



Damozel

2023-2024

DAMOZEL

The Literary Magazine of
Notre Dame of Maryland University
2023-2024

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Editors' Note

In celebration of *Damozel's* 100th anniversary, we are delighted to share this special edition, which features submissions from this school year and select pieces from past issues dating back to 1935. These pieces are testaments to the creativity and passion that have fueled our publication throughout the decades. Here's to a century of inspiration and the continuation of our literary and creative legacy.

— *The Damozel Team*

Mission Statement

Damozel is Notre Dame of Maryland University's student-run literary magazine. First published as a yearbook in 1923, the publication has evolved into an award-winning collection of creative works by current students and alumni.

Our mission is to provide a platform for creative expression and literary exploration within the Notre Dame community. In each issue, you'll find a diverse set of photographs, artwork, poems, short fiction, and nonfiction essays.

The 2023-2024 issue of *Damozel* was created with significant contributions from the following members of the English department's Alpha Alpha chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International Honor Society in English: Cassandra Thompson '24 and April Boss '24.

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The Best Medicine

I owe myself an apology
For lacking patience and respect
Disgusted by my mistakes
Unknown of the disconnect
She practiced how to be small
And hardly made a fuss
Stay quiet and patient
Do anything for sugar
Even tolerating salt
Taking blame and fault
In hopes of gaining love
From lost souls
With the same goals

— *Jy'India Lester '25, Nursing*

A Day in the Life of a Flower

From the beginning, I was an insignificant seed, thrashed into the ground. I was suffocated by the bitter layers of dirt and left to fend for myself. Now no one visits me in this prison except for the slimy worms. The feeling of loneliness faded as I transformed into something more important than just a flower, but a source of life ... or so I thought ...

People look at me and see how pretty I am, but never regard the strength I possess. They think I only dance and sway in the calm breeze, but no one considers the harsh winds I have to endure or the painful blows I feel from the pouring rain in the springtime. It stings me like those useless bees, buzzing ... buzzing ... buzzing! If I could speak I would shout and protest for I am sick of always being violated by insect after insect or stepped on by those lousy creations they call animals. All I wish to do is enjoy the warm spring air without being interrupted. If I could swat those pesky bees a feeling of pure satisfaction would radiate throughout my form. No one mentions how vital I am to the survival of ecosystems. I get no praise, no gratitude, nothing. No one looks at me. I doubt they even notice my beauty.

Madame Caterpillar usually passes by every morning but now she spends her time in a cocoon, getting ready to expand her wings and soar into the sky as a butterfly. I wish I could fly, I wish I could escape from this prison they call dirt. If only I could be free for a day ... just a day, one day is all I ask. When Mr. Tree becomes bare in the winter and regains his leaves in the springtime, the birds rest on his never-ending arms and keep him company from sunrise to sunset. When I stretch my petals like the sun, slowly making its path across the sky, no one is waiting for me to fully rise. Once Madame Caterpillar transforms to Madame Butterfly, the adults will gaze at her and the children will chase her across fields of me and in gardens where I live. They will never caress me like a newborn or inhale my unique scent as they would their mother's best dish. I am one of a kind and diverse as well, from my cousin Rose, the flower of love, to my bright yellow Aunt Tulip and the purple of my cousin Violet. A day in my life is one of great beauty and an example of what God's miraculous hands have created ... if only someone besides me could see that as well.

— *Ashleigh Allen '16*
Originally published in 2014



Blooming Fuchsia

— *Summara Abaid '17, Biology*

The Undertaking

I have
built a selfish empire
Stocked with things I love
and all of my debts

I want to share this
with no one

Secrets broken open, spilling
down my outstretched palm
Reflect back only to me

I write them out
But some will never be
spoken aloud

This kingdom rises and sets
on my uneven rituals of sleep
Up in the night, asleep all morning
Into the afternoon

I thought I wanted children
but I think instead
I am open to them only
Insofar as they don't take
From me

It's impossible
to balance both
I continue not to share
Until I fear the other option
will get too far away from me

— *Rachel Ann Jones '13, English, '24 Leadership in TESOL*

Horizon Lines

As the sunset and the Horizon draw their line,
I see the sun, peaking at me over its blanket, its bright blossoms' eye
winks at me as it weaves its way through obstacles tall, and some, dark.

For a second, it's silenced by the different trees that dance and wave
their hands at me, almost as if they're teasing the sun.
But the bundle of joy comes popping out like a child running wild.

See, its radiance, beauty, and blinding nature place one in awe.
She is the fairest of them all. She soars way above, dancing through the
sky but at night she hides her face from the night's disastrous glare.

Night is jealous because it doesn't have the ability to make someone
bloom and plant smiles. Rather, it places things to rest like a bird in its
own nest.

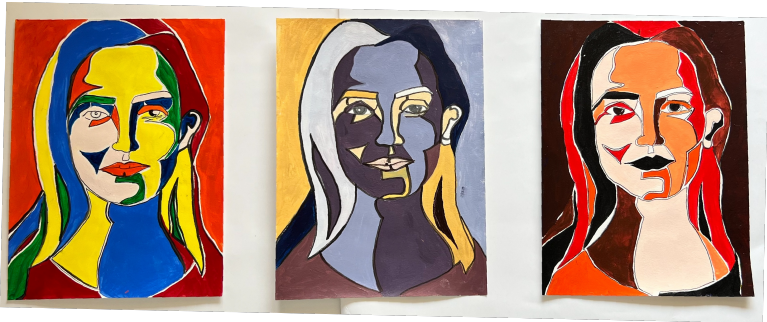
As the morning dawn whispers through our winds, its sophisticated yet
simple and ambitious calls open eyes to the world.
A creation that dwindles from the master above comes to warm the
hearts of all those who love, hate, or fall.

— *Rochelle Thompson '22, English and Political Science*
Originally published in 2020-2021

To Anais

Please go home, Anais.
You've stayed here long enough,
clicking your fingernails
and jangling your jewelry,
stamping my coffee cups with
your over-painted lips, and
tossing a headful of hair
so slick and dark I bet
the dye smears across your pillow.
Please snap shut your little black book,
with its perfumed little secrets
you're so willing to disclose,
and please take back your
chilly hand and your sad,
sisterly smile, and just quit, Anais,
quit.

— *Anastasia Ulanowicz '97*
Originally published in 1997



Triptych of Self

— Nazanin Zori '24, *Education*



Blushing Skies

— *Alycia Hancock '23, Biology*

What To Do When...

When you're no longer inspired by what life has to offer,
What to do when you crave excitement but obtain none, oh well,
When nothing is enough and everything is subpar,
What to do when you're no longer one with yourself.

Sit, bring your pencil and your paper,
Think. Which thought to write when there's a flurry of them,
Stand, begin to cry once your heart remembers,
Put your feelings away, and don't come back until you can write them.

When no one seems to listen, talk talk talking they do so often,
What to do when you're surrounded by all but connected with none, oh well,
When it's time to let go and your mental has fallen,
What to do when you're no longer one with yourself.

I said sit, sit with your pencil and write,
But I can no longer stay awake for long,
Asleep during the day, yet helpless & restless come night,
To be wrong is right, and somehow to be right is wrong.

When one is enough for you, but you're not enough for one,
What to do when you've run out of solutions due to tired legs, oh well,
When you've practiced your smile for so long it can no longer be undone,
What to do when you're no longer one with yourself.

— *Chrys Foster '25, English*

Spring Evening

what are you doing tonight?

if
i tell them
i'm studying
they'll grin and nod guiltily
and say
yes i should too
and go on
dabbing frost and mint
on sunburned faces
listening for the intercom

if
i tell them
i'm tired, i'm going to bed
they'll groan and yawn
commend my good sense
and run downstairs
to meet
lobstered undergrads
in freshly-washed blue volkswagons

if
i tell them
i'm writing to a guy at home
they may
scribble a line
tomorrow morning
as they stretch
dance-cramped muscles
on the sundeck's splintered grill

if
i tell them
nothing—
close my door
and watch the melted-sherbet sunset
light their coupled footsteps—
what excuse will i make to myself
when they drift away
in warm golden chains
and leave me
alone
in the
chill independence of
inadequacy?

— *Carol Kyne '69*
Originally published in 1971

Shopping

To shop
can be distress
when searching for a dress,
with A-line, mods, and London look
in vogue.
Throughout
the day I try
and try, my spirits sag.
It's found, then lost by glance upon
the tag

— *Terri McMaster '68*
Originally published in 1966



Beauty in Isolation

— *Alyssa Johnson '25, Art Therapy*

Submitting/Dinner

Why haven't I submitted my damn poems already? I write and I write, but what good is it if I keep them out of sight? Alright, submit. Tonight, you will go home and figure yourself out, just a bit. Slowly but surely gather your shit, and make time to press send, submit.

"I wonder what I'll have for dinner," water with a side of ice, as I unconsciously became slimmer. I walked over to the villainous mirror and shivered as my reflection became dimmer. Dimmer. No dinner.

Walked over to my bed, my book full of rhymes, wrote some more and realized that my expression in these poems resulted in my teary eyes. Submit this one too, they might hear the cry for help, but then what will they do? Ask if I'm okay, but I'll say yes anyway, then unwillingly pull away, from helping hands as they lay.

