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Legacy

2015

Edited by Lauren Marsh
(Writers Club President '14-'15)

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Poetry

OCD

By Rebecca Amenta

All I think about.

black black black

Cakes the corners

damages demolishes destroys

Endlessly

failure fatigue frantic

Growing inside of me

harried helpless hollow

I imagine escape from my

jaded jilted journey

Kindled disorder

lavish lewd lost

My mind is my cage

needy nervous noisy

Owned by the obsessions

please please please

Quilted into my life

rabid repetition resisting

Stopping to count

tick tick trapped

Useless compulsive organizing

vexing victim volatile

Waiting for the magic three

xenophobic xenon xeroxed

You cannot save me

z z z

Valentines

By Brandon Beneche

I toss and turn deep in the night,
The sweat arises on my brow,
I must resist with all my might,
But I can't sleep I must read now!

How could I leave the hero there
Alone along his quest in life
Could find himself by villains snared
Could find himself finding a wife

My mind chugs on with thoughts ablaze
I find myself in pain and sorrow
My love for reading summed in a phrase
"I simply can't wait until 'morrow!"

Supper time

By Tadia Foster

Clear crystal plate before me,

sheltered on a snowy endless table.

Honey-bathed biscuits awake my inner senses,

beside me the Queen who saved her people from destruction.

I gaze around my surroundings,

Blissful to be present.

As I take my seat, a voice greets me saying,

“Relish your meal faithful servant.”

2nd Place Poetry

The Fall

By Caleb Lewis

Before the mind or mirth or mire,
 Before the suns eternal fire,
 When prudence and its last desire
 Had ruled above all things and higher,

Before bright youths immortal flame,
 Before corruption earned its name,
 Before mankind was brought to shame
 Or evils endless darkness came,

When hope had reached its lawful peak,
 When love was strong and darkness weak,
 When all were wise and just and meek
 And wisdom was what all would seek,

Sovereign greatness ruled on high,
 To and fro they roamed the sky.
 Immortal forms that couldn't die,
 They lived as endless years went by.

They'd lived from times beginning hour.

They were to all a blooming flower.
 Endless worlds would they embower.
 They rode perfections lofty tower.

They were Almighty's' perfect race
 Adorned with wings of pallid lace.
 They were flawless, perfect, chaste,
 Flying boundless lengths of space

Yet, in this virtue dwelt a flaw,
 Ripping splendor with its claw.
 And cunningly it chose to draw
 Others from the pristine Law.

Omniscience saw the fault in one,
 But sadly let him live undone
 Until the third of stars he'd won.
 He'd had it all and now had none.

He'd wanted what was not his own.
 He envied Preeminence's throne.
 He desired omnipotence alone,
 And from his face his malice shone.

He challenged Heaven to a war,

Fright'ning seraphs with his roar.

He, with his livid cohorts, swore

To break coercions aching sore.

He, with his legions, were cast out,

Flung from Heaven with a shout.

But cherubs gathered round about,

Shaking heads with dawning doubt.

They did not know yet evils crime.

They had not glimpsed infringement's mime,

Nor had they seen within short time

The height to which dark night could climb.

God looked upon his doubting race.

A poignant tear slid down his face.

He'd let transgression find a place

And imbue them with its deep disgrace.

For in His goodness dwelt a plan.

Unto His image made He man

With which malevolence began

The reign on earth which it would span.

Iniquity would gain a hold,

Defying God with taunts untold,

Becoming more supreme and bold,

Defiling God's hand carved mold.

And for our wrongs, Gods Son would die,

Suff'ring pain for you and I,

Beaten till His blood ran dry,

That, through one death, our life He'd buy

That death would buy *eternal* life,

Would end all sin and futile strife,

Would end all malice, dark and rife,

And cut through hatred like a knife.

And then He'd rule as King, eternal,

Divest the good of those infernal,

They all would live in endless vernal

Inside the glor'ious realm, supernal.

This florid kingdom would replace

The ludicrous and grave unchaste,

The error and its vast disgrace

That evil wrought upon this race.

My Long Lost Friend

By Marselinny Mawuntu

The mem'ries of my long lost friend, who took
Me out of my woeful misery, fled
Into the unknown, leaving words unsaid
A mystery. I would constantly look
Back at the past, picturing the blue book
That you wrote of our adventures; I read
It before and I laid it on my bed.
I'll always have it to read by the brook.

