

Alone

By Katie Lawson

As I lie here alone
The phone doesn't dare to ring
The door goes unknocked
Hugs are left unhugged
Kisses left unkissed.

This ride is slowing
I'm never sure where it might be going
But I'm certain it will end alone.

Your presence was never ending
Not necessarily ever positive
Yet it I craved thus still do
But mutual it is not.

I'm going to go now
some far away place
I won't be coming back now
No matter what you do or say
I'm finished with this game
the time has come.

Love zero is the final score
and I'm always on the losing end.

Banner Year

By Katie Lawson

It's been a banner year around here
Smiles & events & happy tears
Not that you'd ever notice
Not that you'd ever hear.

She's growing & laughing & changing
But don't worry I'm not asking for anything
We get by just fine
Not that you'd ever notice
Not that you'd ever hear.

Well it's been about ten years now.
She's a teenager.
She'll be driving soon.
Not that you'd ever notice
Not that you'd ever hear.

Another five have come & died.
Always did like lilacs.
She sits & cries without me by her side
She looks around searching for some comfort
Not that you'd ever notice
Not that you'd ever hear.

Cardinal

By Austin Bagwell

A single flame, burning bright
like a beacon in the night.
Looks as drop of crimson blood
belittled against the green flood,
standing before it all,
never expecting to fall.
If only I had known, I'd have saved him
the trouble of dying alone.

On the ground,
without a sound,
lies a speck of blood,
half buried in the mud.
Crumpled, body broken,
yet they walk by, not a word spoken.
Wings shattered, once able to fly,
fallen from grace and willing to die.

Poems Make Terrible Lovers

By Austin Bagwell

Friday nights are not made to spend alone
when the air is warm and alive
with summer sounds.
Friday nights are not made
for missing the feel of your hand in mine
or your body close to me.
Friday nights are not for reading and soft music
but for living and laughing and loving.
Friday nights are not made for missing you
but here I am.
And where are you?
Out living
Out (please God don't let it be) loving.
And here am I, missing
your touch, your smile, your laugh,
sitting alone, with nothing
but a poem to show for Friday night,
and poems make terrible lovers
and worse friends.

They Called Him a Hero
By Austin Bagwell

What makes a man a failure?
A weight he cannot bear?
A coat he cannot wear?
What makes a man so unsure
of the answers that he gives
about the life he says he lives?
And what makes some men so damn sure
that what they have is real?
How do they keep an even keel
when all they have is nothing,
and once again they can't feel
the way they did when they were young,
when things were simple and stars were flung
so carelessly across the sky.
What makes a man a failure?
What makes a life a lie?

Ah, to be Young and in Love
By Austin Bagwell

If these words were a gun,
I just might shoot you dead.
If mere verbs could paint
a picture in your head,
I'd give you Guernica.

I'd show you how Jesus bled.

You think you're so clever,
oh darling damsel.
My dear...
Crawl your ass
out
of my bed.

A Ghost of a Feeling

By Trenton K. Roberson

When he goes back he sees the ghosts, although
the day is bright and light surrounds the place
that once was home. At first he'll feel a pang
of guilt (how quickly things became a mess)
for leaving here without a second thought.

The weeds are growing high along the fence.
The gate has rusted nearly shut and creaks
when he begins to open it. He'll feel
as though his life is but a flash of thoughts
and blurry memories he can't quite hold.

He finds his room among the grass and weeds
by tracing out the walls from lines of brick;
the only parts that still remain intact.
He'll feel that life has ended up the same;
an empty frame just like his childhood home.

We'll Carve Our Name in Stone

By Trenton K. Roberson

Lest we forget, we'll carve our love in stone,
as not to face the weathering of age,
and try to cling to more than blood and bone—
advice that feels as crude as it is sage.

As not to face the weathering of age,
we'll carve our love, so delicate, in wood.
Advice that feels as crude as it is sage,
can hold more truth than speaking ever could.

We'll carve our love, so delicate, in wood,
while listening to the language of the earth—
which holds more truth than speaking ever could,
and tells our story back from death to birth.

While listening to the language of the earth,
we'll trace our love, so futile, in the sand,
and tell our story back from death to birth,
as tide comes in to wash upon the strand.

We'll trace our love, so futile, in the sand,
and try to cling to more than blood and bone,
as tide comes in to wash upon the strand.
Lest we forget, we'll carve our love in stone.

Ballad

By Charles Lillie

I walked over to the tavern,
the bard was cloaked in black.
I sat right down to hear the tale,
and sipped my rum and jack.

The bard began to drop her hood,
her face I could now see.
It was none other than Aoife,
her face as fair can be.

She smiled and looked around the bar,
then pulled her red hair back,
quickly throwing back a tankard;
her lips, loud, they did smack.

"This is a story my father would tell,
one I just don't believe.
But, even through my lack of faith,
I will tell it to thee."