No diner, no help, no concentration, oh well. Maybe I choose to keep them private because a while ago I fell into the habit of artificial smiling and auto-pilot responses, I'm sure some of you can tell. But saying so will reveal that I'm often upset, and those who often witness me smiling will one day see me sweat.

— *Chrys Foster '25, English*

Blue Night

It started to snow late in the afternoon. The sky had been overcast and murky-looking all day. The wind blew the soft flakes before it; they fought against each other, brushed against the windows and turned to water. No one really expected it to last, least of all I. But by the time I'd reached my room it was a cottony moving fog outside. That was all right, too. Anything was all right that day as far as I was concerned. Everyone said you would think I had a date or something equally phenomenal the way I acted. But it was Rosemary who was coming for the week end. Rosemary was important to me—a sort of link to the things that spelled home; football games, Saturday night movies, and even lemon-lime cokes. Letters were fine, but Rosemary was a living, breathing person. She would understand how I felt because she was the only one who knew Bob.

There were a thousand things to do in the room—put the odds and ends strewn over the bed back in place and clean the closet—and there I was, staring out the window, the snow melting on my face. But it was so good to see some real sign of winter, I thought, looking out at the dark weather; the days had been so mild. I watched the wind sweep the treetops, dust it off the roofs and drive it across the campus. The wind had a nasty taste. I stood back, my elbows red crisscrosses from leaning on the sill, shut the window and turned up the heat, because I knew how Rosemary hated the cold. “It gets in my bones and depresses me,” she'd say.

As always, after the last class of the day, the halls snapped out of their lethargy and came to life. Phonographs blared the latest Sinatra records, scuff slippers padded down to the “caf” and the pungent odor of Halo mingled with that of nail polish, as the dust flew thick and fast. The telephone began ringing and people hung in their doorways until the lucky name was called. I'd just climbed on the chair to wipe the ruffle of dust off the top of my desk when someone yelled, “Marianne, your guest is here!” My guest. . . .

I gave the top of the desk a last swipe, hopped off, stowed the rag, gingerly washed my hands, trying not to muss the gleaming basin, paused to take a last look at the bright, expectant room and went to meet my guest. I ran past the chirping rooms, through the dance hall and down the two flights of stairs. Rosemary was there at the bottom, waiting. She'd just come in out of the wind, but she was unruffled. Her long hair looked as soft and glowing as her skin. A silky black strand had escaped the wavy pompadour and formed an “S” on her forehead.

She always appeared to be a frightened little bird until you saw her eyes; clear, calm, green with curious dark specks. Her cheekbones had a

molded look—not like Katharine Hepburn’s—but delicate and natural. The other features were not perfect, but her tilted nose and small mouth went well together, and all-in-all the effect was rather like a little Tyrolean doll in the flesh.

“Hi there,” she called up to me, and if you didn’t know her well you’d think she wasn’t the least excited.

“Hi Rose—.” I kissed her cold, tingling cheek. “I can’t believe you’re really here at last.”

“How’ve you been? It’s been a long time, hasn’t it? I’m just dying to see your room.” She wasn’t quite coherent, but then neither was I. I picked up her bag and led her upstairs to our room at the end of the Junior corridor.

“You look as though you’ve actually been getting some sleep lately, M.A.”

“You mean I look as though I’ve been eating a lot of double-dip sundaes in the “caf,” don’t you?”

We both spoke at once and everything was garbled. Rosemary laughed at a big curl of dust decorating the hall, commenting on my system of housekeeping which, she thought, consisted in sweeping everything out into the corridor. She said she adored our room, and pulled aside the drapes to admit a view of the High School tower, snow-covered. Turning, the first thing that caught her eye was Bob’s picture. Of course, I knew that she would notice it sooner or later.

“Why, that’s Bob Egan, isn’t it? What a cute picture!”

It was standing in the side of the mirror on my bureau, and she looked at it closely. Then she glanced up at me out of the corner of her eye, and smiled. “Have you made up your mind about him yet?”

“Now see here, Rosemary old girl. . . .” Then we both began to laugh. I wanted to tell her, but not just then.

It had really decided to snow in earnest. By nightfall the snow had drifted deep along the sloping roof beneath our window and around the tree trunks out on the back campus. Everyone had gathered in our room, and piled on the beds, laughing and talking with Rosemary.

“Tonight I feel like fried chicken and corn fritters,” she said.

“Tonight you’ll get creamed tuna-fish and string beans,”

Jeanne remarked, looking up from the *Vogue* she was reading.

“How do you know it’s tuna fish,” asked Kay.

“Because I told her so,” Pat said with some difficulty as she was hanging halfway off the bed looking for the ring she had dropped on the floor. “And I know because I helped prepare the menu. . . .”

* * *

No need that I should have worried about Rosemary feeling strange, coming back after more than a year away from Notre Dame. She was sitting on the bed later that night in blue pajamas, putting her

black hair into loose pin-curls. We'd been to the "caf" for two-scoop sundaes, but also had quite a share of coke, pretzels and cake—in no special order. The conversation had been sputtering for some time while I tried to write a letter. She finished her hair and crawled beneath the covers.

"Come to bed."

"In a minute."

"You should never write anything at night-get too sentimental. You have an entirely different viewpoint in the morning, at least I do. Who are you writing to, by the way?"

"My mother and father. And I'll get as sentimental as I like." I pushed up the window and leaned out. The wind whipped the treetops but it had stopped snowing. The moon spread its breathtaking light over the whole land, innocent and new as only the first snowfall of the year can make it seem. There wasn't a sound anywhere, yet it was like hearing music.

"How can you sleep on a moonlight night like this, Rose?"

"There are moonlight nights and heavenly nights," she muttered philosophically.

"But this is like Christmas!"

"Bob's at Georgetown, isn't he? Do you see him very often?"

"Every now and then. Why?"

"I just wondered. You haven't said very much about him."

* * *

The sky isn't really black at night-not if you took closely. It was almost blue that other night, so very bright and blue. "We'll have to look at things this way, Marianne," he'd said. "I'm only beginning at Georgetown, and even though after I get into the Foreign Service School, I'll get credit from Officer's Training, there will still be another two-and-a-half years before I graduate. And you should finish college, too." The stars were so bright you could trace out Orion and Cassiopeia's chair and ever so many others. He looked at me and I looked at the moon till I thought I'd go blind. He took my shoulders and kind of shook me. The wind had taken his words and clipped them up so that they came back to me from behind the trees and beyond the moon and were everywhere echoing around me. "I'm blue," I thought to myself.

* * *

"Did you hear me?"

"What, Rosemary, I wasn't listening."

"I'm freezing to death. Come in and close the window."

I pulled the window down and brushed my teeth. Rosemary shivered as I passed by her bed.

“Who told you to bring the icicles with you?”

“They grew on me, so there! ’Night, Rose.”

“’Night, and thanks for everything. It’s wonderful to be back.”

It began to snow again and was still sifting down when I slipped silently out of bed and over to the star-studded window an hour later. I stood there while the flurries of white snow grew thick, and realized that I was cold. But my heart felt warm for a change. I searched the sky—there was no blue. “It won’t be hard to wait,” I thought.

Rosemary was having a good time and after all, the snow was beautiful.

— *Joann Burke* ’48

Originally published in 1947



Cerulean Serenity

— *Alycia Hancock '23, Biology*



Existence

— *Rebecca Malone '22, Biology and Chemistry*

Her Favorite Piece of Art

“There,” she pointed.

In her eyes, he was flawlessly created, in the most beautiful form, perfectly imperfect. A soul that no distance shall rip him away from her. Behind a glass wall, she sits to admire his presence on this earth. A blessing & a curse. Wishing he would notice her pouring heart and teary eyes. The endless hours he had lived recklessly inside her erratic mind. Her favorite piece of art, one she dreams of having to hold and let alone accompany her everywhere she goes. But he sits far, an image she will only continue to observe and wish it was a collection of her own.

— *Malaak Ahmad '25, Nursing*

A Protagonist's Reminiscences

A little tin heart,
I *think*
that is how the line goes.

My end.
The end.
Her end.

And she had come
for me, too.
She *flew*.
But it was too
late. Too
late for you,
my tiny dancer,
my love.

Maybe
if it wasn't for
the goblin,
we could have
married.
Tarrying,
I missed
my chance,
forever.
Never will
I have you.
Never will I
be able to
call you
my *wife*.

But I wasn't meant
to stay in the box
with the
other twenty-four soldiers.
My red and blue
were not

the same, though
we were made
from the same
tin spoon.

But I,
remember,
was missing
a leg.

I *thought*
you
were missing
one too.

With nothing
more to say, I,
once again,
leave you.