My weeping heart aches for your soon return,
But I know—deep inside—that will never
Be. And even though we may be apart,
Through all the tribulations, I have learned
Our cherished love can never be severed
And forever will you be in my heart.

1st Place PoetryOpen Up

By Amanda Ruf

Sitting in my chambered heart
 Listening to the faint knocking
 of your knuckles --
 those dove-knuckles! soft
 as a downy neck --
 I can see you:
 Gentleman caller.
 Meek and mild,
 sweet and long-suffering,
 the scars on your palms
 as fresh as Golgotha's dew,
 You stand there,
 ever entreating entrance.
 How nice! of you
 to knock, to ask
 before taking, and
 normally I would prize
 this courtesy, but --
 you see --
 not now. Not how
 the Revelator tells it,

“that they should be judged,”
 fire breathing down
 a horseman's neck,
 waiting for the rocks to fall
 and the scales to tip.
 You're at the door but
 Death's under my bed, and --
 make no mistake, Miss Dickinson --
 he is no gentleman.
 I am bound.
 Bound to die,
 bound to be found
 GUILTY of crimes
 I never knew could
 kill a King. Bound to
 be consigned to the
 conflagrant pit (burns
 always bothered me
 anyway), baptized
 with unholy fire.
 And bound to self,
 tied hand and foot
 to a tyranny of
 “Reason in me.”

Yes, I hear you,
Gentleman Savior.
But knocking will
get you nowhere.

No. Those hands --
so soft and tender --
I know too their strength,
able to carve stubborn
wood, to wield a whip
in thy Father's house,
to wrench a floundering
Simon up from the
clamoring waves,

able to smash a door
to a chambered heart.

Yeshua, Joshua,
these walls shall fall
under and into those hands.
"Come as a thief,"
spare no shield,

take no prisoners
in your path to this one.
Slash and snap,
crush and rip
to ribbons these ties
of mine. Tear blindfold
after blindfold
from my eyes, 'til
nothing's left
to guesswork. Then --

only then --

be your gentleman self.
Speak kindly to me, for
that is me you speak to,
not the terrorized,
paralyzed me fashioned
by another's hand.
And, eye scales sloughed,
skin as soft as yours,

I will speak, too.

Aspens

By Bethany Thornton

A quivering leaf with a shivering quake,
A swaying rustle of nervousness,
The sad little moan of the creaking bark,
And the colors of fall in gold and red;
It seems so fragile, but is it really?
Is life so frightening a thing?

Waiting for a Brother

By Beth Travis

Said the tall tree to the midnight

“Why so dark and cold?”

“I am waiting for a friend.” It said

“A brother I knew of old.”

Said the green leaves to the tall tree

“Why is your bark so grey?”

“I am lonely for a brother, friend.

He has been long away.”

Said the west wind to the green leaves

“Why are you so frail?”

“In hope the wind will pick us up

And to our dear friend sail.”

“But why?” exclaimed the west wind

“Could it be you did not hear?

Your brother shall return tonight

So cast away your fear.”

Said the tall tree to the green leaves

“Why are you blooming so?”

“Our friend returns tonight!” they cried

“Could it be you did not know?”

Said the midnight to the tall tree

“Why do you stand so strong?”

“Tonight our friend returns,” it called

“He will surely not be long.”

So the midnight let the moon glow

And set all his stars alight

And they waited and they waited

But no friend came that night

They waited for their dear friend

But each night was just the same

The year began to wear away

And their brother never came

Midnight was cold and dark again

The leaves began to fall

The tree stood grey and barren

Waiting for their dear friend's call

Said the west wind to the midnight

“I am deeply sorry, friend.

There was trouble on the homeward road
 And our brother met his end.”

All were silent for a moment
 Than the west wind cried
 The leaves all rustled sad regrets
 The tall tree bent and sighed

The midnight stood there silent
 For he loved his brother well
 And he gazed upon the homeward road
 To where his dear friend fell

And to his wonder as he gazed there
 Through grey mists dark and cold
 He saw there walking homeward
 The brother he knew of old

Then the midnight let his stars shine
 Brighter than the noonday sun
 And the leaves and tall tree sprang to life
 Their sighing day where done

The tree and leaves and west wind
 Sang for joy at their friend's call

And the midnight stood there silent
 Bright and shining over all
 The Exhuming-Lauren Waegele

People say
 I wound their hearts
 Puncture lives
 With poison darts

People say
 I bring the pain
 Satisfy the crazy, kill the sane.
 People say
 They hate me
 That I take love away.

