

# The Mosaic



Fall  
2012



Marist College Literary Arts  
Society Presents:

# THE MOSAIC

Fall 2012

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# Letter from an Alumnus

First off, I am not a writer. Far from it: I'm a staff scientist within an environmental consulting firm, and I have not needed a sniff of writing skill for the last eight months to function in any of the work I have done. At Marist, I took coursework in three different majors, but none of them were English or Communications. The first time I came to LAS I had no idea what to expect. I was lured in with the promise of priority points and pretty girls with bookish quirks. Thankfully, I was completely misinformed.

The club had me hooked from the start, and although my background involved little writing, it became infused in everything I did for my first three years of college. Looking back now, I don't know how I would have survived without it. Writing was my outlet, my release from and into the inner workings of psychology, biomedical sciences, and eventually, environmental sciences. If there had been no prose or silly poems to translate my crazy days into something sensible, I would not have graduated. It is easy to forget how personal writing is; that at its base, writing is for the author, with or without an external audience. Even when we are writing for the enjoyment of others, our writing has to come from ourselves—we have to want to write or it simply will not appear upon the page. I was fortunate enough to happen upon LAS with a small group of supportive individuals, who loved to express their innermost thoughts and were all-too-willing to extract yours, as well. Past presidents like Marion Quirici, Alex Sutton, and general members like Julia Stamburger, Kelly Gallucci, and Amy Wheeler were beacons of personality and emotional vigor that encouraged me to write, submit, and contribute to this very publication.

I am honored to have had anything submitted to the Mosaic at all, let alone be writing to all of you now. I would be at a loss if I did not take the opportunity to thank all of those who came before me, and also encourage the bright individuals published within these pages now. It is not easy to put our hard work and personal thoughts on paper, and it is even harder to have them laid bare upon pages for everyone else to read, evaluate, and judge. It is a credit to everyone who has the courage to find audience within themselves and open up for others to enjoy.

—Christopher Cho, *Class of 2011*

“Life is an opportunity, benefit  
from it.

Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it.

Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it.

Life is a tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it.

Life is luck, make it.

Life is too precious, do not  
destroy it.

Life is life, fight for it.”

—*Mother Teresa*

## **Birth**

by: Daniel Wilson

Into the world plunges a soul with no feet  
Out of a place destined to decease  
Crying in shame, his world was so elite  
Now injected into life, torn away from his peace

Destiny or not, Fate what have you  
Herculean events are laid out on your path  
Failure, an option, the easiest of a few  
Luck, risk, temptation all applying their wrath

Small and fragile, embraced with security  
Your first moments of life, everything unknown  
Life without error, a moment of purity  
Just nine months ago, and oh have you grown

So lay while you can, savor this time,  
Prepare for your journey, your first hill to climb.



## **Kermit the Frog**

by: Ryan Zaccaro

No, it's not easy being green,  
but life's challenges far exceed my complexion.  
The life of a singing frog looks glamorous, sure  
The tuxedos, the musical numbers, the furry friends  
The swooning swine, the inspirational messages.  
But every day I am told to smile,  
which is easier said than done when sodomized  
by the hand of a greedy Jim Henson  
Using me to enthrall America's children  
Being tortured for ratings  
Now in an utter state of confusion,  
I don't know where to turn next.  
After 57 years in the spotlight,  
I seek a life of normalcy  
Back in my wetland habitat.  
And I'm not the only one.  
Miss Piggy longs to return to the pen  
And Gonzo for rhinoplasty  
(which his contract forbids)  
And Fozzie for a more masculine scarf.  
So don't fall for my good cheer,  
My smiles contrived by the puppeteer.  
Madonna makes 54-year-old stardom look easy,  
But had she grown up with a hand up her dark places  
Her Vogue face might be more of a cringe.