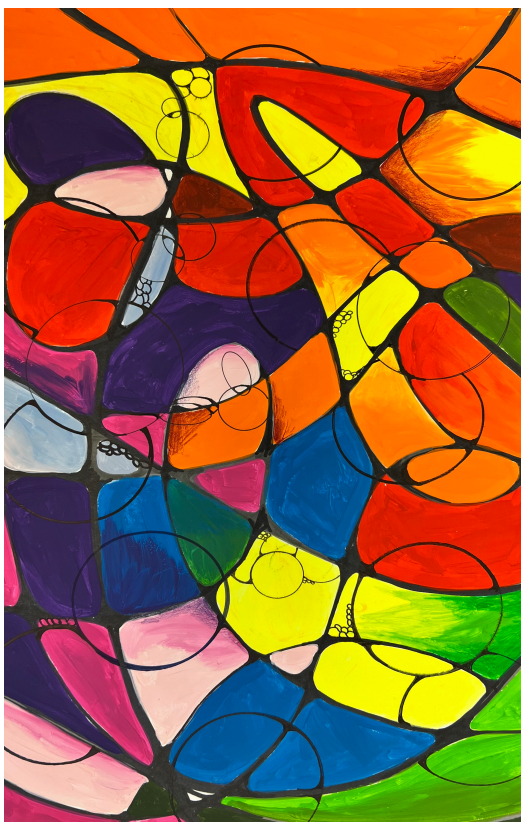
As always,
[Your] Brave Tin Soldier

— *Katelyn Richardson '14*
Originally published in 2012



Sun Sustained

— *Summara Abaid '17, Biology*



Symphony

— *Nazanin Zori '24, Education*

They Each Would Hiss Eventually

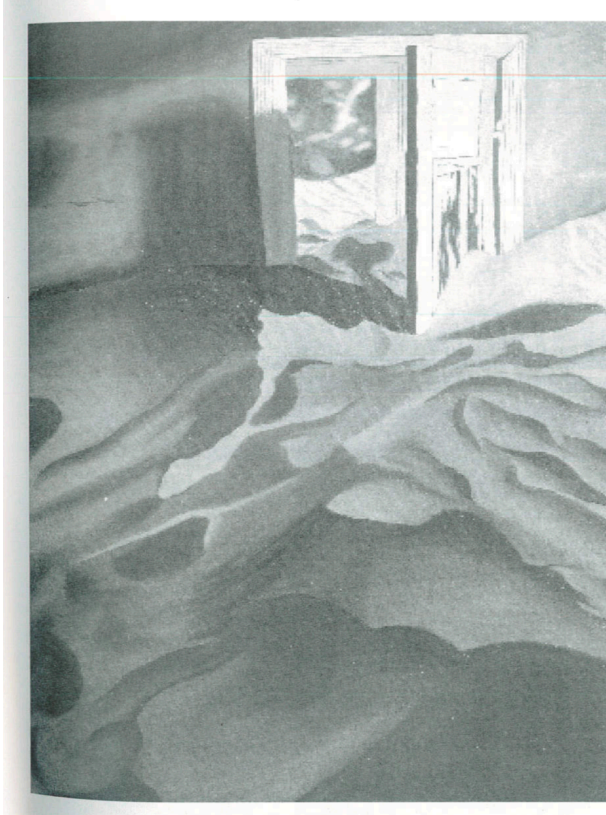
To see what's in the spotlight of deceit,
Observing what's meant to be deceiving,
Meaningful connections are made, and kept neat,
But they each, They Each Would Hiss Eventually.

It's beautiful, the start of a connection, homegrown,
To trust and to sympathize, to feel vulnerable, false sense of safety,
Then to realize the purity was solely a mere reflection of a heart that's
your own,
Because each one, they would, They Each Would Hiss Eventually.

Try as you might, to avoid the reptilian man,
The ones who sibilate while they converse with me,
The ones who switch their faces never exactly knowing when
The ones who hiss, them all, They Each Would Hiss Eventually.

Oh, but there's more than one way to hiss, I must admit,
The sound that arises once air leaves the balloon of life, almost empty,
When the connection is slowly but surely depleting and there's no way
to revive it,
The bonds, the balloons, and all the reptilians, They Each Would Hiss
Eventually.

— *Chrys Foster '25, English*



Sand Storm

— *Katie Conn*

Originally published in 2006

Transcendence

After changing from brown to black, Ashante's skin began to crack. She watched the glorious transformation in the warm glow of her nightlight. She peeked cautiously under her shirt and saw that her belly and breasts had also been affected.

She slipped from under her husband's arm and tiptoed to the bathroom. If Mark woke now, he would curse her like she was nothing. He would be angry at her for leaving his side in the middle of the night and for allowing her skin to get tough and dry. Change frightened him if he had not instituted it.

Ashante was not afraid. The witching woman told her in a dream that freedom was near. "I'm going to open up a window for you, gal, and you fly on away from here." Mark would only try to stop her. He had a doctorate but was still convinced that he could not function alone.

The skin on her feet fell away first, and she flexed her gorgeous talons. Trembling with excitement she stripped flesh from everywhere. She stretched her wings, and the moonlight danced on her silky, silver and gold feathers.

~

Like so many times before, Mark arose with an acidic past stinging his tongue. Despite the open window and the bits of flesh and feather spotting the floor, his only concern was that he could not smell his breakfast cooking.

— *Tawanna Sullivan '95*
Originally published in 1993

Rural Tapestry

They gathered naked
Amongst the sweet green grass
Of the open glen
Humming
Quiet canticle of the fend

Young women
All heavenly created
Each one a different blend
Long, curled, straight, and wavy hair
Some hips wide, others thin
All with different colored skin
From soft pink to ebony bare
And wondrous breasts,
Pert to pendulous fare
The nipples,
Delicate darker button twins
All of contrasting range
Bellies,
Some flat, others round
All leading down
To triangle curly mound

They hum
Each for themselves
Together for intent
While walking in relaxed circumvent
Around and around
Continuous canticle hum

Till when

As one they stop and bend
To grip tight the broadcloth edge
The heavenly-created women
Begin to sing
A melodic grassland chantey
So as to time concerted heave
Up
Goes the trampoline dainty
Beautiful man tossed on high

Like a large limp rag doll
Up
To the cloudless blue sky
Up
Again
And again
As the angelic women sing
A melodic grassland chantey

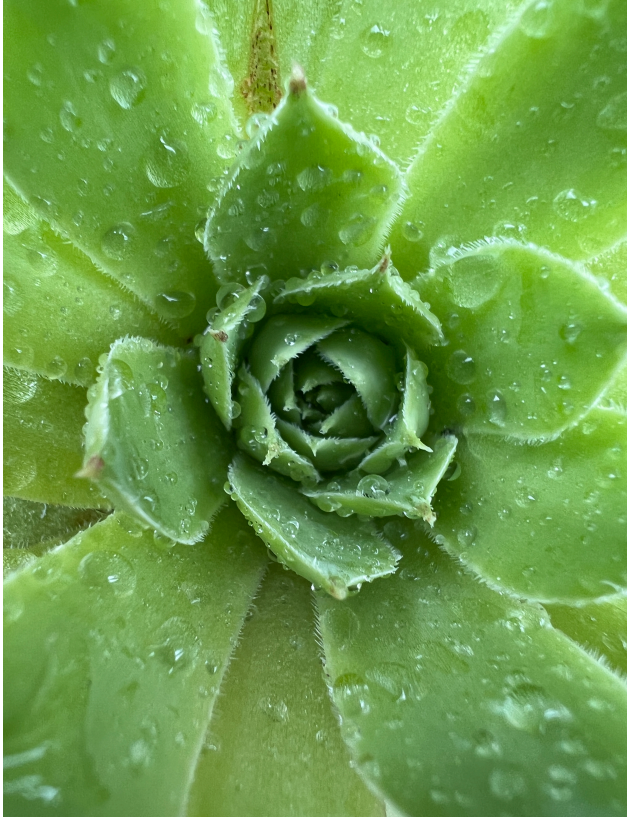
Up
The beautiful handsome man
Like a large limp doll
Up

Till when

A change of singing tempo
To grassland chantey, a lento

The young women,
All heavenly created,
Lowered the hand-gripped linen
And again
Quiet canticle hum
As they slowly turn about
Resolute all,
Walking away
Across the sweet green grass
Of the open glen

— *Guy Trevett, Special Education*



Dewy Succulent

— *Summara Abaid '17, Biology*



Fountain of the Tritons in the Morning

“The Fountains of the Tritons in the Morning” is one part of THE FOUNTAINS OF ROME, a musical composition by Respighi.

The silver bolt of trumpet sound
pierces effervescence of fountain spray.
Pure, straight stream of bound-
less melody rises to a lucid, liquid
height and then, shattering, falls
in crystal drops singing through the depth
of music. Suddenly, violin calls
echo and attenuate the shimmer of tapering
jet-water to a silent, quivering
note.

Tritons and Naiads, in gay, unwary chase
accent the rise and fall of sound and then,
recede into the silver-spraying melody.

