

UNBOUND

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table of contents

an obituary.	6
christopher bradley	
beng-ge.	8
chelsea pero	
sitting by a creek in the rain after my grandfather's funeral.	9
kyle long	
despertarse.	10
lizzie falconer	
under a cherry tree by a café	12
chester carmer	
green end.	13
kevin bronk	
left to lewis	14
eric wong	
untitled	29
e. a. kornfeld	
untitled.	30
e. a. kornfeld	
journey (hell and back)	31
kyle long	
quitter: an essay	33
w. c. bradley	
still life with fruit	36
eric schultz	
shadow box majesty	37
megan woodie	
across the dusk.	38
jerome hirsch	
tribes with trombones	39
cam giblin	

views of a baptism	40
megan woodie	
family sand.	42
hayley tipton brown	
biglow canyon wind farm, oregon	44
nick bernard	
untitled.	45
drew bardana	
shooting star	46
lizzie falconer	
conversations unsaid.	48
erin grady	
real/ideal series.	50
laura barton	
drunk outside strip club.	51
river donaghey	
rock tumbler.	52
nick bernard	
found in translation.	53
j. kim	
properties of water and light.	54
erin grady	
house of wolves.	56
elissa hall	
untitled.	57
drew bardana	
salad revenues are dressing for greek wounds.	58
christopher bradley	

a n o b i t u a r y

CHRISTOPHER BRADLEY

Charles Bream
(25 Aug. 1943 - 15 Feb. 2010)

Charles Bream died of a heart attack Wednesday at his ranch house in Madison, Wisconsin. (The Bream home is the third one down from the hardware-convenience store on Pine, the brick house that's had a droopy gate for a while.) Charles was found slumped on the toilet with dental floss wrapped around his right and left index fingers. He is survived by his wife Beverly, and his sons, Jeremiah and Paul. He was 66.

Although Charles was taken from us too soon, he lived a full life. In third grade, his team earned second place in the local basketball league, and for a year after Charlie would remember the single basket he scored in the championship game, a layup six minutes into the fourth quarter that put his team up by one. Later, in his moments of leisure, he would tell Jeremiah and Paul about his exploits on the basketball court. They dribbled and swooped along with Dad as he told the tale. Perhaps they tired of hearing always about this one game, but every Saturday afternoon they joined Dad in reenacting the third grade championship in their driveway while Mom brought out hot chocolate or grape juice popsicles. Charles rarely made a layup when playing with his sons, but Jeremiah and Paul were quite good and may now be seen playing on Sunday and Tuesday nights in the A-level recreational league.

In high school, Chuck caught on that sports weren't for him and began to babysit for the neighbors. Seven-year-old Tommy took the bus home at 2:30, Chuck joined him at three, and they spent the afternoon together until Tommy's parents came home. They played Chinese checkers or backgammon, Chuck following the rules and Tommy placing the pieces where he liked, and they watched people pass by on the sidewalk. They observed the middle- and high-schoolers and also, once, a car wreck. Chuck had bent to pet Tommy's dachshund when

the crunch of metal came and an explosion of glass. Tommy seized Chuck's shoulder. Chuck shut Tommy in his room and went out to find an old man gazing at the tree that had come out of nowhere. His glasses hung from one ear. Chuck rubbed the man's shoulder until the ambulance came.

When Charles became an actuary, he would think back on the kind of premium he would have charged the old man to get behind the wheel. Something to make the man want to cut up his license. Not because Charles was vindictive, but because he was fair, and he remembered how hard Tommy had squeezed his shoulder. Charles was in fact too fair for the business, and after years of his boss's nagging and of working at a soup kitchen on his lunch break every other day, Charles made the switch. He took over as kitchen manager, and there he would remain until he died while flossing his teeth. But the activity lost its appeal once he got paid for it, and 37 of his 85 paychecks remain endorsed but uncashed in his bureau. Whether wife Beverly will cash them now that he is gone remains to be seen. She will decide when she has a look at their finances, which Charles had always tended to. Maybe next week.

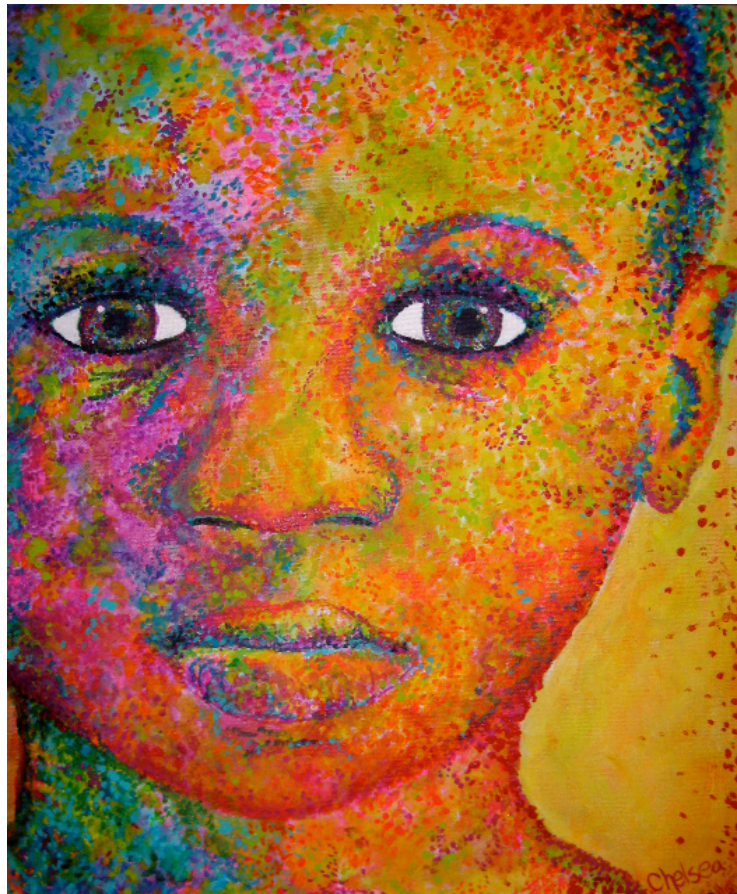
At the soup kitchen the regular diners note Charles' absence and wonder why another good man has moved on. Those who aren't quite so hungry as the rest note the sign posted above the kitchen door: "CHARLES BREAM 8.25.1943-2.15.2010." They, too, wonder why another good man had to move on.

On the basketball court on Saturday afternoon Jeremiah and Paul played a game of one-on-one and Mom brought out the beers. Jeremiah, a touch taller, has developed a nice hook while playing for the East Beasts, and Paul likes to use his quickness to create easy baskets under the hoop. Just like Dad, six minutes into the fourth quarter against Roosevelt Elementary.

When Beverly brought out the beers, she wondered if she should join to make it a game of three. She wanted to be sad, but Charles always said it would be up to her to make people happy if he ever couldn't. She smiled and took a few pictures, then returned inside.

The public service for Charles Bream will be held on Wednesday evening at the Fuller Mortuary. All are welcome.

