



The Laurel

2021

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Letter From The Editor

Dearest Friends,

Welcome to the 2020-2021 publication of *The Laurel*, our 122nd body of work featuring the wonderful, creative content produced by St. Bonaventure University students. Many thanks to our wonderful advisor, Dr. Sara Nicholson, for her guidance and support. Thank you also to all the English Department faculty for supporting our work this year and encouraging their students to submit for this publication.

To say this past year was challenging is an understatement. The pain, suffering, and loss felt by the COVID-19 pandemic has resonated throughout the world as it has on this campus. This spring, we suffered the loss of our beloved university president, Dr. Dennis DePerro. There are no words for all that we have lost.

This year's publication of *The Laurel* is dedicated to the resilience of our students, faculty, staff, and wider campus community. The path is not easy or linear, but we can lean on each other through the trials. Love and solidarity show us the way. The cover photograph, captured by Lauren Barry, captures this collective spirit: We got this.

It is with an aching but grateful heart that I bid *The Laurel* farewell in my final days as a student at St. Bonaventure University. It has been a pure honor and joy to serve as its editor in chief for the past three years. I am confident that next year's editors in chief, Matthew Villanueva and Tucker Reilly, will carry forward the proud and magical legacy of this magazine for future Bonnies. I am so thankful to leave this special club and its mission in their capable hands.

Thank you for sharing your work with the world. Please enjoy the art within these pages.

With deepest love and gratitude,

Victoria Wangler, '21

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The Laurel Community

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Lost and Found

Christina Giglio

Found in the heart of insanity,
Lost in a state of infamy,
Dead to all forms of sympathy,

Will anyone be able to find me?

Trapped in this box, I find
You're not even safe inside your own mind.

It took eras for me to discover
The treachery of "keeping it together."

Aesthetic Whisker

Jordan Gusch



My Natural

Charlie Dobert

MARY JANE, she's my three stooges..... keeper, reaper and creeper can we go any deeper oh
Jesus my lord and savior.
She catches me in her pedals every time I trip or rip a glowing red gloomy stare.
With those chillaxing chimes and fresh and cushy limes.
Her greenie beans purify me into a new place of race when we go to the zoo and see elephant
coo.
My body has been salvaged from the grassy creamy stream.
She is my duchess always as I inhale.
I get the munchies and sing along with the Brady bunch when I see her fly in the pot of stars
and dips on us as she does not like the social atmosphere at the bar.
She is laid back as I go get stoned with the Flintstones and fool around with traffic cones.
At the checkpoint I breathe the holy grail joint. And she gets me anoint.
A splattering painting, such an amazing Mona Lisa she is. A doobie here we go Scooby dooby I
got a Shaggy one.
Please cultivate by all means with your sisters go wild child go play in the field and become
styled and riled.
Her plot is never a riot, I swear we always end up on her yacht napping on feather cots in her
heavenly jackpot lot.
Jane she is never lame, rather she is the dopiest at her peak or at least when we came to roll
up on us a
flame that smelly skunky funky night with super tights. One to remember for all the ancestors
of hallucinations.
We will have to admit and sit baked that we have
been blessed by her herbs for life and we stroll and roll down her Yellow brick
road to the very end till the high sighs and speaks this is where we cut loose our ties.
Shit I am now in Shanghai.

Text from a Notebook Found 50 Meters from a Flaming Sedan

Tucker Reilly

Leave home. Get on the freeway. Take the 10 past Pomona, then ride I-15 through Barstow until you see the first dirt road into the Mojave wilderness. Don't plan to go anywhere or do anything - just go and do.

Drive through the wind farms near Victorville, until the tallest building is only one story. Stop at a grocery store and buy potatoes, cigarettes, and a copy of The Poisonwood Bible. Go past the abandoned tungsten and silver mines, the empty leaning shacks where only snakes and rodents live.

As you enter its domain, let the desert sun in its cloudless sky envelop you, the harsh dry breeze sweep through you. Allow your thoughts to exist outside of yourself, to become caught and tangled in the barbed branches of a passing joshua tree; only to be eaten by a raven or a woodrat. In the distance, sand dunes rise like waves, so steep they tear the gentle curvature of the horizon asunder. Stop in an empty railway yard near Ludlow, step into the iron bars of a decrepit county jail, and watch as occasional passersby stare at the curious city-dweller locked in a desert brig.