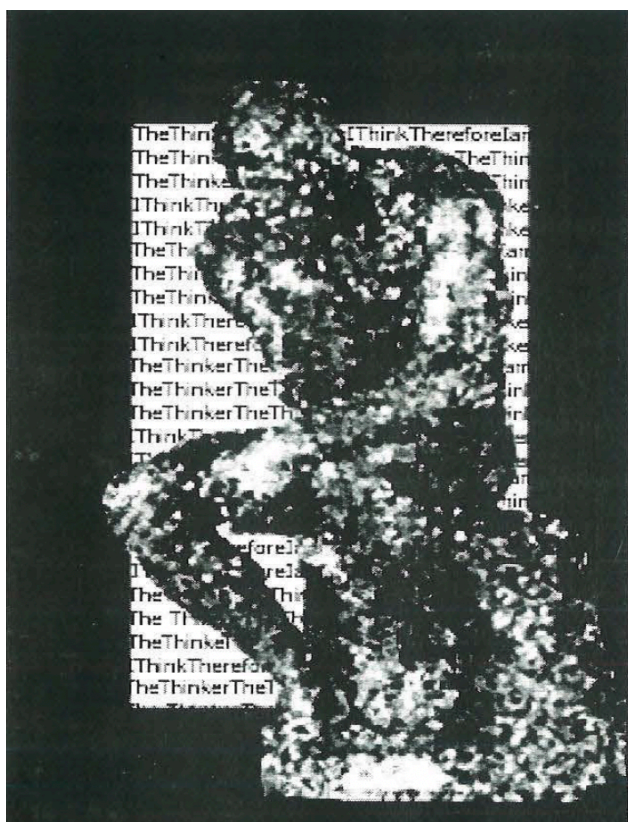
—Noreen Cleary '61
Artwork and poem originally published in 1960

For My Friend The Thinking Man

Eyes cast downward in silence
as quiet contemplation shadows
the chiseled champion.
Taught muscles trying to encase
the warmth of idea in the alcoves
of a breathless bronze body,
stretching to pluck another momentous
Creature of the unknown:
He sits, stooped over the edge of truth.

—*Jessica G. Parton*

Artwork and poem originally published in 2000





Benjamin

— *Andrew Subida '26, Biology*

Someday

One day i was nothing but a slave,
3/5ths of a person!
PROPERTY,
that's what They called me.
Then i was Free, **NO MONEY, NO RIGHTS**, just Free.
After that i was counted as one whole person...
But i had to fight for the right to vote.
Today i have **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY!**...So Today say:
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, i say...
No Way.
SOMEDAY they'll see, **I** say they'll see that
I was always **EQUAL**, in fact more than equal.
You see my people built this land.
My People's Sweat,
My People's Blood,
My People's Strength built this country.
SOMEDAY,
they'll see.
And then **I** will be **FREE!**

— *Carnitra White '91*
Originally published in 1991

on getting my visa

scribble scrabble scribble scratch/ a language/ a language/ a word \
 \not mine\ spit/ bark/ plead/ hack/ a language/ a language/ a
 language that's \\white\\ a strange flavor to my blue tongues/ i /bite
 my lips/ paint them red/ hope the/ shade can mimic/ the language/
 the language/ the home \\not mine\\ promised lands leased to my
 name/ yet/ i am shedding skin/ shredding tongue/ shedding name to \
 \greet you\\ promised land/ promised land/ land not mine/ wrap
 your colors tight 'round my head/ camouflage from the gnashing/ eyes
 of/ burning police \\flashlight\\ hope the flag is enough to cool the/
 sharp silver spice of/my graying hairs/ my/ youthful hairs/ my/ weary
 lines of watered down skin/ my eyes dulled and thin/ look through
 me/ i am yours/ oh/ country/ oh country/ oh country of mine/

take me.

— *Tiara Aragon '27, Communications*

Cherchez La Femme!



*Nous sommes venues à Notre Dame
En poursuivant la Vérité—
Petits enfants cherchant la femme.*

*Nous essayons, comme doit chaque homme, 1
De voir en tout la vraie Beauté—
Nous sommes venues à Notre Dame.*

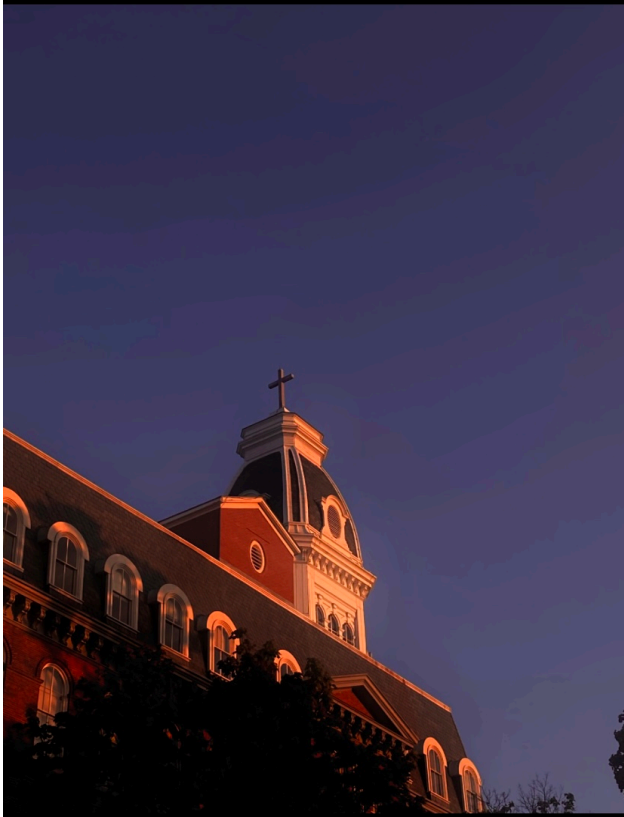
*Nous qui avons péché, nous sommes
A la poursuite de la Pureté—
Petits enfants cherchant la femme.*

*Nous qui avons une grande soif, comme
Tous ceux qui cherchent la vraie Bonté—
Nous sommes venues à Notre Dame.*

*Ici à Notre Dame nous sommes—
Partout cherchant l'Immaculée—
Petits enfants cherchant la femme.*

*Cherchant la vraie Vie de nos âmes
La Vie, la Voie, la Vérité—
Nous sommes venues à Notre Dame:
Petits enfants cherchant la femme.*

— *Sister Mary Michelle '58*
Originally published in 1958



Caroline Sun-kissed

— *Tiffany Mercado '27, Radiologic Sciences*

Burning Sleep to Death

THE RIOTS HIT THE CITY in the spring. For one week, we were kept home by the curfew. Looking out the window, I could see the haze of smoke hanging low over the city, but we were too far away to see much else. The remainder of the riot came to us in glorious color on the television. I could turn and look at the room warm and comfortable in the light, while on the television people raced and burned and defied even my watching. Sometimes, lying in bed when the television was off, I found it hard to believe that all that horror was really going on and I used to get out of bed and look out the window toward the city. In the clear darkness of those nights, I would watch the haze pulse orange and red and I wondered at the silence. It was then that I saw the riots, not interrupted by commercials or programs or station breaks, but steadily, rhythmically pulsating in the night.

Two weeks later, on a windy clear Sunday I took a bus through the city to spend the afternoon at a friend's house. It's interesting to watch the people on a Sunday bus. Out in my section it was mostly old people. They took forever to get on, so slow and careful. As we moved closer to the city, the old people got off and were replaced by the blacks, of all ages. Right past the city line, a woman and three children climbed on. They sat across from me in the sideways seats in the front of the bus. Black children have guarded smiles. They look so serious and worldly next to their mothers. Those three sat passing gum back and forth. They smiled and laughed with each other, but when they felt my eyes, they became old and cautious.

We were entering what had been the riot district. I could tell by the boarded-up windows and the burned-out store fronts. There was still glass and debris on much of the sidewalk. It was a shock to see. I had ridden the bus the entire summer before through these same areas on my way to work. Those stores and buildings had become familiar and so had the people. We rarely spoke, I was still too white, too important, but we laughed together—the fat man who sat on me one day when the bus was crowded, and the tall thin lady whose umbrella trickled a cold stream of water into my shoe. Sometimes we commented on the rain or the crowds or the heat. Sometimes we just smiled. The people now sat stonefaced and the buildings were gone or had windows replaced by freshly bricked walls. There was only one white man left on the bus. He was old and the constant swaying motion had rocked him to sleep. Even the bus driver was black.

We were in one of the real ghetto areas now. My grandmother had once lived only a few blocks away, but she had moved long ago. I pictured white marble steps, shiny wood floors and a strange

cemented back yard with a tall board fence. As I grew older, I was allowed less and less to leave the yard. It was a long time before they could convince my grandmother to move. Her home became the neighborhood pool hall, but she was never told.

I remembered seeing pictures on television of this whole street, flanked by National Guardsmen in gas masks walking in straight, even rows like an invading army. I tried to imagine it like that with no cars or buses or people, but I couldn't. All I could see were the cement-blocked windows and the shiny steel meshing over the doors.

"Hell, man, why should I be afraid of her?"

The sound came from the back of the bus and I recognized the voice of a black man I had watched climb on a few miles before. He had tripped on the last step and his movement to the back had been a series of stumbles from one seat to the next, grinning and laughing the whole while.

"Look, man, what I got to be afraid of? You hear? You see if I be afraid of her."

The *her* had a namelike sound and sitting in the front of the bus in my yellow coat, with my blonde hair I felt conspicuous. And when he stood up I suddenly felt white, glaringly white; I knew that he was moving up the aisle toward me.

"Hey, sweetheart," he said, "d'you throw this at me?"

He was sitting as close to me as he could and his words came carefully and so taut that I was afraid any movement I made would break them. And I could only sense what they enclosed. He had shoved a crumpled paper cup in my face and was moving it slowly back and forth in front of my eyes. I could smell his breath.