Christopher Bradley has his BA in English and is currently a post-bacculaureate student. His work has appeared in the Oregon Voice, Chapman Journal, and Unbound. He is studying and teaching English in Pavia, Italy.



Chelsea Pero
Beng-Ge
acrylic paint
16in X 20in

Chelsea Pero is a sophomore majoring in Art. She has been previously published in Unbound.

sitting by a creek
in the rain after my
grandfather's funeral

— KYLE LONG

*Ripples
on the water,
and my face
pours down tears.
The cloudy sky
means nothing to me
while a broken heart
twitches below the surface.
A darting minnow
cutting through
the icy waters
hides itself from
mortality.
Very human,
my disposition
spoils
the pouring rain.*

*The pouring rain
spoils
my disposition.
Very human
mortality
hides itself from
the icy water
cutting through.
A darting minnow
twitches below the surface,
while a broken heart
means nothing to me.
The cloudy sky
pours down tears,
and my face,
on the water,
ripples.*

Kyle Long is a junior English major and Creative Writing minor. This is his first time being published.

despertarse: to wake up

LIZZIE FALCONER

The smoke was thick and black, and I could smell it—acrid and burning—blocks before I could see it.

“What was Rosario like during the Dirty War?” I had cautiously asked my Argentine host aunt the night before. Norah is petite with long brown hair that sways like a curtain as she spins around our kitchen making dinner every night.

“Oh,” she paused, midway through placing a *milonesa* in the oven. She looked up at me, closed the oven door, and came to sit down next to me at the table.

Norah and I carry on conversations every night before dinner about everything. Harrison Ford, tango, Mormons, Isabel Allende, Chile, NAFTA, Italian, Cristina Kirchner. But this was the first time I had dared ask about the *la Guerra Sucia*—the six-year period of torture, murder, and “disappearances” sponsored by the military government where 30,000 Argentines vanished from the streets.

Rosario was struck hard by the Dirty War, and within two blocks of my school are two buildings where students, human rights workers, and intellectuals were murdered. Every Thursday, a group of mothers whose children “disappeared” during the war march down Calle Oroño and demand the government release information regarding their lost family. Norah was in law school during the war, and I knew this. But, it was a hard time to be an Argentine, and I didn’t want to bring up something she didn’t want to remember.

“It was dangerous, and unstable,” she said, taking a deep drag on her Camel Lights. “Soldiers would walk into our classes and shut them down for months at a time. We had nothing to do, no work, no school, we would just wait.”

The cloud of black was rising from piles of tires, blocking off the road in all directions. Police stood on either end, hands in their pockets, eyes to the sky, apathetically viewing the sharp contrast of the clear, bright South American sky against the caustic burning rubber.

The Dirty War finished over 25 years ago with the election of a

peronista into office, but the country never quite recovered. In 2001, due to all the mishandlings of money and economic policy by the government, there was a spectacular economic collapse that made thousands of Argentines homeless overnight. There were violent riots in the streets, and Pocho Lepratti, a popular Rosario schoolteacher, was murdered by the police.

The streets still carry signs of the period. Buildings are pockmarked with machine gun fire, and graffiti screams injustice from every available surface.

“Luchás o dormeís, vos escogís” (Fight or sleep, you choose)

“Los menores no son peligrosos, están en peligro” (Minorities are not dangerous, they are in danger)

“¡Pocho vivo!” (Pocho lives!)

There is deep political mistrust here, and, as Norah proves, deep political apathy in the older generation.

The current Argentine government is not well liked. The president Cristina Kirchner has passed many enormously unpopular land reform laws, and the younger generation is not taking it sitting down.

The burning tires, the police, the signs, the drums, the yells—all are common here. As I’ve heard from other study abroad students, half of their class time is spent listening to political groups on campus.

It’s impossible to walk down the streets here and not see that something is happening. The “political past” (as we think of it in the States) is the political present here. Everything is still changing, still falling into place.

I kept my head down as I walked through the protest and continued with my day. But like the burned rubber still clings to the bottom of my shoes, so do the ideas and passion of this revolutionary country.

Lizzie Falconer is a junior majoring in International Studies and Spanish. This is her first published piece.

under a cherry tree by a café

An old man stands
and a young man
with a cup of coffee
can't see across
to a young woman
in the window
while an old man says he doesn't eat at restaurants.

An old woman
looks down
at a one-footed bird
on the patio picking
discarded crumbs
as young woman watches an old woman feed a bird.

The old man walks past,
but the little bird doesn't mind where it eats.

—CHESTER CARMER

Chester Carmer is a junior studying Environmental Studies. He has been previously published in Unbound.



Kevin Bronk
Green End
digital photograph

Kevin Bronk is a senior majoring in Journalism with an emphasis in magazine journalism. He is the current Editor-in-Chief of Ethos magazine and has been published in The Dubliner Magazine, Beer NW Magazine, Flux Magazine, and the Oregon Daily Emerald.

left to lewis

episode 1: mort and mandy eat the good doctor's wife

You decide to pull over
at a Gas & Shop
by mile marker 248
because the setting sun
is too low for the visor
too high for the distant cliffs
and the bugs on your windshield
and the reflection of cheap spit water you
washed your windshield with
in Orangevale
where the Chinese teller
with four teeth
and a bad case of
goiter face
gave you change for a five
when you handed her a fifty
expecting it to cover
your candy
and your gas
and spent thirty minutes
arguing with her
reciting the Where's George
information on the bill border
showing ATM withdrawal receipts
washing the windows
with her spit water
probably made of goiter puss
and Windex.
She eventually and unwillingly relents
and after climbing back into your tiny Impala
you slam the door
delighting in the wave of cool wind
that whips across your face,
your own anger cooling you.

You twist the keys too quick
forgetting that you had been blasting
“Rock With You” with the windows down
and it shakes the car
and your anger
like a cat to engine backfire
dissolves into momentary panic.
So you sped off
at a comfortable
88 mph
in Daryl’s pride and joy
proof of his medical degree
his 2008 Impala
which despite being small
burns through gas
like you burn through Camel Wides.
Your husband bought the car
because the man with too many teeth
and a comb over said it would do
forty highway no sweat.
It gets about twenty eight usually,
but when you drive
when Daryl is at a conference
and you can put your foot down
and the car vibrates against the wind pressure
you get about nineteen miles to the gallon.

So as the red bar drops below the quarter tank line
the line Daryl cannot cross
you imagine the sound of his eyes
swooping between the dial and you
the dial and you
like he’s trying to mentally tell you
“it’s time to pull over.”
He actually sweats sometimes.

Daryl doesn't buy cheap gas
nor does he like "commercial gas"
and picks stations on an arbitrary feeling
that you assume only men can feel,
but you know what to avoid.
No 76's. No Shell's. Avoid Chevron if you can.
So once you spot a town of gas stations,
the kind of places that don't really qualify to be towns
district sections, or rest stops,
but seem like little black markets
where magic beans and monkey paws are sold
you pull into the locally owned gas station,
with a worn down sign that says "Hig—ns"
along with some other faded words.