She closed her eyes and leaned way back,
memories- recollect.
'Tis her way of storytelling,
it was a great effect.

"This story was so long ago,
my father was sixteen.
A dragon came upon the land,
the first one he had seen.

"The men were scared and they did fret;
not knowing what to do.
My father smiled and leaned way back,
'I'll slay that beast for you.'

"The men did laugh and they did joke -
who did he think he was?
What they finally chose to get
was a knight for their cause.

"The village soon learned that there was
not a coin to be found.
So to my father's house they went,
his help they tried to hound.

"My father was very disturbed,
for they had done him wrong.
But his father had raised him well
and he was really strong.

"An important note to point out,
my father was quite slim,
but he was of Lady Brigit,
a half-god this made him.

"He put on the best of armor
but it was rusty junk.
He decided to go without;
the girls thought him a hunk.

"The men tried to give him a sword;
he said there was no need.
'My mother did give me two hands
I'll snap the beast like reed.'

"And from there he set on forth,
on to the dragon's cave.
And though his knees and hands did shake
He was being quite brave.

"He walked into the dragon's lair
The beast he hoped to get,
then he found himself standing in
a pile of dragon..."

"It deterred him not, for there was
a drake he hoped to slay.
The village sent him on this quest
he was not here to play.

"The smoke billowed out from the cave
there was naught he could see
Moving much deeper into there,
a hero soon to be.

"And as the smoke filled up the room,
the air was really hot.
If he could not kill the dragon,
his pride, it would be shot.

"Despite the fact that he couldn't see
through all the smoke and like,
He would tell me what all he saw
when I was a wee tyke.

"Was forty feet tall and it's scales
were made of carbon black.
The size of the head and the claws
I was taken aback.'

"He boldly charged up to the beast
and let his aim fly true.
He punched that dragon in the eye
and thought of what to do.

"The drake reared and began to roar.
he was so clearly ticked.
My father then, he realized,
this wasn't a battle to pick .

"Charging again at the snout, and
grabbing it with both hands,
the dragon bellowed and pulled up,
this fight would have been grand.

"With kicks and punches, my father,
he used all that he had.
He even tried to bite the beast
and that ended quite bad.

"They were soon out of the vast cave,
my father around its neck,
The dragon took up to the sky
the village - just a speck.

"Holding on for his own dear life,
the drake began to fall.
The young lad had choked up the beast,
the best thing ever saw.

"After that beast had hit the ground,
he would not let it go.
The villagers gathered around
and each one gave a blow.

"And soon the dragon was really dead
and then they had a feast
and for many months the poor fed
on that amazing beast.

"And this is where I'll end my tale,
sorry I have to say.
If you buy me another drink,
I sing another day."

I walked up to the bonnie lass,
chuckling as I came.

"Little bard, I knew him quite well,
Your father has much fame.

"I was with him on that grand day,
the day he felled the beast.
And as he swept the dragon's life
his soul was then unleashed.

"He became a great warrior
I'm sure that's what you know,
but to this day, that tale is the
first time he came to blow."

Aoife smiled and she nodded
"Sir, I really thank thee,
I didn't know if it was true,
but now, I finally see."

I smiled as I walked away,
her father had such gall.
To say the dragon was so huge
it was just ten feet tall.

CP

By Allison J. McCorkle

My love whose arms are tight leather
Whose arms are cleverly bound books
Folded, unfolded and folded once more to mark constant use.

Whose hair is tangled wire
Whose hair is coiled springs
Wound tight between careful and admiring fingers
Whose hair is forgotten water.

Whose nose is knowledge
With wrinkles marking laughter
And freckles marking smiles.

Whose hands are cracked bindings
That can elapse time
Whose nails are cheap ripped jeans
Whose nails are barnacles.

Whose eyes are dimly lit apartments
Whose legs are driftwood
Carved through the sea, splintered
Whose heart is sedimentary.

Journey in the Night
By Katelyn Jeter

My tale will begin with a love,
A love so sweet and pure.
To girl, from boy; from heart to heart,
A love sure to endure.

They took a plunge into the deep
To see what they could see,
But trouble they were sure to keep
A journey unforeseen.

They left in darkness of the night
And drove a couple miles.
Not knowing what the drive would bring,
But always wearing smiles.

As they stepped into the abyss
Completely unaware,
How many things they could have missed
The whole time they'd been there.

They walked and strolled, went back and forth
Confusion filled their minds.
Going up and down, round and round
How could they be so blind?

What's the point in rearranging?
To drive us all insane!
Why can't Wal-Mart just stay the same?
And not be such a pain.