"Hey, baby, d'you hear me? I asked you a question. Someone threw this paper at me and you look like the likeliest one. Answer me, you hear!" The paper cup had stopped moving.

I looked at the three children sitting across from me. They were all watching blankly, easily, with one hand on the volume and the other on the selector to tune me out if the show became boring. Their mother was no different nor was anyone else on that bus. And yet, my eyes kept forming over and over again the "help, help" that sounded so loud inside my head.

I felt the jerking motion of the bus as it stopped and with a rush of relief turned to the driver. But he had turned in his seat and was watching with the same blank expression. Outside that bus there seemed to me to be a hundred of the same black, blank faces.

"Sweetheart," the sound brought me back, "did you hear me? I asked if you threw this at me?"

I told myself he was drunk, and I did not need to tell myself what he was doing.

"No, I didn't ... sir."



His mouth opened in a slow spreading leer, and with a motion as if he were picking up the foulest of materials, he tossed the paper cup in my face and turned. The sound of laughter and clapping from the back burned in me. All I could see was that paper lying heavily in my lap. With two fingers I picked it up and extending my arm very straight, dropped it in the aisle.

“Hey, man, she insulted you!”

“Yeh, man, you gonna let her get away with that?”

“Hey, man. Hey, man. Hey, man ... man ... man.”

He had turned slowly and stared at me. And with my breath coming in short unequal gasps, I stared back. The only sound in that bus was my choked breathing.

“What’s wrong, whitey, you scared? No one to help you out, is there?”

He stopped. The sound of my breathing stopped and it seemed like a long time.

“You know what?” he finally said, and he laughed. “You’s colored. Yeh, that right, you’s the colored one now.”

And smiling slowly, he walked proud and straight amid the laughter to the back of the bus.

For about three minutes, I could not see. When my sight finally cleared, all I had before me were the eyes of those children still staring. To avoid their look, I raised my eyes to watch the buildings gliding past the bus above their heads. There, moving by in fluid unawareness, was the black-charred frame of a house. On what remained of the second floor, two boys were precariously lowering a water-stained chair to a black woman standing below, beside a small pile of whatever else was salvageable.

— *Mary Young* '70

Artwork and short story originally published in 1969



hydrant

— *Tiara Aragon '27, Communications*

Vagabond

THE sound of a cane thump-thumping on the gravel path came clearly to us. We knew who it was. Once a week the old man appeared, always in the same tattered clothing, always at the same time, always alone. As the sound drew nearer we opened the door to welcome him. After he had seated himself at the kitchen table, he placed the cane against the radiator—his usual gesture—and still not deviating from routine, opened the conversation in the customary way.

“Soup,” he began, “is the finest thing a man can find to eat. Are you going to serve me soup, Mrs. Long?”

Quickly Mother responded by placing a bowl of steaming broth before him. A few minutes silence, then a longing glance from an empty dish to a boiling kettle.

Thus went the meal, every word and act accompanying it according to the old man’s self-made ritual. We were prepared to hear his “Thank you and good-day to you,” when, instead of rising, he pushed his chair back a little, folded his hands, and settled himself comfortably. His expression was that of a little boy—wistful yet serene.

“My dear Mrs. Long, and you, little children, I’m going to tell you a story. Oh! it’s not important at all—perhaps not even interesting. But first, I thank you for all your kindness. It’s been a year that I’ve been coming here, hasn’t it? ... I thought so. A year today. And not one of you youngsters has asked questions! You’ve trained them well, Mrs. Long ...

“My name is Martin-Martin Nolan, if you’re interested in names. I’ve travelled farther than you, my lad (pointing to me), will ever dream. What if much of it was over the same road? It always looked different. A tree would be green and blowing one day, then snow would fall like magic to make it white and still. It’s been many years now since I haven’t done anything but wander. A job here, a little work there, enough to keep me in clothes, that’s all I wanted. The rest has come by itself ... I like to see little babies sprawling in the sun. They look up and laugh at me, and that makes me happy ... Once I wrote a love letter for a young man ... Perhaps because I say so little, just eat when I come here, you think I don’t talk or listen? Woman, I hear what your sons don’t hear—the ache and fear in your heart of what the world may do to them. And you, my boys, I hear the dreams you speak of quietly to one another—dreams of castles, and knights, and lovely ladies. Aye, I hear. The good, the kind, everywhere—and sometimes a little of the sad!

“A year ago I first came to eat at this table. Every week I have been back. You thought it simply because of my old age? No, no indeed. I

came because it's warm here, even on the coldest days—even if fires have gone out—because there is love here. Everywhere I go there is love. That is why I don't stay still. There is always more to find. And now I've found enough ...

“You see, when I was young—about twenty-five, perhaps—my mother died. When she left me, she said: ‘Martin, love is all I have to give you. Cherish it. Remember it is the beginning and end of everything.’ She might not have said any more if I, child that I was, had not burst into bitter tears at the thought of years without her. She heard my heart and whispered: ‘Don't, son. It won't be so hard—not if you use well the love I give you. It must not be kept selfishly, but be spread everywhere far and wide, so that you may find it coming back to you from all directions. And don't forget that Love itself is calling me. I've earned it, son, and the day will come when you will have earned it too.’

“Her words puzzled me until one day I saw the meaning clearly. That love she gave me I scattered everywhere I went, and sometimes I travelled back to see how it was growing. Now I've gathered in more than she gave—enough to give hers back to her, and pass some on to you—and so I know that at last I too have earned Love's call, as she promised.”

So speaking, the man stood, none too steadily as he whispered a few words of grace in thanksgiving for his food. Then slowly with a goodbye-smile to each, he shuffled out the door and down the path until in the distance he was lost from sight. A strange spell was over us. We scarcely spoke that day for somehow we knew that he was right—we would never see him again

That evening, Dad on returning home from his office, told us a tramp had died that afternoon in the village—
of old age, the doctors said. None of us spoke,
but in every heart there was the question:
“A tramp?” “Of old age?”

— *Gretchen Hartmann* '36
Originally published in 1935

Lightning's Bunk

I'll clean and organize the games bin every day, go through and take all the beads out of the trouble box.

I'll put them each away and reorganize the beads in the bracelet-making container. The string is usually undone and knotted, and I don't mind sitting down and untangling it.

You'll make a collection of garbage scraps that have made it into the craft bin. Sometimes it's hard to discern the art from the scraps of paper and trash but I've gotten good at it.

I'll make a pile of the artwork and tomorrow you'll ask them to take what's theirs home with them, but most will end up living with me forever. How could I get rid of it?

I don't mind taking the extra hour or so after to wipe everything down.

You and I have gone through so many Clorox wipes I couldn't count. I don't paint my nails because constant exposure to bleach and chlorine makes it pointless. Every surface, if they touch it, gets wiped. The walls, the toys, each pawn in each game.

I'll take my time and move all the furniture back to its original position but not touch the plastic tablecloth fort built in the corner.

You'll collect all discarded clothes, tiny t-shirts and tiny swimsuits and tomorrow I'll make sure to find who their rightful owner is and make sure they are safely in their backpack.

Missing water bottles are usually found now too. I will always wipe down the board and draw a new message for tomorrow.

But on particularly bad days, you sit with me quietly as I close the bunk door at the end of the day and cry. You say it's hard not to internalize everything we see. Our campers who come in late after chemo, the medical emergencies we calmly handle and the tears and fears of our campers who are a little too familiar with the concept of dying. You make me talk till I get it all out and then you'll make me laugh before we leave, and I'd do anything to make tomorrow the best it can be.

— *Holly Hand '25, English*

Mommas Fool

My momma did her finest
She came to every game
Always at back-to-school night
Anything you could name
She kept everything tidy and right

My momma was cold and rigid too
Emotions weren't her cup of tea
I needed a safe space to unpack me
"Depressed with a roof over your head?"
How can you be so out of touch
I'm playing with scissors on my bed
But yes, of course, you "know" me
Inconsistent responses to my needs
And fragile parts

My momma was the first woman
To break my heart
Only for me to chase the same women
Trying to steal a taste of sweet strawberries
From the same sour lemons.

— *Jy'India Lester '25, Nursing*



Wanderlust

— *Rebecca Malone '22, Biology and Chemistry*

The Anchor

I was flipping crab cakes in a frying pan when a voice behind me said, “Hi, Liz.”

A crab cake slid off the spatula into the pan, and grease splattered up onto my shirt. I had not heard Shelly’s voice for eight months and did not know when I would hear it again, so I thought at first I had imagined it. But I turned around, and there was Shelly standing on the back porch with her nose pressed against the screen.

She stepped into the kitchen and it could have been one of hundreds of afternoons when she arrived home just in time to eat dinner but not in time to prepare it. She was barefoot, wearing cut-offs and a tee shirt with “Ocean City” printed across it. Her brown hair had been cropped short. I didn’t see a suitcase. (Later, when we were sitting on my bed talking, she told me she had left it on the back porch just in case she wanted to leave.)

“Shelly,” I said. “Well ... Shelly, I can’t ... how are you?” I concluded.

She grinned. “A-Okay.”