Veer off the main road if you see a possible path. Push up through rocks and brush, feel the creaks and rumbles of tough terrain. Nail your splash guard plate back on with thumbtacks. Drive in circles on a lakebed, kicking up dust and salt and ash in your wake.

The nearest town in 100 miles is three gas stations and a novelty motel. "World's largest thermometer." Next door is a small Korean woman selling "World's greatest firewood" for fifteen dollars a bundle. Buy it anyway.

Park your car and walk through a field of burnt joshua trees. Smell the acrid stench of decay and watch as funnels of ash fly into the breeze. Bow with the blackened frames of the trees in the wind, dead and cracking limbs pointing toward some unmarked grave in the distance. Sit in the middle of the highway, legs crossed, and watch for the dust clouds of an approaching pickup truck.

At night, sit alone in a clearing and listen to the howls of roadrunner and coyote. See the blinding lights of Las Vegas in the distance, pure white projected across the sky from hundreds of miles away. You should see stars. You should see stars. You won't. Learn how every creature survives the biting cold.

In the morning, eat nothing and climb a mountain. Leave your shoes next to the road sign for "Zzyzx." Taste the harsh salt on the roof of your mouth. Stand on the precipice and allow yourself to be buffeted by the vacuous sound of perfect silence. And for once in your life, when you lie and say that you are complete, make yourself believe it.

The yellowed pages of the notebook remain blank after this point. Above all these instructions are the words "A recipe for becoming--" with the final word scratched over in thick blue ink.

7 Years

Jamie O'Malley

2555 Days
Seems like forever

It has been forever
Since everything was okay

Everything was okay
And now everything is not

Everything is not okay
There's not much I can do to help

I feel helpless and hopeless
This isn't what I wanted

Is this what they wanted
When they wished for warmer days

When they wished for warmer days
The Earth was colder

The Earth was colder
Before we were here

Before we were here
She was a thriving being

A being thrives
In the absence of humans

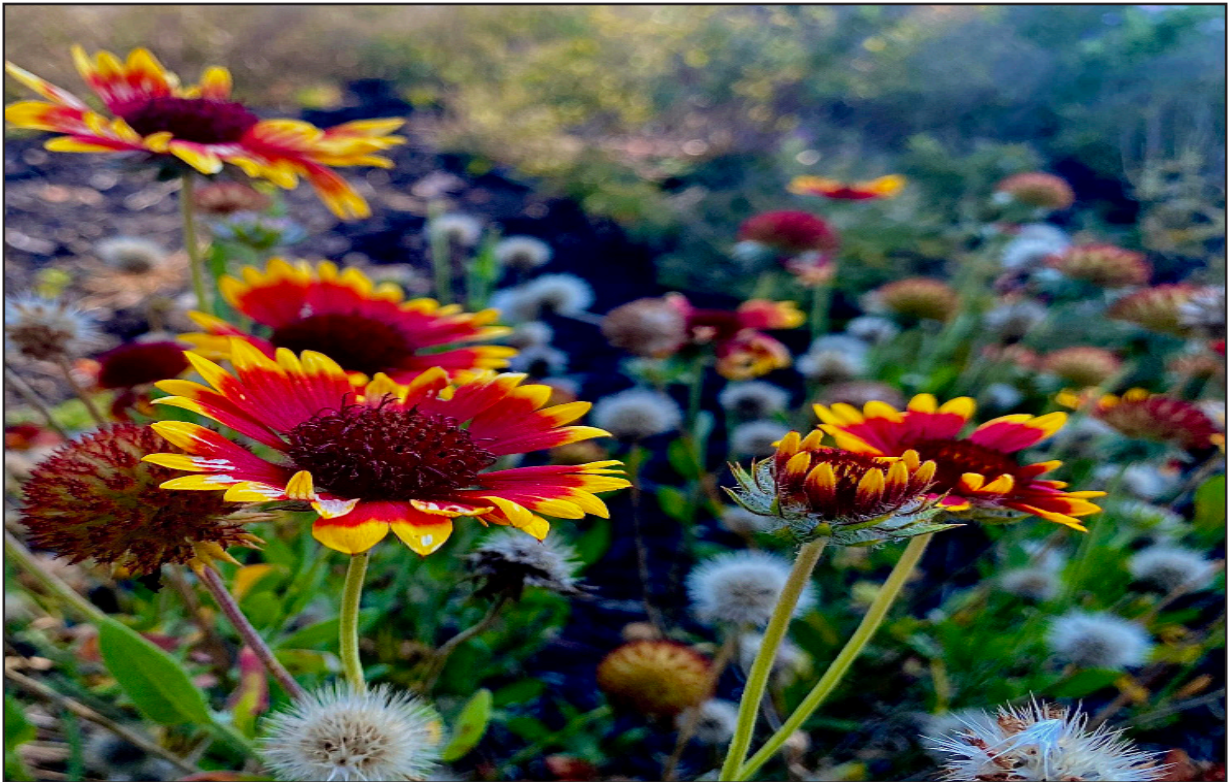
In the absence of humans
There is an abundance of life

