

Blended 

2017

The logo for 'Blended 2017' features the word 'Blended' in a stylized font. The 'B' is large and black, while 'lended' is in a smaller, red, lowercase font. The letters are partially enclosed by a colorful, swirling graphic that resembles a musical note or a stylized 'e'. Below the word is the year '2017' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Blended 2017

The Literary Arts Magazine of Olympic College

© 2017 The Ranger
Cover Art by Daniel Chung

Design by Lou Faulkner

Faculty Advisors
Lynn Hovde
Nicholas Schuur

Student Staff
Alex Dunbar
Daniel Chung

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ONCE UPON A TIME - Rachel Ren	1-2
DR. J. AND MR. H. - Gretchen Lund	3
THE FOREST - Matthew Dean	4
HAIKU 17 - John Olson	5
ARTIST - Raven Moore	6
HAIKU - James McPherson	7
ARTIST - Brian McCartney	8
HAIKU - Phil Labombard	9
ARTIST - Gretchen Lund	10
HAIKU - Raven Moore	11
FOCUS - Taylor Rauch	12
REFLECTION PROJECT - Melodie Tanksley	13-15
HEADPHONES - Daniel Chung	16-17
CARBON RIVER - Alexander Dunbar	18-19
NEVADA HEART - Alexander Dunbar	20
SO - Ashlyn Taylor	21
STILL LIFE - Gretchen Lund	22
LADIES FIRST - Kyra Boatwright-Frost	23-25
DAFFODIL - Joseph Criswell	25
COMING HOME - Nessa Broughton-neiswanger	26-27
AUGUST 1, 2015 - Marcosa Opulencia	28-29
RUBY BEACH - Bobbyjohn Stratton	30
AWAKENING THE BEAST - Daniel Chung	31
BATB - Gretchen Lund	32
LOOK - Matthew Dean	33
LIGHTPOST - Matthew Dean	34-35
PHOTOGRAPHER - Joseph Criswell	36
GOODBYE - Ashlyn Taylor	37
GOLD CREEK TRAIL - Ashley Brown	38

Once upon a time. The most famous and memorable stories of all time start, with once upon a time.

Once upon a time there was a princess. Once upon a time there was a prince. Once upon a time there was a rabbit. Once upon a time there was a kingdom.

The part that most people focus on is the end. The princess, the prince, the rabbit, the kingdom. They wonder, what about them? Once upon a time is just an opener.

But what if we focused on the beginning of those sentences? What if we focused on once upon a time? What if we look deeper, past the thought of, “it’s just an opening.”

In those four words, there is the small thought, “what if this really happened?”

What if there really was a princess caught in a spell, and a prince that saved her? What if there was a talking rabbit? What if there was a magical kingdom?

I thought about this, and came to my own conclusion.

Once upon a time means “this once happened.”

It doesn’t mean it happened in this world, or in this time. But it does mean “this once happened.”

Now, take some time to think about the world around you. Not the one where you think, “it’s just a rose, it’s just a house, it’s just my room.” No, take some time to think about the world you thought of as a child. When it wasn’t “just a rose,” or “just a house,” or “just your room.”

Because back then, the rose was a magical rose, that was the house of the fairies that lived in your yard. That house was the secret hideout of a witch. Your room was ten million things in one, an amusement park, a pirate ship, a store that you ran.

As you grew older, you became more “sensible.” There are no fairies that live in your yard, that house was just a house for sale, your room is just your room, and nothing else.

But that’s not true.

That rose is still the house of a fairy, that house is still the secret hideout, and your room is still a million things in one.

I know that these things are true, because with every one of those stories, you can add, “once upon a time.”

“Once upon a time, I believed that one rose in my yard was a house for a fairy.”

“Once upon a time, I thought that house next door belonged to a witch.”

“Once upon a time, I pretended that my room was anything I wanted it to be.”

If you think what I think about once upon a time, those sentences mean a lot more.

“That rose in my yard was once a house for a fairy.”

“That house next door used to belong to a witch.”

“My room was a room where anything could happen.”

And if something happened once, it can happen again, can't it?

I think that today, most of us think of things as “it's just.” “It's just this” and “it's just that.”

If we replace “it's just” with “once upon a time,” stories start to flow.

I think we of today are ever so slightly bound by reality, forcing us to look at everything as “it's just.” Because when we become adults, we need to focus on our jobs, and at the facts of everything.

I think that we begin to think, “There is no need to create a story behind something that doesn't have one.” And the world becomes so normal. Boring, even.

But if we stop for just a moment, and view the world around us in “once upon a time,” it becomes so much more. It becomes brighter, more colorful, cheerful.

And who wouldn't want that?

Once upon a time. The most famous and memorable stories of all time start with, once upon a time.

I'm sure that all of our stories start with that too.