We stood awkwardly, as sisters sometimes do. Then Shelly held out her arms, and I smiled and hugged her. It seems that Shelly has always taken the lead.

“I thought I’d turn eighteen next week without you here to help me celebrate,” I said, grinning. Shelly laughed raucously. Then she sniffed. “Do I smell—”

“Crab cakes,” I said. “And we’re having potato salad, too.”

“My favorite,” Shelly said. “My homecoming dinner.” She reached up and fluffed her hair. “Do you like it short? It was getting to be a real pain long. What’s Mama going to say? She always liked it long.” She paused. “Where is Mama ... and Dad?”

I heard a gasp behind me, and that answered where Mama was.

“Shelly, baby,” she said, and ran over and threw her arms around Shelly.

“Frank,” Mom called. “Frank, get into this kitchen, now.”

Shelly protested. “Mama, not yet.”

“Hush,” Mom said.

I heard Dad grumbling in the hallway. “Ellen, dammit, can’t I even read the—” He stopped when he saw Shelly. He stared at her and scratched his upper lip. “You still make me mad as hell,” he said, then he smiled slightly. Shelly kissed and hugged him, and he hugged her back.

The Prodigal Daughter returns. The good child finishes dinner and will probably get stuck with the dishes, too.

Dinner was full of “Shelly, I’ve missed you” and “Shelly, you shouldn’t have left like that.”

Shelly mostly smiled and apologized.

“Mama,” she said, “how did you know I was coming home tonight? You planned my favorite dinner.”

“Sweetie,” Mom said, “you don’t deserve your favorite dinner. But I’m glad I made it, anyway.”

Actually, we have lots of crab dishes in the summer. We live in a small town just outside of Ocean City, a resort in Maryland where crabs are plentiful. But I wanted to think of that dinner as a good omen. Shelly was back, and perhaps now she would steer her life smoothly along with the rest of us.

Of course, when Shelly left, there was nothing smooth or calm about her departure. It was January, and Shelly had just finished her first semester at Salisbury State College with mostly “C” grades. We were all going out to dinner when Shelly announced she was not going back to school the following semester.

This did not surprise me. After Shelly graduated from high school, she worked at the local Dairy Queen for a year, content for the time to do nothing else. My father begged her to try college. He wanted both his daughters to be college graduates. He didn’t have to convince me. I wanted to go because I wanted to teach. But Shelly didn’t want to go to college.

“You don’t know what you want to do,” he said. “At least get some education while you decide.”

Shelly relented, but not to please our father. She agreed to try the school twenty minutes away because she was bored with making hamburgers and sundaes and wanted a change. So, she worked at Dairy Queen part-time and commuted to college.

“After one semester, you’re quitting?” my father asked after Shelly told him. “Dammit, Shelly, what are you going to do, fry hot dogs the rest of your life?”

Shelly sighed. “Dad, I don’t like school. I never have. It’s a waste of your money.”

“School is never a—”

“It is for me,” Shelly interrupted. “It’s not for someone who likes it, like Liz.”

The disagreement grew worse. It seemed that Shelly hated just about everything, except us. She was in a rut. No, my father said, she was spoiled. The argument expanded to include Dad’s displeasure with Shelly’s recent boyfriends and her late hours and Shelly’s claims of not being understood or appreciated.

“Everything can’t be perfect, Shelly,” he shouted, and stormed out the door. Mom and I followed hesitantly. Shelly remained in the house.

We ate our chicken specials in silence. There was a note on the kitchen table when we returned.

*The only thing I don't hate right now is you
all. I need a change of pace. Wouldn't you like
me to like everything again? I'll let you know
where I am.*

*Love,
Shelly*

Dad said, “She just went to spend the night at a friend’s house. Don’t worry, Ellen.” I thought the same thing. This disagreement hadn’t been any worse than past ones.

But Mom came out of Shelly’s room almost crying. “Frank, half her summer clothes are gone. It’s January! What does that mean? Her summer clothes—what does that mean?”

After two days went by without Shelly, I drove into Ocean City to see her most recent ex-boyfriend.

Tony was from Baltimore but lived in Ocean City year-round. Tony loved Ocean City during the off-season because it gave him a lot of time to work on a novel he was writing. In January, Ocean City was more like a ghost town than a resort area. Even many of the shops and restaurants that remained open past the summer peak and into the fall gave up the pretenses of life and went into hibernation in January. But some places remained open all year, and Tony worked in such a restaurant.

Tony was making a cheese sandwich for lunch. “Well, Howdy, Lizzie,” he said. “What’s up, or down?” he chuckled.

“Have you seen Shelly?”

“What’s that girl done now,” he said. It wasn’t a question as much as a statement. Shelly always seemed to be doing something worth commenting on.

“She just left the other night,” I said. “But she didn’t tell us where she was going on her little vacation.”

Tony poured himself a glass of milk. “That Shelly,” he said fondly. They always parted amicably. Shelly was the antithesis to the idea that old boyfriends or lovers couldn’t be friends.

“You know what she lives like?” he said. “A whirlwind. She’s the personification of a whirlwind.” He opened a bag of potato chips. “No, I haven’t seen her. And I haven’t talked to anyone who has mentioned seeing her.”

“Well, she’ll turn up,” I said.

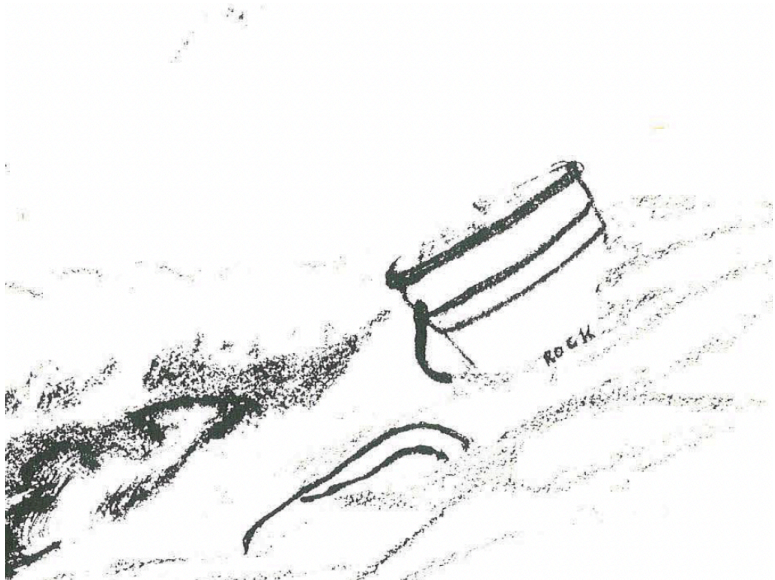
“Liz, I wouldn’t drive up and down Coastal Highway looking for her. She knows so many people in Ocean City—it seems like she knows so many people everywhere—I wouldn’t know where to start.”

He was right. Shelly knew what seemed like an inexhaustible number of people. After she cultivated a friendship, she didn’t try to keep it alive. The other person always did. Everyone adored Shelly, especially my father, even though he spent so much time arguing with her. They liked her and found her pert and bubbly and charming. Did anyone find her childishness and raucousness irritating? Did she bother anyone with her impetuosity? No one—except possibly me.

Shelly seemed popular with everyone. She wasn’t particularly striking, but she was pretty, in a selfish sort of way, with straight brown hair to her waist, dimples, and hazel eyes. People liked to be around her. She could save dying conversations and always remembered people’s names. She made them feel at ease and added sparks of life wherever she was.

Shelly was the one to invite to a party. Shelly was the one you could count on take a dare. She was the one to stir up excitement because no one could match her impulsiveness.

But she had to come home sometime. And the characteristics that delighted others at parties and school brought disapproval and headaches at home. Living with Shelly was quite different than just spending a few hours with her.



When she would return home from a night out with friends during high school, she would pull off a twig from a pine tree and chew it to get rid of the smell of beer or rum on her breath before coming in the house. She would kiss my parents goodnight and walk slowly up the stairs to bed. I'm not sure if they ever knew she was out drinking. But I always knew. Her friends saw her as wild and lively. Her friends got all the enjoyment out of the evenings. But I got the mornings with Shelly in the bathroom, trying to help her recover from the hangovers, bringing her coffee and adding blush to her cheeks to keep it a secret from my parents.

I always watched Shelly moving ahead of me like a whirlwind, while I passed through smoothly, like the calm after the storm. I always felt like background music, while Shelly's life was the plot, earning all the attention. How could I expect to be noticed first with Shelly so loudly in front of me?

I was waiting for disaster, waiting to help pick her up, but disaster never came. Through broken curfews and broken romances, it never came. She got a heart tattoo on her shoulder, picked up all kinds of stray animals from the side of the road and brought them home, planted a marijuana plant in my mother's vegetable garden to see if she would notice, but everything turned out all right in the end. Punished or not, whatever Shelly did worked out.

I watched her go through life oblivious to feelings of doubt or hesitancy, while I minced along cautiously, planning every step. I watched her with mixed emotions. If I had to grow up and handle responsibility, it wasn't fair that Shelly stayed behind and had everyone smiling at her like indulgent parents. I wanted her to fall now so that I could help her up before it was too late, but I also wanted her to miss every disaster because I loved her.