Nothing here seems perfectly level
the heat rising from the white pavement
distorts the space four feet in front of you,
the tepid windshield water smells metallic,
and on a brief inspection you gag
as the hot fumes fill your nose and mouth.

Inside is a girl sporting a —
Hello My Name is Mandy —
name tag,
the desert in her hair
black streaked with sand;
she must be inside all day
to be as pale as she is —
leaning against the counter
not moving, you strain to see
the flaring of her nostrils
her faintest sign of life.
She greets you with a limp smile
biting the chapped skin
from her bottom lip
painted blue.

You're from Berkeley
you've seen weird
you've seen people pissing
on their shit they shat
on the bumper of a Uhaul

but this is weird
A girl garbed in bones
skulls fixed to her arms like football shoulder pads
and ribs wrapped round her ribs, divided at the sternum
with a metal clasp and hinge,
hugging the black polyester long sleeve shirt
perfectly content in the ninety four degree heat...
you make the obvious joke
the stupid joke
the kind of joke that gets people killed

"Halloween isn't for another month"
and she laughs
too hard
like the laugh track on a failing sitcom
abrupt
empty
like the joke is on you
like you're the weird one
her bones click together as she contorts
and you notice they sound nothing like plastic.

You pay with the Mastercard
to avoid a repeat with goiter girl
and walk outside to enjoy a cigarette
before continuing toward the state line.

Flick the keys one click
and a static drowned rendition
of Witchy Woman
gargles through
separated by clicks
of Morse code –
your phone is about to go off

but you know it's your spouse
reminding you to refuel before you hit the grapevine
to let the car sit for at least twenty minutes
to cool off
to not smoke in the car, where it'll cling to the
upholstery

so you turn the dial
and drown the drone
in the scratchy falsetto

*

*Lewis Willows wipes the drip of stagnant spit
from the corner of his mouth
his tongue, sliding against the grain of gray stubble*

*No one had been in all day
which he preferred
he didn't really need the money
any more or less than he needed the quiet*

*Even the florescent hum from above
was grating enough to merit hours
of sitting in the dusty dark
arcs of desert sun streaking throughout
Willow's Drug and Grocer*

*He turns the page of the magazine he wasn't reading
and runs a finger along the plastic counter top*

*not dusty enough to dust
a disappointment*

*The headline reads “Vagdaline leaves Gwen! Secret Affair with her Sister?”
and he grits his aching teeth
grimacing in equal parts disgust and pain.*

*Lewis shuts the magazine and slides it off the counter
banking it into the steel wire waste bin
filled with used tissues and expired candy bar wrappers.
He tries to purge the real world nonsense from his mind
cupping his chamomile tea between his palms;
it’s lost much of it’s warmth, but feels familiar
like holding hands, and for a minute
or an hour, or a day, he sits there
until it feels like a mug of tea again.*

*Nothing sold
nothing to stock
No one to wander the aisles
looking through labels and
active ingredients*

*So all the products are perfectly faced.
For a moment Lewis Willows wonders
if there is a more logical way to arrange the store
concluding however, it would be silly to recalibrate
the store for the benefit of customers who never came*

*The slow spinning fan makes its pass across his back
sending chills down the trenches of sweat along
his black suspenders, his leathery pink skin
peeking through the dampened white dress shirt.*

*The late afternoon heat
brought a heavy need for sleep
and confident in his lack of enterprise
“Willow’s will be closing early today.” hangs proud in the window
no apologies, just the facts.*

*Takes a minute
to turn off all the lights
shut the blinds
power down the fans
so hot muggy silence
can take him into sleep*

*Lewis rests back in his old wooden rocker
which he keeps in the stock room behind the register
he does not like to sit at the counter
where it takes up too much space*

*The crook of his neck
meets the moon of the chair
and slowly the desert symphony
replaces the dying fans
with sand sewn winds
scratching against the tin and plexiglas
bouncing off and up into the endless atmosphere*

*The doppling sounds of cars
and trucks along the highway,
circling overhead a vulture rings the meal bells
for the scorpions and scavengers*

*A car no longer pumping gas has left its radio on
it's a song he recognizes, but doesn't know the name or artist
doesn't care, anything post-Chuck-Berry can go right to hell*
*Lewis remembers being young and falling asleep
to late night jazz programs on AM radio – waking up
seven times a night to off air static, yet somehow needing
the gritty groan to find any sleep at all –*

*And now, the sound of running water, a hose unattended
preparing to wash away the carcasses of a thousand flies
and five hundred miles worth of dirt and desert
brings him to the thought of urination.*

*Lewis re-locks the bathroom door
with the old doorstep-taped-to-key
contraption, the handle is coming loose
a man with any amount of determination
could shoulder the door open with relative ease,
Lewis leans against it
catching himself in his own
machismic competition
-don't break it down you idiot
you're gonna have to fix it.*

*The distant car radio was closer than Lewis
imagined, parked at Higgins' Gas & Shop
the only station independent of the Humblebee family.*

*Weird kids, the Higgins.
Ninety percent of Cedar Falls felonies
can be traced back to Mandy "May de Beau" Higgins
and her retarded rhino brother Mort.
Mostly your standard desert creature torture
de-shelled armadillos and tortoises
something skinned, something chewed
something to clean up with Deputy Donnie Pruitt
before knocking back a few beers and roasting chicken
but never any real destruction to the town
so Lewis Willows couldn't really complain...*

*The hose had been left on
and veins of water flowing over
concrete, evaporated and wisped away
into the deep purple blaze*

*The temperature would drop quickly
The water could freeze overnight
Someone could slip*

*Lewis finds the spigot on the wall by the drinking fountain
and twists it off through rusty squeaks that pinch his ears.
The song from the car is winding down, "another commercial free set
from your friends at KWLP 95.7*

*The Eagles, by Witchy Woman
that was the name of the song, he was sure*

*There was no sign of Mandy at the counter
which shouldn't be any surprise
she often took off during the day
but today there was a car still here
still running*

*He didn't want to approach the car
or rather, he did
but the thought of being seen
as a snooping old man kept him
until*

beep beep beep

*The passenger side door was open
that's why the radio was so loud
A blue flip phone sits in the cup holder
a blinking green icon signaling a message*

*It rings again
"Daryl"
he watches it go to voicemail
"twenty-seven missed calls from Daryl"
"four new voicemails"
after a second
"five new voicemails"*

*Lewis finds the spigot on the wall by the drinking fountain
and twists it off through rusty squeaks that pinch his ears.
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after a second
"five new voicemails"*

*The remaining hose water
reflected the oily rainbow
of gasoline
but smelled like ammonia
mixed with grain alcohol
* * **

You are dead
detached
watching the animal you once inhabited
being hunted in the gas station parking lot

*Lewis dials Daryl
“Linda?”
“No, my name is Lewis”
Silence ensues.
Lewis licks his drying lips
on the other end
he can almost hear
the acceleration of Daryl’s heart
“Where’s Linda?”
“I don’t know.”*

You don’t register the pain
but you see the blood
and know it needs to hurt
for there to be that much blood.
A red mist spreads before your eyes
and you follow it to the epicenter
where a three foot bladed missile
pokes its head out from your gut.
The cigarette falls from your lips

*Lewis sniffs a smoldering butt
on the floor, lipstick on the filter,
probably only three or four draws
before being dropped.
“Daryl, was your wife planning
a trip to the desert?”*

And you watch it fall
fall and bounce off the bloody harpoon arrow
now splitting from your belly
sending a shower of sparking tobacco

*“No, she’s suppose to be in Utah
who is this?”*

the animal you once knew
is pulled off her feet
and dragged on her back
she scratches at the arrow
flaying her hands and wrists
and you think she’s trying to kill herself faster
her white blouse red
the laughing beast by the bathroom
in a blue tank top
his cheeks flapping up and down
over each other
as he effortlessly reels in the ninety nine pound catch

*“My name is Lewis Willows, I found your wife’s car
abandoned at a gas station.”*

“I’m calling the cops”

“that’s probably a good idea”

Daryl does not appreciate your sense of humor.

