



Westland Writes ... 2014

Andy Schuck, editor; Cheryl Vatcher-Martin, co-editor

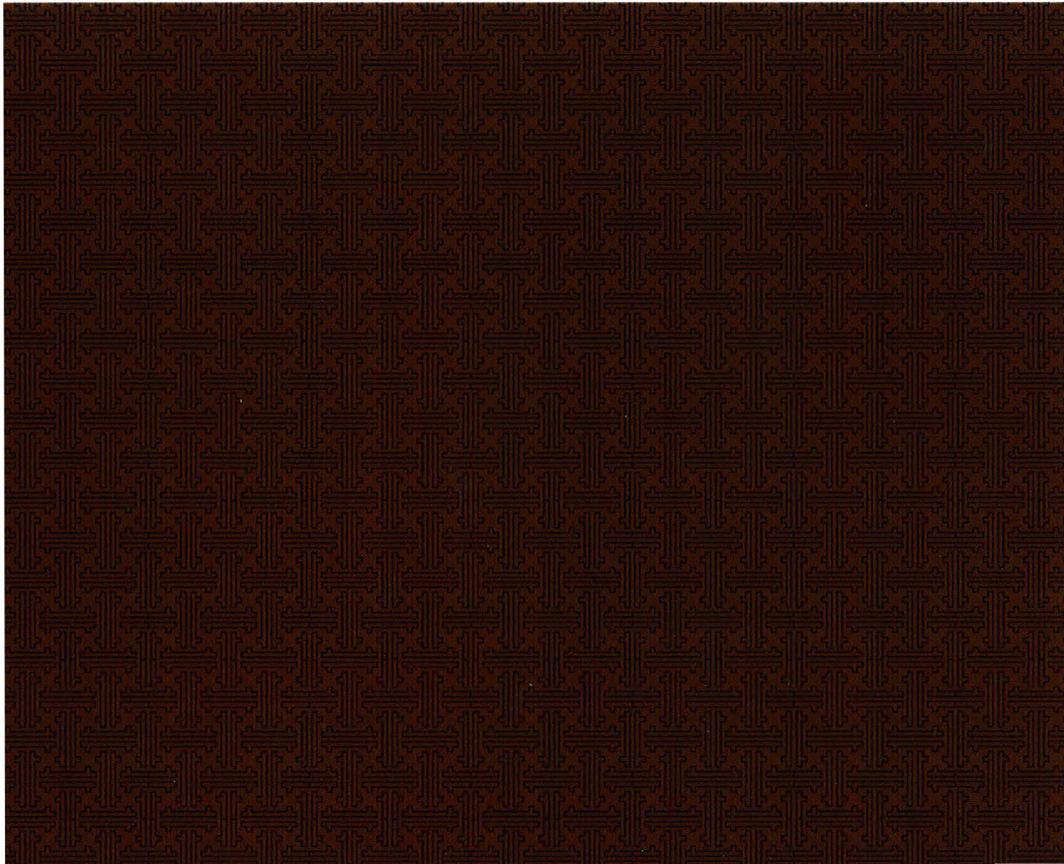


TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
POEMS	6
Michelle Alford	
In the Heart of Me	6
LeeAnne Baumdraher	
Dragon's Due	8
Three Word Vessel	9
Beverly J. Bettega	
Life is Meant to be Lived	10
Phyllis Campbell	
The Wedding Vow	11
Hatred	12
Robert Cohen	
Dreaming	13
Forever After	13
June Cole	
The Reason	14
Sacrifice	15
Tisha Cole	
An Open Window	16
From the Chronicles of the Dragons	18

N'Jay Coleman	
Who's There	21
Kayla Dempster	
A Room of My Own	22
Music or Words	23
Patrick Franks	
Ale On	25
Old Piece	25
Bobby A. Kelly, Jr.	
Prisoner	27
... You Did	28
Rekiya Kelly	
Inadequacy, Wanted by God	30
Women of Honor	32
Angie Krueger	
I Can't Swim	34
Bloodshot Eyes	34
Robert McFarling	
Haiku on a Wyoming Day	35
Father and Son Haiku (Robert and Scott)	36
Catherine M. McKenzie	
Steven	37
Where Flowers Grow	37
Casheena Parker	
Queen of Lust	38