**The World Before Me**  
by: Michelle Zdunczyk

**Me:** Let me out.

**The voice:** Out of what?

**Me:** Out of this room.

**The voice:** There is no "out."

**Me:** Is this a room?

**The voice:** Yes.

**Me:** But there are trees.

**The voice:** Yes.

**Me:** But trees do not just grow in rooms.

**The voice:** Sure they do.

**Me:** Then explain the towers.

**The voice:** Towers?

**Me:** Yes, the towers.

**The voice:** They serve to remind you how small you are in the world.

**Me:** So this is the world, in its entirety, before me? Is there a world beyond this room?

**The voice:** No.

**Me:** Is there a world beyond this life?

**The voice:** Define life.

**Me:** After I have lived, is there consciousness or unconsciousness?

**The voice:** After?

**Me:** It does not end?

**The voice:** Do you want it to end?

**Me:** No, but...

**The voice:** Yes?

**Me:** Does it ever change?

**The voice:** Change in what way?

**Me:** Do I get old? Do others replace me?

**The voice:** Others?

**Me:** Are there others?

**The voice:** You are everyone; everyone is you.

**Me:** Do I have a career?

**The voice:** Your sole job is to Regard the towers, Love the trees.

**Me:** What is my pay?

**The voice:** What need have you for compensation?

Me: Well, uh... do I not need to eat?

The voice: Are you hungry?

Me: No,

At least not for food.

The voice: Well then, what do you hunger for?

Me: Something.

The voice: Is it a secret?

Me: No, it's something.

The voice: Care to share?

Me: I already have.

### Starfish Sonnet

by: Grace Henderson

When I first saw you, five legs like sides of a  
pentagram, I screamed: pitch treble-clef.  
Floating on the surface of the shade-cooled water,  
I nearly inhaled half the ocean,

the rough skin of your back making  
my own crawl with the tiny legs of a thousand jellyfish,  
hoping the water would protect me from  
your tiny mouth, filled with the terror

of tiny starfish teeth.

Half terrified, half mystified- I saw you later  
on the wallpaper in my room  
and on the edge of my towel

as if plucked from the ocean of Anguilla  
and left to light my nightmares with stars.

## Ether

by: Michelle Zdunczyk

Most can  
Wave their fist through it,  
Lift it up over their head.

Most can  
Sip it without wondering,  
Taste it without thinking.

Most can  
Leave it behind,  
Call it invisible.

But I feel        its burden  
                  its Pain,  
                          Loneliness,  
                                  Resignation,  
its blind glory,  
                          vain penetration,  
                                  its Forgotten appreciation,  
  Neglected adoration.

Chewed up, spit out;  
Breathed in, pushed out;  
Sharp inhalation  
Fast exhalation  
Held within

Discarded too soon;  
Oh, the things we do to you!

What kind of friend would I be,  
If I let you roam ill-fatedly?

Doomed to torment,  
Every living thing your predator.

What you don't believe,  
I'll prove to you.

You're work something.  
You're worth something,  
Despite the scale and the mirror  
and the blank photograph.

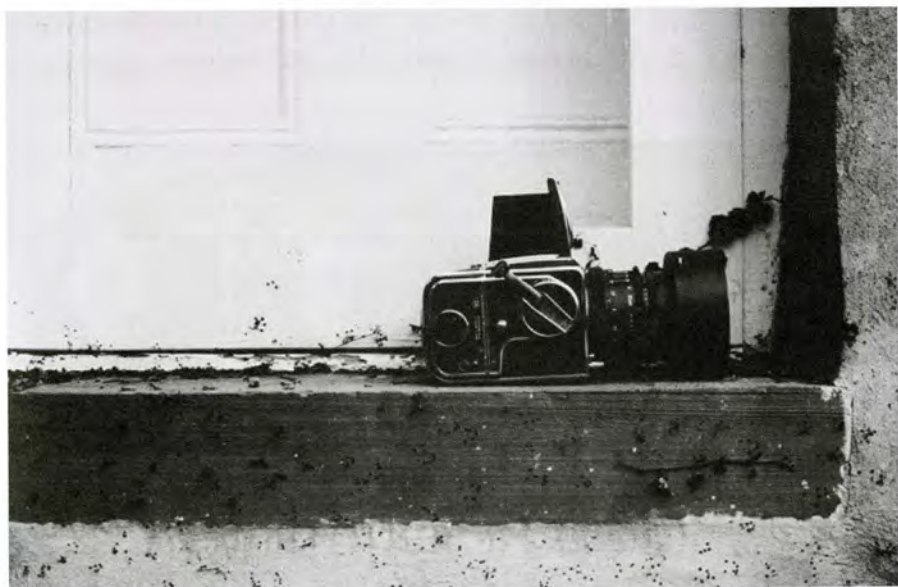
People see through you, but not  
me.  
I know you're there,

Waiting for me to rise up and join  
you one steamy day,  
To travel the world  
And become forgotten as the  
wind.