There is an abundance of life
That we're killing

We are killers
With a mission deadline of 2555 days



City Skies
Mili Patel



Spring In A Bundle
Alex Alby

Well, It's Complicated

Akim Hudson

Love, you and I have had quite the ironic relationship. I know nothing of you, yet I pursue you.

From what I have observed in movies and songs, you are blissful and beatific. Even toxic at times.

Love wasn't in favor of my mother and father. To my knowledge, mostly because of the mishaps of my father. But it's impossible for me to know all the details because he was absent by the time of my birth. This already misconstrued what love is to me. One's first perception of love is through observing their parents. I was stripped of this privilege. At such a young age, I had nothing or no one I could reference to. My mother loved her children, but there wasn't anyone stagnant that loved her.

I've witnessed love elicit the worst out of people just as often as it conjures ecstasy. Love's got people out here being abusive to one another, creating families, and committing adultery all in one relationship.

Love wears many masks, but truth be told, not many have revealed its identity.

Love hasn't spared me any fortune, but I'm a keep it a buck, though. I have been blinded of your essence due to my toxicity. For reasons that can't be explained, I have an eerie type of apathy. Everything that was too affectionate always made me feel awkward. I just never really relished subtle moments like others, everything that involved romance was corny.

Since a youth, I always assumed that love is pretentious because I believed that everyone is a piece of shit. What made me this stolid? Perhaps it's the father absenteeism throughout my life. Whatever it may be, I just have the tendency to keep my heart in a desolate fortress.

Being hurt or rejected isn't my concern. I don't want myself or my vulnerability to be made a travesty of. I don't want to live with the reality that I love someone more than they love me.

Unfortunately, that is the reality I've lived with for the most part.

Imagine expressing your affection to someone, which is already uncharacteristic of yourself, then having them not feeling the same vibes. Keeping your intimacy strictly platonic.

Disheartening, right?

The trance one is in while in love causes a blindness that covers up the true colors of whom they're in love with. There have been times where I thought that there may be a potential significant other ... then I get ghosted, they disappear. Sometimes I've dropped the ball. At times, I'm just too Akim. I just believe that if my presence can just be diminished like it never existed to someone. Then the relationship was never genuine in the first place.

Another fear of mine involving love, is the potential of wasting time. See, if I've wasted money on my ex, that money can be earned back. If I waste food on my ex, that wouldn't matter because I will eat another meal after our relationship is over. But time is something that is irreversible and that I cannot get back. I wouldn't be able to live with the fact that I wasted so much time on someone who didn't even contemplate a second before neglecting me.

I'm still young but I'm approaching the age where love becomes a priority. And I don't mean pursuing a relationship out of the sake of being lonely. I've been lonesome my whole life, and I'm introverted, I won't be losing any sleep. My pursuit is love, not company. What I've sought after, is a best friend on a different level of intimacy, bound together by soul and energy. Not by linking and fornicating. Currently, I'm not rushing but the thought of settling down has pondered my mind.

My next infatuation will be my beloved. Relationships are not meant to be a trial. I believe that if one is to get in a relationship, they should intend to be with their significant other if not forever, then a very long time. I'm not sure when that day is, until then I will remain a traveling man.

Ekphrasis based on Andrew Wyeth's "Christina's World" (1948)

Drew Torres



It is a gloomy Wednesday evening. My name is Christina, and I am watching my aunt Meredith's house for her because she's gone on vacation with her husband. My aunt lives in an old wooden house located in Texas.

I can tell that the house is old by the rotten wooden floors and the windows that look like they're about to break from the strong wind slamming against the hollow walls. There isn't much around the house except a shed in the backyard and an old, abandoned house within walking distance.