“Where are you sir?”

He is probably shifting back and forth

trying to contain his testosterone

crossing his arms

feeling the flex of his own biceps.

“Cedar Falls, but look for mile marker 248”

*“2...48...Listen buddy, If I get there and find that
you have anything to do with this*

I swear to God I’ll rip your ass off.”

His jokes are funnier than yours.

*“okay” *click*

He is Mortimer Pentworth Higgins
kill in his spam shaped palms
he looks around with glee
revealing a mouth of crooked yellow nubs
which may have once been teeth
but have been worn down
to semi-functional kernels of corn

*There's blood on his hands, on the phone,
from the phone? No. Lewis retraces his steps.
From the faucet.*

The monster of meat turns to Mandy
and giggles and groans
he holds you out to her

Like a pug dog
his head tilts to the side
as he searches his sister's face for approval
for affection.

*Along the tin walls of Higgins Gas & Shop
localized by the hose spigot
a tiny cloud of blood rests against
the hot sheet metal.
Like galaxies, it seems like a cloud
but when Lewis kneels and properly
adjusts his bifocals
he sees tiny droplets,
a long dark hair glued in
with the blood and dust.*

You watch the twins wrap the animal in plastic sheets.
It is showing signs of shock related resistance.
You don't want to live. It does.
The four hundred pound Pudge cannot
neatly wrap the flailing sack of bleeding meat
and starts to cry
"Man-deeeee hel-puh"
his voice an auditorium deep croak
that echoes in his mouth and gut
before booming out like a tuba,
and Mandy goes back into the store
comes back out with an aluminum bat
and strike after strike
she jumps up
and brings the bat down hard on its head
a biological trampoline.

*Lewis steps out of from the shade
cast by the gas station and dials a new number,
having to pause a few times
for pressing the wrong buttons
which are too small for his thick leather fingers.*

*"Cedar Falls Dispatch"
"Donnie, it's Lewis Willows"
"Hello Mr. Willows"
"Mort and Mandy moved on to bigger game."*

Now at rest, the mystery calls
and as you depart
you think of Daryl
how you should call him soon...

*"You sure?"
"No, maybe it was a dog with a harpoon gun."
"...I'll be down in a minute."*

Slung over the shoulder of Mort Higgins
sliding back and forth on his rubber skin
your eyes are getting heavier and clotted with blood
and you can't tell if you are inside your body or not
but the eyes of Mandy's shoulder skulls look deep into you
and you stare back
at the cracks in the skull
and the small flakes of dried marrow
and you realize Mandy's made of bone.

To be continued...

Next Time!

How Mandy Got Her Name & The Mind of Donnie Pruitt

You think you are in Hell
and you are
you are alive.
Damn it, right?
You can't see
some blurry black
a crack of light
suggesting desert
no shit.
Sounds are muffled
some deep groaning
crackling
fire
and shock
shock that cancels pain
shock is Jesus
Jesus is sleep....

— ERIC WONG

Eric Wong is a senior English major. He has been published in previous issues of Unbound.



E. A. Kornfeld
Untitled
35 mm film



E.A. Kornfeld
Untitled
35 mm film

E. A. Kornfeld is a senior Art major. He has been previously published in Unbound.

j o u r n e y

(h e l l a n d b a c k)

Like a pack of frenzied Zerglings,
 you tore me apart
and like a RuptureFarms Scrab,
 you danced
 on my heart.
Couldn't put down the controller
 when I lost my Player Two,
would have climbed buildings,
 vaulted barrels,
 if it meant holding on to you.
But like a Wallmaster's victim
 I never saw the shadow coming.
Just a mushroom-munching hero
 and some extraordinary plumbing.

Like a certain blue hedgehog
 you left me a-spinning
Dropped me into the wrong warp pipe
 to head back
 to the beginning.
No more fairies,
 no more sub-tanks,
 no more second chances
no more days of double-dashing
 Mushroom Kingdom romances.

Saw my tetris tower toppling
 and I started to lose it.
All of the Vault Dweller's stimpacks
 couldn't start to reduce it.
Nearly gave myself a Complex,
 but I lacked the Facility,
tripping over prox mines
 like a Double-0 wanna-be.
More anger than Cloud

choking back post-Aeris sadness,
I had to trust my Force to get me
through the Garden of Madness.

It takes a Kong sized push
to help me conquer my fear,
I need a yellow-clad ninja
screaming
“Get over here!”

Running out of lives,
I’ve gotta watch where I tread,
I don’t want to be Nobody,
or wind up Heartless instead.

Then like a Phoenix
from the ashes
A hero full of dark Eco,
I’m falling like a lemming,
wondering
“Where do we go,
from here?”

I’m Kratos climbing out of Hades
fighting back against the strife,
charging up my X-Buster,
take another shot at life.
Just keep on button mashing
and when I get into a jam,
I’ll take a deep breath,
just like Kirby,
make it part of who I am.

Like a Lombax
with a RYNO,
I’ll be going to town.
‘Cause I’m as tough as Cairne Bloodhoof,
you just can’t keep me down.

So when you’re running low on quarters,
it comes down to what’s in you.
And when you get a
Game Over,
you can choose to
Continue.

— KYLE LONG

Kyle Long is a junior English major and Creative Writing minor. This is his first time being published.

quitter: an essay

W. C. BRADLEY

I recently quit a job in the midst of the economic crisis. I was working two part time jobs; one at a local politician's office as a receptionist, and the other at Enterprise Rent-a-Car as a reservation agent. I guess the fates have decided to put me to work on the phones to ruin me creatively and kill my dreams with every telephone ring. I have worked in the politician's office for years, and while I have zero passion for politics, legislation, or democracy, I enjoy my pleasant co-workers, the nice office with the comfortable chairs, and the freak shows called town hall meetings that occur every so often. Don't get me wrong, I like democracy, just not enough to ever want to discuss it. Talking politics is like sharing medical information; it reveals way too much of a person's inner-workings, or at least that is the opinion I have cultivated after years of conservative verbal lashings. My lack of attention to political happenings actually makes me a shoe-in for the position, as I discovered that people do not want answers, they want to yell at strangers about where our country is headed, and if you try to educate them with your "bleeding liberal heart," you're just asking for a conversation that'll never end. Once a man called the office and commented on President Obama's new Portuguese Water Dog, asking, "Why couldn't he get something more American, like a German Shepherd?"

