Anthology
CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Students enrolled at Tarleton State University are invited to submit their work for publication consideration online at: www.tarleton.edu/~anthology. Anthology accepts work throughout the calendar year and is published annually in April.
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I discovered the reading and writing of poetry only as an adult. Previously, I had considered the locus of poetry to be “somewhere else”—whether in Britain, Italy, or simply in another century. I thought that poetry was only written by people with more exciting lives than mine. What an incredible revelation to see that poetry is here, all around each of us every day. Yes—in the waiting line at the bank, in the rusty hinge on a gate, or in the lopsided gait of a mean horse.

In order to participate in the deep, silent message a poem transmits from the writer to the reader, you have to be willing to pause, to reflect. And, if you wish to write good poetry, you have to wrestle with the English language in order to put down on paper the intangible mystery contained in what you have experienced. If you want to read poetry, you must be willing to hear what the poem says to you. Both of these functions are furthered by a good vocabulary, an insatiable passion for words, and a willingness to pause. A good ear comes in handy also. Creating a readable and publishable poem takes time—a lot of it. Finding and reading poetry you love takes time also. Needless to say, as a poet and as a reader of poetry, I deem this time well spent.

Remember that finding poets to read whose work you like isn’t necessarily easy. Just because you walk into a bookstore and don’t like the first twenty books of poetry you pull down from the shelves, doesn’t mean you aren’t a reader of poetry. Perhaps, those were just twenty poets you happened not to like. I might do the same things with those particular twenty poets. But, be persistent. Somewhere, someday you will find a poet whose
words seem to articulate the silence inside your very soul. It will feel like a homecoming. And, you will know what it feels like to love poetry.

Sarah Cortez  
March 2006  
Remarks for Tarleton State University
Our Editors’ Choice Awards honor three individuals who have contributed outstanding works to this volume. The range of talent demonstrated by these students exemplifies the breadth of creativity at Tarleton State University.

OUTSTANDING ARTIST: Elizabeth Meiron
OUTSTANDING PHOTOGRAPHER: Katherine Thompson
OUTSTANDING POEM: “Mundo Maya,” Jean Wickham
She had blonde hair
I recall
And two big brown eyes
Skin with a slight tint
That was a hint
Of her Hispanic heritage
She had a smile
I recall
That was a vestige
Of her innocence lost
And the sensuous cost
Was written across her face
She had a way
I recall
Of smoking a cigarette
That whispered come on lines
And flashed bedroom eyes
Her lips glistening and wet
I spy her, while reading a bit of Emerson
Her caramel skin
Glowing and glorious
She confidently displays the beautiful lines of her breasts
Transcendent and alive
Her raven hair
Curléd in sultry and innocent rivulets
Cascading around her bright face
She chooses a volume of Chopin
Opens it
Transcendent and alive
Gene Rhea Tucker
Cigarette

With that cigarette in your lips
And your head on my shoulder
We could argue with the night
And win for ourselves
A piece of time made for no other
Take that time and build
One step toward heaven
Then begin another,
Or we might just surrender to the dark
And take what we can get
A hand on your cheek
A head on a shoulder
Cigarette in your lips
You
You toss back your blonde hair
Smile
Throw an impudent glance
In my direction
Malicious
With your smart body
And your sexy mind
I glimpse the tight passion through your eyes
The heart of a woman
The soul of a girl
I hear brawling thoughts in your voice
Perhaps you doubt your choice?
Governments are not the only things
Instituted among men
My theology is not constrained
By church walls and Sundays
Scornful eyes and denunciations
Misguided moralities
    of those haughty ones
Who declare themselves elect

I am no sensual toper
Or lusty debauché
But an aesthete of many varied arts
The handiwork of a cliff face
The canvas of a blue-thick sky
The awe-glowing beauty
    of a woman’s face

The letters of the Word
From Hebrew aleph
To Greek omega
They are but a primer
To the alphabets inscribed
    in a sparkling night sky
The notes of a song
The chapter and verse
    of verdant hills and trickling streams
The Creator’s masterpiece displayed
To be read and studied
Like the golden reflection
    of the sun
Shimmering across an endless sea
I would not the good deacon be
Gene Rhea Tucker

Selfish

A selfish life
I’ve kept myself from you
Hid myself from you
Never told you my true feelings
I suffer in silence
While you hurtle along
Dangerously and scandalously
From beau to beau
Drug to drug
Break to break
But me —
And my selfish life
Mirrors your selfish life
I tumble along
Flippantly and glibly
From romance to romance
Drink to drink
Philosophy to philosophy
Me
Keeping yourself from me
Hiding yourself from me
Never letting you know your true feelings
For me
Seven unconnected words
Reveal themselves in an instant:
Elevator,
Femininity,
Hatred,
Iris,
Smile,
Perseverance,
Sensuality;
And the skyline illumined by
The angular beams of a falling god
Was the backdrop for realizing
The soul has flavor and eloquence
Look into my eyes and you will see
The pain that I hold
Because of the lies, my government has told
My father, Zapata, was a man
Who had a plan
To take a stand
And redeem our land.
I will hurt no more
So open the door
Land of the free
Commencement Day, set for trumpet, trombone, and piano, is in single-movement form and written to honor the life of my father, Don R. Carroll. All expressive markings are the composer’s suggestions; as with all music, a large portion of the musical interpretation is dependent on the performers.

The piece commences with the sound of a distant trumpet foreshadowing triumph, then progresses directly into a Death March ostinato as the first theme is heard. Two distinct themes are present within the piece, each played by a different solo instrument. The first theme heard is a mournful one exposed by the trombone, representing Dad’s earthly death. Being human, we all experience the grieving process. The denial, questioning, confusion, anger, and pain of losing someone precious seem to attack us. The time of grief, portrayed by the development section, is short-lived because of our faith in God, who provides us comfort and peace. Once again, the trombone’s Mourning Theme is heard, quickly progressing to the trumpet’s Triumphant Theme with more brilliance and assurance than ever before. Dad loved to hear mom sing “Ivory Palaces”. One can hear melodic quotes of that hymn if he or she listens closely.

Dad lived his entire life striving for heaven, and now is there with his Father, no longer hurting, crying, or suffering in any way. He is with God watching us and rejoicing with our triumphs. Please share with me in the celebrating and rejoicing of his greatest Triumph.

My father passed away March 9, 1998, two days after his fifty-second birthday. This piece is intended to be a celebration, not of his absence from earth, but rather of his presence in heaven. It is a celebration of his graduation from this life and of the commencement into his real Life in his real Home with his real Father.

1 Corinithians 15: 54, 55, 57
In Celebration of Don R Carroll

Commencement Day

Marcus T Carroll

Performance Time = 7 min.

Trumpet

Trombone

Piano

Mellow

© MCMXCVIII by Marcus T Carroll
Commencement Day - 2
Dear Mr. President,

I use “Mr.” since I fully expect that a woman has not been elected; the Republicans in no way, form, or fashion have any intention of allowing a mere woman to run or win the Presidency and my own Democratic friends can’t even figure out how to put a set of wiper blades on the broken-down vehicle of our party. Whoever you are, I trust this letter finds you settling into the Office well and the coffee in the Navy mess downstairs as strong as I remember it.

This letter is not only an urgent appeal to your sense of duty to the Office in which you sit, but also a call to arms for a crisis that stands to cripple our nation in the next two generations, if not sooner. This firestorm on the horizon is not some far off emergency that can be settled by dropping in the 82nd Airborne, nor can tightening our borders or strengthening security in our airports fix it.

The problem is right here inside our shores, right in the public schools and communities of this great land; public education is begging for help and desperately needs your unequivocal attention. Without your immediate attention and a firm commitment from Congress to step up to the plate and start hitting homeruns for the schoolchildren of America, the gently protected minds of tomorrow will be left withering on the windswept crags of history.

If you, as President, decide to take on such a monumental task of restoring public education, you will find yourself caught between the fireplug and a dog, and you will probably wonder how you will survive such a battle. I assure you that there have been many in your shoes (or boots) that have wondered the
same thing. And, no doubt, there will be more to come who face
tasks equally as daunting in their struggles.

Not since the heady days of civil rights reform has this great
nation faced such divisive and refractive burdens. The problems
facing public education today are painfully obvious in concept,
yet meandering in their solution.

We can sit in our comfortable armchairs and watch the
evening news and say that international problems are best left to
governments across the sea, that crises around the globe are best
left there and not brought to our homeland, that the problems
of the less fortunate are not always ours and they are destined
for their lot in life, that our leaders of this nation are cynical and
cannot be the sole agents of change in America. As Toby Ziegler
once said, “. . . but that, my friends, is not worthy of you; it’s not
worthy of a president; it’s not worthy of a great nation; it’s not
worthy of America.”

I write this letter in mid-December of 2005, less than a calendar
year from the midterms of 2006, and a full three years before you
have moved into the White House. But, just in the past few days
we have seen the distinct lack of concern and compassion for
public school children in the country. Your predecessor, George
W. Bush, a man of notable shortcomings, pushed through a full-
throated fight for his landmark legislation vowing to leave no
child behind. Yet, that is what has happened. Child after child
after child is being left behind in education.