The rest of the house is surrounded by empty land filled with grass. I am currently in my aunt's room under the covers because it is cold in the house. I turn off the lamp and try to get some rest.

Suddenly I hear a big bang come from downstairs as if something just fell. I think to myself that it must be the wind from outside and try to go back to sleep.

A couple minutes later, I hear the same bang come from downstairs. I rush up out of my aunt's bed, run to the door to lock it, and then return to bed with the blankets over my head. I then begin to hear footsteps walking back and forth downstairs. I look out the window so I can see if there's someone's car, but I see nothing. I reach into my aunt's dresser and pull out a knife so I can protect myself. I hear the footsteps start to make its way upstairs. The footsteps stop once they get to my aunt's door. I take a deep breath and grip the knife as tight as I can.

The doorknob begins to move as if someone is trying to come in. The movement of the doorknob stops, and I make a run towards the window. I break the glass with my fist and jump out of the house. I fall on my ankle and it breaks as I feel a sharp pain shoot through my leg. I begin to crawl away, and I turn around to look at the front door of the house. I see this grey tall person with huge eyes, no hair or clothes on them. I say to myself, "Is that even a real person?" I look up to the sky and see a round object flash a light on me.

The next thing I remember is waking up on an empty field with my aunt's house in the distance.

I grab my ankle and see no injury. I feel no pain.

Girl on Fire

Mariah Carriero

She slammed the car door closed. The heat that radiated off her body could have raised the temperature of the vehicle by a hundred degrees. She slipped her backpack off of her shoulder and plopped it on her lap. I took a deep breath, opened my door, and crawled inside. I removed my backpack from my shoulders and tossed it by her feet. We've driven in my car together so many times, but the tension had never been this high before. I exhaled as if I hadn't taken a breath in a while before twisting my keys into the ignition.

We looked at each other; both of our minds were racing with questions and assumptions, but neither of us could build up the courage to speak them aloud. Her normally honey brown eyes were now full of flames and scrutiny. She turned and peered through the windshield with a look of disgust. The car was silent besides my engine roaring. I offered her the aux cord, but she pushed it back towards me, insisting I play my music instead. I turned on my playlist and backed out of the driveway. It wasn't until we reached a red light that she finally spoke.

"What is happening? I mean seriously Christopher, what is going on?" I didn't have an answer. At least not one that I was confident to say out loud. I looked at her and couldn't speak. "Do you think he..." her words dribbled off. She was afraid to say it. Saying it only meant it was true, and neither of us wanted that to be the case.

"Cheated?" It took everything inside of me to say it, but I knew she never would have been able to. We both sighed. There was a feeling of relief. There was no going back.

"If he cheated," she paused. I could tell there were too many thoughts racing through her head to choose the right ones to say. "Our family is never going to be the same."

The light was still red. I wanted it to be green so bad. I did not want to face reality. I wanted her to take back what she said and get out of the car and forget this ever happened. But I knew she was right. The day replayed over in my mind and I knew she was right.

Green. It was finally green. I put my foot on the gas pedal and we were once again in motion. I was taking her to her friend's house which was still a while away. I reached my arm over trying to get into my backpack.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"There's something in here I think we both need tonight." I kept digging through my bag before I finally pulled it out.

"Fireball? Really Christopher you're driving!"

"I know, but you're not. Go ahead, drink some before I drop you off." She gave me a look of concern, before accepting the fact that this was the reason we both left the house, to escape and get drunk before facing the reality that would soon become our lives. She twisted the cap off and chugged straight from the bottle. I swear, even though she was younger than me, she could always out-drink me. We finally got to her friend's house and I put the car in park. She exhaled, took another quick swig and slid the bottle back into my bag. This whole time she never revealed an ounce of emotion.

"No matter what happens," I choked on my words, "I love you, and we'll get through this together. No matter how bad it gets." For once in her life she let go. She was just like Mom; she never wanted to let people see the hurt she felt.

Tears poured from her eyes. I didn't mean to make her cry, but I was glad she let herself release the emotion that had built up inside of her all day. I pointed to the glove compartment where I had some crumpled-up McDonald's napkins she could use to dry her tears. It was almost as if the tears cooled her down metaphorically and literally. Once she composed herself, she maneuvered her backpack onto her shoulders and put the napkins in her pocket. She opened the door and got out of the car. As she walked up the driveway, she turned back to look at me. I rolled down my window to see what she had to say.