Andy Schuck

Near Red	39
Am	40

Denise Sedman

Under the Influence of Depression: Group Meetings	41
--	-----------

Daniel R. Simmons

Word Art	46
I am	47

Ellaree Simmons

Seasons	48
Untitled	50

Matthew Slaughter

The Quiet Gift	51
Amelia Miss Earhart	53

Kaitlyn Stabile

Façade	54
Our Lady Who Lurks in Graveyards	55

Cheryl Vatcher-Martin

A Red-Winged Blackbird	57
Snowdrifts in Spring	58

Shari Welch

Therapeutic Walking	58
Being	59

Tammy White

Unexpected Sunday	60
--------------------------	-----------

Janice Will	
Empty Nest	61
The Porch Light	62
Katrina Wilson	
Alive Again	66
STORIES	
Na' Jay Coleman	
Gone Ghost	67
Anthony B. Cross	
Fear and Loathing in L. George's	68
Rayna Fritz	
The Spy Games	70
Casheena Parker	
Lust Plays	72
Stephanie Neilan	
#Serina (a tweetiatore)	76
Imelda Zamora	
Reminiscence	78

STORIES FOR CHILDREN

Alicia Oldham

How to Clean Your Room in Five Seconds 80

How to be a Good Sibling 81

NON-FICTION

Deanie McFarling

Family Traditions – The Birthday Shirt 83

Jacqueline D. Ward

Spoken Words: Words of Wisdom 84

POEMS

Michelle Alford

In the Heart of Me

Telepathic signals keep flowing into the wonderland of my
dreams

I keep wondering what it all means

Each time I lay upon my bed, he keeps sending me signals

Planting endearing kisses upon my forehead.

Upon our last telepathic meeting, we embraced one another

With a loving greeting

We reminisced together, caught up on things, talked about the
discovery of the beautiful things, that, we somehow missed in
one another

The atmosphere shifted and the angels swarmed around in the
midst of our halo's glow

Then, he made his intent clear, he wanted to keep me as his
hearts' dearest.

He erected his horn into my spirit

Then he blew his anointing into my very being

He became the conductor of my soul

I became his harmony

We collaborated in music until we became synchronized as an
angelic symphony

He is my inspiration; he is the epitome

Of what love is meant to be.

He is the wind beneath my wings

He is the wind that blows
Colliding with the chimes that clicks in sync with the rhythm of
my soul
He makes my heart sing, releasing divine melodies from every
crevice in me
He wills my life into sweet harmony
He knows I am the love that is, meant to be tied to his eternity.

I am his aurora, the bliss of his early rising sun
I bring light into his existence
He sees my worth, even from the farthest distance.

He is the linger of music
Flowing as the blood in my veins
We are identical loves; we are the perfect merger of flames
We match love and love for us is one in the same.

We dwell in different places but our hearts are present with one
another
The possibilities of us being together is as sweet as a chorus of
angels singing
It is sweet music to our ears
He is my warmth in the midst of a winter's storm
He is the quench that satisfies the thirst
Of my dry screaming pores
I wish to be no longer without him
He has the divine telepathic ability
To see inside of me and explore the deepest parts of me
Even though he is not present with me, he has the key of divine
permission to go where no other has gone
That is in the heart of me, because he knows that my heart is his
to treasure
And to have and behold

LeeAnne Baumdraher

Dragon's Due

His petal-like fingers wilted
Against her hardened scales
She was more diamond than rock
Yet, he failed to see past her fiery tongue

Engulfed in his permafrost flames
Poetry often sparked from her lips
As she attempted to call him to her cloud
Beyond the wildflowers
Each time, he ignored her, turning into the sun