DR. J AND MR. H - *Gretchen Lund*

THE FOREST

Matthew Dean

There's more to the forest than what's to be seen
Mysteries that hide in the gray and the green
Storm-weathered trunks above roots that go deep
The rain they endure and their secrets they keep
Many are withered and heavy with years
Others stand tall when the overcast clears
Stick-thin or stout, or stumpy or tall
Some bend with the wind and some break and fall
Were they all planted here, or moved from afar?
Are there stories behind every sapling and scar?
What does the twisted gray bark try to hide?
Is it rotten and dead? Is a spark still inside?
Drinking pale sun and empty gray skies
Ancient and ageless, foolish and wise
With grand mossy hair that hangs down to their knees,
It seems that our people are much like our trees



HAIKU 17 - *John Olson*



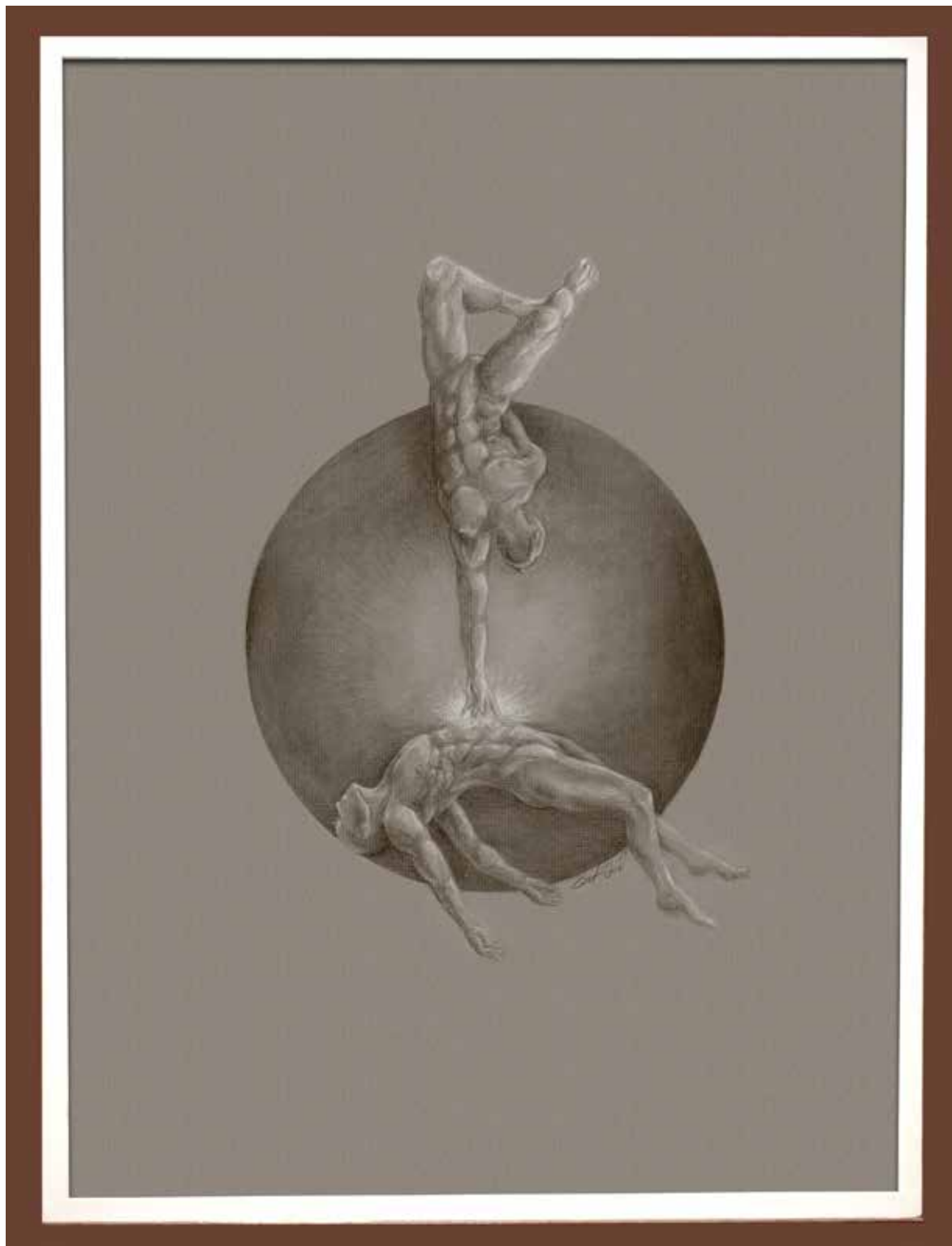
ARTIST - *Raven Moore*

Forces push and pull
Rotating and translating
Constant and changing



ARTIST - *Brian McCartney*

Atoms everywhere
Flowing, communing, holding
All matter is one



ARTIST - *Gretchen Lund*

Weighted down by force
Resting firmly on one's flesh
Hold me down, ground me



FOCUS - *Taylor Rauch*

REFLECTION PROJECT

Melodie Tanksley

Empty nothingness, void of identity
An empty shell stands in the middle of vibrant cultures and rich diversity
It longs for a home

All my life
I've prided myself in the ability to take no sides
I've claimed the ability to stand in third person, to see the world without bias
But now, as I reflect, I see something not worthy of boast, but instead, worthy of pity
Now, as I reflect, as I look deeper within, I see that there is no one there

This is a series of poems, by Melodie Tanksley
As she grows,
she strives for identity,
she strives for voice,
she strives for self