Hope is the Belief in Something More
By Andrea Godoy

Why is it that the hardest thing to do is to Hope?
We can give our all so easily to love,
it's not so hard to hate when it's all over.
Yet, when we have left all the pain behind
It seems like acceptance is so far beyond,
that the only one to make us whole is a Hero

In our darkest hour of need , we seek a Hero
One that will make us believe in Hope
Who will take us far beyond
The fickleness of love.
Leaving all the bitterness behind,
it's a cheery thought, waiting for this to be over.

We focus so much on the end, the pain being over,
this otherworldly savior- our Hero,
that it becomes too easy to leave ourselves behind,
and lose the Hope,
we blame on love.
It's not hard to see what's in the beyond

A far off place. The beyond
 where we imagine, all the sacrifices will be over.
 That it is filled with laughter and love,
 ruled over by our magical Hero.
 This is not a logical hope.
 It's like saying, leave your life behind

and come live in a place where the sadness lays behind.
 But, like all imagined things, it is beyond
 possibility that our hope,
 really lies over
 there and that our Hero
 really will Love

Us like we imagined We Love
 Him. We could just leave this all behind,
 and be with our perfect Hero.
 But life in the beyond,
 isn't as great as we imagine it, over and over.
 It falls so short of all our hopes.

There, We find a washed up old has-been, jaded towards our love and juvenile hope
 Who longs to leave this 'magical' world behind and move beyond,
 to where His dreams will come true, and this will be over.

Work
 By Andrea Godoy

It's that time again, when I have to hold my head up high,
 gather my things, your money and walk out of this room again.
 Every day is the same self loathing ,
 every time I swear it's the last.

Then I think about the baby at home.
 Who needs to eat today.
 The little girl ,that is depending on me
 who has seen too much of this world already.

It's for them that I walk these lonely streets at night.

In these beat up old heels, and tight little dress.
 It's for them, that I deal with the pain
 regret
 humiliation
 The desire to be something better.

To be a mother and a father to them.
 When all I want to do is break down.
 And cry
 I am too young to be doing this.

I need my mother,
 but mine was too busy getting high to notice her kids.
 I need a father,
 but mine was just looking for an easy lay.

I needed someone to protect me.
To make sure I had something
Other than broken dreams
And moldy bread at night

I do this, so that my brother and sister
will never have to suffer
I work, so that she will never have to.

It's early yet ,and we still need to eat.
It's that time again.

When You
By Andrea Godoy

When you have forgotten, the butterflies that dive-bombed your gut when our eyes met across the room.
When you have forgotten, the surge of heat flashing across my cheeks from the first 'I Love You'.
When the ups and the downs have all blurred in to the past,
When you have forgotten the frightful crash that my hear made when you gave up on us.
The tears I fought, and the words that we screamed, to cover the shock.
When you have forgotten all the 90 proof fixes, all the heartbroken hangovers,
When you have forgotten all the cleverly disguised ploys to convince the world that every thing is alright.
When you have forgotten all the hopes we shared and all the pain we made
Then you will have forgotten me.
Then I can start to move past you, forget you.

Buying Other People's Things
By Andrea Godoy

Driving on an old county road, I see a sign.
Estate Sale, it lures me in.
I walk inside, and all around are other people's memories.

I can tell they are laid out just so.
Through the chaos they have their order.
The smell is distinctive here,
As if the owner had temporarily left, but will return.

Photographs line the walls, cabinets, counters, any where there is room.
Smiling children, stern adults
black and white memories, Technicolor adventures.

A tea cup is placed just so,
waiting for its owner to come home and resume their daily ritual.
I sit in the arm chair and look around,
An old cigar box catches my eye.

Inside is an old velvet bag, with three marbles.
Some child's treasure,
the bag is worn but well cared for.

This feels weird, I set the box back, careful to leave it as it was
I stand up and move away.
In the bed room there are dresses and suits

Silent soldiers awaiting their command

A young couple admires them, wanting that vintage look
I spy a treasure forgotten among the knick knacks and decades of stuff.
An old typewriter, an interesting find

I pillage my treasure and make my way to the front of the house.
Seeing my bounty the woman's lips curl in a sad smile
As I buy her mother's memories.

The Heart of Christmas

By Victoria Thomas

Emissaries of light
at Christmas time
attempting cheer
in the heart of darkness.

The horror, the horror
another family gathering
to grandmother's house we go.
Over ivory mountains
and through the dark jungle
shackled and silent
to grandmother's house we go.

The horror, the horror!
I've just discovered
my great grandmother is Kurtz.

Withered bones all alone on the hospital bed cry out,
"I'm in hell! Get me out! I'm in hell!"
In the mourning room
beside the Christmas tree
we tell my grandmother
"Your mother's last words were your name."

Snake Charmer

By Michael Boyles

You sat there on a grassy hill, the wind
arose and took your silken hair in grasp
and made it dance and speak just like the asp
who tempted man that day when he first sinned.
So struck with beauty as I watched and grinned
I didn't even notice your tight clasp
on me until it felt just like a wasp
had stung my heart and my self-will was thinned.
When I awoke from my euphoric dream
I had by then become your slave in full.
You killed all that was me with poisoned lips
and used me for your selfish heartless scheme.
And hoping that you'd love me like a fool,
I knew, but took the bane in bigger sips.