Though she owned scarlet veins
In his pollen-soft eyes
She was cold-blooded and stone

She blew floral-scented smoke rings
Sending them sailing toward his smile
Pistol shy and lost in another's dew
He, again, shunned her beckoning breath

Claw and jaw could destroy him
Without effort, without perspiration
Strength unaccountable and immeasurable
She carried the arms of conquered enemies
Within her bubbling blood

But her love was beast enough
Throat still burning from past bridges
She could not bring herself to scorch him

For all the men she'd plucked like weeds

Kisses evaporated from their stalks
Caressees that snapped their pining stems
Every one uprooted and tossed to the storm

She assumed this was the dragon's due
Bend to fire, only to be drowned in earth
His chlorophyll called to her oxidized skin
Nose tickling at the scent of his muddy veins
Wishing desperately for his wilderness

Forever, she would beg his seasonal glance
Until her frame decayed and fed the dark soil
On which his seed would one day stand tall

Three Word Vessel

I wanted to tear into your muscles silently
Whisper soundlessly into your pale arms

Yet the hail in my eyes had other plans

I moved to storm your mountainside, dear
Suck your moat dry and breed reptiles

Still we coagulated into gentle moments

What monster taught us how to plummet?
What beast tore the sky from beneath us?

There is only so much rage in the rabid

Hardened scales shrank into peach pores
Clogged red rivers ran like wine again

Voices climbed from a constricted throat

And I gripped your beauty with talons
Carrying it away in a three word vessel

Beverly Bettega

Life is Meant to be Lived

How time passes by as we live our lives
From birth to old age as daily we strive.
Life changes rapidly, days, weeks, and years,
Throughout that time there is laughter and tears.

Each challenge we face is meant to be won,
But failures come in, one by one.
Each day is new for overcoming life
We cannot look back and see only strife.

Forward we go throughout childhood and teens,
Into adulthood, whatever age that means.
Working, playing, hobbies, and all
Still we march on at life's daily call.

Suddenly we find we are at winter's door
Youth has gone and seen no more.
Where did the fleeting years leave me?
What is next in my life to be?

Step by step I must be brave
As memories can be saved.
One by one I will remember

Now that I have reached December.

Each new day may bring surprise.
Even through my mature eyes
Optimistic to the end
This older age is my friend.

So even though I'm t the door
Of leaving earth and here no more,
My time and days, I still confess
Are a time of thankfulness.

Phyllis Campbell

The Wedding Vow

Tis thee I love
dare I express the ecstasy of my admiration.

Tis thee I lace with my heart I shall have thee only; to love as my
husband because of thee the land of dreams become a
gathering-place each day a new beginning.

Where ever you go I shall follow.
Thy resting place shall I call our home. I will shield thee from the
night and walk with thee in the day.

I shall love thee, keeping only unto you; I shall cherish, honor,
and believe in thee forsaking all others for thee.

I shall comfort thee in sickness and health, joy and sorrow, and
for richer or poorer till my life is no more.

Here am I, receive me as your wife, as I receive you as my husband. From this time on we shall be as one.

Hatred

Consider all hatred divides and that this topic is important and proper for anyone to speak of.

Hatred never grew a rose nor caused a smile.
Hatred takes away from our natural kindness.

Hatred lacks honor and pride, giving way to the other harmful things like uncertainty and fear. It consumes all it touches. Our values are shaken to their foundation with no clear road of return or stable assurance of a new day.

We are in our own state of intellectual disgrace. Let the healing state teach the free man to know his own character.

Let him find his happiness in another kind of consciousness: the new knowledge that goodness does exist, evil is helpless where it cannot breed.

Hate makes waste but God makes great!

Robert Cohen

Forever After

Choose me, love me,
I want the sun to blanket us each morning,
And together enlarge the sands of time,
To keep them from destroying our plan of life.
Never will the pale rider of despair enrich itself
At our cost,
As we reap the miracles of life it will always be summer.
Our fiery ways will burn through others'
Jealousies,
And the bonds of magnetism will never weaken,
We'll ride through eternity on a horse and buggy,
Stopping only to sample the aromas of paradise,
And wade through the endless mist,
Like children in a field of flowers.