But
 People never hear what I have to say.
 I say
 I rescue those who live in pain
 I say
 I make evident the wisdom of the
 sane
 I say
 I heal the lives that were left broken
 I say
 I speak the words that were left
 unspoken
 Whether I come in heat, or end life in cold
 I say
 I tell the history that longs to be told.

The Exhuming

By Lauren Waegele

People say

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Short
Fiction

1st Place

A Captain's Oath

By Zacharias Thomas

Golden stalks of grain danced in the wind as we sped past them. The field around me undulated in the wind like a tumultuous sea. The setting sun bathed the world in red and orange, glaring harshly through my back seat window. Dust from the road coated the glass, masking the outside world in a hazy gauze.

Lost in a world of my own, I imagined the oncoming truck to be a majestic galleon, flying the royal colors of the evil king.

“Helmsman! Bring er’ round to broadside!” I shouted to my mother in the front seat. She jumped, swerving our car out of the lane onto the shoulder of the road. The car behind us honked ferociously as it sped around us.

“What did I say? Stop your stupid games, sit down, and shut up!” She spat.

“Aye, captain,” I murmured quietly, so she wouldn’t hear. I returned to my window, defeated.

I tried to make out the murky shapes in the distance. Was that a sea serpent peeking its head above the waves? Had some monster of the deep braved the airy world to satisfy its curiosity of the land dwellers? I turned to my mother, desperate to question her about the “lock-less” monster the older kids at school had warned me about. But Mother didn’t appreciate questions. I looked back to the window, watching for more monsters.

I tried to give up my musing to watch the lines of the road zip by. The tiny reflectors picked up our car headlights and gleamed brilliantly. I couldn’t help but imagine a group of sea creatures flaunting their fluorescent bodies. Our vessel glided over the glassy waters they danced together in, oblivious of the magic below it.

Every summer we made this trip. We spent hours on empty highways in silence, save for the occasional static filled radio channel or empty conversation. We were headed to my father’s house, or in my mind, *home*.

I treasured the few precious holidays I spent with him. Normally, he would have met us halfway to liberate me, but he had been called to an important meeting. I imagined how I would have rejoiced in my freedom, shouting orders to my father.

“*Veer slightly right, Captain!*” I would have commanded.

“Nay, landluver! Tis starboard ye’ be wantin!” He would have replied in his best seafaring accent.

I groaned in frustration.

I hated how boring it was with her. My choice of literature quickly became contraband. “Magic and fantasy,” she would say, “are inappropriate for a young christian boy.” Video games and secular music were often subjects of debate as well, and she usually confiscated anything she could lay her hands on.

Imagination was my only refuge when my mother came home howling and sobbing again. It became my best friend when she would announce year after successive year that we would be moving, so she could find a new job or meet a new man. I often wondered where “home” would be when I returned from my visits.

So, instead of reading my copy of Harry Potter tucked neatly away in a corner pocket of my backpack, or playing on the GameBoy I’d smuggled in my jacket, I watched the road speed by.

My imagination became the adventure I longed for. There I could be the handsome airship pilot, standing behind a polished wooden helm, studying the clouds drift lazily below me. Sometimes I was an edgy detective, tailing a suspicious broad in a rainy, monochrome street. Other days, I was a wizened and greying wizard standing in my tower above the city, creating a spectacle of light for the people below to marvel at. When it rained I was a dark and mysterious ranger, inching my way through a forest and searching for my prey. Most days I was the captain of a sea vessel, strong and courageous, barking orders to my crew.

The sun had set and the moon stood vigil over the land. The ever silent sentinel cast light over the sea of grain. I wondered what kind of crew would be bunking on my ship at this time of night. Would my ship be manned by the most dastardly dogs of the rough seas? Would I pirate and loot the great, rich, pompous cities of the world and spread my wealth to the poor? Or would I be a member of the most dashing and refined men to ever set sail, treading new waters for kings? I liked to imagine I would be the former.