Ode to Newlyweds

By Linney Holley

Connected now, lovers begin.
First caresses, glowing skin.
No excuses or need to atone;
Exploring regions newly unknown.

Eyes connect: certain, adoring.
Lips touching: searching, imploring.
Flesh exposed: feeling, teasing.
Writhing, sweaty, becomes pleasing.

Heavy breathing, eyes are closing;
Bodies moving, no one's dozing.
Mouths agape, panting, groaning;
Softly touching, loudly moaning.

He whispers, nothing left to hide;
She is squealing, bodies collide.
Orgasms explode, they now feel high;
Cuddling together both do sigh.

Burning Hearts

By Linney Holley

What comes along the way insures delight;
a love will grow inside allowed to dare.
To be alive, a heart must burn so bright.

When love a knocking comes to call with might,
then hearts entwined become as one to care.
What comes along the way insures delight.

When one, two hearts belong enthralled real tight,
and nothing else has flair when one compares.
To be alive, a heart must burn so bright.

For those around, the bliss is quite a sight
and by a cause to blush beneath the stares.
What comes along the way insures delight.

When jealousy begins to brew, the fright
should warn a couple: watch and become aware.
To be alive, a heart must burn so bright.

So when you find the heart that's right, don't fight.
Believe in love and live your lives with flair.
What comes along the way insure delight.
To be alive, a heart must burn so bright.

A Call to Poets
By Dani Morton

Release your mind to roam the rhyme
though it may seem to be your foe.
Aspire, poets! Your words must be sublime.

Allow the verse to take its form. In time
your pen will find the page and thoughts will flow.
Release your mind to roam the rhyme.

Reject coffee shop lies and pantomime.
Applause from fools permits ego to grow.
Aspire, poets! Your words must be sublime.

Arousing phrases wait to meet their prime
while you continue to suppress them, so
release your mind to roam the rhyme.

To write a mindless verse is such a crime.
The greats adhered to formulas, a code.
Aspire, poets! Your words must be sublime.

Though gaining skill requires patience and time,
you'll earn respect from poets of long ago.
Release your mind to roam the rhyme.
Aspire, poets! Your words must be sublime.

You're Just a Jackass
By Sara Elizabeth Jones

With little regret, I must let you know
the fire you spit has fallen short
of breaking my spirit. Your condescending speech
about my lack of knowledge reveals your
callowness of the situation.
So seat yourself while I speak and you just observe.

You yelled and screamed and I did observe
all the things you claimed you know.
Many of which don't apply to this situation,
which is why I had to stop you short.
I insist on requesting your
collected attention while I deliver my speech.

You may soon notice a difference in our speech,
maybe even in what you observe.
You act better than me because of the size of your
bank account. You believe you know
more than me because my body falls short
of a gender varying situation.
Regardless of the thing you consider a better situation;
you will see no modification in my speech.
Because, you see, I know I do not fall short.
I have worked in this field long enough to observe
nearly every circumstance and I know

this type belonging to you and yours.

You puff your chest and raise your
 voice to intimidate and create a tense situation.
 You have your tactics down well and think you know
 exactly what your well-rehearsed speech
 will do. With me; however, what you will observe
 is a cool and calm reaction, showing your tactics have fallen short.

How, you may ask, did they fall short?
 Well, you see, I have more confidence in my toe than you have in your
 entire body. You try to cover what you lack so I won't observe
 that you have no knowledge of the current situation.
 You see, I too have a well-rehearsed speech
 based on the facts I've learned and what I know.

What you will not observe is me falling short.
 Because I see through you and know you have no power to change your
 unfortunate situation. I have the power. This concludes my speech.

A Realistic Proposal By Sara Elizabeth Jones

Come live with me and be my love
 and though I cannot promise you the earth,
 the moon, or stars or constant perfect skies,
 I give to you my hearts most solemn gift
 to stand with you through life's strongest tempest.

Through Spring the flowers will we so strongly adore
 In Winter's cold we shall by fire endure
 In storms and rocky weather foundation will we find
 As Fall and Autumn in us bring forth change
 Inside of us new paths shall we discover.

Because my love I count as faithfully true
 no flawlessness can I promise to you
 Not gold, myrtle, nor beds with roses filled
 It is my love, my heart, my soul I give
 for you to be my love and with me live.

Graduation By Jacob Martin

I face this time with mixed emotion.
 Exhilaration and fear fight within my head.
 Time is passing fast, like locomotion.
 I meet graduation with excitement and dread.

Exhilaration and fear fight within my head.
 Even though I know it is not the end,
 I meet graduation with excitement and dread.
 A career and grad school is now the trend.