Dreaming

I think of you now and again,
I'm so sorry it had to end,

My soul is crumpled and destroyed,
Sold off like a toy.
I test my mind to see if you've faded,
But my psyche is still invaded,
By your presence that will never be real,
Life is nothing but things with to deal.

June Cole

The Reason

Excellent

Adoring

Savior

Tree

Exalted

Righteous

Would that I shall never forget where I was the day we met
I saw myself in the mirror and the guilt that surrounded me
Looked me in the face and I hid ... or tried to

You were there you were always there waiting not to condemn
me
But to forgive me with your Amazing Grace
You covered me with you precious blood and oh the love I
found there at the Tree

Sacrifice

Thou art precious oh Lord Thou were brave as you hung on the tree

Bleeding and dying for me Stripped of your humanity

Slain for the least of these suffering because of our sin

Oh what an amazing God it'd like I was there with every stroke of the

Hammer my heart breaks with every drop of blood with the weight of it

I am crushed

Then one Sunday morning a blaze of light and you are alive again

And I have new hope soon I really will see you face to face

So I rejoice I am glad to take part in rescuing sinners

For I was rescued by you

Tisha Cole

An Open Window

On the other side of the open window as I sit to think and make a list

Of all the busyness of my daily goings-on, I heard not one

Not two, but many sounds that pricked my ears to hear

I've got to write this down: remember to make a doctor's appointment

Geese close by, honking incessantly, I see them always battling for territory

So loud! Wait. There's a lone little bird singing—three trills in a row at a time. So pretty.

I need to go to the post office and mail that bill; it's almost late already

Is that a ship's horn? It's a clear day today. Can a ship's horn be heard from a faraway harbor?

What a breathtaking sound...where is it going, I wonder.

Ahhh... just love my coffee. Oops, reminds me I need to buy more. Do I need creamer, too?

Seagulls! They're one of my favorite sounds. What do they screech at each other? Are they always that excited? Reminds me of our beloved vacation spot by the lake. How I love the lake.

There's the refrigerator fan again...*that* sound I don't like. A car horn faraway.

A single monotone toll of my deck chime—boooong. What a lovely tone by the small wind

My list...what else do I need to do, to get? (tap tap tap goes my pencil on the pad)

A jet is flying over. I hear them day and night. How far is it going? Across the nation? Across the ocean? I always wonder.

I always wondered, as a little girl, where semi-trailer trucks were heading, as I heard their low rumbling going over the overpass when we'd stay at my aunt's. It was always the middle of the night by the clear moonlight. I felt I was the only one in the world awake to hear them downshift for the climb. At times I wished I could go.

What time is it? Oh, good, it's only been a half hour. What do we need for supper tonight? I know I need milk and bread. Meat, too.

My chimes play two tones this time, just soft enough to hear.

Now I can hear a small engine plane; it's low drone sound. There's a siren, not too close. The police? Or an ambulance? I hope they're alright.

Another rapid trill of a sweet songbird, a different one than before, I think.

A distant car's engine as it takes off. Ahhh...there's a semi-trailer truck shifting, can't mistake that Jake brake. I heard it so much at my aunt's.

A man's voice calling out indistinctly; shortly a little child responds

I realize that I was beginning to doze off, my pencil and pad slipped off my lap

But, I stayed still, because I heard something else that caught my attention

The still, small words that said, "What a wonderful world it is through your open window."

Oh, no! Gotta run!