### **All in a Smile**

by: Miles Wellington-Deanda

Hope passed me by on the street  
dressed in a dress of light and valiums  
she gave me a sideways glance of relief  
just enough smirk and smoky eyes  
to draw my attention away from  
the haunting of self-destructive self-reflection  
I turned my head to catch her full force  
hers turned to hit me with that smile  
a ton of white ceramic bricks right to the brain  
then she turned around walking to wherever  
she goes  
and so did I, a smile burning in my head  
and the sun caressing my face.



**“Hasselblad”** Victoria Huntsinger

## Childhood

by: Daniel Wilson

Thinking and guessing, searching for meanings  
Poking at crushes, and forts in the trees  
No obligations to worry about, just parents intervening  
A glorious lifestyle, time seemingly at a freeze

Waking each morning not afraid of the next  
Your mind wandering elsewhere, to places unknown  
Standing amidst creativity, different than all the rest  
You're the maker of this world, and sitting at its throne

Little do you know of your quest that lies ahead  
Or challenges that await you, contradicting what is now  
You'll hear your own people screaming "Off with his head!"  
If promises are broken, and you shatter your vow

For now that's all in front of you, but will soon start moving faster,  
So indulge in what is now, exploring life and endless laughter.



## Can't Help the Color!

by: Dani Ferrara

How many more days until the smile simply stops,  
Like a city underneath oil-ring clouds and if I try  
To give a moment to each soldier then would I be a redundant  
Animal, an aboriginal worthless in the dictionary?  
If you cannot answer my questions, then you must not know  
That I am speaking directly to you, my hands cupping  
Your dry-skin ear, or ears, both when I'm feeling especially  
Infuriated, for you, my dear Earth, are infuriating,  
And immeasurably, so do not – or do, for you presuppose  
Even the rush in my veins – insist any longer on rivers-long  
Vestibules, vehicles, dictators with tolerance for candy-wrappers  
Dancing around a stool, dapper older men in bars  
With wives, demon-haunted gratification (which is only  
An abstract way of referring to prostitutes) and even less  
Obvious mannerisms like a wink that lasts for sixty-five  
Years in sepia slow-motion. Allow, please permit,  
This free verse to flow, simile-less, a brigade across  
A charming bridge above a hollow hole, with parenthesis  
And dashes to lead the way. Magical human beings  
Can accrue themselves to accidents, but romances  
And corporations know better. How else could feet  
Balance on wood on an ocean? Why the associations?  
That's all I wanted to know, really, but it's difficult  
To ask such a simple question without invoking  
All the associations.

## Some of God's Tears

by: Grace Henderson

*-after Llamas with Hats by Jason Steele*

It is red and sticky because Carl  
is a sociopathic llama with a taste for human flesh.  
That is the truth for sure.

It is not, however, where the metaphor lies,  
hidden beneath the ocean, screaming silence  
of forgiveness.

It is the small rubber lifeboats'  
sticky metallic sweetness, God's tears.  
When God created Man, carving him out like from a baked  
potato, he poured in his melted butter, sour-cream tears.  
Did God, overjoyed with his creation,  
spill life into us through the holes of our halos?  
Did he weep as he sent us off  
to build cities and fences and social networks?  
And is he disappointed in us, we ask ourselves.  
Does he now weep for the cannibalism of his world  
for the veins of hate and fear and sacrilege  
that turned his tears red and made them sticky and  
sweet in the bottom of this raft?  
Does he curse with the thunder and send angels  
to fill our dreams with ice  
so we wake up with snowflakes  
hanging from our eyelids?  
Gunshots sound and wounds cry, seeping  
back down into the Earth where God collects them  
in plastic bags and puts them  
back into His eyes.