My job at Enterprise took place in the armpit of any community, a call center, a dreadful place where I would not send my worst enemy. I was put through a grueling and lengthy interview process for which I was asked to explain what I would do in unlikely hypothetical situations, describe my best/worst personality traits, and dive into the disaster that is my work history. I don't understand why someone would ask you to identify your worst traits. Everyone knows you're just supposed to say something that actually makes you look good, like "I've been told that I work too hard" or "Sometimes I'm just too nice, you know?" But if you told them what your actual worst qualities are, like "I hate people" or "Sometimes my drinking interferes with me being

on time or showing up period,” you don’t stand a chance in hell. What I found most unusual was the rigidly strict dress code, considering you never, ever see a customer in person. It looks like a Janet Reno summer camp. I was hired and trained to make car reservations and speak as fast and fake as possible. *Yes, that’s right, just \$3,500 for an economy car in Maui for four days. Can I go ahead and set that aside for you? ...Hello?*

I lasted two months.

After my boss gave me a verbal warning about my attire, I decided to throw in the towel. I was in the middle of incoming Call #677 explaining to a teenager that “Yes, in fact, you do need a valid driver’s license to rent a \$30,000 car, and no, there is not a cup holder for your girlfriend’s Smirnoff Ice, so you’ll just have to take your dad’s ’91 Buick LeSabre to prom this year, you little fu—” when my manager and an unidentified woman asked me to step into a cubicle for a “chat.” Hoping to God I would be fired, I gathered all my things, sat down joyfully bouncing in my chair, removed my badge and got out a pen to sign my walking papers.

“Whitney,” she said, “we’ve pulled you aside to discuss your wardrobe choice today. Your shirt sleeves are too short and we can see your armpits.”

Slightly embarrassed, I did a quick check to make sure I had shaved and deodorized. Check. Were my breasts spilling out over the side (even though I’m pretty sure gravity prohibits B-cups from doing so)? Nope. Then, what? I thought to myself, “Are my pits going to offend the customers on the phone, or will my pits be too sexually stimulating for my co-workers?”

I took the verbal warning with ease, and even signed a statement legitimizing this embarrassing, sad act of discipline even though I was boiling inside. Not only did my bored manager feel the need to prove her authority over me with the most completely backwards piece of corporate policy in existence, but she brought along a manager-in-training to be her witness in worthless authority.

I returned to my cubicle, arms crossed and covering my pits in shame, and plotted my escape.

I have always envisioned quitting a job by causing a huge scene that people will remember for the rest of their days. I have written lengthy “I quit” speeches for almost every one of my jobs, rehearsing them in front of mirrors, screaming them in my car after crappy, long days, and delivering hour-long rants to boyfriends and roommates, never to have them heard by the intended audience. I guess I have never had a boss so bad that I would actually call them a “sack-less loser” to their face.

In the end, I decided to quit Enterprise and stay at the other job. In lieu of causing a scene, I came in when my shift was supposed to start and sent an email to my manager, letting her know the code to my locker so she could get my headphones back. I was courteous enough to let her know I was not coming back, yet spineless enough to avoid face-to-face interaction.

The other day at work in the politician's office, I started my day listening to the previous night's voice messages. The last message, delivered deadpan by an old hippie, said, "You are all corporate whores," referring to the state of our government and its general lack of backbone when it comes to corporate bribery. Wishing she had called during office hours so I could thank her for her "true dat!" statement, a warm feeling washed over me: I'd rather be a corporate whore than a corporation's bitch. At least I can flaunt my pits without judgment in government.

Whether or not I care for politics, or ditched one of my jobs during a recession, there is one core American value that I can always appreciate: choice.

I quit.

W. C. Bradley is a post-baccalaureate student majoring in English. She received her BA in Art History in 2006. This is her first published piece.



Eric Schultz
Still Life with Fruit
12' x 3' x 16'

Eric Schultz is a BFA in sculpture. He has previously had work in Unbound, and shown in the LaVerne Krause Gallery and the Jacob's Gallery in the Hult Center.

shadow box majesty

— MEGAN WOODIE

moving through
pressing dark streamlined
the way light
never is
erratic whipping of my cape
mottles night

tasting kerosene heat-shimmer
halo-hypnotized
quivering closer
eyes ache toward
illumination immolation
body craves—

air! distorting jar
saturated with (*flutterscratch*)
fumes
heavy the way
dark never is, (*flicker*)
dizzying,
(*scratch glaze*
shudder)
I sag to the cotton-ball plot
inhale a grave new dark

you gaze through spotless glass
at my stippled skin, art imitating
life, your eyes shine with a species
of reverence for my spread form,
impaled and elevated, displayed
sacrifice, your lips taste the cryptic
inscription of words that name me—
though not flying, still I am high,
imperial, encased; I, lantern-bright,
exalted the way light always is,
draw all eyes, cause gasps for air.
Out of dark, I am radiance-crowned.

Megan Woodie is a junior English major.

a c r o s s t h e d u s k

Across the dusk, brushed blue and peach, moon tilts.
Down mountains shuttle slushes and cascades.
Within a frosted tea house built on stilts
One steaming cup reflects a ring of blades.
Up to the drifter struts the gangster boss.
He flips the table over with a kick.
Manic, he grins, eyes wide with lidless gloss.
WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA – ssslick
Through robes the flashing steel slips and darts.
The floor is filled with lunging, toppled dead.
Fresh fountains hissing, misting body parts.
Rice paper silhouettes on walls of red.
 A hawk lifts off, sweeps towards the mountain's crown.
 His branch sways gently up; the snow shakes down.

— JEROME HIRSCH

Jerome Hirsch is a senior double-majoring in English and Computer Science. He has been previously published in Unbound and Oregon Voice



Cam Giblin
Tribes with Trombones
gouache and ballpoint pen
11 in. x 11 in.

Cam Giblin is a junior majoring in Journalism with specialization in advertising. He has worked as a freelance illustrator for the Register-Guard and he currently illustrates for Ethos magazine. His work has also been featured in the Insurgent. He is the artist for bands such as Sea Bell, Adventure Galley, and On the Tundra and has recently begun a line of t-shirts and shoes with custom artwork under the name "LonePines."

views of a baptism

Let us pray

*May the powers of darkness, which the divine Redeemer hath vanquished by his cross,
retire before thee*

The baby, asleep at the altar,
eyelashes feathered against cherubic cheeks,
is bored with the blessing already.
The priest exhales gently,
agitating eyelashes and mother,
but not child.
The raw-nerved mother prays:
please please blow the sin— so much choking dust—
from my child.
Let him breathe free
in the presence of the LORD.