“Son,” my mother interrupted my thoughts, “Look, I know I’m hard on you sometimes, and moving to and fro all the time isn’t easy for you,” She turned to me, her face stern and beautiful as always, “And I’m sorry. But I love you very much, and I only want what’s best for the both of us.” Her face softened as she turned back to the road. “It’s hard for me too.”

I sat silently, my imagination stilled.

“I know sometimes you think of moving to your father’s house like you other siblings did, but I need someone to be the man of the house, son,” she said. “Please don’t leave me, okay? Will you promise to stay and be my captain?”

She was right, I wanted to escape sometimes, but I couldn't stand the thought of leaving her alone. Besides, she could take away my books and games, but my imagination was my own.

"Aye" I promised her.

And that seemed to make everything okay.

2nd Place

The Tunnel

By Caleb Lewis

She sat alone, huddled in the darkness of the corridor—narrow and seemingly never-ending in either direction—a road. She was a young girl, possibly eleven or twelve, with messy, brown hair that pushed out from under the small tam that covered her head. Her hands hugged closely against her body and she leaned forward toward her knees to keep warm against the coolness of the tunnel. There was a single streak where a tear had worked its way down her cheek long ago and she repeated two words over and over again in a whisper, “So long... so long... so long...”

There was a presence about her, a seeming intelligence, that even though she was a child, her large, green eyes betrayed a sort of notion that she was much, much older than she appeared to be at first glance. A slight, mysterious breeze from one side of the long passage ruffled the stray tips of her hair and she glanced back and forth, looking into the distance, as if she had waited a long time for something that had still never come.

There was a dim blue light in the tunnel, though it was impossible to tell its origin, and the entire place was filled with such an incredible silence that one could hear its quiet droning deep within his ears. Where the girl had come from was an obscurity for there was not a single door or opening anywhere to be seen in the passage, and as for the passage itself, the purpose was a mystery as well for it contained absolutely nothing and was empty. There was a moment in which the girl lifted up her hands displaying long, red scratches along her arms made by fingernails, but the movement was momentary and she immediately returned to her previous position. She continued to sit doing nothing, continued to wait; waiting and waiting for some mysterious occurrence—not sleeping or wandering or watching, just waiting.

After a certain while a warm, yellow light appeared, perhaps miles and miles away—a flickering, yellow light that moved with such smoothness and dreamy slowness that it appeared to not be moving at all. The girl did not move toward it or even do anything in the least to recognize it though she clearly knew of its presence, but continued in her apparent trance as though the single, solitude glow was not one of which she was concerned. After another time—maybe hours, maybe years... for time was not something easily distinguished in that place—the light came within a distance so that the girl could see its bearer. He was an old man with a smooth face, or perhaps a young man with a head of white hair; the type of whom one is never certain of the exact age for he looked both young and old, and he walked with the tall candle held out in front of him. The girl had risen before he drew near and her large green eyes stared at him solemnly with an unwavering intensity. The man lowered his eyes to his steps, not returning her gaze, and continued in this manner even as he drew close. Words were not spoken for a certain amount of time, but when the girl broke the silence her voice was low and fearful. She slowly formed each word, and asked but a simple, somber question.

“Who are you? How is it that you have come?”

“I am a messenger.” was his quiet reply, not bothering to answer her other question. “

Have you come to free me?” she asked. The response came quietly.

“I have come for many reasons.”

“When shall I see day? The response was even lower.

“All things come in time, my child, do not give up hope. You must stay awhile longer.”

Dr. Thomas Allen stood over the slender body of the woman in the chair in front of him. The time for panic had come and past; there was very little left he could do. Her usually large green eyes were half closed, her muscles were limp, and her breath came so quietly and slowly it was as if she were barely alive. To any other bystander she would have appeared to be sleeping, but Allen knew differently. She was wide awake; probably more awake than she had ever been in her entire life, yet her body still did not move. It had been only logical that she attempt to go in, after all she had met the criteria perfectly; though, looking back on it, he regretted not stopping her. It had been reckless and bold, driven by an overwhelming desire to understand what was not meant to be understood. “Oh the price that must be paid to gain knowledge,” he muttered to himself.