**6 Word Short Story #1**

by: Meg Flannery

Just in case, I pour two.



**“It Was You I Was Thinkin’ Of”** Stephanie Conte

## **Adolescence**

by: Daniel Wilson

As if life took its hand and moved it across your face  
And spoke solemn words such as success and responsibility  
Leaving you with nothing but the start of a seemingly endless race  
Making you doubt yourself and your own capability

Once deep into this era of conquer and defeat  
Do you accept what it's made of, and challenge yourself to succeed  
No longer thoughts of failure, or calling cowardly retreat  
Now staying at the front lines, willing to sweat and bleed

Embracing a patience once at its end  
That will save your future from unwanted reality  
Approaching you see your goals and dependable friends  
Knowing what is now, and what can come out of thee

Steadily now, moving into a world of desire,  
So rely on your heart and keep feeding your fire

## **Table Manners**

by: Laura Matelsky

I am not Chinese. My ancestors are not from the Ming Tang Shang Happy Dragon Dynasty.

I am not Japanese. I had sushi for the first time last month. I gagged on soy sauce and seaweed.

I am not Taiwanese. I went to summer school for math three summers in high school. I usually skipped to see matinee movies instead.

I am American. I read twelve Babysitter Club books in one week in the 5th grade. My diary entries for all of that year read "N\*Sync Rules." "Backstreet Boys drool."

My birthplace is Daejeon, Korea. My parents and their parents and their parents were all born there. But English is the primary and only language I speak.

I am American.

Sometimes I forget I don't look like apple pie and baseball. I'd even settle for a mush of muddled European countries to look like and call my own. Some dingy tenement on the Lower East Side that I can pretend my Great Grandma Rosemarie lived in, swatting her piglet sons with a spoon coated in tomato paste. The only thing my halmoni ever gave me was her eyes. And halmoni doesn't count as speaking Korean. That's just what I've always called her.

I must have especially forgotten what I look like a few Friday's ago. The crowded nail salon was obnoxious and feigned relaxation, the workers' hands picking at my feet. I was halfway through my pedicure when a 3:30 regular walked in. The Asian worker tossed my foot aside, ushering the woman into a chair beside me.

I finish her first, then you.

I nodded. I didn't look up from the magazine I was reading for a good twenty minutes. In the time that had passed, women were squeezed together on the couch politely bumping shoulders with one another. It reminded me of the crowded lunch tables in my high school cafeteria. All of the girls courteously shoving one another out of the circle, butt cheek to butt cheek sharing chairs. I would laugh in spite of myself at my vacant table, picking the large celery chunks out of my mother's latest attempt at a brown bag lunch. Tuna fish. Don't you want some leftover kimchi, my love? She would ask every night. I told her the other girls at the table wouldn't want to smell it.

One woman in the salon was leaning against the wall, fidgeting. She tossed her hair. Looked at her watch. Absentmindedly flipped through a magazine. Checked her watch again. Tapped away furiously on her phone. Finally she bulldozed past the front desk, flapping her thin flip flops behind her.

Hello, don't you think it's a little inappropriate to be on break when you have a line of people waiting, miss?

I looked over to the woman who had started my pedicure earlier. But she was looking at me. Everyone was looking at me. They followed the stampeding woman's gaze right to me. Since then I've thought it might have been comical in a sitcom sort of way if I had gotten down on my knees and started meticulously choosing my tools. Clipped the woman's toenails. Worked out the knots in the balls of her feet. Instead I let the magazine slide off my lap into the bubbling water and left without putting my shoes back on.

Since then I've been wondering if Asians or Americans annoy me more. It's hard for me to know.

I don't date Asians. When I was younger my father told me, daughter, don't marry someone who looks like me. Marry a man that wears suits. I don't know if I have been waiting for the man in the suit since I was sixteen, or if I've just been scarred from ten years of bad dates.