*Receive on thy forehead the sign of the holy cross, to remind thee that thou openly
profess thy faith in Christ crucified,
and glory not, save only in the cross*

Seated nearby, the aunt, swathed in earth-tone tie-dye,
knots her limbs, her constricting vines.
Dreadlocked hair tightly coiled,
mother's Medusa-sister
curls her venomous mouth at these "antiquated rituals."
They try to engrave the cross on his soft skull,
his softer mind, she thinks.
She prides herself that her heathen gods
are older than the Christian one.

Receive this salt as an emblem of wisdom; the Lord grant it thee unto everlasting life.

Navy grandfather, smokestack-straight,
salt of the earth and of the sea, oversees all.
Flooded with pride,
he watches the baby grimace
at the briny taste.
Can't wait to see
how well he handles the immersion.

*That thou mayest be ready and willing to hear his words, and mayest joyfully proclaim
his praise.*

The priest touches the delicate ears and mouth with a fingertip.
The baby hears these words, feels the fingers.
Opens his tiny mouth to scream joyous praise.

I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Then comes the cleansing water,
the blessing,
the baby caught in a religious riptide.

Amen

— MEGAN WOODIE

Megan Woodie is a junior English major.

family sand

HAYLEY TIPTON BROWN

It was early.

So early the sun had yet to crawl out of bed. He wished he could join the sun and remain in bed for a few more hours. But he couldn't. He had to help his father.

"Did you get the buckets?" the inquiring voice fractured James's thoughts. He forcefully pulled his gaze from the dark outline of the sea in the distance. His father was staring at him. "You know James," he began, with a pointed look, "if you don't pull your head out of the clouds once in awhile," he yanked the stack of buckets out from underneath a pile of marine floats, "it's going to be lost up there forever."

James studied his shoes, planted firmly in the dirt outside the small wooden shed. "Sorry."

His father just shook his head and thrust the buckets into James's arms.

James trudged down the unlit dirt path along the house to the waiting truck bed. He deposited the buckets and stood at the tailgate for a moment, taking in his father's equipment. So far the pickup contained two shovels, a small trowel, waders, towels, a rain hat, dull yellow coats, rubber gloves and of course, the buckets.

"James," the gruff voice called again.

James stepped around the truck and saw his father's frame, illuminated by the porch lights. Dangling from each hand was a two-foot-long silver metal coring tube, swinging gently as the tall man approached.

"Have we got everything?"

James rocked forward on the balls of his feet and leaned over the side of the pickup bed, taking stock once more even though he had done so not ten seconds ago. They couldn't afford to forget anything.

"Looks that way," he replied, planting his heels in the dirt and looking at his father.

The older man laid the tubes down in the back of the truck before slamming the tailgate shut. James watched as he rested both hands

atop the gate and gave his teenage son a once over. James stared right back at him. He wondered fleetingly if he would one day become the man he was staring at now. He shook the thought from his mind as his father shifted his gaze to the dark horizon.

"We'd better get going," he said, moving around the truck and gripping the driver's side handle, "we have a lot to do before the sun comes up."

His father wrenched the rusty green door open and slid into the seat. James yanked open the opposite door and dropped into the passenger seat.

The family clam business had never been James's idea of a life. Every morning, long before sunrise, his father and uncle headed down to the shore to collect as many of the elusive shellfish as they could. They then used several famous family recipes to run a small restaurant in town. This particular Monday, James's uncle had come down with a rather serious case of pneumonia and was lying unconscious in the town hospital. He'd had one too many freezing mornings on the wet coastline. The duty of clam collection had thus fallen to James, the next oldest male.

As the truck roared to life and bumped along down the road towards the beach, James watched the small town whiz by. He sighed, leaning his head back against the worn cloth headrest as a million thoughts swam around in his brain. Closing his eyes, he took stock of how far behind he would be in school now. His uncle wouldn't be back anytime soon.

Minutes later the truck jolted to a stop. James opened his eyes and stared out at the expanse of sand that held his family's livelihood. As he climbed out of the truck after his father, he wondered what people found so appealing about this place.

*Hayley Tipton Brown is a freshman Pre-Business major.
This is his first published piece.*

big low canyon wind farm, oregon

All of the sheep turned out to graze
while Farmer John rolls over in his grave

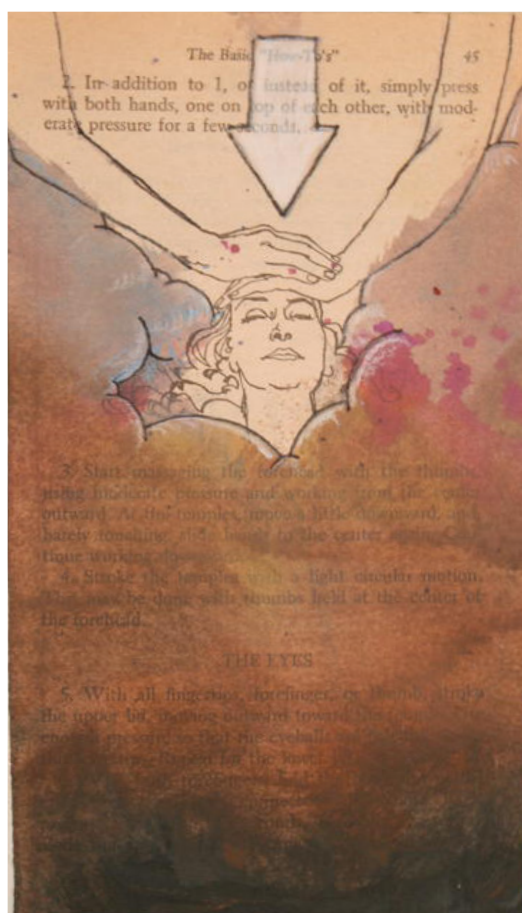
in the shadow of white, mechanical weeds,
a cash-crop of metal daisies and Jr.'s key

to the city, wheeling toward anywhere
else on an archaic combine harvester,

leaving the barn, the nag, the whole flock.
The long blades spun like the hands of a clock.

— NICK BERNARD

Nick Bernard is a senior English major and publishes the zine Bad Light.



Drew Bardana
Untitled
altered-book page

shooting star

LIZZIE FALCONER

Marie had never seen a shooting star. She had heard of them, in the thick bound books she read at night, and how they granted wishes. And she had a wish she wanted granted more than anything in her whole life.

After dinner she would spend hours, face pressed against the glass, staring out at the absent ocean sky. Sometimes, if she had washed the dishes and Daddy wasn't too tired, he would walk her down the steep concrete steps to the beachfront, where they would sit on the sand. Daddy would set down his old black radio and tune it just right, until the soft whispering of sea captains accompanied them.

"Hear that, Marie?" he would say, his eyes closed, softening the wrinkles around his eyes.

"Backing wind," a ghostly voice murmured. "19 knots."

"Good night to be on the ocean," he would say to himself. Marie wondered how he could understand these haunting phrases of men he didn't know when she was sitting right in front of him.

Oftentimes, exhausted from her sky search, she would fall asleep on the cold, sticky sand and wake up in her bed, grains still stuck between her tiny fingers and toes.

One night, as winter turned to spring, and the nights became warmer, Marie and her daddy sat watching the blackness and listened to radio static. She'd been waiting for a shooting star for months now, but every time Daddy pointed one out, Marie missed it. She wondered if they even existed, or if the books and Daddy had been lying about them too.