"I love you too, Christopher."

the first of July

Victoria Wangler

Dark red drops spouting against the clouds.
light shot-through burgundy;
some cousin to an older scarlet.

Faded, patient; housing life
like the oldest mothers.

What Jesus cut His heels against the roots?
rubbing stained palms onto bark,
pushing old love into the thin fingers.

Weeks ago, June bugs crowded the pews at dusk.
Murmuring, stumbling in the half light.

Hours ago, fireflies struck their matches in the late twilight.
My heart stutters in time to their light.

Time rolling like moss, like water.
tell me: what was yesterday?
promise me: it all goes somewhere good.

Behind a veil of green, summer slips
softly. A lover, carved to bittersweet memory.

I want her
like breathing.

She comes

and goes

unyielding.

Truth

Kimber-Lee Iacona

As I took a breathe
I could feel my jaw unhinge itself
Making a familiar sound
As if it was taking on a life of its own

I've found myself distracted lately
It feels like I'm barely breathing
My body feels lifeless as I watch myself
go through the motions from across the room.

I've found it hard to see the point of getting out of bed in the morning.
Nothing seems to matter anymore
I've let myself go a while ago and it's too late to come back.

I can't stop the mess that I have created.
I don't see myself getting out of this.
Don't tell me that everything will be okay when it really isn't.

Tired of hearing your lies.
For once, can I just hear the truth?



Summer Solstice Farm
Jordan Gusch



Mysterious Moon
Mili Patel

Mom

Jordan Sanders

As the wind whipped across her damp face, she watched the casket get lowered into the ground. The beautiful details of the pine box briefly held her attention, as she avoided thinking about the situation as a whole. The preacher spewed words of remorse, but she didn't comprehend any of it.

Mom.

Why did you go?

Another tear slipped down her face as she attempted to avoid the stares from those around her. The hole in her chest felt as though it was growing larger by the second, but she knew there was nothing she could do about it. In the end, it was going to consume her, just as it had consumed the one now covered by the dirt.

Mom.

Will I see you again?

She hoped that she would. But, the thought of that never happening sent her mind spiraling. Her yells pierced through the calm air. Her seemingly gentle hands ripped at her blonde hair, pulling out strand after strand. She could bear no more. She sprinted away, never feeling her legs or lungs tire. She just continued to run, farther and farther away, until her cloudy vision finally cleared enough for her to see the bridge.

Mom.

I want to be with you.

Familiar

Ellie Weidener

Sleep had found me and gifted me dreams
Gentle thoughts to keep me till morning
This morning just the same as the last
Each day a mess of moments
Each moment a treasure
That I promise you I will try to remember
The chip in the paint
The way the light reflects on a wine glass
Lipstick stains
Sunlight falling through the window
The faint smell of coffee grounds
Bumbling through the early hours
Life moved like honey dripping from a spoon
Into warm tea leaves swirling
Their gentle movements synchronizing
Morning

I remember the moments
Simple and small
Like the stories on the news
Or paintings on the wall
Bobby Kennedy, Blunts, and Barrington
All of this is so familiar to me
Abundant laughter was dandelions,
your brightness was a warm yellow
A light filled presence to drain all sorrow
Life was golden at these hours
The lovely and stunning

Afternoon

Tired conversation, a locomotive with no steam
Set my mind at ease my thoughts refuse to let me sleep
Long and draining I tell you as my voice is straining
It's over, it's over, it's over
There could be a tomorrow
Night.

Duplex (after Jericho Brown)

James Matthew Villanueva

I always like to drink my coffee black
Every morning I wake up and see darkness

Every morning I wake up and consume darkness
The eclipsed fluid helps me to feel something

The eclipsed fluid helps me feel alive
It's crazy how this drug is normalized

It's crazy how this drug can rejuvenate
The weakest of souls to be worthwhile

The weakest of souls feel the most arid
Grinded beans dehydrate the best of us

Grinded beans hydrate the souls of the stale
Mashed corn gives life to the hopeless

Mashed corn gives me life when I'm hopeless
I always like to drink my bourbon straight