But I've dated. From the ones who think Asians are pretty and "different" to the full blow fetishes. I once had a date ask me if I could smoke a cigarette out of my vagina like he saw in an Asian porn video. Apparently I wasn't only Asian, I was a show dog.

Meeting men like that always left me shoveling Thin Mints into my mouth by the sleeve and inevitably thinking of Harrison. My last boyfriend. Technically my only boyfriend. And in my mind, he was still the sixteen year old that would feel me up like he was squeezing a stress ball. And yet, I still think of him. His family was from Korea, although I never found out where. We didn't talk about family. We were sixteen, the point was to ignore the fact that we had one.

We had been together for nine months before prom season was upon us. We were at the mall spitting paper balls at the freshmen when his sweaty palm grabbed my straw and he looked at me.

My parents want to meet you.

I think I met them at the preschool orientation day, oh, a good twelve years ago?

No, but, they want to meet you meet you. You're my girlfriend now.

I didn't understand why he was so nervous. I now wonder if he knew more about myself than I did. If he knew that when I met his family they would steal concerned glances at each other when I didn't speak Korean. When I said I had never helped my mother make pa jun cakes when company came over. When I thought I was being polite by asking for the recipe.

I sat and picked apart my food after a twenty minute effort of attempted conversation while Harrison's family reverted back to speaking Korean to one another. Harrison was staring at his plate, contemplating his own future of a duplicated generation of what he was now a part of. And I, I found myself at another table where I didn't belong.

## Drunk

by: Dani Ferrara

I'm interested in your river lining.

I'm naked, completely.

Chalked up on whiskey and borrowed beer.

My ass

Sticks out in the light in the screen:

No two tears are the same, no  
two spiritual milleniums.

The blues cure my hangovers;

Molecules, vision up and down, up and down.



“Swoosh”

Victoria Huntsinger



**“Welcome to Hogwarts”**  
Mary Nickerson



**“Burano”**  
Kathryn Herbert



**"Bee"**

Victoria Huntsinger



**"Self-Portrait"**

Mary Nickerson





**“Runaway”**  
Lauren Zaknoun



**“Venice Vines”**  
Meg Flannery



**“Untitled”**  
William Vrachopoulos

## Words Alone

by: Katelyn Powers

If words alone could save  
Or resurrect the souls  
Resting in telling piles of ashes  
I'd never cease speaking.

If words alone could only prevent  
The guns from being fired  
Or the hearts from being torn  
I'd scream upon every mountaintop  
Until gravity sends the moon falling.

If words alone could sculpt  
A house back into a home  
Or a credible apology  
I'd fall on bended knee, begging for mercy,  
Until the stars no longer shine in nighttime skies.

If "I am sorry" alone could perpetuate  
The rare bond of trust destroyed –  
I cannot fathom how much I'd give  
To feel security once again  
Or see familiar smiles return to their faces.

If words alone could mend  
That which has been broken  
I'd never fall speechless  
Or let my mouth fall silent.

If only words alone could be sufficient.  
I pray to God, these words tonight  
May reach from my heart to yours in time.

## 6 Word Short Story #2

by: Meg Flannery

Red lips on your shirt; caught.

### Prayer

by: Grace Henderson

I walked with Jesus across the K-Mart parking lot where we waited for the six o'clock bus to Hoboken. Jesus pulled a pack of cigarettes out of his coat pocket and offered one to me. I took it and broke it in half, dropped the pieces to the ground and smeared the black carcinogen insides onto the floor of the dingy bus terminal. Jesus shrugged and lit the Marlboro hugging his bottom lip. We stood there for a while with a woman named Sharron whose son was shipped to Iraq a week earlier. She asked Jesus to keep him safe. Jesus said nothing, but nodded his head. Sharron didn't ask anything else. When the bus arrived, she boarded quickly, but Jesus and I stayed inside the damp room. He threw his cigarette butt on the grass outside and sighed, watching the bus drive away. "I try" he tells me, lifting his hands up towards the dim sunlight, the holes in his palms shining like stars. I put my arms around him and he rests his head on my shoulder. "I understand" I say into his ear as he begins to cry, "we all do."