The limitless black ceiling of the sky framed her world, full of tiny immobile lights.

"Daddy, what makes shooting stars so special?"

He paused, placing his rough hand on hers.

"Oh honey, they're not actually stars. Just pieces of leftover rock falling into the atmosphere and burning up. Then they're gone. They're

special because they exist only for a second.”

Leftover. Burning. Dying. Disappeared. She knew what that meant. She knew what “gone” meant. She knew “gone” meant an empty chair at the dinner table, Daddy’s hair going gray, adults sneaking glances at her, and hushed conversations in the living room. She knew “gone” meant black, and an ache in her little chest that kept her up at night.

Why would someone wish on something dying? Her eyelashes glistened with tears, and in that moment, Marie decided that she didn’t believe in shooting stars. There was nothing special about existing for only a second, because behind you there was only emptiness.

So for the rest of the night, Daddy quietly at her side, she looked at every glistening, stable star in the sky and whispered:

“I wish for Mama back.”

Lizzie Falconer is a junior majoring in International Studies and Spanish. This is her first published piece.

conversations unsaid

Say: Slaughter silhouettes on the desert horizon.

Anemic elbows are swords jabbing at the sky.

Say: Death and water, death and water.

You say: I don't even know myself

I can't comprehend space and linear time

I say: Quantum particles are inaccessible and dull.

Sleep inside tonight trinket heart, have a cup of tea.

Say: Stars burn out and oceans fall through a sieve,

Particles separate into perfectly balanced loneliness.

She says: Even bullets are inconsequential

And nothing cares enough to listen to your rhapsody of love.

Roll over in your garden and feel the maggots carve out their tunnels.

She says: This is more beautiful than waltzing.

Say now: There is sweat on your neck and you are sitting under the window

The panes are steamed, the trim is chipped brown

My breath is wavering silver.

Eyes say: Close. I look for the plain yellow.

I love you. I love you, I love you

I could say it a million times and my mouth would still be dry.

I say: When you are gone, spaces between things

Are cracks in the earth, but when you are near

I am always falling in.

You say: Not much at all.

Your confessions are corked in bottles,

Brown and green, green and brown

Or else nailed to the wall where your mother hangs her picture frames.

Say: Fake gold, rust, yellowing sing-a-longs

Repeating arias falling off their highest, purest note.

I say: Come back, come back

On your back I drew my best map of this place.

He says: Everything depends upon how near you sleep to me.

She says: I know you plagiarize from the street signs,
From the angular conversations that crucify you to the stars.
I say: My best friend was stripped of grace
The night the man in the moon became a rapist,
His empty bottles crashing on the sidewalk like a comet.
My mother says: I'm sorry I told you everything was yours,
Control is an illusion I made up because you were just a songbird.
She says: I'm sorry, look at the black birds circle
The skeleton tree.
They will tell you the extent of my failures.
I say: I was wondering, I was wondering
Where I was when I realized I was entitled to jewels and bones
Say: Cages and guns, cages and guns
I know now my doings weigh tons.
I say: My failures think they are red balloons,
Berate and forgive, berate and forgive
North Pole and Southern Sun.

I say: Will you travel with me, whispers and cigarettes,
The dust kicked up behind the bus.
Say: Where will we be when the cellophane skin of reality slides off forever?
Manifest Curiosity and Destiny, your worn out shoes.
Say: I have been looking for the field
I have been searching for the sanctuary.
Say: I have been watching the way the birch branch bends in the wind
So I would know exactly what to do
When I came to you
With nothing left to do but fall to my knees.
Say: We have reservations in all the wrong things you know,
Shovels and cement, a break in the fence
Show me the long road to the sky.

— ERIN GRADY

Erin Grady is a senior International Studies major.



Laura Barton
Real/Ideal series
9.5x11 in.

Laura Barton is a senior Art History major with an Art minor. These digital photographs were originally part of a series in a 50-page book.

drunk outside strip club

She pisses by the chain link.
Illuminated by the headlights,
Long, squatting Peter Pan
shadow on the concrete.
Embarrassed to be in the spotlight,
she blushes.
Urine carves down the pavement timidly,
her eggshell thighs like Scylla and Charybdis.

— RIVER DONAGHEY

River Donaghey is freshman Philosophy major. He has been previously published in Lane Community College's literary magazine, Denali.

the rock tumbler

Find anything to feed me, I keep on
rolling. A *wunderkind* of metamorphosis,
I form and reform the cast-off and flawed
with an elixir of grit and grind awash
in my hold. I work in the dun of dust
on basement shelves among a quarry of books
and crates of photos like great cairns of shame
you shovel in and seal up in the dark
as if they will emerge someday absolved.
How pitiful you are, unwieldy with burden
churning unchanged inside you. When you return,
for once, home and shuck your childhood
rock collection back into the tide,
listen—you'll still hear me singing.

— NICK BERNARD

Nick Bernard is a senior English major and publishes the zine Bad Light.



J. Kim
Found in Translation
digital photograph
1280 x 1024 pixels

J. Kim is a senior English major. This is her first time being published.

properties of water and light

1.

What the world needs is a sturdy tree house. A map, a compass, the simple life. The water comes from the sky. You spend your days responding to it. It makes you cold, it makes you quenched, it makes you able to forgive. You look out and not down, at the tree tops, the high branches, and the owls hooting at the opalescent dusk. You are in one of the few slivers of this planet where the moon can still illuminate the whole night. Where everything has a halo.

2.

What the world needs is an angel in the machinery. The angel is made of a fraction of a dewdrop and she condensates. Short circuits electricity. Causes blackouts. There was a blackout in Colorado the night the war of my generation broke out. We sat under blankets, by candle light, we held each other like children, and listened to the bombs on the battery radio. We were a country of children that night, awed and unconsidered. In the blackout, we imagined the desert, and we prayed for angels and rain. We wondered if either would be of use to those children of heat and dust. We drew nearer to each other to feel the light.

3.

What the world needs is a sincere apology. From the crowns that refuse to be vulnerable. My father apologizes like a fish wriggling on a hook. Trying with every thrust of his body to get back to his ocean of pride. The ocean is mostly full of salt, empty space, and predators. My father is ultimately his own hunter. He cannot see that virtue originates from the highest, purest mountain glacier, which melts and cools the throats of shepherds and flock. Streams upon rivers upon rivers offering relief from treachery, the ability to be honest. But the rivers flow into cities, become polluted, we gasp for clean water and many die of thirst. They say that every river will eventually find its way back to the ocean. I say every river will eventually find its way back to the sky, where the enormous sun can do nothing but shed its molten truth.

4.

What the world needs is a good escape plan. A crack in the silent winter of the pond. Water has told me before that it despises the prison of ice. It longs for the rush of evaporation and for its place in the clouds. It isn't that it wants to be a ruler of a kingdom, it is that water remembers how it feels to waltz in the colossal blue ballroom of no ceilings or floors. Far off I hear the roaring gasps of melting ice. It is not the distinction between winter and spring that I hear, but the distinction between contraction and expansion. In the bottom of the valley that summer I slept outside for two months. I became a woman, a tree branch, a blossom, and then I was blown away into molecules, which became wind, and then light.