Earlier this week, Congress passed tax-cut legislation
adding another $56 billion, spread out over five years, that
further deepens the deficit and allows for a cut in excess of
$50 billion (that was passed just three weeks ago) that reduces
funding to critical services to low and middle-income families,
including $14.3 billion in cuts from federal student financial aid
programs—the largest, mind you, cuts to the student financial
aid programs (including Pell Grants) in the history of their
existence.

The war in Iraq we now see was a sham: an excuse to divert
attention away from the Saudis who financed the 9/11 attacks
and the friends of the Bush Administration involved in the
oil and defense industries. Leaving the human cost out of the equation, think about the financial costs associated with the war in Iraq alone. Now, I am not a mathematician, but let’s look at the numbers for a minute.

We’ve spent over $230 billion in Iraq thus far. With $230 billion, we could send 5 million American college students to college every year and give them a scholarship of $11,500 a year for four years.

With $230 billion, we could send 3 million American college students to college for four years, give them a scholarship of $11,500 and buy them a Lexus to drive off to college in.

If a senior citizen were taking four of the most widely used drugs for a range of ailments from hypertension to ulcers, their average yearly cost for their prescriptions is $4,251. With $230 billion and using data from the US Census Bureau basing this projection on 55 million senior citizens, we could pay for every senior citizen in the United States’ prescriptions every year for the next one hundred years.

With $230 billion, we could spend $3,750 a year for fifty years on every child in every public school in the United States.

While countries like India and China are making impressive improvements to the educational systems, our Congress is doing everything they can to bleed it dry, especially for students from low and middle-income families whose life dream is to go to college. All done while we’re spending $5 billion per month on a war in Iraq, thereby furthering the deficit. Where is the conservatism and compassion in that?

When we went to war in the past (at least until WWII), a President asked Congress for a declaration of war. Then Congress raised taxes to pay for the cost of the war. When President Bush began to prosecute the war on terror and on Saddam Hussein, Congress refused to raise taxes in order to pay for it. So, the costs of the war are going to be passed on to our children and grand children.

I urge you to commit to fully funding our educational programs that will help lead us out of the desert of mire and establish a culture of dedication to our schoolchildren and the
future. So much waste in government and such little hope for the correction and prioritization in spending. Below are just a few items I have noted in federal legislation (in 2005, alone) that I really think we can live without:

- $50 million for an indoor rainforest in Iowa
- $102 million to study screwworms (these were eradicated at least forty years ago)
- $50,000 for a tattoo removal program in California
- $1 million for laptop computers for 20 police cars in Wassilla, Alaska (that’s $50,000 for each laptop)
- A $3 million grant to the Cal Ripkin, Sr. Foundation; $100,000 to the Tiger Woods Foundation (Tiger won $1.85 million in his first two victories in 2005; his foundation has assets in excess of $32 million)
- Since 1986, $439 million to the International Fund for Ireland (this year, Congress gave $10 million to help build a replica of a Canadian ship that ferried Irish famine victims to Canada)
- $1.7 million for the International Fertilizer Development Center
- $40 million for the Department of Homeland Security Fellowship Program (of 101 students trained in this federal program in 2004, two were hired by the DHS)
- $3.72 million to “finish” the Capitol Visitor’s Center (swelling in excess of 111 times its intended cost, the center still isn’t finished.)
- $3 million for a US House of Representatives staff member fitness facility
- $1 million for the National Center for Air and Space Law (University of Mississippi)

In all honesty, I really think we can live at least another millennium without the need for a visitor’s center extolling the greatness of Congress and standing as a self-appreciating, pompous monument to itself.
Now, nobody with a lick of sense can sit here and argue that an increase in federal funding will result in higher test scores, better retention rates, lower dropout rates, or much else. But, at least it’s a start. When our policy-makers and Congressional leaders come to the realization that we desperately need to tighten the regulations on how federal money is spent and where it is spent, then we can get a handle on spending. With block grants, there is so much room for using federal funds for increasing administrative salaries and graft. Who’s to say that every penny for schools is going where it needs to be (with “needs” being the operative word, here) and not to frivolous programs or worthless purchases? Why not pressure your partners in Congress to line out where the funding will go and get away from the block grant notion and fully fund education across the board? Did I say “pressure”? I meant LEAD! How about LEAD the Congress in this direction by publicly stating that during your Administration you plan to see that Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be fully funded, if it hairlips Bill Frist.

In Texas, education funding is quite disheartening because nobody wants to talk about HOW we solve the problem. Members of the legislature will propose their own, individual suggestions, but when it’s time to sit down and talk them over and discuss areas to change and negotiate, there’s just silence. The conference committees must sound like Bill Clinton and George W. getting together to swap war stories.

Speaking of the state level, there MUST be some sort of equalization formula that will support education for a fair and equitable distribution of funds to the roughly one thousand school districts in Texas. But what is fair and equitable? Do you balance everything out by reducing funding to wealthy districts and increasing funding to poorer districts? The Texas tax code only allows for so much negotiation room in how we tax property values for school district funding. What about the school districts in West Texas that are extremely wealthy from mineral, gas, and oil revenues but have very few students? How
would one handle this situation? Suffice to say that there are regions nationwide with this same predicament.

As an eighth-generation Texan, I speak with some authority on this matter as I have watched and studied Texas politics for over twenty-five years. There is but one way to solve our education crisis, and that is for every penny collected in every school district in Texas to be sent to Austin. Then and only then can the tax dollars be divided evenly and equally and sent back to each school district. If we did this, school districts in Texas would have more money than they know what to do with. But until that day comes, the poor districts and their children will continue to suffer at the hands of the Legislature, and the rich districts will continue their patterns of wasting money for frivolous expenses.

If you and the Congress could somehow magically sit down and take a true, bipartisan approach to education—leave the hatred, personal and special interest agendas and contempt at the door—and really take an honest and forthright look at tackling the crisis of funding education, then, Mr. President, that’s another good start.

We have entrusted you with the tremendous responsibility of leading this country, and you have also earned the support (or at least enough electoral votes to win) of the American public. Words are inadequate to describe the pressure you will feel over the next four years. The constant drains on your time, emotions, and previous commitments will cause you to draw on an inner strength that only men who have served in your Office know. You will feel from this day forward the honor and distinction of being recognized wherever you go, and I sincerely hope that you will bring honor and trust to not only your duties as President, but also to the far greater duties of the Office.

And so, if this farmboy—rich in human friends but poor in worldly goods—can impart to you any suggestions for success, it would be to start with our youngest and most cherished commodities as a society. And when I think of the honors and kindness that I have known in my life, I think of the dreams and aspirations that I personally would like to see become realities for every man, woman, and child in this great land. I want my
hopes and dreams to be those of all who serve in public office: that we remember those who suffer with grinding poverty; we remember school classrooms like some of the ones I grew up in with leaky ceilings and roofs, and we give every child, not just the token few, the chance to have a better life in the world than their parents had.

But sadly today, that reality does not exist—not for the five year old who starts school in classrooms with duct-tape on the broken windows or with textbooks that are missing covers and pages, not for the baby born with birth defects who will have an uphill battle the rest of its life, a battle that might have been prevented with adequate prenatal care that this government could fund, not for the children along the Rio Grande, many of whom will likely never see the inside of a college classroom, let alone make a living wage substantial enough to support a family.

We need not overly concern ourselves with national tests that will tell us if Little Lucy is learning as well as her contemporaries in the first grade; we need to foster in these children the spirit of hope that someday they will be able to rise up out of grinding poverty and the staggering way of life that is the ruin to millions, even right here in Texas, of children. Whether it is from a college environment or technical school, at least they deserve an equal chance. Mr. President, we can do better than this. You can do better than this. And we owe it to the future generations and the history of the ages to do better.

Mr. President, your challenges are great in number and the rewards are few. You hold the future in your hands, and the reins of leadership of Congress tucked into your belt. Only by taking that first step forward and approaching the Congressional leadership with outstretched hands and not clinched fists can you save education. How can we expect society to cultivate the hope I wrote of earlier if you are not willing to believe and hope for a better tomorrow for ALL children? How can we ask children to perform in a classroom environment that suffers in some regions of the country as badly as third-world and developing nations halfway across the world? If you don’t believe me on this, hop in a limousine and take a trip through
Appalachia, or visit some of the Native American reservations in the Western United States.

We can do better, Mr. President. Horace Mann once said that we rule by the majority, and if the majority is insane, then the sane must go to the asylums. It is up to you to pull sanity from the depths of Washingtonian policy, no matter the personal or political costs. I know I stand with millions of other Americans- and Texans- and offer my support, trust, and faith that you will do whatever is necessary to save our young people.

With every good wish and hope for the future, I remain,

Very respectfully yours,

Tony Dudik, Graduate Student
Tarleton State University
Stephenville, Texas
Elizabeth Meiron

Figure 1

Kelly Richey

Patiently Waiting
The Inevitable
Change
Strain on the mind
To think around
The Unpredictable
Walls that
Thwart our wills
Away from
The Potential

The World contemplates
Mutates
And reaps
The Incorrigible
Harvest of
Choice.
Glistening Ropes surround the illumined chair,
A spotlight gleams off four-legged beams.
With a chrome face, laced in a phosphorescent base,
Subdued in uniform stagnation,
Giving no hint of its vindication.
So many stories; so precious
So rare
With reflections trapped inside,
Hiding the screams and the dreams of a pastime.
Look in the distance and one may see,
The silhouettes of wrestling; subtle and
obscene.