### **Hollow: Part One**

by: Miles Wellington-Deanda

Hollow  
boy dreaming alone  
of days left long ago.  
Drift in a sea you cannot see:  
the void.

The void  
the space between  
where memories seep through  
like tears from closed eyes into the  
hollow.

### **Hollow: Part Two**

Scarecrow  
a shell of straw,  
an empty head full of  
shadows and air, lost to the past:  
hollow.

Hollow  
beneath your clothes  
and under your skin, you  
are nothing but the forgotten  
scarecrow.



**“D’Orsay Clock”**  
Meg Flannery

## Heartache

by: Kathryn Herbert

Heart-ache, *n.* 1. Pain in the heart./ A white blindness like nausea in the chest ./ An acuteness of senses and accuracy of memory, recalling images, words, smells, tastes, sensations, accompanied by nights lit by LED and damp cotton headrests. / To dread what is to happen because this is all you have, or maybe this is all you have ever wanted./ A longing unquenchable by hunger or thirst, because it is so deep in the soul that no food nor drink could remedy the ailment that plagues your mind even when the world conspires to distract you; your heart proves insatiable, screaming into your pounding ears as you press your fists down to drown out the noise of your hurt. / A deepening crescendo that pulses louder and louder until  
2. It subsides.

## Adulthood

by: Daniel Wilson

All that is behind you crafted your being  
Transforming a child with never ending dreams  
Into six feet of uniqueness, and a different way of seeing  
Saying to yourself, "nothing is really ever what it seems."

Questioning decisions that haunt you from your past  
And relishing the determination after making such calls  
Your father once told you, "that's how happiness lasts,  
Breaking through barriers and dismissing the falls."

Searching for love or entangled in lust  
Hoping life keeps its hand at its side  
Believing in yourself and those who you trust  
To never let go, and distinguish your pride

But as memory fades, one question stays afloat,  
"When is my heart beat going to hit its last note?"

## **Public Transportation**

by: Taylor Foreman-Niko

There is something profoundly sad about public transportation, all these people with places to go and no way to get there. They stand on platforms, sit on benches, and think, and their reflection thinks with them, flashing by in window panes as the bus or train slows, a slideshow of their grief, the deep sadness, long hurt that makes you stare out of windows hoping to see something, more than your shuffling, static life: a quiet place, a faithful book, a smile.

But all you see is yourself.

And the closeness of your breath does nothing but fog the glass, bereft of the deafening silence of nearing, of being, fingers drawing fire across a thrumming plain that burns you like a song, sunk deep and hot in your ears, scalding your throat with that knot of doubt and hope, that knot that chokes you, girds you, cheers you to bridge the gap, to take one small step, to speak not with words, but in words, breath them into one another, twisting like snakes in the universal language of tongues and sighs, CPR for the soul, two souls, radiant like supernovas that will never fade, the afterimage forever scorched upon your retinas, the memory crashing with all the fury of igniting stars and fulfilled dreams, and there is no gravity as you touch, no collapse, you are lifted, light fills you with its double meaning, bears you up and there is no knot, nothing but the link between, and the twisting and the burning and the questing of five-limbed runners across the New World, the toppling as up become left and down becomes right, as feet give way, and sheets embrace, and you breathe their hair and kiss their eyes, cup their faces, as you laugh and cry and smile, smile, smile until your face hurts, and despite everything, at that moment, as you look into their smiling face, you know that they are hurting with you.

## **My Heart is Heavy**

by: Catherine Natoli

My heart is heavy  
Folding  
Under the pressure of  
Your walk trotting stepping  
On the cracks of my ventricles.  
Sodden with  
Your saliva dripping  
Mercilessly into the absorptive  
Sponge walls.  
Swollen with  
Memories of cold nights spent huddled on  
Stone walls watching stars  
Peering  
Into a big sheet of glass.  
Bloated with emotions  
Fleeting and  
Undying yearning  
For each second to be an hour  
Spent in the perimeters of  
Your gaze.  
Steeped in muddled thoughts  
Pouring through my atriums and drowning  
Out the rhythmic noise  
Of beating.