He closed his eyes remembering the introduction to his career. It had been offered him straight out of college—a job as physicist for the NSTA, an association researching both space and time. He had walked in his first day and stood staring at who was probably the most brilliant physicist of the time, Jason Leno, who was gazing intensely at a computer screen with rapidly changing calculations—his messy grey hair standing nearly straight up. “Are you familiar with the term limbo?” Leno had asked him. “Not entirely.” He had replied. “It’s an intermediary condition, a passageway so to speak, between the two extremes of time and space. It’s what I believe makes time travel possible.” The declaration had stunned him.

They had immediately started work the next day, theorizing and searching for ways to access this theory of limbo that Leno had discovered. He and Leno became instant partners. Leno had been his instructor—a brilliant one too—and together they had discovered the secret to their treasure. To access that doorway to both realities, an entity had to be capable of existing solely in each reality. “The body is not able to exist outside of space,” Leno had told him in a moment of epiphany, “but the conscious is totally different! It can enter and exit either reality and be virtually unaffected!” This realization put an entirely new edge on their work. They began to focus on transport of the mind. Allen would continue late into the evening, constantly coming to Leno with new discoveries. Leno would analyze them, offer his advice, and then they would both continue in their work.

“The mind is such a fragile instrument.” Leno had once explained. “It can be very powerful at interpreting input and reacting, but when its input is removed and a mind is turned in on itself—left to its own jurisdiction—it begins to decompose. A mind cut off from any type of reality but its own will digress farther and farther until it has literally annihilated itself. It will actually self-destruct.” This had put a complication on things since it was the mind itself that was accessing limbo. It didn’t stop them however, they longed too much for this discovery. They continued to study.

Allen had later gone to Leno with a possible idea that put a bigger risk on things than they had ever imagined. If the act of accessing limbo disconnected you from the reality of time then there was no telling how long you could remain trapped in that condition. A single second in actual time could be an infinite in limbo... possibly the other way around. It was impossible to know. The other risk was in the disconnection to space—the possible confusing of realities. A mind severed from the body would undoubtedly create a new reality that it would live in. Once this had happened then the mind itself would resist departing from its own created world to rejoin a reality that could only be remembered as a dream—a dark and faded illusion. It would sense a discrepancy, but may not understand the fullness of it well enough to fight against it. All in all they could not avoid the risk of limbo being an inescapable trap, a black hole of the mind. They both knew that their plan was doomed, but the vision of knowledge had set its hold on them and they refused to acknowledge the danger.

Finally, after years and years of failed attempts they succeeded. They created the exact nuclear conditions to remove a person's consciousness from his body and launch it into that oblivion. The problem was, neither of them wanted to try. Weeks after their invention the machine still sat in the corner, unused but not forgotten. Angel had then entered the scene at the perfect time. She had been the perfect candidate—intelligent enough to do the job, yet with just enough inexperience to be ignorant of the risks. She agreed to the idea, and it was settled. They set a date for the launch and hoped for the best. The day of initiation they sat her in the chair, carefully connecting every possible body reading they could think of to their monitors, and had then launched. Seconds later they knew they had made a mistake. Her heart rate had slowed as expected, but her brain activity was off the charts. “Her brain is digressing...” Leno had stated, “though... much, much faster than I ever would have thought! We have to stop this!”

And it was true. Her brain wave patterns had become more and more simple and childlike as time went on, and they slowly realized that there was nearly nothing they could do to stop it. They worked furiously on their own creation, trying to reconcile their own destruction, but it was to no avail. She had continued to digress so far, that her readings were nearly those of a young, twelve year old girl. Leno gave up long before they had reached any kind of answer, either from knowledge Allen did not possess, or from a will broken by disappointment. But Allen did not give in. He stood looking down at the woman whom he had plunged into this nightmare. He had few cards left to play in this game, but he knew he had to play them; he had to remind her of truth, for it was clear that she had forgotten. He had to gain time! He couldn't tell her himself of course, for he could not interlock his mind with her own, but he could send her a message, and he knew that he must! He slowly worked controls on the equipment that sat before him, triggering her brain in places he could only hope would elicit the right memories in her mind. He looked down at her once again before taking the last step in his struggle to save her, and whispered a last plea of hope.

“It's up to you now, my friend, you must choose to be saved. You alone hold the key. The path to life is one that must be chosen, and I cannot choose it for you.”

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