Passing

White girls trying to look like Black girls has become the epitome of beauty
But don't you dare look like a Black girl because that would be ugly
Each morning I carve the European features out of my wide nose, almond eyes with hooded lids, and protruding lip
We are taught that it is okay for others to pick and choose which features of ours they want to wear that day
That there is no difference between appreciation and appropriation
That when they slander us, they're giving us back power
That if it's said enough it will lose meaning
As if they did not give slander its meaning
I contour myself into nothingness
I straighten my hair
I pass
Each morning I look in the mirror and I choose to be white
A white girl trying to look Black
But in order to achieve that, I must first shed my melanin
A contradictory world we live in
Where a White Black girl
Has to be a White girl trying to be Black

Continued

Outside

I love outside

No one can hit me

Outside

It's really hard to hear yelling

Outside

It's really easy to find beauty

Outside

Which is comforting

When you can't even find beauty in the mirror

Inside

If it were up to me,

Everyone would be a pretty pink flower

From a hydrangea bush

Outside

And no one would fight

And everyone would sprout their pretty pink petals

And we'd all be

Outside

Learning How to Smile

Resting faces form in the ways we feel when we are young

As muscles learn where they're supposed to go

They form habits, and they stay where you put them

Like rocks, forming over time until their edges lay bare from erosion

And as you chip away, you see the layers that have formed many years ago

My resting face has never been happy

Sometimes sad, but mostly empty, simply unhappy

But when I'm with you, the muscles in my cheeks try to learn a new language,

And slowly I notice the upturn of the corners of my mouth and my cheeks firm

You are nature

And you are powerful

I see the world in you when I wake up to the sun beaming through the branches of your hair

The mountains on your chest reach the softest pink peaks

I see the world in you when I fall into the sparkling lakes that are your eyes

Or when I see the sparkle in your smile that reminds me of stars

The ways you light up my world

Have nothing to do with the way your body curves,

But the way that your mouth does when I finally get around to the punchline of your favorite joke

Continued

The ways you make me smile
Have nothing to do with the length of your hair,
But the length of the list of the times you've been there when I needed you
We face a world that tells us we need to choose a side
But the only team I want to be on is yours
The side I choose is love
The world is full of hate and has forced this frown upon my face
But with you
With you in all your glory
All your beautiful, n.atural, powerful glory
I am learning how to smile
And that has nothing to do with what's between your legs
And everything to do with what's in your heart

I've been able to live life free of bias only because I've had no bias to cling to
I've had no cultured hands that reached down to caress my heart or shape my mind
I have nothing but Black and White in front of me
Even still, I stand with no ability to choose
Not White enough for picket fences or country clubs
Not Black enough for tightly knitted spiral curls or the right to oppression
Too White to make contributions in protests or embrace slang
Too Black to know what a nuclear family looks like

I've been told I'm Black when it's convenient
I get scholarships for the heritage I don't even know, but never have I not passed and had to feel the shame of
eyes darting away from me as I shuffled down a street trying to look as innocent as I could

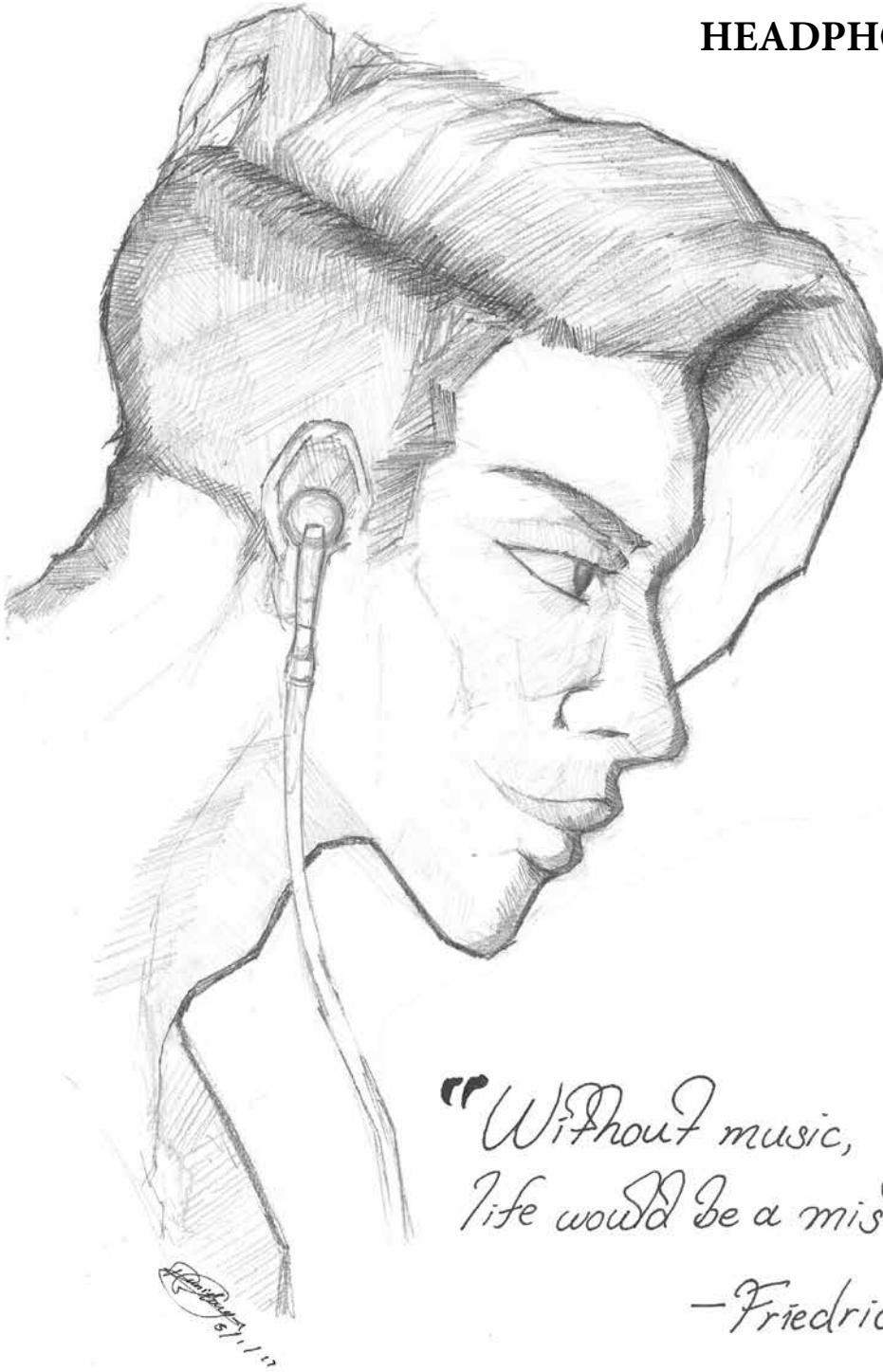
I pretend I'm straight because somehow it's easier than explaining how I love souls and eyes and lips and
laughs, despite what I find between thighs that are fun to bite, or what may or may not lay on the chest that
presses into my back as I fall asleep