Even though I know is not the end,

Graduate school is soon to start.
 A career and grad school is now the trend.
 My Bachelors program I am soon to part.
 Graduate school is soon to start.
 But, staying provides little comfort for this.
 My Bachelors program I am soon to part.
 My professors and instructors will be so very missed.

But, staying provides little comfort for this.
 Time is passing fast, like locomotion.
 My professors and instructors will be so very missed.
 I face this time with mixed emotion.

Platypi

By Jacob Martin

Obama is the talk around the town.
 His antics really make some people frown.
 The war did not stop like he promised us.
 But congress says it really is a must.

Inflation has gone amuck on his watch.
 Because of all the bailouts he has launched.
 His health reform has really caused a fuss.
 It might would even make my grandma cuss.

Some of these things have people up in arms.
 Obama tries to cure it with his charms.
 Hard working, good people could lose their farms.
 While Obama says there's no foul, no harm.

The private sector keeps NASA alive,
 and advancement is not Obama's drive.
 Virgin Galactic will reap benefits,
 and NASA fans will really have a fit.

Republicans don't like him nor do I.
 His programs do not work or let us fly.
 His origin? We'll find out when he dies.
 I think he's foreign like the platypi.

Thunder

By Jacob Martin

Of Playing Thunder, Jack grew tired,
 So Bentley came to stay.
 We met when he was just a calf,
 Upon a football day.

He was so small; much like a doll
 He seemed as smart as Jack.
 He caught on fast; he's Thunder now.
 His spirit does not lack

And, now he's big and makes us proud.

He's very strong and bold.
 Other mascots are shamed by him.
 Like Thunders from the past.

Oh Thunder's such as special breed.
 For him the crowd cheers loud.
 Goodbye dear Jack, we miss you much;
 Of Bentley: you'd be proud.

The Pilgrim's Eulogy
 By Nathan Kennedy

The desert spreads through vast expanse of space
 Before the Pilgrim's brown and dusted view—
 And wearied, faint, and burning for his grace
 (Or is it but the scorching sun), the dew
 Of sand and sorrow mixed within his eyes—
 It falls, the raging flame of love to quench:
 His body burns and restless spirit writhes
 To dare, to hope, that some relief be wrenched.
 What here does stand? What in his heart, compelled
 To fast, to pray, to suffer, die, unknown,
 And face the cruel, cold dregs of deepest hell,
 Moves forth to sight with love's sweet crushing moan?
 The stones cry out, the desert wastelands sing,
 Because his heart became a living spring.

The Pilgrim at the End of His Journey
 By Nathan Kennedy

As tolling, calling out, the death bell rings,
 And night concludes its journey into day,
 My heart, inflamed with burning fire, sings.

My journey ends—to nothing do I cling,
 And I revert to ashes, dust, and clay,
 As tolling, calling out, the death bell rings.

I drink, I breathe, a searing joy that stings—
 Such fire forged my heart's love, now obeyed;
 My heart, inflamed with burning fire, sings.

The deep dark night calls on the lyre's strings—
 My deep dark heart awakes the golden rays
 As tolling, calling out, the death bell rings.

The flames that flow from such a living spring
 Have burned, yet quenched—my soul's great thirst allayed:
 My heart, inflamed with burning fire, sings.

The blazing flames that death—my life—now brings
 Give peace, yes peace—my heart knows no dismay.
 As tolling, calling out, the death bell rings,
 My heart, inflamed with burning fire, sings.

Untitled

By Nathan Kennedy

If
leaves fall,
soundless, still,
smoldering and red,
exhaled by the breeze
of brisk cold autumn air,
this deciduous season full
of bleeding, burning trees that weep where
they offer grim relief against the azure sky,
remember then—remember then our walks
through springtime's sod of singing life,
its song that was our delight
before this gloomy fall
of dying red trees
who sing so sad
that it makes
the heart
break.

Nativity

By Nathan Kennedy

The naked trees tower over the snowy ground,
rising like the listless skyline of a sprawling metropolis.

The fiery mind, eloquently pacing through
the season's mysteries, swims in overwhelmed
and silent agony as its parts go twisting,
impatient for spring, but
deaf to the beckoning beauty that calls it
more than the forest's green.

The bare branches pierce the heart with an ascetic beauty.

The spacious winter air opens the soul
like a revealed cavern, exposing
the sharp features and protuberances that mar
the crisp simplicity of the inner depths,
begging to receive like the earth opened up,
pleading for the fullness of the winter crèche.

Here now, the air takes the heart's breath,
revealing the petals of withered winter's flowering joy.