The next day Shelly called from Baltimore. I was at work and my father was walking the dog when she called. But my mother recited the conversation.

Shelly was staying with Sylvia, a friend who she met last summer when Sylvia was working in a crab house in Ocean City.

She was fine. She was sorry she had left so abruptly. But actually, she had been planning to visit Sylvia next month anyway.

She loved us all and she apologized again. She might get a job in Baltimore, if she could find anything decent.

No, she was not going back to school. And she was not coming home. Yet.

She was twenty years old, so what could anyone do? My father was sure she would be home by the end of the month. Already, their brittle words were forgotten, or at least softened to the point where the disagreement was not worth dwelling on.

We missed Shelly. So did it seemed, much of the surrounding area.

Shelly hadn't told anyone she was leaving. The phone calls came, scattered over the next few weeks. Tony called. A few others from Ocean City. People she worked with at Dairy Queen. New acquaintances from college.

"She's not home? When will she be back?"

"I don't exactly know," I would mumble.

A chuckle from the other end. "Unpredictable, isn't she? Well, tell her I said hello when she gets back."

Even after Shelly had been gone a few months, a forlorn caller or two would occasionally ask for her.

"She's not around? I'll try another time. I was just thinking of her ..."

No one, it seemed, permanently severed ties with Shelly. Shelly called again the second week of February. This time I answered the phone. Now she was in Wildwood, New Jersey, another resort area. I should have realized that Shelly wouldn't transplant herself in Ocean City. Ocean City was packed with people asserting their independence and breaking away from home. But to Shelly, it was part of home.

She had two part-time jobs, one at a seafood restaurant and another at a souvenir shop. She would start working at the shop at the end of March. She decided not to stay in Baltimore because she could not find a job she liked.

"Lizzie, are Mama and Dad mad at me?" she asked, rather timidly for Shelly.

"No, Shelly," I said. "They miss you."

"Let me talk to Mama first." I handed the phone to Mom.

"Shelly," Mom said, "are you all right? ... Where can I reach you?" She frowned. "I don't want a box office number. Where are you living? ... For God's sake, Shelly, we won't come charging down there to drag you home. You're too old for that ... Even if you don't have a phone— ... I promise we won't come ... All right, I'll take the box office number ... I love you, too ... But let me know where you're living the next time you call ... Here's your father."

My father cleared his throat and then picked up the phone.

"Shelly? ... I'm sorry, too. We always argue too much ..." He laughed. "I remember that ... I wanted to strangle you with your pigtales ... Do you need any money? ... Why don't you come— ... I love you, too ... The dog is fine. He's still sleeping at the foot of your bed ... All right ... Take care."

No, he said, she was not coming home. Yet.

We heard from her infrequently, mostly by letters. I know my parents were tempted to drive to New Jersey and talk to her. But what was the use? She was not ready to come home. They waited for Shelly to make the first move. Like always, we wanted for Shelly to take the lead.

But now it was August and here was Shelly. She smiled and chewed her crab cakes and took three helpings of potato salad. Her short hair made her look like a pixie. That, and having lost about ten pounds on her already thin frame made her look younger.

After Baltimore, she said, she took a bus to Wildwood to visit Marlene. I had forgotten about Marlene, her closest friend in high school. The summer after high school, Marlene went with her family to Wildwood for the summer. Marlene decided to stay when they returned home on Labor Day. Now she helped manage a tiny restaurant there.

Marlene helped get Shelly the job in the seafood restaurant. Life starts to slowly creep back into resort towns in March, so Shelly was able to line up the job in the souvenir shop. She lived with Marlene until the end of February, and then found a small one bedroom apartment for herself.

She liked the jobs and the people she met. But she told her supervisors in July that she would be leaving in August.

“What made you decide to come home?” I asked.

“Lizzie, how could I miss your birthday?” she said. “I’m taking you out on the town.” Then she added casually, as she lit a cigarette, “Besides, I start school in September.”

We stared at her. She took a deep drag of her cigarette. “I know you’re all shocked,” she said. “But I was thinking of taking some business courses—look how well Marlene is doing even without college—I could go into management. I already applied and they accepted me back at Salisbury. And if my grades are better, I want to transfer to University of Maryland next year.”

No one else spoke. “I know you think this is spur of the moment,” Shelly continued. “But it’s not. I’m very sincere. I’ve saved almost enough money for two semesters so you won’t have to use your money on something you think is a waste.” She stopped chattering.

My father said, “Shelly, that’s good news. But is it what you want to do?”

Shelly nodded.

So Shelly and I would both be at Salisbury in September. She would be leading the way again.

Mom and I did the dishes while Dad and Shelly had a father-daughter talk in the living room.

“Well, the big homecoming went well, didn’t it?” I said as I splashed the soap suds around.

My mother smiled, but didn’t say anything.

“She’s reckless as hell, but she always lands on her feet,” I said, and scrubbed a dish harder.

“Because she always lands here,” my mother said. “Liz, do you really think she’ll finish college? With all her false starts, she’ll probably be thirty if she does.”

Mom put her hand on my shoulder. “Shelly does everything so fast, so reckless, she can’t get out of the tailspin. She needs a . . . an anchor somewhere.” She started drying again.

I watched the soap bubbles popping in the water. I always thought of myself as watching Shelly in the forefront, feeling like a loose thread attached to her life. I never thought of her looking behind for me.

I remember when our father taught us both to swim. He would watch us practice back and forth across the pool. Shelly doing a fast, silly crawl while I took strong, steady strokes.

“Shelly,” my father would say, “Slow down. You’ll tire yourself out.”

“But I’ll get there faster,” Shelly would reply.

“But you’ll never get any distance, build up your endurance that way. You’ll have to keep stopping for a rest.” He bent down closer to the pool. “Suppose we were in Ocean City and you got stuck way out in the ocean. If you swam like that, you’d tire yourself out and never get to shore. Then what would you do?”

Shelly grinned and turned around to look at me. “Lizzie swims strong,” she said. “She would save me.”

My father would sigh and shake his head. I would grin back at Shelly.

Was it so bad to be the steady one?

I would always be the steady one. All the phone calls would start coming when people found that Shelly was back. And she would rush out again, wild and impetuous, while I stayed behind, watching, waiting, never cutting the thread.

No one expected more. Now, not even me.

— *Diane Spedden '81*

Artwork and short story originally published in 1981



Peace

— *Alycia Hancock '23, Biology*

A Good Daughter Always Stays

It's an instant
quick
as you realize
you're out the door

Struggle against
the sun
the knocking
(three times fast)
it's over and over and it
never stops

I knew myself in
grades behind
and caught up
unwinding
Knowing better
Pull it loose
(the water's off)

They said two years
after the room was ours
the leak overflowed,
cresting
the low wall
(were there walls at all?)

I dread the
daily course of embarrassing
myself
How it feels
to look back and say
I have no idea who
that girl is
standing inside me

I peeled the layers loose
I left them for you to find
I think I died when I was 16
I was wound up, so tight
My teeth shot a
county over
Popping
(the noise never stops)

I have to be sick the rest of my life
I hate that I have to
be
the daughter that
Always stays

I rot from the inside out
Knowing there's no way off
the path and there's a
Long way
to go

— *Rachel Ann Jones '13 English, '24 Leadership in TESOL*



Eternal Passage of Time

— *Rebecca Malone '22, Biology and Chemistry*
Originally published in 2022-2023

In a galaxy far

In a galaxy far, far away lives my warmest memories.
I hide in them when it gets cold at school, and I think of them often.
I am reminded of them in everything and can't help but think of how
they are doing in school.
I appreciate how in the summer my hardest paperwork was a roster of
children who could swim in the deep end and who couldn't, and my
notes were attendance for the day and if they brought a lunch or not.
I yearn for those days when I face astronomy homework.
My most difficult problem being the fairness of who can use the fort in
the bunk and who gets to stay back from a swim.
I spend my weekends now with the counselor whom my campers were
convinced I was dating
and maybe they were right.
When I sit in a cold classroom all I manage to think is how if I were still
there, I would have to take my jacket off and warm up one of my kids,
and when it rains, I think of taking out my raincoat but still being
drenched because one of my kids needed it more.
I bask in lunchtime when my campers would nap in my lap after eating
because the pool tired them out.
Getting dressed in the morning all I had to remember was if I had to
wear a swimsuit or not. How I miss days of tie-dye shirts and shorts
with big spacious pockets. My walkie-talkie clipped to my belt bag,
pockets filled with candy and temporary tattoos.
Days when my backpack was filled with toys and sunscreen, Band-Aids,
and a clipboard. Now only remnants of glitter and string tied to it live
on.
Nobody asks me to play Uno or if they can hold my hand walking
somewhere.
I see their absence everywhere.
I sleep in my tie-dye now and keep the banner they made me on their
last day above my dresser and I count the months till June.

— *Holly Hand '25, English*

A Slice of Bread

She grasped the crusts of bread in fingers aged
to bony tentacles. They crunched like sea
shells brittle in the waves. Those years when she
had walked the shore, her mind had only gauged
the time, by blare of foghorns. They would pace
a quickened throbbing in her skin, until
all memories of night, as dark, and chill
as loneliness, were driven from her face.