I take third person points of view because I have to
No one lets me choose sides
In some way, knowing all about both sides is how I've forced myself into culture

Empty nothingness, void of identity
An empty shell stands in the middle of vibrant cultures and rich diversity
It longs for a home

This is me
I see around me people who know who they are
Who take pride in their culture
I wonder what it would be like to be like them

HEADPHONES - Daniel Chung



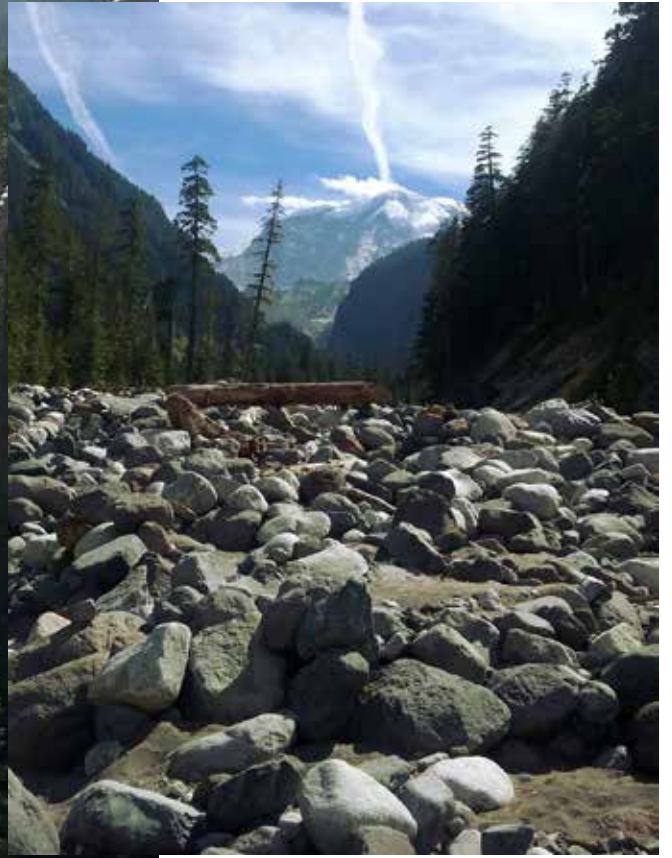
*"Without music,
life would be a mistake"*