Ode to a Meeting of Percy Bysshe Shelley and Socrates in a Café in Paris at Dawn
By Dominick Miller

“O just and happy man of truth,
So called corruptor of the youth,
Whom Athens’ courts condemned to die
When spurred by old comedic lies
Of Ancient Grecian Pharisees-
Truth, thy name is Socrates!
And how alike that Son of peace,
The Jesus Christ of Ancient Greece,
A man who made his sacred duty
The search for Philosophy’s beauty
In logic, ethics, mind, and soul
Which poetry so rarely knows.
How like a proof a poem can be-
If *a* and *b* then follows *c*-
A crafting of words logically
Creating clever mysteries.
To write in service of the Good
Is just what all poetry should.”

“Dear poet, finest of your kind,
With purest soul and sharpest mind.
The beauty of your words enralls
And even mighty Homer falls
Before the genius of your rhyme-
Shelley! Poet of the Sublime.
Who loved life with such violent rage
You passed away before your age.
What pleasure is poetic beauty,
To see ideas for all their glory.
Philosophy has lost that art
As Science slowly steals its heart.
How like a poem a proof should be-
A thing that lets the mind run free
And fills the soul with ecstasy
A simple, sweet poetic plea.
To write in service of the Good
Is just what every treatise should.”

“A union of these disparate crafts?”
The poet posed and then he laughed.
“The ancient quarrel at an end!
Then come my friend and we’ll extend
Our hands in friendship for a while.”
The philosopher greeted him with a smile.

The Sun Also Sets
By Dominick Miller

When I drank with Ernest Hemingway,
Atop Kilimanjaro, misty-eyed in the clouds,
And lived in his shadow with so little to say;

His shadow grew longer with the death of the day,
A shadow I must wear, an inexorable shroud.
When I drank with Ernest Hemingway.

His hands shook when he drank, and his hair had grown grey
With a gun in his right hand, his pain disavowed,
And I lived in his shadow with so little to say.

I took a last drink and asked him to come away,
“But this is heaven” he said, and laughed aloud.
When I drank with Ernest Hemingway.

I looked for the East and asked him the way
But he turned to the side with eyes defiantly proud
And I lived in his shadow with so little to say.

With the advance of the night I saw I could not stay
So I walked out of his shadow, my head unbowed,
When I drank with Ernest Hemingway
And lived in his shadow with so little to say.

Semicolon
By Dominick Miller

Semi-something, fully-nothing;
Forgotten within punctuating lore.
Kids call me a comma with a hat
Or a colon with a broken leg
But still I'm avoided like the plague.
To some my use is a dreaded chore.

Semi-nothing, fully-something;
'Cause commas aren't always the answer,
And colons: there really only good for giving cancer.
And even though I may not announce poetic pauses
Don't forget me between independent clauses.

Is Not War His Great Argument?

By Dominick Miller

I met a traveler moving through a land
Of boundless misery and level sands.
He spoke in broken ancient prophecy,
“Those pioneers! who rose up from the sea;
A tan-faced race of darling youths who sung
Just “Freedom, Freedom”; quenchless faith that hung
Upon their dry, and bloody lips. With guns
To harmonize their Babel-din, and sons
Of men to die for senseless ancient sins,
The oldest argument they went to win.”
Still buried deep in sands we walked were bones
Of conquered Bedouin. And near, alone,
Atop a hill, a shrine; and written there
In stone was “Look, Ye Weaklings, and Despair,
Upon the Work of Freedoms Hands” Yet bare
And empty Earth is tribute to their err.

When You Leave

By M. Jensen

Go swiftly,
not quietly.
Go prudently,
not foolishly.
Go compassionately,
not mercilessly.
Go bravely,
not resigned.
Go purposefully,
not questionably.
Go now,
or not at all.

Karma

By M. Jensen

I sat upon the wooden chair,
with eyes like hollow spots.
The judge had left my world
a mess, like soldiers casting lots.

The car, the house, the kids, to me.
Our dreams and plans, to him.
For they were now to never be,
released on sudden whim.

I tried to be the very best,
the one who knew the way.
Naïve, I blindly lived our life,
no way that he would stray.

I thought how quickly men can change
 from loving honest friends,
 to men for whom greener pastures wait,
 to fulfill carnal ends.

My pallid skin once held a ring
 now packed into a box,
 with pictures, gifts, and silly things
 now used to only mock.

My life advanced with kids to raise.
 My heart began to heal.
 My lots, the best of both our lives,
 we four now learned to deal.

I taught myself to take each breath
 with love for every day.
 For karma comes to everyone,
 not least the man who strays.

Monday
 M. Jensen

A park, a bench where she sits on Monday.
 The sounds of small birds and rustle of leaves.
 She always waits till she decides not to stay.
 The laughter steals her joy like waiting thieves.

The sounds of small birds and rustle of leaves.
 She walks the park, headed only nowhere.
 The laughter steals her joy like waiting thieves.
 It's hard to find the emotions to spare.