Chaotic; perpetual

A malicious crack across the back,
Enforcing a deafening pain.
A raging blood flow sent off its track
A clang! Bang! She rang…
Crimson stains chafe the mat,
Mixing with a vial of sweat.
Now engraved with a permanent “tat,”
Scars that a wrestler never forgets.
Scalding tears roll down faces
and Stitches sew up lacerations.
Stepping out from the scene,
one may come to find
A glass of wine can toasts these crimes,
A memorial against the sterile mind.

Everlasting.
Ripe for the Pickin’

The cows are ripe for the pickin’
As the Silent Fields lay hushed in covert observation.
The grass is saturated with chilly dew
In the April midnight
And a facetious crew is lurking on the prowl,
Singling out a wallowing stray.
Their bellies scuttle along the ground
Keeping the endeavor hidden deep in the dirt.
A monstrous bellow rings out from the herd behind
Disquieting the boys’ ranks.
“She hear us?”
“No, let’s move!”
Stalking their prey in a standard circular tactic,
They carefully filter in around the heifer.
After a series of incoherent hand gestures
And reaffirming nods,
They arise from their bellies and rush toward the night’s destiny
As the Moon lays fold to oval spots blotched on an ivory canvas,
Exposing the target’s primary position.
And after one unconscious shake of her unwieldy head,
A nudge parade thwarts her position
And ground beef is served upright.
The ever-present enemy whoops as they gloriously vacate
the scene,
Returning to their forts.
Mission Accomplished!
Life is
a systematic assembly
line. Rinse.
Being fed a
can manipulate
The crystal ball:
Sunlight has never
Sipping tea, washing
the chalkboard to attain
Repeat. Lather, Rinse.
And now the crystal ball
though ascertain. The grades are right here for us to grasp. Inhaling
fumes of a fleeting past. As long as we line up in a prism, we’ll get for
what we came. Lather. Rinse. Repeat. Now the monotonous circuitry
conquers our eyes again.
Find yourself plunging into
By the vacant, sly sheath;
a dreadful, disdaining lie
burn these “safety” bridges

Lather. Repeat.
polished pill that
your brain impulses.
transparent and neat.
touched the pale skin.
it down with gin. Scrape
those five precious lines.
Wait, the routine is wrong
backwards. The tasks: trivial
AFTER
ALL
THE
STRAIN
YOU MAY SLEEP AWAKE
IN YOUR DISMAL GRAVE
KNOWING THAT YOU GOT
FOR
WHAT
YOU
CAME
After swallowing almost all my head
I cut my throat for the stimulus
No matter how much I try
I can never find a life of substance

This all rests beyond me
In a home that is not here
Because I don’t understand the reasons
Of why I do the things I do

This pain swims in my chest.
The cancer of my failures travels through my heart
And to my stomach where my love dies.
For that, I give my life to the God of the spirits.

Give me the ultimate tragedy . . .
The ultimate story
Siempre Bajo

Después de trage casi todo mi cabeza
Corté mi garganta para el estímulo
Por más que trato
Nunca puedo encontrar mi vida

Esto todo descansa más allá de mí
En una casa que está no aquí
Porque no comprendo los razones
Por qué hago estas cosas a ti

La herida nada en mi seno
El cáncer de mi enfermedad dispersa a mi corazón
Y en mi estómago donde murió mi amor
En sus manos le concedo mi vida a Dios

Darme la última muerte...
Darme la última historia.
i sing here,
i play here,
i smile here,
i love here,
i laugh here,
i wish here,
i dream here,
i try here.
i fail here,
i cry here,
i lie here,
i curse here,
in fear here,
i hate here,
in pain here,
i die here.
in faith here, i go There.
Disjointed figures waving in the mist
Enticing-seducing, beckoning
Toward forgotten images
Dancing to the fore
Seeping around edges
Sealed long ago.
Keys to the abyss hang upon the door
Swaying through eternity
Begging to be heard
Tortuous voices,
Crying out to escape hellish nightmares
Looming dangerously close.
Hideous beasts, death upon their backs,
Magnitude unknown
Pounding to dust forgotten lost souls.
Misery and anguish accompany their march
Dealing out demise to all caught unaware.
Impending doom slithering ever closer
A serpent on its belly.
Beware to those who know
Sitting on their thrones
Pious indifference rolling from their egos
Slashing down double edged swords
Upon disquieted souls.
Anthology XII

Bonnie Harding

Reality

What tortured visions haunt your dreams
Causing you to cry out,
Jolt from those nether depths
Where the conscious self dare not tread
In the misted light of your day?

Where does the twisted path threading your soul
With undeniable agony
Lead you each dark night
When sleep no longer can hide
In the safety of normal
To come crashing around your ethereal world?

How long before you let yourself go,
Go into that nefarious scape,
Before you confront the wicked scenes
Lying past the mirrored pool
From which you struggle to surface
Each time the dreams come
To reveal themselves to your timid mind?

When will you cease
Holding onto the tangible fear
Gripping your soul to denial,
To reach out and touch the dark light
Hovering beyond the realm,
Waiting to reveal mystic truth
Beyond this reality you choose to live?
Joshua Hart

The Emperor

My neighbor, I’ve forgot his name,
Would mow his lawn, edge, clip, and trim
Religiously, once every week.
He must’ve been near eighty-five.
I’m twenty-six. I mow mine twice
A month, if that, and never edge
At all. The blades of grass would
Bend to his will, conforming to
His blade. He injected order
Into his universe: One lot,
A house. Nice man. He waved and smiled
Each time he saw me on the porch.
Damn, lazy kid. He might have thought.
Silly old man, conquering blades
Of grass, I laughed but smiled and waved.
Three weeks ago, they found him there
“Passed away,” they said, “in his sleep.”
‘Passed away’ sounds heaven-bound, it
Seems. Perhaps that’s why we say it.
No matter. Dead or ‘passed away,’
His conquering days are ended.
A line of cars stretched down the block.
Ones I’ve never seen out there in
The year I’ve lived across the street
From ‘What’s-his-name,’ the emperor.
The people smiled, shook hands, and went
Inside, divided what had once
Been his, and loaded up his small
Empire, shook hands again, and
Drove away. Three weeks ago. The
Grass is tall from rain and loss of
Master. No one seems to notice.
But when I sit there on my porch,
I stare and feel compelled to go
And mow the old man’s grass.
Silly. Yeah, I know.
Grandpa. The old man must have had it in for me. Grandpa was peculiar to use the nicest of adjectives. I would like to say that I loved the old man, or at least it is consoling to describe my feelings toward him in that way, now that so much time has passed. He was disagreeable always and quick-tempered. The slightest of infractions on the part of a child in his home was intolerable to him. His fraction of Irish blood arose in his voice when he gruffly snapped his ready-made warnings in moments of such infractions: usually playing too loudly when the television was on (the television was always on). “You can stay, but that noise has got to go!” and “Kids are to be seen and not heard,” were commonly heard on visits to see Grandma and Grandpa. His face would become red instantly as he pointed the stem of his old, still-smoking pipe at the guilty party, clenching his dark teeth which were forever stained in the copyrighted Hills Brothers and King Edwards tradition. Grandma would soothingly advise us to go and play outside for a while. His mood would improve almost instantly after these explosive moments, and he would soon be smiling contently and puffing his pipe, awaiting the next infraction. Though it seemed the old man hated me intensely, he would always greet me with a smile when I arrived at his house for a visit. This same smile appeared, perhaps only a bit more cheerfully, when he waved goodbye as I left with my parents. “Goodbye,” he would say, “for a while.”

Grandpa was shrewd with his money, however: a good provider if nothing else. When he died, he left Grandma with a house and two cars free and clear and well over a hundred thousand dollars in savings (she gave all of the money away and was near destitute in less than ten years).

After retiring, he started going for walks every day, and he soon began collecting aluminum cans. He would walk for several miles and was easily recognized by his old khaki pants and shirt.
This routine he considered good exercise, and his collection of bags full of cans slowly filled his garage, awaiting sale on the unknown yet glorious day when the price per pound of recycled aluminum was to reach its peak. This habit, or one might say hobby, of his progressed into something less socially acceptable over time. His route became depleted of aluminum resources, as even the small town drunks could not throw enough beer cans to the side of the road to supply his daily appetite. This alone is a testament to his work ethic in the business of can collection, as this particular town had no shortage of drunks. The old man, out of boredom or perhaps a striving to maintain his quota, began peeking into garbage bins as he passed to see if there were cans on top of the refuse. Of course, when his investigation paid off, he would collect these gems, and, in doing so, reveal treasures beneath. Perhaps it started by lifting a bag to see if there were cans underneath. Within a short time, however, my grumpy old Grandpa graduated from simple can collector to the most honorable profession of full-fledged dumpster diver and official ‘town crazy man.’ His once-timid peeking and discrete removal of cans became bold and shameless rummaging. The old man saw nothing wrong with this behavior. He never left a mess; always replaced the lids.