-Friedrich Nietzsche

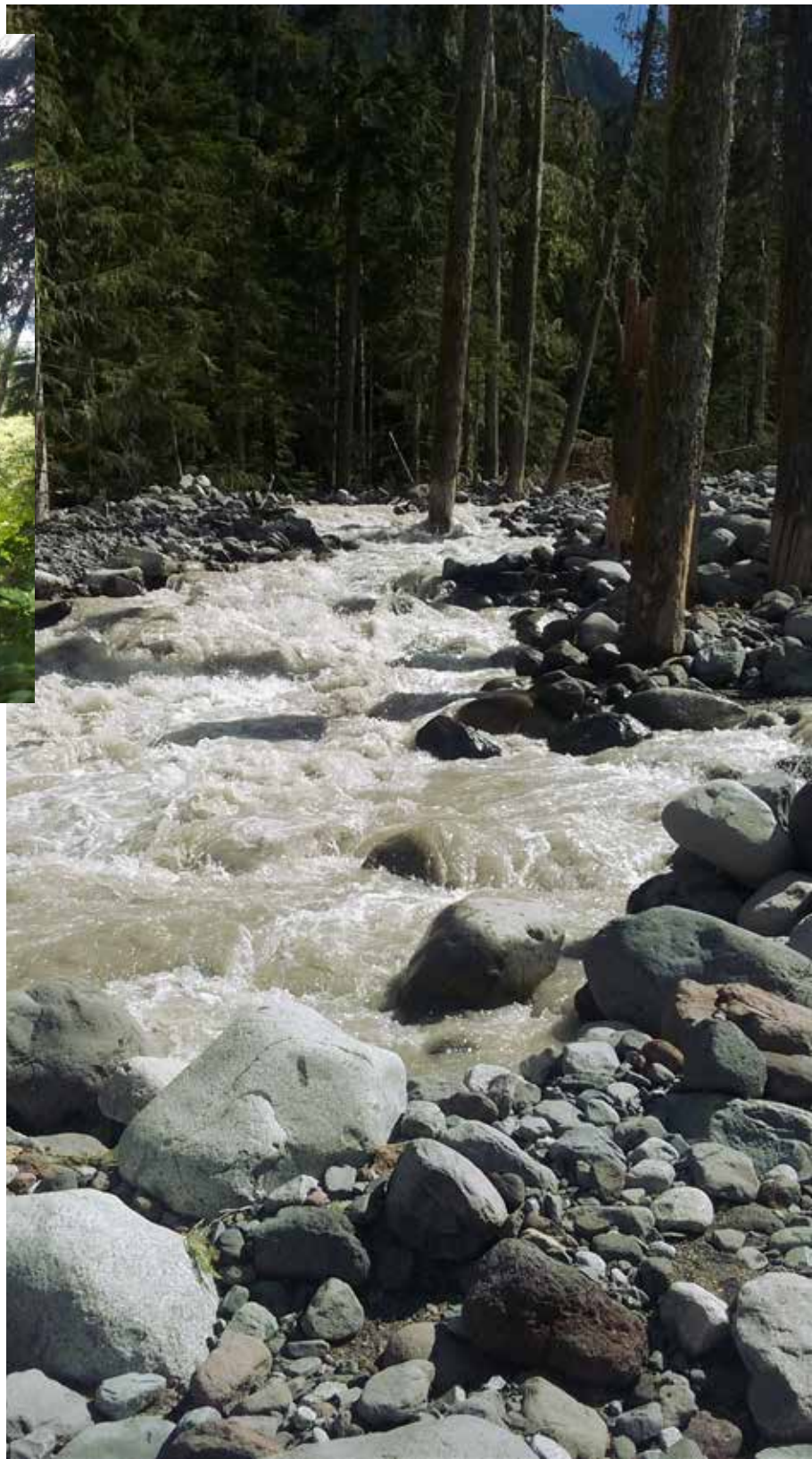
“One good thing about
music, when it hits you,
you feel no pain.”
—Bob Marley