She walks the park, headed only nowhere.
 Her heart remembers the feel of first love.
 It's hard to find the emotions to spare
 when Monday is what she feels deprived of.

Ode to the Muses
 By Rachel Waterhouse-Currie

Here comes a modern man, curves and colors 'round
 His lips that muse about the women of art
 And their resurrection by paint and oil
 "They inspire," he speaks

"Raphael's painted models of Madonna
 With her Holy Spirit-blushed cheeks gave to him
 The breath of Dharma, a calling from above
 Her hands fold, I pray

Botticelli's Venus with sea-shelled vulva
 A maiden mused from gods and myths sent to him
 A vision of a subaqueous goddess
 She stands nude, I love

Vermeer's woman, the blue-wrapped lady in black
 Pierced him with beauty with her tear-drop pearl
 And he painted her, cascaded in the dark
 She looks back, I stare."

The modern man took his brush and blank canvas
 "With their resurrection, I am inspired
 To create to Art's next immortalized actress
 The timeless muse, we watch."

Obscura

By Rachel Waterhouse-Currie

Bewitched, the nymph jumps from thicket, something cracks and clicks
 As she spritely leaps to look at me in her mystique
 With her dogwood-knotted hair and honeysuckle-lips
 She stares with robin's-egg-eyes, puts a hand to her cheek

As she spritely leaps to look at me in her mystique
 Half-hidden in white cloth and ribbon like the maypole
 She stares with robin's-egg-eyes, puts a hand to her cheek
 She speaks with a coarse milk-thistle voice: "I'll steal your soul."

Half-hidden in white cloth and ribbon like the maypole
 I twist her tone without a thought, my heart beats and spins
 She speaks with a coarse milk-thistle voice: "I'll steal your soul."
 From her posy-pocket, she pulled out a magic lens

I twist her tone without a thought, my heart beats and spins
 a flash of logic, she says, "Don't be so paranoid."
 From her posy-pocket, she pulled out a magic lens
 Spying on plants and people to take a Polaroid

A flash of logic, she says, "Don't be so paranoid."
 With her dogwood-knotted hair and honeysuckle-lips
 Spying on plants and people to take a Polaroid
 Bewitched, the nymph jumps from thicket, something cracks and clicks

A Jagged Mountain to Climb
By Rachel Waterhouse-Currie

God
 Sits here
 Up at the top
 Or so “they” all say
 The “they” may sit up here
 Maybe the “they” are the CIA
 Or the FBI, NSA, KFC, or any other
 Acronym. Presidents past and present
 Might sit here along with anyone else who
 Has tea at the Bohemian Grove or attended
 Skull and Bones or any conspiracy thought to be a
 Slope up. They say some visionaries and artists who
 May or may have been trained or taught to entertain us
 Sit up right here somewhere. Maybe Alex Grey or the elite
 Few who glitter in the limelight, cascaded on magazines and TV
 Sit here. How did they get their seat so close? Luck or looks, maybe.
 Talent? Eh.....Maybe not.
 Still there’s more than an ellipsis about who sits here.....
 Leaders, politicians, conglomerates....maybe the “they” who made the triangle.
 Maybe it’s _____ who sits there with his friend _____. Fill in the blanks. You might
 Be correct. Who gets the “cheap” seats at the bottom? Citizens, neighbors, friends,
 Colleagues you know. Maybe _____ or _____ can creep their way up to the top. Wait.
 Creep doesn’t sound like a valid verb or _____ action to get to the person who sits on top of this.

Even if you don’t belief in any of this, we might want to climb back “down” or “up” so to say
 And see what’s at the bottom or the top of this mountain. Pluto creeps here; the King of ID
 Or maybe the CIA or the FBI or the NSA or the KFC. Sloping down, you might guess what
 presidents past and present sit here if any. The Bohemian Grove tea partiers and the
 Skull and Bones and their affiliates may or may not sit here. No one can be too sure
 With a conspiracy theory. At this point, people _____ sit wherever they want.
 “They” and I mean the “they-they” and they “you” can choose a side. There’s one
 Side that creeps and one that climbs. There are those who sin with _____
 And have bad vices like _____. There are those who do what’s right _____
 And do good deeds like _____. Either way they sit around here.....
and that’s a lot of places to sit
 And that leaves.....a lot of room for judgment. You may think
 Your fellow citizens, neighbors, friends, and colleagues sit here
 Close to the bottom or close to the top. Maybe _____
 Thinks they sit here. Maybe _____ thinks they sit here
 Fill in the blanks. You’re probably correct on your
 Guess. But everyone, everyone sits around
 Here.....very close yet very far away
 Even if you don’t belief in any of
 This, we might want to climb to
 see in the modern day
 God takes a seat
 Here.