## **Fred on Loneliness**

by: Shannon Slocum

Fred is an older man in his early eighties. He is seated, slumped, in a weathered armchair. The stage is set up like a living room, out of date, with two windows on the back wall. Fred talks to the audience.

[FRED]

I've got a dog, Robbie. I wasn't too sure about him at first, he was a gift. You see my kids are always giving me gifts, gifts that they think I need or that will occupy my time. Before Robbie it was a Keurig—the hell with that piece of junk—and before the Keurig it was...what was it...some kind of... some kind of foot massager? One of those, you know, those slippers with the batteries and the heat and the—it doesn't matter; the thing doesn't even work. So they give me a dog. Me, a dog, at my age...but the dog was better than the Keurig and the slippers so I let him stay. Not that he hasn't had to earn his keep. I told him, after he kept me up all night, that first night, yapping, that he better straighten up if he wanted to stay here. And he did, the little chump, he straightened right up. Give him a piece of cheese and he's golden. He might gas a little, but who the hell doesn't, that's what I say.

[Pause]

And that Robbie, he's a good listener, too. I'll sit in my chair and he'll sit at my feet, either looking up or looking down, but he's listening. I know because his right ear twitches, you know, twitches at every word I say and don't say. The kids, when they come, they give me all this junk and then haul off, back to work, back to their appointments—appointments. That's what they're always saying, "Pop, we've got so many appointments today, maybe next time." So I guess that's what they gave me Robbie, to ease the guilt about them appointments...

[Pause. Gazes past audience for a moment. Shakes it off]

But to hell with them. We've got appointments of our own. We get up in the morning and we have our breakfast. The doctor has got me on a strict diet, just bananas and yogurt and Cheerios for me, a real man's diet, you know, but what he doesn't know is that I cook bacon for Robbie. That's right, the dog gets the bacon and I get the Cheerios. Someone's got to eat well in the house, that's what I say. And I might even nibble at a little, just so I can hear Dr. Robins tell me how my cholesterol is leveling nicely without all of that meat and fat. Puh. After breakfast—

[Interrupted by the sound of sirens]

Oh boy.

[The sirens are overlapped by the sounds of frantic barking]

Oh boy, oh boy.

[Chuckling]

That's him barking, the nut. He loves the sirens. We've got the fire department up the road so they're always going off. That reminds me—

[Slowly gets up from chair and shuffles around the stage, shutting windows]

If I don't shut these damn screens, even the windows, he'll bust right through and go running for the hills. Shoulda' seen what he did when the sirens came for me. When was that...February...no April...whenever I had that cold...

[Shuffles back to the chair and eases down]

Anyhow, he slipped out between their legs, right out the door, when they had me strapped to the stretcher.

[Remembering fondly]

They had to make one of the younger guys chase him around the yard, that little chooch. You see, he was trying to jump in the back of the ambulance, so he could come along for the ride...

[Shaking his head]

And they let him; they let him because I said everyone else has got appointments.

[Pause]

So now, after that fiasco, Dr. Robins said I can't sit for too long in this chair, I've got to get my exercise. Bad heart, bad lungs, bad circulation—to hell with those stockings—so we go to the park and walk around the trees and sit by the pond and watch the families down there for a picnic. They don't notice me much, sitting on the bench with Robbie alert and ready next to me, but if they've got the grandparents with them, I'll get a wave and smile. It's funny how forgetful they can get. You have 'em, you raise 'em and you send 'em off so they can do the having and raising themselves. But with Marie gone and my health...well, it is what it is and it's not good...

[Pause]

It's just nice to know that someone's listening out there, out there in the shadows. Because, you know, I'm in the shadows, too. And it's lonely, it's damn lonely, even with a dog.