HEADPHONES - Daniel Chung



CARBON RIVER -
Alexander Dunbar





HEART CACTUS - *Alexander Dunbar*

So many words in so many songs

 You know the feeling

 The one that changes a person's life

 Never to be the same

But how do I tell you

 you have inspired me

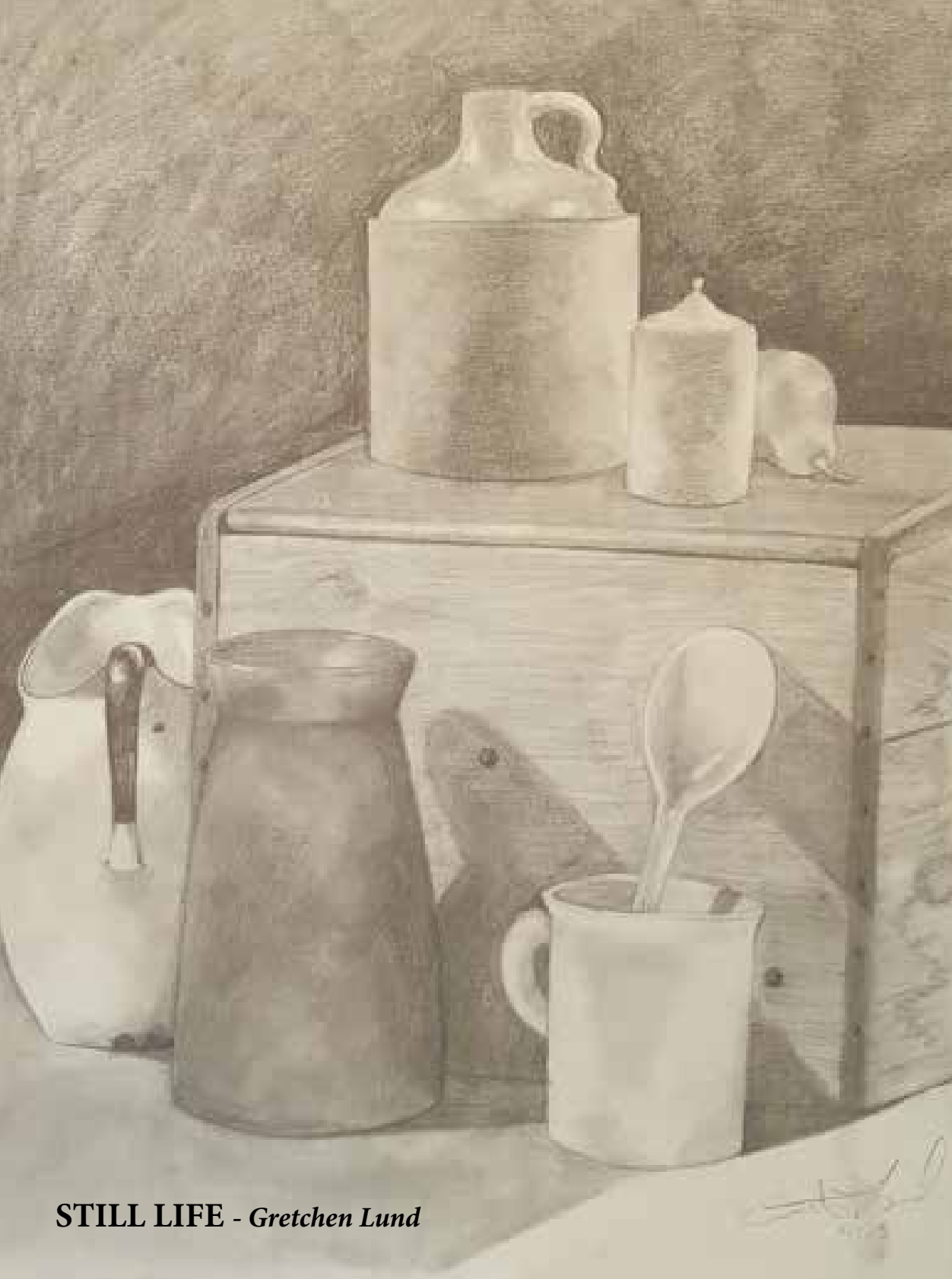
 caused me to reach further, try harder

I have walked the beach

 thinking of you

I have felt the sun and rain and wind

 an eternity of moments without you



STILL LIFE - Gretchen Lund

When I was in high school my favorite subject was Autoshop. It was a two-hour long class over fourth and fifth period. It was taught by my favorite teacher and I was his favorite student. It helped that I was good at what he taught and was eager to learn. I was also the only girl in the class, which sometimes made my life harder in the classroom because so many things were aimed towards the boys, who liked to be gross and rough. I was pretty good at being “one of the guys,” but I certainly had it a little harder than the rest of the boys. I once asked my teacher if it was better to have a class of only boys or if it was better with girls mixed in. And he responded with, “I always like having a few girls in a class. It helps keep the boys in line, and stops them from being so gross.”

I really enjoyed my teacher, but there were problems. My teacher had a bad back and sometimes couldn't teach the class. So when he would stay at home, we would get a substitute teacher. We had a lot of different substitutes. We got one teacher more than others, though, and her name was Ms. Fox. She was a prehistoric creature who attended the same church as me and liked to remind me of it during class. It was hard because she was one of the least liked teachers we ever had, so having her single me out was embarrassing and awkward. But one time always sticks out to me more than others and that was the last time she ever substituted for us.

It was lunch time and the bell was about to ring. We were all waiting by the door getting ready to dart out to try to beat the lunch line. Ms. Fox called out above the clamor of boys getting ready to leave—with me in the back as usual. I didn't like being in front because it was very crowded and people were

pushy, so I usually left the classroom last.

However, the words that she called were not what I was expecting. “Ladies get to leave for lunch first!” she yelled over the boys. She gestured for me to come forward so that I could get out of the door first. I hurried over, feeling bad for the rest of my peers. There were two boys hanging just outside the doorway, and she was trying to get them to come back inside so that I, the only girl, could leave first! I tried making excuses so that they wouldn’t have to come back inside, joking that they were honorary girls, trying to pass off my discomfort with the situation with humor. She must have thought she was being nice or clever or something, but I was just mortified.

As the bell rang, one of my classmates darted out of the door in front of the rest, but Ms. Fox was having none of it! She grabbed his backpack and held him against the door until I could pass. I ran, trying to keep any more people from being so violently handled. But I couldn’t help but apologize as he briskly walked past me in the hall.

When my teacher came back, he had notes from the substitute, saying we were purely awful. So when I got a moment alone, I told him what happened as calmly and as accurately as I could. But I was upset, understandably. I was feeling betrayed by my own gender and how it made me so different from my friends. When my teacher heard what Ms. Fox did to my classmate by holding him against the door, he realized she had broken a very important rule. He was very disappointed in her and angry that he had left us with her. He said we wouldn’t have any problems with her anymore, and thankfully we didn’t. She didn’t come back to substitute for us anymore, and we tried not to talk about it. My classmate ended up