It is not entirely clear to me whether he lacked the understanding of his daily faux pas or if he simply didn’t care, and I am not sure which explanation is less socially indicting. What is clear is that my Grandpa became obsessed and would take longer walks every day. The spoils grew out of the realm of recyclable metal to “perfectly good” knick-knacks and small appliances, and then ultimately, to food. This last bit will strike most as completely repulsive, but I can assure you that it was a natural progression. Another of Grandpa’s favorite ready-made phrases was, “You can take what you want, but eat what you take.” Wasting food was an abomination, and it was amazing how much food a small town could waste! Why, some people would picnic in the park and leave half a package of lunchmeat and three quarters of a loaf of bread in the trash: all perfectly sealed in plastic. Can you believe it? Shameful! And it was
impossible to convince Grandpa of any flaw in his reasoning: it was all perfectly sealed in plastic—IN PLASTIC, an impenetrable force field against germs! He reveled in salvaging what others had cast aside. Grandma, though she dispatched many of Grandpa’s spoils to their own trash bin, was also raised in the Depression and not inclined to throw quite all of it away. She became less inclined still as she acclimated to his new manner of shopping. (We stopped eating even the occasional dinner with Grandma and Grandpa).

One day, at the height of his rummaging career, my Grandpa met the president of his bank downtown. After the customary greetings, Grandpa invited the man to his house for a beer and then proudly explained where he had acquired it. Some unthrifty fool had left most of a six-pack of perfectly good beer in the trash in the park. The bank president consulted his schedule, and most regrettably, was forced to decline. It was during this time, however, that quite an agreeable turn occurred in his demeanor. He became increasingly more pleasant, presumably as a result of his newfound method of significantly decreasing his grocery bill. He would gleefully prattle about his magnificent discoveries, and a few times, even invited me along on expeditions. I, being young, did not fully understand the stigma associated with his activities.

Then it happened. One evening, my father took me with him to the American Legion building, which was only two blocks from my Grandpa’s house. There was a banquet of some sort to be held the next night and the parents were preparing the tables. This left me and several other elementary school boys to play. We ran out of the back door and onto a loading dock-sized rear porch, which was flush with the tops of the two large dumpsters that sat beside. It was late evening, and the streetlights were shining into the space. There was a man wearing khakis, silhouetted with his head and both arms hidden beneath the plastic flap of the far dumpster. As the back door swung shut, and we came to a halt, he looked up and said, “Well hi, Peter.”

“Hi, Gra—” and it hit me. At least five sets of eyes moved quickly from the old man to my face. There was something
terribly wrong with the situation . . . something shameful . . . something threatening to my status in the group. The old man’s face disappeared again under the dumpster flap, and I turned back toward the door.

“Who’s that?” one asked. “Is that your Grandpa . . . diggin’ in the trash?” asked another. With my head down and my back to him, I said in a half-whisper, “No . . . he’s . . . he’s just some old man I’ve seen before,” and I walked back inside. The others followed. Grandpa kept on digging, I suppose. I didn’t look back.

“You sure he ain’t your granddad?” asked another boy.
“No, he ain’t. I don’t know him . . .”
“How did he know your name?” someone pressed.
“I don’t know . . . I must’ve told him when I saw him before . . .” I walked away, and the other boys returned to their game.

That night, I didn’t go to sleep for a long time. I lay there and cried for myself. I felt rotten and shameful. I was a liar and no good. I had been a coward, and I hated myself for it. Less than a year later, my Grandpa slipped and fell walking down the hill into the park and broke his ankle. He hated hospitals and refused to have it looked after, but simply propped it up and waited for it to heal. This halt of physical exercise allowed the effects of his years of pipe smoking to take firm hold upon him, and in a few days, his heart failed him, and he was dead. I never asked him if he had heard what I said on that porch that night, and he never gave the slightest indication that he had. I’ve since forgotten the names of all those other boys.

A couple of years ago, I returned to my old hometown to visit my Grandma. After leaving her house, I decided to stop by the cemetery. After a long search, I found Grandpa’s grave and stood there staring for a while. Finally, I leaned down, brushed some dust off the stone, and with that old shame in my voice, I whispered, “I’m sorry . . . I’m sorry . . . I’m so sorry.”

Just outside of the gate, I saw a dusty beer can lying in the ditch. I stopped and picked it up, tossed it into the floorboard of the car, looked back, and smiled.
Anthology XII

Austin Crotts

Rest

Terrence J. Moye

A Twist of Beauty
For Emma

Whose eyes I see have traveled far
You always look to the future
I’ve often pondered what you saw
Staring out in your pictures

Trying to grow up so fast
I plead and say “Don’t rush it!”

Courtney Kincaid
Emma in a Wheat Field
I’ve seen that smile Hardy recognized,
Alive enough to have strength to die.
I’ve felt it spread across my detached lips;
It’s become a pandemic,
Covering up our emptiness.
And I know a girl who takes notes
On how she should
Be feeling,
While I don’t see the worth of anything.
“Does anything have to matter?” I wail.
Defiantly denying my desire
And defending my lack of dedication
Because my best is never good enough.
Experienced enough to be hopeless,
Innocent enough to be foolish,
Simple enough for truth to escape,
Complex enough to resent it,
And alive enough to die.
Another Prufrock

Why do I keep asking myself questions
Instead of making statements?
Is it all just pretense?
And why do I watch shows that are rigged?
To root for the loser?
I listen to the same song over and over
Until I kill it—it can’t possibly mean anything more to me.
I always force the moment to its crisis,
Then turn and walk away.
There is no time left for visions and revisions.
I resign myself to urgency and do nothing.
I have grown from anger to idealism to depressed compassion.
Now I’m tired and just want to know what comes next.
As I become just another Prufrock—
Drowned by human voices
The sirens may save me.
Perhaps Billy Pilgrim said it best
When he learned of the irrelevance of regret.
“It had to happen. That’s the way the moment’s structured.”
It gets very hard to blame anyone.
Disturbing how we can relate to insanity.
But, dear Vonnegut, if caring destroyed Billy and Eliot,
What do you want from us?
A façade of feeling
  Is deceiving ourselves to believing
We are still human-alive—
Though we are as dead as our intensity.
Is this progression a digression? —No improvement.
Each musical revolution made us dance and believe
We can no longer commit
To the half truth of hype, nor turn our backs
So we follow everyone else
I don’t know who started it—
To sit immovable with our drinks
In front of desperate pounding, strumming, straining,
Reverberating within the veins
Of these fortresses housing empty hearts,
These lost and oblivious cadavers.
Two modes of thinking: calculation and meditation
The latter makes us human,
But the effort and intangible gratification
Has made this thought a thing of ridicule
Among all types of intellects
No more alive than computers
No more feeling.
Let’s erase our past and pain.
Not pondering the implications of their advancements,
Making us more dependent on our rapidly
approaching destruction,
But by then maybe we won’t care.
How Long Exhumed Mrs. Rossetti?

The girls gasp at the story; selfless act of zealous devotion,
Grief or a Romantic whim?
Buried cold and pale with the words inspired by your life,
Sadly beautiful that you should descend together.
The eternal rest in peace disturbed by retrieving the paper that
was not as decayed
As your skin.
The words rejoining the living as you can’t.
What motives for this violation?
To share your memory? Nostalgia?
Or time’s detachment?
Amy Kuhn
Living with Zombies

I live among the zombies
They are all the same
No reason to feel ill ate ease
They only want to eat your brain

They’re not to hard to fool
The creatures aren’t too quick
Ingenuity and wit
Always end up in their stomach

The same jokes are tirelessly told
The eyes avoiding yours constantly cold
In the stores the same zombie clothes are sold
Unmotivated masses, a fright to behold

How do I tell the living from the dead?
Is there a difference in brains in stomach or in head?
On the fringe are whispers of something beautiful,
Like sirens dangling a revolutionary aesthetic movement
forbidden in life,
Luring to a precipice.
“That moon’s a sign,” you gazed at the sky and look at me,
my eyes still
Transfixed on the long curve of the orangey slice, beautiful,
like smooth skin
Exposed under a black shirt
I need more than an idea – a definition to give concrete form to this feeling.
Do I mistake the irrational reality of a dream for normalcy?
A disease (surra), and an artistic term (surrealism), before and after,
But the 2000 page Unabridged Encyclopedia of language omits The mysterious adjective.
What event could this discovery portend?

My trusty watch slows 20 minutes of its own accord.
Oblivious I straggle behind the correct majority
I show my watch to explain my belated arrival is relative (isn’t everything?)
Making the connection I explain to my boss, I was late due to the dictionary.
So surreal.
The Thrice Forgotten Watch

Does this melting clock represent disorder or freedom?
And what is the difference?
Comic chaos is loosed as my subconscious sends me
  frantic messages I ignore as a joke that gets funnier
    the longer it persists.
Freedom is slavery.
My watch manacled wrist is a triumph of order,
Transforming moments into minutes,
Life becomes a state of waiting,
Not existing.
Monika Leandro

No Dreams

Don’t know what to look for
Don’t know what I’m here for
Walking up and down the street
Bored out of sight and mind
Get the hell out and find
My place among the people who want to scream
Cause no one else ever dared to dream
Of a world without end
A world to be free
Everything closes in and snaps the life out of me
Running away from this or that
Want to step from this or that
Want to step front and let it run first
Want to push it all away
Watch all your decay
Cause no dreams ever came to those without hearts
and Babe I’m just a rusted pile of tin
Anthology XII

Monika Leandro

Song I

Verse 1:
You only cared when it came to you
Didn’t give a second glance to what’s around
Drawing all of your passioned hate from a self inflicted wound
I can’t just sit around and let myself struggle while you drown
But wait, that’s what you did to me.