“In the Alleyway” Kathryn Herbert

**Manor House**  
by: Taylor Foreman-Niko

Manor house  
Flat plain  
Lone house on  
An old lane  
Silence chokes  
The air

Manor house  
On a still plain  
Beside crooked willow  
With etched names  
A rope still  
Dangles there

Manor house  
Quiet plain  
Still faces  
In a gold frame  
They're screaming  
Inside

In the manor house  
On a wet plain  
In a bathtub with  
A plugged drain  
A mother smiles  
As the bubbles rise

To the manor house  
On the changed plain  
Early returned  
In heavy rain  
He finds her lover  
In the hall

In the manor house  
On the burning plain  
With the marriage  
Bed profaned  
The lover won't  
Answer her call

Dark manor house  
On a dark plain  
She wails at  
The doorframe  
As she sees  
What's left

Manor house  
Greying plain  
He wades through  
Tears feigned  
His hands wrap  
Around her neck

Empty manor house  
On a red plain  
He whispers her  
Cursed name  
As he mounts  
The trembling bough

Ancient manor house  
On an ugly plain  
Rusted gate  
Thick chain  
They've long since  
Stopped asking how

Stolid manor house  
Pale plain  
Candle flicker  
Behind window pane  
A face in the  
Darkness lit

Manor house  
Empty plain  
A father  
Driven insane  
By the dreams of  
His children's cries

In the manor house  
On a drab plain  
A broken father  
With no name  
Discovers his  
Wife lies

Endless manor house  
On unending plain  
Years pass but  
It's all the same  
From the dark he  
Whispers her name

Why did you do it, dear Lor-  
raine?

Why did you do it, my Lor-  
raine?



**“Untitled”** Shannon Slocum

## Italian Poem

by: Nicholas Cipriano

*Tutti invecchiamo e moriamo,  
è una parte naturale della vita.  
Ma, quando è il mio tempo,  
Sarò da solo?*

*Quando io sono vecchio  
e il mio corpo ha molto dolore,  
avrò una persona al mio fianco per aiutarmi e amarmi?  
O cadro` e rimarò freddo e senza vita, come la pietra sotto di me?*

*Quando io sono morto  
e il mio corpo è sepolto sotto la pelle della terra madre,  
sarà le persone viene e mette le rose sulla mia tomba,  
o sarà coperta con erbacce e polvere?*

*Quando io sarò morto da molto tempo  
e il mio corpo è decomposto,  
mia memoria scaldierà i cuori degli altri  
o scomparerà come i nomi sulla lavagna?*

*(English translation)*

We all get old and die;  
it is a natural part of life.  
But, when it is my time  
will I be alone?

When I am an old man  
and my body has much pain,  
will I have a person at my side to hold me and love me  
or will I fall, cold and lifeless, life the stone beneath me.

When I die  
and my body is buried deep under the skin of Mother Earth,  
will people come and put roses on my grave,  
or will it be covered with dust and weeds.

After I have been dead for a long time,  
and my body has become one with the earth,  
will my memory warm the hearts of others  
or fade away like names on a chalkboard?



## **Death**

by: Daniel Wilson

Though some goals and aspirations were never achieved  
And there are people you haven't met, and places unseen  
    Questions unanswered, losses that are grieved  
You seized what life gave you, and found yourself a queen

Your last goodbyes are undying, standing the test of time  
    Traveling with you to share with those you have lost  
    Into an eternity of memory, your last hill to climb  
    Passing through the gates, your life is the cost

As your eyes begin to fade, and your vision turns to black  
    Images of forts in the trees, and moments unforgettable  
    Let you know you did okay and to never look back  
    Because your future is now made of the un-regrettable

    So lay while you can, and savor the past  
It's now the end of your journey; you've done all that was asked.

# NOTES

Dear Readers,

Thank you so much for picking up a copy of *The Mosaic*! Hopefully you enjoyed the work we compiled in this issue, and that what you saw and read here will inspire you to begin your own creative journey—literary artistic, or otherwise. We hope you will continue to read *The Mosaic* in the future!

Your Editors,  
Kathryn & Catherine



**Back L-R:** Shannon Slocum, Kathryn Herbert, Carolyn Rivas, Jessica Sturtevant  
**Front L-R:** Catherine Natoli, Miles Wellington-Deanda, Devin Dickerson, Meg Flannery, Victoria Huntsinger