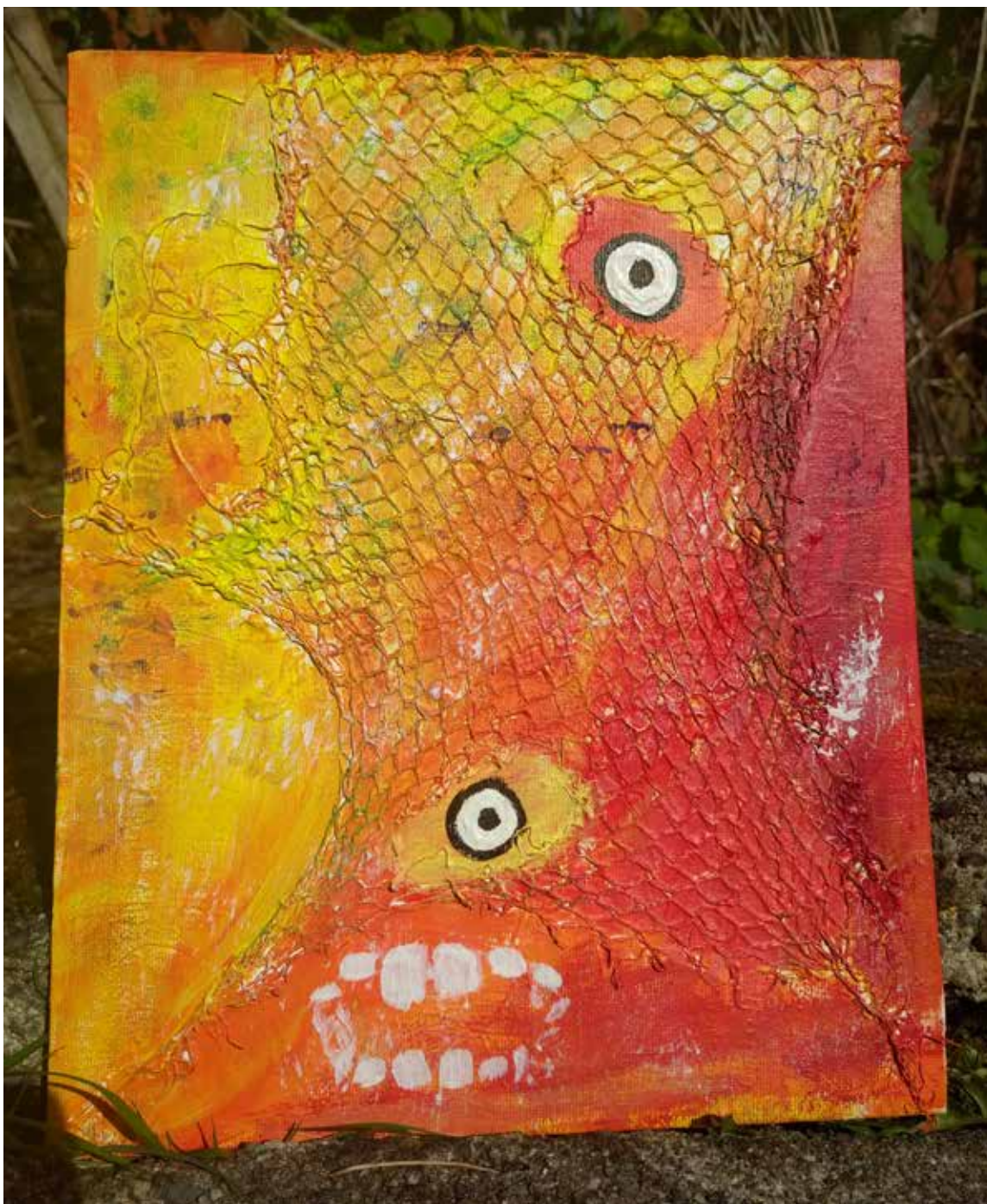
Continued

dropping out of the class, and honestly, no one could blame him after what happened with Ms. Fox.

Not only is it difficult to be the only female in a male-dominated domain, even people of one's own sex, who should be allies in these situations, can make things more difficult.



DAFFODIL - *Joseph Criswell*



COMING HOME - Nessa Broughton-neiswanger

Both were painted using a mix of acrylic, indian ink, and orange netting.



ARTIST - *Nessa Broughton-neiswanger*

I am a world changer
watch as tectonic plates
move at my fucking request

I am a whole person
and I am the world, the
world is me.

My screams make
every animal awake. I
wake up and the flowers
bloom. All my belief
is in 5 year old
daydreamers and love
is reserved for girls finding
their directions. I make
evolution happen. I am
unapologetic
I am the melody in every
song

(that can't be taken from me)
Thunder pounds in my ears AND
I romance with shooting stars.
Cultures strive and die within me
I am an aging building
filled with cardboard boxes
I am tears on a teenager's cheeks
I am the first bite into
fresh fruit

Continued

I am a cup of strawberry milk in
Germany

I am a stolen shopping cart

I am a stable structure

I am an anxiety attack

WHISPERS CAUSE EROSION

I AM A WANTED ACCIDENT- WHO WANTS ME?!

Find me underneath a heart you're
trying desperately to hide.

I weigh you down like an ex lover
kept inside a jar in the dark.

If you cannot see how I ripple
amongst the hearts of toads and
wannabe punk youth,

how my laughter warms cold nights.. I will give you eyes
with working retinas and
a mind full of unconditional
love. I find home outside of
you. I have been invited
in so many homes.

They're warm but they cannot
hold my rain clouds

I was and wasn't meant to exist-
all at once- I am an oxymoron.

I do not owe, I
have no debts. Consider me a
failed abortion, a priceless painting,
a page turner



RUBY BEACH - *Bobbyjohn Stratton*



AWAKENING THE BEAST - Daniel Chung



BATB -
Gretchen Lund

It's Spectacular Dan,
A real super man,
He's tall and he's strong and he's tough.
He said he would "Help"
And "Nourish our Kelp"
And "Stop all the Criminal Stuff"

But he spent all his cash
On a mask and a sash
He pawned off his car for a suit
And he sold his pet mouse
And he mortgaged his house
For a cape and a jet-powered boot

Now Spectacular Dan
He sits in a van
And he waits for a crime-fighting call
And he sleeps in the park
And it's cold and it's dark
And he's not very super at all

In a little town, surrounded by trees and hills, on a warm summer's evening, the light on the corner of 6th and Main came on for the first time.