Chorus:
Spin me around
With your tender hate
Lock me up and hold me close
You let me free
I’m trying to find a way
to lose myself in blinded faith
Keep me here in your
Contradicting fallacies

Verse 2:
Let the drops fall from our failures
Nothing will ever be made up
Nothing can ever be forgiven, Yes it can
What can I do to bring you back to my abyss?
What can I do to keep you trapped within me?

Chorus

Verse 3:
Finally we sit together
Watch our world come to an end
This time was not meant for us
Let’s relive it again
Let’s relive it again
Stop this time and see that it ends
We moved around a lot when I was growing up. I would just start getting used to a place when it was time to pack our bags and move on. In 1961, when I was six years old, we happened to end up in Houston, Texas. That was the same year Hurricane Carla visited the Texas Coast. Carla was a category four hurricane and still ranks in the top 10 worst storms to hit a populated area. The rain, wind, and destruction went on for a couple of days, but I only remember one night.

After preparing my favorite dinner, my mother got ready to go to work. She had prepared spaghetti and garlic bread. I ate my spaghetti two or three strands at a time. I would start out slowly, and then get little faster as I sucked the strands though a tiny hole in my mouth. The result was small plops of sauce landing on various parts of my face. I think my sister taught me this wonderful trick. Mom gently wiped my face and started putting her coat on. I went into a full panic. She was going out into the storm. My sister and Dad were staying, but I was dangerously close to tears at the thought of my Mom leaving. She worked for the American Red Cross and was called in to help. I though she should stay home and protect me, but she was going out into the storm. When she hugged me, I tried to absorb the Mom smell and never forget it. It was a combination of Chanel #5, cigarette smoke, and Prell shampoo. She promised to be home soon, and the she was gone.

Trying to be a big girl, I did not start to cry. I dramatically positioned myself and my stuffed monkey on the couch and watched Gunsmoke. About an hour later, the lights went out in the house. The earlier panic returned. My dad told me to go to bed and that if I would just go to sleep, everything would be ok in the morning. I loved my Dad, but I did not believe him. Both my mom and dad were alcoholics, but at that time, I didn’t know my Mother was a drinker, just my dad. He wasn’t mean or
abusive, just a drunk. He came in and out of our lives, and even at six years old, I knew I could not depend on him. I went to bed.

It was so dark. The wind made terrible sounds outside my window. My bedroom door was open and I could see the red glow of my father’s cigarette. I know that I was terrified, but did not call out to my Dad. I kept thinking that my Mother was outside in the storm and she was never coming back. I don’t know why I did not seek out my sister or crawl in bed with her. She was eight years older than me and was my caretaker and best friend. I guess I was still trying to be a big girl. I cried myself to sleep after what seemed to me an eternity.

When I woke up the next morning, the sun was shining and I could smell bacon frying. The hurricane was gone. I ran into the kitchen and saw my Dad at the stove. He told me Mom was ok, would be home soon, but I had my doubts. I ran outside to wait for her and that when I saw the most amazing sights of my life. As far as I could see, my six year old brain registered a gazillion frogs. I started laughing and chasing my new found friends. I wanted to catch one and keep it as a pet. The gooey green frogs kept slipping from my fingers as I slid across the muddy pond that had been our front yard. I was covered in mud, giggling as only a six year old can, when my mother turned into the driveway. She got out of the car—gently wiped my face—and all was right with the world.
Their faces were brown, coffee, chocolate, and cream-colored. Their eyes were a mixture of sorrow, mischief, and suspicion. My grandmother called them “wetbacks” and my mother told me they were “illegal immigrants.” To me, they were just my customers. I was a hard-working twelve-year old in my grandmother’s grocery store, The Double J. The grocery store was in the middle of a barrio in Fort Worth, Texas. The boulevard in front of the store was a conduit to other parts of the city, busy enough to have four lanes, but slow enough to call out makes of cars if it got slow.

I had a variety of duties. My hamburgers, piled high with onions and jalapeños, were a favorite among the lunch crowd on Saturdays. The intense beat of my heart would match the whirl of the meat slicer as I watched the ribbons of salami fall on the wax paper. Yet, my favorite time was sitting on the high stool, deliberately punching the sticky numbers on the green monster of a cash register, sacking the groceries and making change, smiling and asking this heap of humanity to come back and see us.

Some of my customers lived right across the street from the store. Their home away from home was a worn-down motel. The rooms were rented by the week. I don’t remember the name, but at night the neon sign flashed “ACANCY” to the throb of the cars rolling by. These customers were all men, and my grandmother gave them credit. My grandmother, Claster Mabelle, was a hooked-nosed, big-breasted, meaner-than-nails woman who didn’t take shit from anyone. As I write this today, I am amazed she gave credit to her “Wetbacks.” A trusting soul she was not. She did, however, have a thin, blue book that contained all of the daily transactions:
Dusty, worn-out as the rooms they slept in, they came in after work in groups. Every day they would come in to gather a few supplies and then proceed to spell their names very slowly to my Grandmother as she recorded every detail. They had holes in their workpants, black tar under their fingernails, and sweat-drenched hair. Some would be laughing while others concentrated on their choices for the evening meal. One by one, they would shuffle out the door, dodge the cars getting out of the neighborhood, and return to their neon paradise.

However, Friday night was different. Most of my customers got paid on Fridays. They would come in, always in groups, to pay their tabs. The collective smell of Aqua Velva would announce their presence before I ever saw a smiling face. Their western shirts blazed with embroidered flowers and their hats were placed in just the right position as to showcase the Brylcream hair. I thought something must’ve gotten lost in the translation from “A little Dab will do ya.”

I could never remember their names—too different for me I guess. Except for one. His name was Jesus, but every time he came in the store, my mother would call him by name, but I thought she was saying, “Hey, Zeus.” So Zeus became my favorite customer. His smile was brilliant. He talked to me every day he came in, not just on Friday nights. Zeus tried to teach me a little Spanish; I tried to teach him a little English.

“Que Paso, DeeBee.”

“Que Pasa, Zeus?” Zeus would giggle and correct me, “No Dee Bee, Que PasO.” Never daunted, I would reply, “Como estas, Zeus,” and I would be rewarded with, “Very well, DeeBee.”

We didn’t get much further than that, but I do remember telling him about escuela and his telling me about his hija. I never had to look up to see his eyes, eyes that were kind to me.
Then suddenly a new set of men from across the street staring coming in the store. No more Zeus. That’s when I learned what “illegal immigrants” meant. I was shocked but not sad. Zeus had gone back to his daughter.

Five years later, much wiser now that I was in high school, my résumé at the Double J had expanded. I sat in the office, Led Zeppelin filling my ears, adding up the transactions, thinking about my new boyfriend, hoping no one would call me to deal with the customers. The numbers and all I knew came into focus:

- Journey Farms Milk 90 cents
- Mrs. Baird’s bread 62 cents
- Marlboro cigarettes 75 cents
- Lone Star Beer $1.65

I understood their names now, even though my Spanish was still terrible, but I never had another customer name Zeus.
The answer
What is the answer to the problem?
A problem which none can solve?
Where there is no right answer
Only consequence… no matter what the choice

How do you know what is right or wrong?
As long as you feel
This is what matters
You either do it or you don’t
But don’t play games

You take several steps
Some are relative to the equations
In RARE cases some are irrelevant
But all for a common purpose
To solve the problem at hand, and to not put it off

How do you choose?
Give up?
Press on?
Wait?
Is it worth it?

