want is a man with a bow  
from Old St. Nick – HO HO HO.



# One Day

Rebekah Ricksecker

6:47 AM The darkness turns gray; the misty fog rests over the water; the honeysuckle perfumes the air as white petals float on the still water.

7:03 Beneath the surface, new life begins. The jelly-skinned egg splits open; the wet insect emerges and swims toward the light.

7:04 The mayfly eats her first meal. Her only meal. Algae.

7:05 She breaks the water's surface. The sunbeams stream through the golden-laced clouds. Life stretches before her.

7:06 She spreads her wings as the breeze carries her to the riverbank. She rests on a leaf.

8:35 Others of her kind have joined her, translucent wings folded, silent observers.

10:40 Her wings are dry. She watches the cloud of flies hovering over the water, thousands of black specks.

Noon She joins the dance.

3:45 PM She does not want to leave. Just a dot in the mass. They are dancing. Buzzing. Swarming. Trembling. Flitting. Bouncing. Hovering.

5:00 The dance slows.

5:03 She is tired, but stays a little longer.

5:05 It is time.

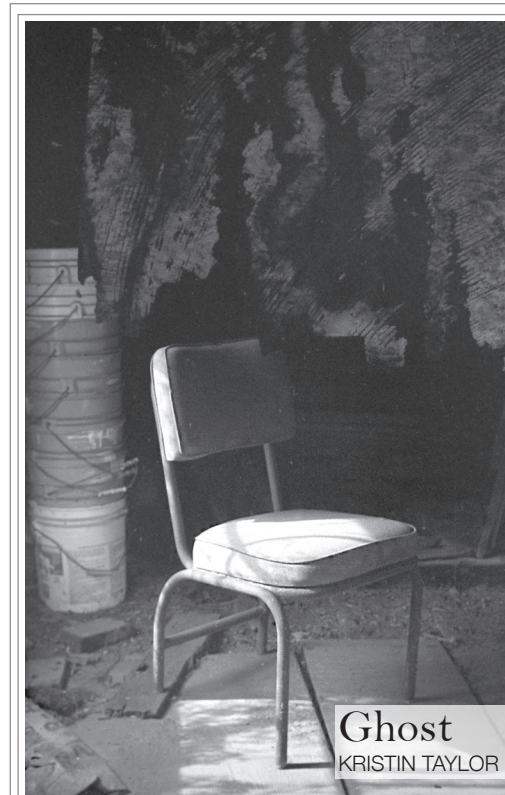
5:06 She flits to the water's surface.

5:08 Beneath her, the jelly-skinned eggs float to the bottom of the river.

5:09 Her own strength is expelled. The mayfly's translucent wings become invisible in the liquid as her body floats amidst the flower petals.

7:03 The golden rays of sunshine turn gray.

8:08 Then black.



Ghost  
KRISTIN TAYLOR

# From the porch, late evenings

Joey Storey

Across the yard the thin dog  
breaks from the thin wood, running  
on an inborn limp, tongue  
like a wet flag in the rain.

Inside, heavy boots make slow thud and slow noise against  
the house's ground, reluctant sounds, slow to join the late haul-line.  
Porch lights follow street lamps,  
the asphalt grayer beneath yellow light.

Steel-toe boots and tar stained shirt  
step down two cracked stairs  
to the real ground with real grass,  
to a real day for a thin moment.

Skipping slowly, the dog greets his boot.  
He pets her.  
Nothing ever changes.



**Burrowing**  
BARNEY DAVIS

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—yarn—  
the yarn that  
runs around your  
frontal lobes—  
carrying all of the  
important stuff is—  
orange-pink——  
not blue—not green—  
not red—not yellow  
not purple-not white  
——orange-pink

—David Smalt