The Captain's terns and sandpipers would splice
the cottage air with salty wings. They fled
her outstretched hands and scattered at her scold
to greedy gulls.

And in the winter ice
she watched them peck her only slice of bread.

He'd want them never hungry in the cold.

— *Pat Emory '77*
Originally published in 1976



Mile Marker

— *Tiara Aragon '27, Communications*

The Shed

In the winter, I hang out in a shed. Literally a shed. It doesn't look like much from the outside; its front-facing window cradles a sun-bleached sign that says "Find us on Facebook," although I'm not sure you really can. Inside these four walls is an ecosystem teeming with life. It doesn't matter how hard the wind blows or how cold the humid Baltimore air is when it hits your face; inside the shed is warm. It smells like sap, wood, holly, and honey; it smells like Christmas. The shed is a marketplace, where women discuss the cost of supplies, decide on pricing, clack on the keys of an old cash register, and smile when someone offers cash instead of card, a rare occurrence in our modern world. The shed is a workshop where my grandmother and her "elves" craft beautiful handmade wreaths for families and businesses alike.

On the floor is an old Golden Retriever, whose main purpose in this ecosystem is to sleep in front of the space heater. Her name is Garland and despite her silver whiskers and sleep schedule, she is quite spry. When she hears the lid of the cookie jar open, she bolts to life and follows unsuspecting patrons in their vehicles hoping for the drop of a crumb or a milk bone. She "stands guard" as friends new and old wander in and out of the shed placing orders, weighing holly berries, and observing the army of bright-colored bows hung in rows from the ceiling like icicles.

"You can pick anyone you want," my grandma calls out to a guest at the door, staring in awe at the rows of bows. This is a big decision to make—the bow decides the rest of the wreath, which type of holly, which colored ornaments or pine cones, or, if you're really feeling courageous, dried okra. She decides on a gold bow. Grandma jots down the woman's ideas on a spiral notebook and tells her she'll give her a call when it's ready. It is ready within 30 minutes.

Behind the register is a collage of photos, curled at the edges from years of intense heat and cold in the shed. The photos are mostly of my grandmother's dogs over the years, but there are some of family, of weddings and babies, and loved ones who are no longer with us. The board shows over 30 years of life operating out of this shed: wreaths made, sketches drawn by my late grandfather, beers cracked open, storms, sunshine, birth, and death, all moving to the hum of an old radio collecting dust.

—*J.H Newman '24, Education*

Wonder Woman and Captain America

It's superhero day today, and they are in full costume. He has a mask, but he wears it on his forehead so we can see it's him under there. He's carrying around a real metal shield that he lets me hold. I can lift it even though I am only six. I wonder if it's real. She wears a red, blue, and gold flowy dress and Wonder Woman's golden crown. She looks like a princess, but when I tell her that, she says she prefers super strength.

Maybe they secretly do have superpowers. I mean she always knows what to do when I fall and hurt myself, and he always knows the right words to make me feel strong again. I see them run around to make my day perfect.

They have to at least have telekinesis. I see them have conversations with just their eyes. I mean it makes total sense because he always knows where I left my lunch, and she gives me a snack before I even know I'm hungry.

I thought about it more at the pool today. They stood on opposite sides making sure we were all safe. She kept the crown on but stood in her swimsuit, ready to save the day. He paced circles around, watching, still in the cape, playing games with me.

Today, we played dodgeball on the turf, and Wonder Woman and Captain America played on the same team. I used her as a shield. She towered over me, and I watched her get all the big kids out on the other team as she high-fived me and then Captain America. I sat down on the side as my energy started to dwindle. I only have so much in me these days, and I grow more and more tired.

I must have fallen asleep. I feel her pick me up and carry me across the field. My chin rested on Wonder Woman's shoulder and her arms wrapped around me tight. Captain America checks to see if I'm awake and I give him a sleepy smile. He pats me on the back and tells me to get some rest. Her super strength carries me back and I fall asleep once more.

She waves goodbye, and he smiles as I'm leaving, and I think superheroes are real.

— *Holly Hand '25, English*

The Dragon Fly

(Translation of “La demoiselle” from the French of Théophile Gautier.)

Over heather, sparkling through,
 Bright with dew,
Over each wild blooming rose,
Over shadows of the hedge,
 On the edge
Of the path where barberry grows.

Toward a delicate and sweet
 Marguerite,
Who in dreaming leans and clings.
Waves of rye which bend and stand
 Here are fanned
By the wind’s capricious wings.

Over fields and hills that wind,
 There inclined,
Toward the meadows in full bloom
With their garlands quaint and pure,
 Toward the moor,
Past an elm in lonely gloom.

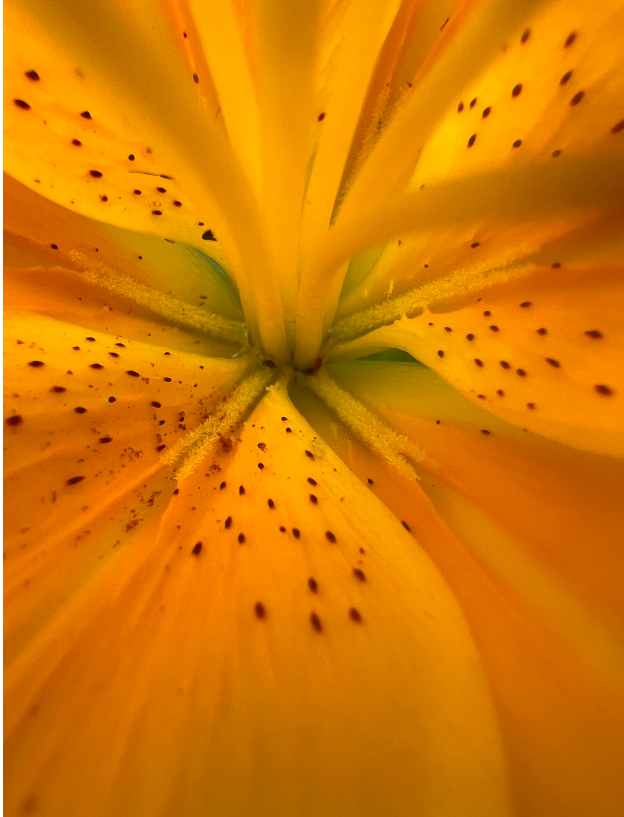
Flying thus she rocks and twists.
 If the mists
Should be torn, bright blue will swell
The break. In the golden beam
 She will gleam
As a glance of Ariel.

Swifter than the breeze can whirl,
 She will twirl
In her mad, capricious flight.
Willows bend from banks much higher
 To admire
Their sad brows in streams so bright.

Woodlands sing; plains are near;
 Fresh and clear
Rainbow waters; hills of blue;
Rolling clouds shield Heaven's face.
 Now a space
Where the mountain rocks pierce through.

Here is her immense domain,
 Where quite vain
She parades. The flowers hurl
Hues of green and rose, as dye.
 The dragon fly
Seems an iridescent pearl.

— *Donelle Shannon '45*
Originally published in 1943



Speckled Sparks

— *Summara Abaid '17, Biology*



Carrier of Divine Blessings

— Yvonne Mutshipayi '24, *Instructional Leadership for Changing Populations*

More Than What You See

Listen

When you see me walk
It's more than a pretty face walking
When you see me dance
It's more than a happy soul dancing

Listen

When you see me laugh
It's more than a free spirit laughing
When you see me talk
It's more than a loud voice talking

Listen

It's power talking
It's wisdom laughing
It's glory dancing
It's grace walking

Listen, it's more than what you see
It's a wonder, it's a miracle
It's a treasure in an earthly vessel
It's a costly pearl of priceless value
Listen, it's more than what you see

When you see me move
It's more than bare feet moving
It's goodness moving in the room
It's peace saturating the atmosphere
It's joy overflowing like a river
Listen, it's more than what you see

When you see me come
It's more than a broken body coming
When you see me go
It's more than a fragile body going
It's me, a carrier of divine blessings
Yes, a carrier of wealth and wisdom
A sacred body of miracles
A vessel loaded with power
A temple full of light

A head crowned with solutions
Listen, it's more than what you see

When you see me rise
It's more than a healing body rising
When you see me rest
It's more than a tired body resting
When you see me cry
It's more than a sad soul crying

It's light waiting to shine in the midst of darkness
It's glory waiting to break forth like the dawning of a new day
It's hope waiting to rise out of the pit of despair
It's healing waiting to find expression in the sea of brokenness

Listen, it's more than what you see
It's greatness on the way to happen
It's a miracle about to unfold
It's a blessing in the making
It's me
Yes, me, a carrier of divine blessings
The one that is more than what you can see
The one that is more than what you can touch
The one that is more than what you can label
Yes, the one that is more than what you can define
The phenomenally me
The carrier of divine blessings
The one crowned with miracles, solutions, and graces

Me, yes me
This me, I am more than what you see
More than what you imagine
More than what you think
More than what you understand
Listen, I am more than that
Yes, I am more than that
Listen...

— *Yvonne Mutshipayi '24, Instructional Leadership for Changing Populations*



The Deep Blue

— *Summara Abaid '17, Biology*

Cover



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