In solving equations
You have to measure twice
Cut twice as well
Everything is relative
With only one possible solution

I just haven’t found it yet
“Ore para mi”
Anthology XII

Colleen A. Zeiler
Alleluia in New Mexico,
as influenced by Charles Demuth

Robert Hunter
Mixed Emotions

65
Terrence J. Moye
Wild Beauty

Terrence J. Moye
Yellow Rose at a Glance

Terrence J. Moye
Twisted Perfection
Elizabeth Meiron
Architectural Blue

Kelly Richey
Heritage
Anthology XII

Misty Green
Golden Tears

Misty Green
Frenzy
Elizabeth Meiron  
Swan

Kelly Richey  
Grace
Elizabeth Meiron
Figure in Yellow Dress

Gaye Lyn Howard
Delicate Petals
Anthology XII

Gaye Lyn Howard
First Water Color

Melody Kennedy
Figure Study from Vogue Magazine
Elizabeth Meiron

Squash

Elizabeth Meiron

Avocados
Robert Hunter  
*Mona Lisa in a Starry Night*

Colleen A. Zeiler  
*Haunted*
Anthology XII

Sally Hadley
Geometric Still Life

Gary Bennett II
Santa Fe Storm

Misty Green
National Geographic Study
Terrence J. Moye  
Fort Worth Sunset

Amy Burk  
Firetruck Silhouettes
Music
Sweet Music

Reminder of memories
A mask for your feelings
The emotions you express
So easily

The cure for most things
Inside
Outside
An entity I have known

The embodiment of comfort
Anger
Sadness
Joy

Music
The only friend I have to comfort me
Havoc, mayhem, an onslaught of phonetic pitches, frequencies, does not come.
Nothing brilliant or enchanted.
Empty words leave the dead in their graves and the soul’s embodiment of creativity burns in hell.
Thoughts that once brought honor, love, joy, respect, are now ignored like chivalry.
What once was an inspiration, now a frustration.
Trapped and fading, the imagination is doomed.
And with no one to listen, all becomes obsolete.
A whir speaks.  
A voice like wind rustling through blackberry bushes.  
Its words prick like needles piercing the soul.  
My heart plunders as it commands me to speak.  
Nerves and thoughts stumble in my mind.  
My turn to speak, my mouth opened wide, and—
Rays of sunlight travel, searching for rest. Trumpets blast and roosters squawk spreading the news of the rays’ arrival. Flowers bloom, grass rises, and trees dance to welcome the new day. The planet begins to buzz with furious zest.

This canvas captures motion everywhere, But one spot contradicts its theme. Faceless and solo a man sits. Alien to the world around he is motionless.

He must be diseased, because he does not participate in life. The heart suggests something’s wrong.

As the world stirs with haste, one man finds rest and that is a place rays of sunshine cannot find traveling at the speed of light.
Chaitanya Read-Walsh
Almost Home

I traveled four days
I lived July 16, 2004 twice
I am in an aircraft
Moving backwards
An hour and a half feels like
Eternity
Only a short time separates me
From Joy
From hugs
From the people I love the most in my life
I should be tough
Resilient to my own heart
I am fighting myself
Good thing no one is looking
I don’t want them to see an American Soldier cry
I left everyone again for the second time
It was more painful than the first departure
I know what world I am going back to—
There are no illusions
No grand fantasies of combat
No moments to transform myself
Into a super hero
Baghdad creates more smoke
Reminds me how human I am
How vulnerable each part of me is—
To dirt
To heat
To the sun
To bombs
To gunfire
To brutality
To hostility
To water
To food
To time
To distance
To friends
To terrorists
To love
To fear
To God
To my leaders
To my environment
To my family
And to myself
I grip my pen like a steering wheel while my eyelids
fall like anvils
Chaitanya Read-Walsh
Our Enemies

I look at the palm trees through the brush
I strain my eyes
I can’t get beyond the leaves and trunks
Baghdad dirt-road dust
Clouding my vision
I know they are there
Lurking
Waiting
Anticipating our arrival
They thirst our blood
American blood
One push of a button to detonate
One chance
One moment
To take our lives
To be back in the USA again
To smell clean air
To see garbage free streets
To use technology
To flush toilets
To wash with clean running water
To be welcomed with grateful eyes
Firm handshakes
Words of gratitude and appreciation
I am overwhelmed with joy
Thankfulness
Everlasting emotion that I have lived long enough
To see my town
My family
My friends
My USA
Robert Hunter

43rd

Robert Hunter

Ol’ Ben Lilly
I began blank, expressionless, palpably useless
My existence was without purpose or appreciation
Being part of whole, I lacked the uniqueness I desired
Patiently I waited as those before me were taken
Then tossed aside as insignificant debris.
My day came, my day to be used.
I remember the lasting impression it left on me—
I was forever changed, never to return to my old state.
Since then, I have been cherished, passed about, duplicated and studied.
I am your creation; I am what you choose me to be
It is your imagination that sets me apart.
Meet Quirky Heroine. She is (hopelessly single/recently divorced/dating Hunky Loser).

Enter Mysterious Hero. He is (apparently a total jerk/too good to be true). Heroine and Hero dislike one another because of Coincidental Misunderstanding and part ways.

In Random Twist of Fate, Quirky and Mysterious meet up again. They are forced to (collaborate in a project/live in close proximity), and they begin to warm up to one another. They both (tell white lies/omit certain truths) so the (Quirkiness/Mystery) (doesn’t seem so bad/is endearing). They hook up.

After Montage of Fun and Chemistry, Quirkiness begins to irritate and dreadful Mystery is revealed. Angry accusations communicate betrayal of trust and nasty breakup ensues.

Loneliness Montage shows Hero (toying with relic of Quirkiness/struggling to concentrate on previously-shared project) and Heroine moving on with Mundane Life, occasionally wiping away tears. Background Music communicates hurtful potential of misunderstood love.

Hero begins working on Vast Project, details of which are obscured. Soundtrack hushes as he shows up on Heroine’s doorstep with penitent apology and (is rejected/meets new boyfriend, Hunky Loser). He (leaves a standing invitation for Heroine to come to Project location/colludes with Heroine’s Comedic Best Friend to erect Project in Easily Discoverable Place).
Heroine (stumbles upon/, denying her curiosity, finds) Project, which is Fulfillment of her Wildest Dreams, and realizes own selfishness. Hero, however, is already on way to drown sorrows in Remote Place for Extended Period of time. Heroine humiliates self in mad rush to airport/dock/station.

Hero (hasn’t quite left yet/changed mind at the last minute). Heroine catches Hero and breathlessly communicates Change of Heart. Lengthy kiss during Drastic Zoomout out indicates reconciliation of Quirkiness and Mystery.

(Soft rock/Classic) crooner sings beaming women and blinking boyfriends back into brightly lit, popcorn-strewn lobby.

Works every time.
Poetic inspiration, listen close to me, whether this is what you are or my fabricated fantasy, You remain an enigma, a stirrer of my soul, thunder for my heart A distant friend, a muse I cannot choose To ignore, no matter the consequence here I sit, pondering what you are and why To me you seem to be so full of piquant mystery.

Serious, sweet, intense, smarter than the teacher, A twig of death dangles from his serious, sweet smile What do his eyes see? Do they see me? Every moment is a sublime experience while he sits and studies, His breathing is a rhythm that matches mine, a brain that ticks in tune with time Drama beneath his calm cool surface is it turmoil or only regurgitated literary anguish? Is it pain that make his eyes so deep, his stare so poignant?

Fair David of the stage! Are you the bard’s player, or do you merely play? Your genre has much depth and is full of art, art thou? Are you YOU in the dark? Take me with you when you read, let me cipher thoughts from the wrinkles of your mind. I want to drink your interpretation, your inspiration into mine.

Perhaps the day will fade away and with it only your memory will stay, Yet still I’ll sit and ponder “of” all things you sit and wonder.
If you see the ocean made, not of sea,  
But of waves, a rolling liquid landscape,  
then the struggle on the earth becomes apparent to a poet’s eye. 
One wave small another tall;  
all rushing towards that selfsame goal:  
Some lonely, distant, sandy coast. 
The frothy salt stings as it races,  
hurling threats along its way.  
But does it not know that death lies upon the rocks?  
Even the sand it yearns for is unyielding and melts away their  
marks. 

Who could know the faces of the waves?  
Yet you remembered me.  
When the swirling pool of humanity 
jerked me away, your hands my fear suppressed.  
And because of your faith in something greater than the Sea,  
time and again, you have rescued me.
Once upon a time in a far away land, there lived a very naughty little boy and his sad mother. The boy was naughty because he loved to bite people, just to see them cry out in pain. Every time his mother would invite guests to their house, the boy would bite them and chase them away. The mother told her son over and over, “Son, one day you will regret your wickedness, but it will be too late then.”

He would never listen to her, though, and continued to bite people. Every time the mother tried to stop him, he grew into such a fit of rage that she could not control him. Thus, she became sad and lonely because she could no longer have any visitors and because she had such a wicked son.

Then one afternoon, a fairy disguised as an old woman knocked on the mother’s door. When she opened it, the old lady asked for shelter for the night. Gladly, the mother led the lady in. She began to make supper for her.

While she was busy, her naughty son crawled up under the chair where the old lady had sat down and bit her hard on the ankle. The old woman leapt out of her chair and cried out in pain. The mother rushed over and scolded her son.

“Oh, you naughty boy! When will you ever learn?” She told the old woman about her son’s habit of biting any visitors they had. The old woman looked angrily at the naughty boy and said, “You act just like a biting dog. Therefore, you shall take the form of that which you act like until you learn to behave kindly.”

With that, ZIP! The boy instantly changed into a barking, excited dog. He began to race around the house, knocking over lamps and dishes. Stunned and scared at what had happened, the mother turned the boy, who was now a dog, out of the house.

“You’ll have to stay outside until you have learned your lesson,” said she, and she closed the door on him.

The dog-boy was angry now. How dare that old woman do this to me, he thought. He trotted away on the trail heading out of
town. He growled and nipped at the butterflies along the way. He really felt like biting someone now.

After a while, he came upon a person walking on the trail. The man was whistling as he carried a new hoe back home with him. Here’s my chance, he thought. The dog-boy snuck up silently behind the farmer and bit him on the calf.