5.

What the world needs most is for the levees to break. Society demands the heart stay dry and still and parched for productivity. Society demands the horse stay in the barn. When we made love for the first time in 6 months I was drenched in cyclical hurricane waves. I was awake and breathing in water. My lungs were made of one million tiny sea creatures singing in a perfect chorus. I remembered, small breasts in his hands, the time he explained to me the tides. How faithful they are to the moon. How they never inhale caution, how they always exhale, "again".

— ERIN GRADY

Erin Grady is a senior International Studies major.

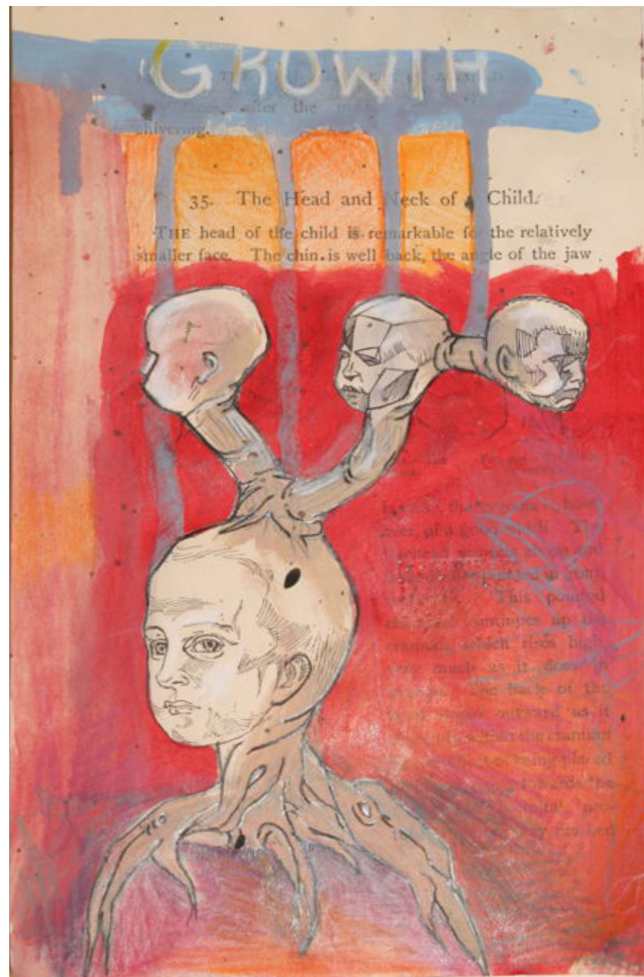
house of wolves

My ears perk first, steps stump
the porch, lock fumbling open, panting
whiskey-cloyed as his shadow
bulks the doorframe. It is a struggle
to keep from jumping
up on his khakis but I have learned my lesson.
I am the fleabag, yanked by the scruff
and kicked in the muzzle. Now,
I love him cautiously, bury
bones in the garden and wait
for the rare hand to rustle
through my coat.

A woman lives here also. She wears a
pink bathrobe and smokes late-night menthols
in his absence, ember an endless firefly
flicking the dark. Occasionally, she sleeps
tensely and I nestle my snout in her nape, inhale
its powdery scent. These nights
I am most lonely, stand on the deck and howl
with the melancholy of one thousand stray wolves,
fear and hunger strangled from my throat
as the hollow cry echoes back. So I remain
still, and wait, love cautiously because
I, too, do not know
how to leave.

— ELISSA HALL

Elissa Hall is a senior Women and Gender Studies major. This is her first time being published.



Drew Bardana
Untitled
altered-book page

salad revenues are dressing for greek wounds

CHRISTOPHER BRADLEY

NEW YORK CITY—Relief has come for Greek balance sheets, and it has nothing to do with budget cuts: the Western world has gone gaga over Greek salad. Eight years after smash hit *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* boosted international sales of Greek olives and honey, a sudden uptick in feta sales has the country looking up and its cheese producers working around the clock.

Feta is the star ingredient of Greek salad (*horiatiki*), an amalgam that includes tomato, cucumber, red onion, kalamata olives and green pepper. Abroad, the dish is especially popular in the United States, where lettuce is usually added, but has found a place on menus across the world: as *Bauernsalat* in Germany, as *salade à la Grecque* in France, as *görög saláta* in Hungary, and as *ensalada griega* in Spain. Each of these countries has reported feta sales increases of at least 12% across the last six months—almost exactly the level of Greek debt in the 2009 budget cycle.

Indeed, these times have not been kind to Greek pocketbooks. The European Union's Maastricht rules forbid any level of debt exceeding three percent of national gross domestic product (GDP), but Greece has routinely doubled this limit. Now, despite having sought the

help of Goldman Sachs to restructure and hide its debt, Greece is scandalously in arrears. Public debt of 12.7% of GDP has pushed the country to the edge of insolvency, with few international investors willing to take the plunge into Greek securities. A Kentucky boy made headlines in mid-January by using funds from his hot chocolate stand to buy an undisclosed amount of Greek bonds. He recognized the risk but claimed he was “at the right age for such a dicey investment.”

Now greater help has come to the birthplace of Achilles with the Caucasian world's growing appetite for Greek salad. What exactly has created this feta frenzy is unclear. Some attribute the rise to improved awareness of feta's health benefits—it is rich in calcium, riboflavin, and vitamin B12—while others speak of a clandestine Feta Federation. Rumors coming out of Athens have fingered Greek-American actress Olympia Dukakis, an Oscar-winner and stage veteran, as being responsible for its founding. She could not immediately be reached for comment.

Around the world Greeks have gotten wind about this chance to help their homeland and have banded together. Katina Chiklis, born in Corinth and

currently a resident of Dublin, Ireland, expressed excitement about being able to give back to the country that gave her so much.

“When I heard about the suffering of my people, I cried because I was so far away and could do nothing,” said Chiklis. “Then I spoke with my friends Dasha and Xanthus and we formed an action plan. Every week we go to all the supermarkets in Dublin buying up feta and demanding that the stores increase their stock.”

With or without the Feta Federation, back in the Aegean, Greek officials are thrilled with this timely surge in exports. Said Finance Minister George

Papakonstantinou upon reading the numbers, “Καὶρό ἔχω νὰ σε δῶ!”

With the resulting infusion of tax receipts, the government hopes to revive several stagnant public works projects in Athens. The Acropolis has been overrun of late by feral dogs, and though the government has tagged them, it has lacked the funds for removal. But with the help of the so-called Greek Salad Fund they will be able to quickly and efficiently round up these dogs and deliver them pre-butchered to needy families around the capital. Interior Minister Prokopis Pavlopoulos called the situation a “win-win.”

Christopher Bradley has his BA in English and is currently a post-baccalaureate student. His work has appeared in the Oregon Voice, Chapman Journal, and Unbound. He is studying and teaching English in Pavia, Italy.

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