Remember

Meghan Lanphere

Remember when we burned that midnight oil
Remember when we spun tires at 2 A.M in a Domino's parking lot
Remember when we snuck into Gurnsey Hollow
Remember when we climbed under the fence to that abandoned asylum
Remember when we sat in the garage and binged horror movies
Remember when we lit fires, bright as our souls in the dark
Remember when we tore through the trees in that beat up truck
Remember when we made midnight runs to walmart
Remember when we played bumper carts in the parking lot
Remember when our friends were shocked that my mom let me stay most nights with you two
Remember when my jeep broke because you decided to pick it up
Remember when we'd sleep on couches for entire weekends
Remember when all our summers were lost to flames; burnt out to ash
Remember when we lost the boy who lit up everyone's lives
Remember when you turned on each other
Remember when my nights had to be split between you
Remember when we all just wanted to go back to happy.
Remember when we sat on your bedroom floor; we knew it might be the last time,
Remember when you left.
Remember when I last saw you at Tim Hortons; one final time,
Remember when we talked for two days and I realized I missed the past.
Do you remember when...?

A utopia meî

James Matthew Villanueva

In a perfect world, it wouldn't matter the weather. We'll dance *en imbero*. We'll kiss when the kin of venus radiates gold until *solis occasum*. We'll watch *luce brumalis* with coffee cradled in one hand, *manus in mano*.

In a perfect world, we will never again feel *odium*. *Amabimus cum mellifluum*. It won't matter who's fighting in the unforgiving battle of life. It won't matter the *tyrannus en officia*. For *Omnia vincit amor*.

Thirdstory harmonized, *If I could write you a love song, it would go on and on and on and on*. In a perfect world, Ella and Louis *occentabunt*. Chet and Charlie *proflabunt*. John Mayer *sibilabit*. Our story will go on and on.

But we do not live in a perfect world.

I can't whistle; you can't sing; neither of us can dance.

We can only hope for *meliora*.

In a perfect world, nothing else would matter.

In a perfect world, *amo in perpetuum et unum diam; ego totus tuum*.

In a perfect world, there is no other world outside our own

this dream, the sun and all the stars

Victoria Wangler

Summer seeps into me like a stubborn shock.

Trickling through my veins—sunlight.

Shaking apart my lungs—those fragile, empty things.

God tosses fire across the stars.

I fall to my knees in a rain-hungry field.

My limbs heavy with unspoken words.

My fingers shake with the weight of the soul.

Claim me, O Forest.

Yield to me like water:

hushing over the roar of violence,

a stranger on a foreign shore.

Something to make sense

amidst the chaos

[a word, a pill, a kiss without poison]

Something to ease the passage

from this little life

into the next

[tunnels and hillsides looping into eternity]

Empty mouths, hungry eyes,

hands that take and never give.

I seek without aim,
want without need.

Boiling, freezing, consuming:
inside, an animal that is never sated.

Venomous conception:
my heart, and all the others
broken, healing jaggedly

running always
to the first call of warning.

Summer seeps into me like a stubborn shock.
I, a foolish animal,
fall into the dream once more.



***The Future Lies
Ahead***

Lauren Barry

Make It Home

Zach Stryffeler

The cabin had to be just over the hill. The snow was thickening now and the sun was cresting down over the horizon, adding an orangish tint to the white opacity of the snowfall. The snow was falling for a few hours already and his tracks were covered long ago when he made the trek out to his tree stand. He wondered how he had been so stupid to fall asleep in the early morning hours.

It was the cold medicine from last night. It had to have been. No way would he have ever fallen asleep that long in the tree. Even now as he walked, he felt drowsy, and mucus streamed from his nose onto his brown wool scarf.

A few hours earlier, he awoke to five inches of snow piling down on him. In his daze, the beginning of a blizzard settled neatly on his body. His tracks were completely covered; any sign of markings he made in the trees was completely gone. For the first time in a while, he felt lost in the forest.

The journey back to the cabin, or at least where he thought the cabin was, would be long and arduous. The cold was beginning to seep into his body, stiffening his outer coat and working its way past the wool and cotton.

The forest was looking darker by the minute and the hill seemed to stretch on forever. He pushed himself to go faster. The snow piled up; every step was an effort. He pulled each leg up and above the snow, making it look as if he was goose-stepping across the tundra. He knew he looked ridiculous.

After another agonizing thirty minutes of trudging uphill, he finally reached the top. He was sweating now; surely a death sentence. The cabin had to be here. Resting his body against a tree, he leaned forward and vomited his breakfast onto the snow. His heart was hammering dimly in his chest. It HAD to be just over the edge.