“Ow!” yelled the farmer. He swung the handle of his hoe at the retreating figure and caught him in the hindquarters. The dog-boy yelped in pain as the farmer cried out, “You filthy dog! You remind me of my wife’s pet duck. You bite almost as hard as that boy in the village.”

Just as the man turned his back for home, ZIP! The dog changed into a duck. Surprised and furious at this new condition, the duck-boy headed back into town thrashing about and flapping his wings angrily. He didn’t like being a duck one bit. Being a dog was bad enough.

While he was thrashing about in his temper tantrum, he noticed a mother leading a small boy by the hand to the town’s bread shop. That boy has a mother, and I don’t anymore. I’m going to scare him, thought the wicked duck-boy. With that, he rushed over to the little boy and started flapping his wings right in his face. Alarmed, the mother scooped up her little boy who was now crying and gave the duck-boy a good kick in his side.

“You get away, you naughty duck! You remind me of a mockingbird trying to scare away an animal from his nest with all that thrashing about. The little boy over in yonder cabin is the only one who has temper tantrums like yours.”

As she carried her son away, ZIP! The duck suddenly changed into a mockingbird. Finding himself in such a position, the bird-boy was angrier than ever. How terribly unfair it was that he had been given such a terrible curse!

Now that he was a little bird, thrashing about just didn’t seem to make him feel any better. Besides that, he was sore from being hit in the rear and kicked in the side. So instead, he flew up to a tree near the center of the village and started screaming and screeching as hard as he could.
A mother was sweeping out her doorway when he began to screech and cry. After a moment of staring at him, she ran at him with her broom, saying, “Go away you terrible bird! I don’t know where you picked up that song, but you sound like a screeching owl. The only thing I’ve heard that sounds worse than you is that biting boy when he’s in one of his terrible fits.”

The little bird-boy flew away, but in the midst of his flight, ZIP! He turned into a great owl. Now the owl-boy was starting to get scared. By this time, the sun was setting, and he had always been afraid of the dark. He knew his mother would never let him into the house, for she would not recognize him. He flew to their house and perched on a tree near an open window. There he sat and sulked, feeling sorry for himself and angry with the world.

As the shadows grew deeper, however, he began to think about the things that the villagers had said about him.

“You bite almost as hard as that boy in the village,” said the farmer.

“The little boy over in yonder cabin is the only one who has temper tantrums like yours,” was the remark of the mother with the boy.

“The only thing I’ve heard that sounds worse than you is that biting boy when he’s in one of his terrible fits,” spoke the woman with the broom.

The boy had never realized how bad of a reputation he had made for himself. He saw for the first time how truly terrible his behavior had been. Then he grew very sorry for all the grief and shame he had caused his sweet mother. He also realized that it might be too late now to change his ways and do better.

The boy began to weep for his sinful naughtiness. However, since he was also an owl, and owls don’t cry, he sounded like he was hooting very mournfully. All night long he cried and hooted in the shadows of the great tree. What he didn’t know was that just inside the open window lay the old woman who had placed the curse on him. He kept her awake all night long with his crying.

When morning had come, the owl-boy felt very hungry. He knew that his mother always threw the leftovers crumbs from
breakfast out the door to feed the birds. He flew to his mother’s doorstep hoping to get something to eat.

As his mother was preparing breakfast, he noticed that she looked very sad and worried. She began weeping to herself and she cried aloud, “Oh, my son! My poor son! I love you so much. I hope and pray that you will come home to me. Whether boy or dog, you are still my son and I will always take care of you.” The boy took comfort in the fact that his mother still loved him, even though he had grieved her so often. Just then, the old woman walked in, and his mother dried up her tears.

“Good morning,” said the boy’s mother politely. “Did you sleep well last night?”

“No, I didn’t. There was an owl outside my window that hooted mournfully all night long. He sounded very much like a naughty boy mourning over his sins.” There was a twinkle in the old woman’s eye as she said that. Suddenly, ZIP! The boy found himself sitting at his mother’s doorstep, a human boy once more.

“Mother, I’m back!” cried he with joy and delight. He rushed into his mother’s open arms, and they cried and kissed each other. “Oh, mother, I’m so sorry for everything. I won’t ever bite anyone or lose my temper again, I promise. Will you forgive me?”

The mother cuddled him in her arms even tighter for her answer. Then, she stood up and said, “Come now, we’ll all eat breakfast and rejoice together.” They looked around for the old woman, but she was no longer there. The boy searched the house diligently, for he wanted to thank her for changing his life, but she was nowhere to be found.

The only thing she had left behind was a carved, wooden owl on the table. It had a great tear rolling down each cheek. The boy picked it up and put it in a place where he would see it often to remind him of the lesson he had learned while he was an owl and the promises he had made. From then on, the boy never lost his temper or bit anyone. Slowly, he won his way back into the hearts of the villagers, and his mother could once again have as many visitors as she wished. He grew up to be a meek, gentle man who was kind and wise, especially when it came to dogs, ducks, mockingbirds, owls, and biting little boys.
Anthology XII

Katherine (Katy) Thompson
Goddess

Katherine (Katy) Thompson
National Champs
Anthology XII

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

Down Home

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

Home on the Range

96
Anthology XII

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

The Essence of Eagle

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

Independence Day
A romantic evening at home is the best...

Happy people need no particular cause to be happy.

You have this, and you have that.

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

Happiness

Katherine (Katy) Thompson

Laze in the Grass
Yes, but What IS it?

Dinner
Holding Inertia
Against The Prevailing Wind
The Flock of Buzzards
Fluttering [Lazily] Cast Off Into The Valley
Toward The Sea
From Where A Heron Comes
Searching With Resolve for A Mackeral
Among The Armadillos and Sweetgrass
Beside A Mass of Weary Robins
Scattered Disturbed and Aimless
Into Oncoming Stars
Beginning as a rolling field
rising from the rocks
And the ocean creeping up to it
soaking it with its salt
Drying, bared, in view of the sun
the grasses crept up on it
And civilized the old ocean floor
building buildings of themselves.

So the grassy field was pure and tall
as clean as dirt could be
Then cows decided, befitting cows,
to claim the dirty prairie
But then the plowman decided again
to use the dirt for corn
So, in a manner, the corn finally won
the field and the dirt therein.

But perhaps presently near one day
a new ruler will have it
And the sea would know that
as would the grasses
and the cows their vengeance
forcefully having lost
And the plowman would be glad
with his full wallet

As the fair field can shine in the morning
and be warm at night
While it sheds petroleum fluids in rain
It can cleanse itself
Yet deny the dirt and rocks of water
because its impermeable
Concrete covered or cheaper asphalt
A fine parking lot.
Anthology XII

Robert Wagner
A Little Tree

Create A Grove
Create A Little Tree
A Little Tree is Small
A Little Tree Says Like A Sapling
A Sapling in A Grove knew A Little Tree
A Sapling Knew from Time Seedling
And Known for All Along

A Little Tree is Wrinkled and Weathered
As The Broken Bare Granite Shards

A Little Tree Existed at the A Grove Beginning
Seen The Weeds Rise and Fall
And Burn Away in Drought
Yet A Little Tree Survived And Stands
As Historian for A Grove
New Scene from Null

In Scene New House from Generic.Building.House
In House New Room from Generic.Building.Room.Null
In Room New Fireplace from Generic.Fireplace.Stone

Fireplace.Texture is Brick.Marble
In Fireplace New Fire from Wood.Fire
Fire.Type is Hot AND Blazing
New Fire.Timer from Action.Time
Fire.Action.Spark(Fire.Timer every 10 seconds)

Fire.Lighting is Fire.Type
Room.Temperature is cold
Room.Lighting is dark

In Room New Chair from Exquisite.Style.Victorian.Chair
Chair.Position is Room.Middle

In Room New Man from Generic.Human.Male
Man.Age is old(viejo)
Man.Position is on Chair.Position

Man.Facing is Toward(Fireplace)

While Man.Alive is True
   Man.Action.Sit
   Man.Action.Stare(at Fireplace)

   Man.CurrentThought is Man.OldThought
If Fire.Spark is True then
   Man.CurrentThought is Man
   Man.Sees is Fire.Spark.Fade
   Man.CurrentThough is what Man.Sees
Close If

Man.Alive is False
Close While

Man.Fade
Destroy Man AND Destroy Fire
Beginning with the Void
Import the CommonCulturalExperience

Create a Plane from FormlessGeometricObjects
Create a Plain from GenericGeographicalFeatures
Let the Plane’s Texture be the Plain

Create a Mountain from GenericGeographicalFeatures
But let the Mountain be Small which is to say at the AnimalKnowledge-HeightWhereBuzzardsFly

Create AnotherMountain like the Mountain
But AnotherMountain should be Slimmer like a ConeVolcano from GenericGeographicalFeatures without the Cone

Create RockyCliffs from GenericSharpRocksAndThingsAndDeathlyFalls
Let RockyCliffs be on Mountain and AnotherMountain

Create a Prairie from GenericMidwesternPrairie
Let the Prairie be on the Plane

Create a Village from GenericNativeAmericanHistory
Let Village be on the Plane

Create a Mound from FormlessGeometricObjects with BlackDirt
Place the Mound between Mountain and AnotherMountain on the Plane