A Guide to Surviving Christian High School, for the Damned
By Chris Hudson

Stand in class when the prayer is said. Second period is chapel. Sing about God and love and being kind to others. Memorize the golden rule. Realize that this rule does not apply to teachers or with people who know you are different. Individuality is a virtue of curriculums and literature, but be wary of being too individual that the afore mentioned golden rule does not apply. Hang out with your best friend; try and sit close; try and brush his hand. Spend every moment you can with him; dream of what it would be like if he loved you; don't act on these dreams for they cannot be. Learn from others who are expelled for being what you yourself are. Play the games you are forced to; kiss their girls; cry at night. Listen to the sermons of love and see the hate. Wonder if God is really who they say He is. Burn their plastic idol; burn your God too just in case He is the same as theirs. Try to find your way on your own. Fill your heart with boys you do not love. Forget who you used to be. Forget you ever believed in love. Breakdown.

Remember there is a God who loves you. Go back to him... He can't be who they say He is. Forgive them for who they turned you into. Pray that one day you can feel again.

A Picture
By Sarah Parijs

I found an old photograph of you yesterday,
buried in a keepsake box dusty with age
that I took with a Polaroid camera.
You were sitting in your old house
with a hardback book in your lap
and a lava lamp burned mellowly beside you.
I remember how much you loved the '60s;
sporting a mood ring on your right index finger
and a diary of your revolutionary thoughts.
I wonder if you remember the day
that we stole a bike from your parents
and took off: a painting of chaos.
I remember everything in an ancient picture frame.

Sonic Noise
By Sarah Parijs

We sing to fill the void with sonic noise
then whirl this sphere upon its head; explore
and dancing shake this space with reckless poise.

When rising voices touch on pains and joys,
our songs of deeds, divine and deadly roar.
We sing to fill the void with sonic noise.

With bodies moving motion, dance destroys
This sleeping world, to writhe in graceful gore,
and dancing shake this space with reckless poise.

Expand, then merge these words and muse new ploys
to touch what we can't name ourselves: the core.
We sing to fill the void with sonic noise.

Surpass these bounds while stagnant stillness cloys
our sense of motion; reel to this and more
and dancing shake this space with reckless poise.

So scream and rant, till breathless, girls and boys
still waltzing past the edge of now, encore.
We sing to fill the void with sonic noise
and dancing shake this space with reckless poise.

The Day We Played Chess

By Sarah Parijs

We played a game once, do you remember?
The way that I aligned each piece
with anxious, shaky fingers
while you waited to collapse
all my plans with callous ease.
I shook so bad that the pieces rattled,
The pieces rattled so bad they shook me.

What were the colors? I can't remember...
Your pieces were white,
my pieces were black.
While I watched the color leached out
of my pieces and into yours.
Yours were black and mine were white,
yours were white and mine were black...
the pieces were colorful, the pieces were colorless.

Do you remember the rules we played by?
In an infinity of geometry you taught me the rules:
pawns leave first and move one space
killing diagonal, rooks move straight kill straight...
you went on forever and I understood one thing:
I moved one space diagonally to end up in a corner
and you encompassed the geometry of murder.

We played a game once, do you remember?
Because I can't,
in playing the game, we became the game.
I still don't understand, my only clue
is the perfect stillness in your calculation,
the implosion of colorless color that splattered.
The millions of strategies, of murders,
of cold careless ways
that you slaughtered across the board.

The Ode of Our World

By Sarah Parijs

Smash the world he said to me,
beauty lies a dying husk;
with sad, pale eyes soon to flee.
Scream and bury lands in sea
making light eternal dusk.

Forge a road, I said to him.
Pave the way inside your head,
music stays a waiting whim

filling silence past the brim.
Find new paths before untread.

Build the world anew we sang,
wrench and wreck the old to make
universes roaring bang.
Beauty born with monstrous clang,
worlds now lie for us to take.

Preemptive Eulogy
By Jake Fox

The crisscrossed metal vines that formed school walls
cast geometric shadows on my past.
These black lines trap old friends in nets like fish
and force them to forsake much needed breath.
But whom among my generation has
been taught to use their lungs? We breathe when told.

When young, adventurously, I tied blankets
onto my back and scaled my childhood home.
I was not deluded that I could fly;
instead, I felt sure I could take the fall.
Exactly like first love and ended much
the same. But floundering fish people don't
fear death in youth: They expect it when old.

Still, since then I have fallen many times:
learning to fly in Icarian style;
as my undead friends cast their glassy eyes
with hidden, latent regret upon my
attempted breathing above water. Love
and life are haphazardly dreamt of here:
We forget wings in which we should take pride.

But I remember things like finger paints,
and forgone friends. And one first kiss, among
the rest. And lego bricks, and guns and sticks
in playgrounds covered up by bricks; which form
new homes o'er childhood's bones, destroying all
the evidence that we were young.
So if I die before I grow, please let
all whom I've loved know: even with pain that
I've seen; I lived on land and learned to breathe.