He couldn't feel his hands or face anymore, and a bright red piece of skin was peeking out from his mitten. There it was, the small little hunting cabin with a thin curl of smoke coming out the chimney. He smiled, his lips cracking, feeling the blood drip down his face. He tried to move his legs forward, but it was so hard. So hard. And he was cold. So cold.

If he only could rest just for five minutes, he could make it. Just five minutes. Rest. Tired. Sleep. No. Yes. Five minutes, sleep. Yes.

tenderness

Ellie Weidener

tenderness is in your gaze
the delightful innocence of loving glances
from you
to me
tenderness is in good mornings,
and goodnights
tenderness is in your smile
soft lips spreading to the edges of the earth
the place i rest my own
tenderness is in a love letter
written out of guilt
tenderness is in hugs goodbye that may just be a last time
but two paths may never cross forever
they risk becoming one
tenderness is in making a bed
for you to lay your tired head
tenderness on days i'm blue
gentle loving moments i got to spend with you

Chills

Mariah Carriero

Early in the morning, a small bug looking car approached its destination. The little wood cabin sat cozy nestled in the wilderness. The snowflakes laid softly on the branches of the skyscraping trees. It was an unforgettable view. In the distance there was a large pond covered by ice. Mary pictured herself bundled up skating ever so graciously, carving into the ice. She spent months planning this weekend getaway with her boyfriend. As she assisted grabbing bags out of the car, she knew it would be a trip to remember.

Once they were settled inside the cabin, Ed suggested they take advantage of the sunny day. Ice fishing. Neither Mary nor Ed had ever gone ice fishing before, but they had the perfect opportunity. They put on their coats and grabbed their fishing poles and headed up to the lake. Ed carefully carved two holes into the ice and they plopped their lines into the water. The sun was warm. Mary took off her coat and draped it over the back of her chair. As time passed, the couple sat patiently waiting for fish to bite their hooks. Sitting. Waiting. No bites. Not even a nibble. Ed's stomach grumbled so he headed back to the cabin and put together some sandwiches.

Mary now sat alone in her chair. She was content in the woods. A breeze brushed against her shirt, sending a chill down her spine. She stood up to put her coat back on. When she went to sit back down, her foot slid on the ice and she fell hard onto her chair. The ice beneath her could not handle the pressure of the chair's legs.

The delicate ice began to crack below her feet and Mary began to panic. She screeched as her body crashed into the freezing cold water. Gasping for air above the water she used all her might to yell to Ed. From inside the cabin, Ed heard faint yelps and peered through the window to see only one chair sitting on the frozen pond. Horror overflowed from Ed, he dropped the slices of rye bread from his hands and darted out of the cabin towards the pond.

Mary's arms flailed in the water. Her whole body ached as she fought off the raw chills that overwhelmed her. She wanted to give up, but the thought of sinking to the bottom of that numbing water pushed her to keep fighting. Ed finally reached the cracked ice and instantly dropped onto his stomach and reached his arms out trying to grab Mary's. Her head bobbed above the water and Ed caught a hold of her wrist and pulled as hard as he could. He struggled but managed to pull her out onto the remaining ice. Mary coughed up water and shivered, but she was okay. Mary was right; it was a trip to remember.

To Whom This Poem is a Prayer

Wendy Woite

To whom this poem is a prayer
Listen well and let it sing.
The devil is a cannibal
And humanity makes a King.
So
Bathe in His words
And dry yourself with this,
The past does not predict your future
So there is no need to reminisce.

To whom this poem is a prayer,
Deprivation leads to vocation
And my hope is
To help you heal this abrasion
Caused by the constant persuasion
Going back in forth in your head saying
You aren't good enough.
Because
The devil of dissuasion
Holds no power over
Your determined aspirations
And I know life is rough
But I promise you are tough.

To whom this poem is a prayer
Wear the cross and keep Him near.
Did you know they can't hurt you
If you're protected, my dear?
And I must let you know
To converse with the Heavens
Before proceeding
Because if you just ask for help,
That to me sounds a lot like cheating.
I've learned only when you put in the work
Can you truly stop the bleeding.

Late Nights Thoughts

Meghan Lanphere

When I think of what to write
And the stories fill my brain
Like the books that fill a library.
I hold on to those
To keep me company in the night.
Huge, tumbling thoughts
That I may never take down.
It's magic in my mind
At this late hour
That I shall forget by light
Against my power not to.
And I'll restart with love.
Remake the world with a new plot
Until reality fades to nothingness.