Destroy Village

Loop this
  Let Mountain and AnotherMountain be shorter than before Until ManyYears Passed

Let Mound Remain
Collision

Having driven on the highway
Having met another car’s bumper
Having been caught unaware
Under the golden lamps of valor
Sits the honorable man
Not having known the physics involved
Not having educated himself in much at all
Not having most of all known the equations
Of kinetic energy and collisions
Which releases the energy

Although he doesn’t know
that kinetic energy and potential energy before
is kinetic energy and potential energy after
and when including a bit of momentum
makes a collision into an explosion

However he does know now
that blood in body and no blood outside before
is no blood in body and all blood outside after
but this knowledge came too late
unfortunately for this honorable man.
void Collision()

New Setting in TheNight
New Lighting like Lamps.Painting ( The Scene, Golden of Valor )

On Highway Place Car with HonorableMan inside

Let Physics.Collision ( Car between AnotherCar.Bumper at Velocity ( High ) )

HonorableMan.Understands Not the details of Physics.Collision
HonorableMan.Knows Not MuchAtAll
HonorableMan.Age is YoungAfterAll

Define Equations of Physics.Collision for HonorableMan
   InitialEnergy = FinalEnergy
   And InitialEnergy = InitialKineticEnergy + InitialPotentialEnergy
   And FinalEnergy = FinalKineticEnergy + FinalPotentialEnergy
Let Collision be Solve ( KineticEnergy And Momentum )

HonorableMan.Understands Not the Physics.Equations
HonorableMan.Knows However HisOwn.Collision

Define Equations of HisOwn.Collision for Observers
   InitialBlood = FinalBlood
   And InitialBlood = InitialBloodInBody ( All ) + InitialBloodOnStreet ( None )
   And FinalBlood = FinalBloodInBody ( None ) + FinalBloodOnStreet( All )

HonorableMan.Age is StillYoungAfterAll
When you say slough,  
I see my father sunk  
through the ice  
among the reeds and weeds  
In the dirty cold water.  
But he falls only waist-deep  
Before his feet meet  
the cold mud floor  
that nourishes this slough.

It’s an old lake,  
in its final centuries  
Before the grasses claim it,  
And it’s another field  
growing corn and beans  
rather than reeds and weeds.
Jean Wickham
Baby Doll

When I did finally get to see him it was hard to believe that this was actually a living miniature human being. He looked more like a doll. He had a smooth texture like porcelain. His color had a milky pastel quality, a kind of blue over white. This was due to the fact that he had not yet developed the outer layer of skin that has the pigmentation. His many unoxygenated veins showed right through his thin shell. His eyes were dark bulges in the skull. His hands and feet looked gigantic on his tiny frame, yet they were barely the size of my fingertip. They had a breathing apparatus taped under his nose. His whole body was spotted with bruises where they were sticking the needles.

The NICU where they had him was a labyrinth of mechanized cribs and babies. Not arranged in rows like in the nursery, but scattered throughout the rooms that shot off a long corridor. His crib looked like a tent, an inflated plastic bag. The room itself seemed to be alive, while the people inside were not. We were just statues. The room was breathing, pulsating to the rhythm of the machines. The air conditioner clicked on with a deep sigh, adding to the noise. I must have had a grave look on my face of some emotion I could not yet identify for the nurse turned to me and whispered,

“You can hold him. He’s still alive.”

But then all of the machines came advancing towards me, rushing at me until they were swirling around in my head. Breathing, beeping, pulsating. Pushing me out. I could feel myself, but I seemed so far away. The nurse, little Tyler, the whole world in the NICU, and I were far away, and it was only the machines. I was holding my breath. Tyler weighed less than two pounds, but the weight of his image was bearing down on my chest like a boulder pushing me down. Or maybe it was
the ground pulling me in. A dizzying rush of reality swallowed me with overwhelming emotion. I had to get out of that room before I fainted.

Becky told me a few days later that she could not find clothes to bury him in. She would have to buy doll’s clothes. I imagine it was the hardest thing she has ever had to do.
My old friend,
This feeling,
Comes slow
Smiling deliberately
A chemical kiss
Draws down the shades of my eyelids
To make it dark inside my head
Shutting out
The penetrating sky
Shhh . . .
Drowning in numbness
A pale face fading
Into a bleached reflection
Fossilized passion
Lingers beyond the glaze
Jean Wickham
Disconnected

She felt the scar
It did not feel her back
But somewhere beneath
The dead nerves
And mangled skin
Lay the pain
Pushing up from within
Surging from the deep within her
To meet her fingers
Becoming entangled
In a circuit of emotions
Cyclical sensation
Jean Wickham

Door-to-Door

Afterlife Insurance Salesman

A doorway will do
For a pulpit
Or a soap box at least,
And you have me cornered
In my own home.

The venom from your fangs
Soaks the words,
As you push them out of your mouth,
Towards me.
That name becomes poison
When used to justify.

I’m an easier target
If you think I’m already
Inclined to believe,
But I’m not so easily moved
By that one, two, or three syllables,
When it travels in your voice.

So I just admit
Being a heretic.
And say it suits my lifestyle
To just make things up as I go along,
But really, it’s just safer that way.

You won’t catch me sinning
For anybody else’s sake,
But my own.
And in no one’s name.
Fulfilling the destiny
Which was concealed
In their marrow.
The fate that twisted their bones.
The invisible burden
Crippling,
The backs of men.

The truth hidden
In the cavernous pupils
Of the old women.
Wells drawing up
The pain at the center of the world
And opens
Hot volcanic agony

Disrupting the mesmerizing beauty of the lands
Which lulls you asleep
The smoke rises from open mouths
In the earth
Screaming silence
The perpetual death rattle
Of the scorched earth

Their memory is long and winding
Whispers in the rivers.
Jean Wickham
Nightmares

Awake
open eyes
4:26
monsters straight out of horror movies
chasing me into my conscious life

same darkened room and shadows
lights filtered through the blinds
penetrating lacy web of rays
cast upon the opposite wall

close eyes
thin dark clouds
against a bleached white sky
with no sun
burn trail across my mind
restlessness running grooves
in my head

4:27
tangled and trapped in my sheets
imprisoned
and afraid to return to my dreamworld

the boogey man is alive and well
and waiting on my pillow
Exit
Through the glass
Caught between the panes
A blurred reflection
Shattered echoes
Bouncing around me
Filling me with memories
Cries of joy
Streak the sky
Orange and purple
Painted by my childhood
Here where the sunsets
Are the most beautiful
Silhouetted figures
Fade into the background
Running and slipping on the pebbles
And here I stand
A blurred reflection
Of yesterday’s ambitions
Caught between the pains
In my dreams, 
I travel to Germany, 
See places where I lived 
And remember them again.

In my dreams, 
I paint pansies with my mother, 
We sip tea and 
Eat finger sandwiches.

In my dreams, 
I spend Christmas in a fancy downtown hotel 
Stroll down snowy, crowded streets, 
Take a carriage ride in the park.

In my dreams, 
I travel back to London, 
Shop at Portobello Road 
Ride the double-decker bus.

In my dreams, 
I have beautiful grandbabies 
Some boys and some girls 
For me to enjoy.

In my dreams, 
I go on a Mediterranean cruise 
Work hard at relaxing 
See spectacular sites.

In my dreams, 
I go the theatre on Broadway 
To see a New York show 
Maybe The Phantom of the Opera.

In my dreams, 
I will rest in the summer 
Have breakfast on the deck 
And a nap about 1:30.
Editors

Akhil Kadidal is an International Student from India who deliberately failed Computer Science in order to be an English major. He is News Editor for the J-Tac. His interests are in writing, art, aviation, and twentieth-century history, particularly World War II. He plans to pursue a career as a writer/journalist.

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Publication Directors

Benni Konvicka and Marilyn Robitaille

Benni Konvicka and Marilyn Robitaille are professors in the Department of English and Languages. They have been co-publication directors of Anthology for the last twelve years. Since founding the journal with students Jimmy Hood and Cris Edwards in 1995, they have read hundreds, maybe thousands, of submissions and worked with student editors from a variety of majors.
Acknowledgements

We extend heartfelt thanks to each of the following people for their help in making this year’s volume of *Anthology* possible:

Editors’ Choice Award Sponsor

Jimmie Konvicka
Charlie, Marlow, and Chaz Robitaille
Our *Anthology* editors
Barb Wendel
Nancy Pricer
Sabra Vickery
Sharon Seelig
Sam Dodson
Mary Etzel
Mark Adams
Don Zelman
Gary Peer
Koy Floyd
The Tarleton State University Foundation, Inc.
President Dennis McCabe

Additionally, we would like to thank the following for their contributions to the success of Creative Arts Day:

Department of English and Languages
Faculty Development
Speakers Symposium
Tarleton Alumni Association

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Benedda Konvicka
Marilyn Robitaille
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We chose the flower motif for the cover because of the etymology of *Anthology*. The word *Anthology* comes from the Greek words *anthos* (flowers) and *legein* (gather). The definition, according to our dictionary, is a collection of prose, poetry, and visual arts.
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Lynn Swanbom
Natalie Swindle
Katherine (Katy) Thompson
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ISSN 1081-938X
http://www.tarleton.edu/~anthology