It was not a particularly beautiful streetlight, not vivid, not intensely bright, not colorful or brilliantly designed. It was there because the Mayor had had little else to propose in one especially dull town council meeting, but felt he must do something of public interest before his citizenry forgot about him completely (unbeknownst to him, they already had, and were rather the happier for it). Nevertheless it was beautiful, in its own functional way, and it stood proud and tall upon its corner and did its duty as well as one could expect.

This light did not shine upon anything in particular, but generally upon the sidewalk that led from the corner up Main Street to the bank, the post office, and the library, and then to the edge of town and the forest (it was a very little town). Every morning it looked on silently as a few sleepy citizens made their way to work, and every night it watched those same men and women (awakened, worked, and now sleepy again) meandering back towards their homes. But in between very few people passed under the light. The only ones who could be expected to walk the same route again and again were two young boys, one short and one tall, who walked together to the library every day. The short one spoke little, while the tall one spoke hardly at all, but they were the best of friends and nothing could discourage them from their daily walk. And when they returned after dark (engrossed by some novel or biography), the light on the corner shone down on them both.

And the light still shone valiantly as both boys fast approached one night, racing each other home, the tall one the faster but the short one the more determined. And when a chance crack in the pavement upended both, the obstacle unseen in the glare of the streetlight, it was clear that although the tall boy had escaped harm, his short friend had clearly fallen badly.

And the light soldiered on in its duty as the tall boy now walked alone, saddened but bringing home a double load of books for his injured friend. The town's doctor, a somewhat spherical fellow that laughed loud and often, cheerfully told the short father and the short mother, as well as the tall friend, that the leg would heal completely soon enough, if left alone.

And the light was dimmer but still at its post when "soon enough" arrived, and it was once again two boys and not one who walked to the library and back every day. But something was different. While they still talked as much as ever (which was not much at all), the short one's talk was of heroes and villains, daring and adventure, and all the other things that had filled the books he had read during his injury. And while they had always spoke of that sort of thing, being boys of that age, the short boy had had time enough lying in bed to think of actually doing these things, rather than talking of them. But the tall boy shook his head, saying nothing but looking up at the trees and the hills and little post office and

the library.

And the light had been serviced and partially rebuilt when the short boy (a boy now graduated from a nearby town's high school) collapsed against the pole one late night, trying to make the hardest decision of his life, as the tall boy walked off angrily towards home. And it was under the light not three days later that the short young man got into his new car and drove off for military school, leaving the little town and the little library and the stalwart light behind, with a tearful short family and a lonely tall young man waving goodbye from a house down the road.

And the light still shone strongly as a tall man joined the ranks of the sleepy workers going to work and back every morning and night. But he was the only one of those workers who returned every night, back through the town and under the streetlight to the library, and now also to the post office. He was still silent and lonely as he walked empty-handed to his destination, but looked a little less so when he returned with a stack of books and, once a week, a nondescript envelope from a camp far away, beyond the trees and the hills.

And the light was flickering and in poor repair the day the tall quiet man passed under it and, in the flickering light, bumped quite hard into a tall quiet woman, purely an accident but one that nonetheless forced them both to apologize profusely to a stranger (the most uncomfortable of social duties). It was a chance encounter, and both parties left the flickering light feeling embarrassed and as though the other must think them horribly awkward.

And the light had been rewired and shone more brightly than ever when the tall man made his first walk as a married man back to the little library. He also stopped at the post office, and retrieved a week-old letter with an address from a dear old friend. The light from upon the pole shone clearly on his face while he read and walked, and shone through the paper where it was stained with his tears.

And the light had no need to shine on the day of the procession, for it was a sunny afternoon when a somber group made its way down Main Street, the grieving town lining the sidewalks. A hero had come home for the last time, his body borne by the men he saved in a far-off place, his eyes closed forever. The tall man leaned against the light pole that night, quiet as ever, staring up at the stars and dark sky, thinking much but saying nothing, heedless of the cold and dark until his tall quiet wife took him gently by the arm and led him home.

The short man and the tall man are both gone from that little town now. One left old, in his sleep, and at home, while the other left young and brutally in a far-off jungle. One was called a hero while the other was called a neighbor, and one left no heir behind while the other was buried by his great-grandchildren. The town is still there, but no one who knew them is left, except perhaps the streetlight. But the streetlight does not judge, and still stands proud and tall upon its corner and does its duty as well as anyone could expect.



PHOTOGRAPHER - *Joey Criswell*

GOODBYE

Ashlyn Taylor

for all that's been loved and lost
he is just another current to overcome
the sky is wide and endless

no time for sorrow
except with drops of rain
for all that's been loved and lost

The Pacific cries
and I lay beside its beating
the sky is wide and endless

a soft message
cool breezes spraying salt
for all that's been loved and lost

these wet emotions
cleanse me of building grief
the sky is wide and endless

in the end, oh self, you stand in a shadow
watching the light pass outside of you
for all that's been loved and lost--but--
the sky is wide and endless



GOLD CREEK TRAIL - *Ashley Brown*