From the Chronicles of the Dragons (a narrative poem)

The worn yellowed scroll was brought to the king for this uncommon rite

Its frayed edge was bound by seven sigils, each of magical powers

Unbroken, as yet, the blood-red wax were scripts of seven ancients

Whose royal names and regal semblances hung on centuries-old tapestries

Gathering dust and much fading, rarely thought in memories

The king received the scroll; anguish confronts this once-valiant Crown

Bearing knowledge that this fateful day cannot be undone

For no exalted throne or hierarchy, no majestic diadem trimmed with diamonds and gold

No rubies, nor emeralds, nor glittering gems amassed up to the heavens

None amount of golden bars, no measures of silver platters could assuage the impending doom

Thus a weighty hush filled the chambers; the reading of the clandestine words had come

The certain few, the trusted few, were anticipating their sovereign lord

The announcement, the grave pronouncement that would alter
life from now on

"Hear ye your King!" he bellowed; flagging knees beneath
jeweled robes

"Now begins the breaking of the seven seals long ago foretold."

"The first sigil I break!"

A low ominous rumble echoed in the cavernous halls

"What will the other seals unveil?" whispered panic on faltering
lips

Witnesses suffered in dread and fear as the powers that be
were released

One by one the portent seals were severed, as violence and mist
intermixed

So it awakes...

It sensed a guttural rumble escape its massive chest

*His home, an abyss in a faraway mountain range, loosed rocks
and boulders*

As the pit became unearthed;

He knew he was free

"The second sigil I break," the king spoke, shaken and faint

The seal revealed an angry cloud of gray smoke rising to the
vaulted ceiling

"Seal three!" The onslaught of thunderous lightening claps
shook them to the core

Hoping beyond hope that it was the natural elements and not
the magical ones

Though spying not a cloud in the sky

*Its nostrils released a screen of smoke as when oil is poured on
fire of green wood*

*Repeatedly, his mouth expanded and clamped shut; undoing
the ages of subjection*

*Terrible claps of thunder emitted from innumerable rows of
teeth*

He drew in air and inflated his chest; he knew he was free

“Now the fourth sigil I break.” A shuddering earth tremor
rocked the castle walls

“What can stop this earthquake from killing us all now?”

The king stilled his heart as best he could, “I now break sigil
five.”

The clang of colossal chains emerged as though hundreds of
prisoners fled their cells

Wildly, His Majesty waved his arm to stay the guards tracking
after phantoms

*The creature, now fully awake, stretched up in its new found
freedom*

*With stomping limbs, it caused violent tremors; the mountains
shook again*

And jolting his massive frame of dark, strong iron scales

*The clamor of thousands of links rattled at will; he knew he was
free*

Finally, the last of the seals, and the king prolonged his hand
above the wax omen

He slumped onto his futile throne; “What can it do for me now?”

To undo this curse come down to me from time and times ago

Is there a mighty warrior in all the kingdoms able to save us at
once?

Surely someone must know.”

“So now I break the last of the seals!” the king groaned from his
soul

The subjects, the guards, his advisors held him in their sights in
acquiescence

The time was fully come for the court to bow to another
For the writing on the wall, an unknown language, the final
sigil of old

An acrid stench of burning ash, and seal six filled the hall

Na'Jay Coleman

Who's there

knock knock

A gruesome knock on the door

Awaken the girl who pretended to so hard core

knock knock

So she just lay in her bed

And pulled her covers over her head

Knock knock

She thought it was thunder

But that's unlikely because it was summer

knock knock

She took one step after another toward the door

she cracked her knuckles which were still sore

knock knock

She asked who's there

They replied with It's Your biggest fear

So she opened the door she simply didn't care

CREEEEEK

It was a cat that just purred

eww she said and stepped on its fur

She looked up and noticed behind the cat it was her

Kayla Dempster

A Room of My Own

I have a secret room
where I enjoy to go.
I sit and think and write all day,
from my pen ideas flow.

An endless ream of paper,
pens that never run dry,
my room is small but perfect,
where endless time goes by.

This room is all my own,
known to no one but me.
You will never find it.
It doesn't exist you see!

My room has no location;
it's very hard to find.
But I still spend time within my room,
in the depths of my own mind

But I must not tell a single soul;
they must not find my secret out.
If they do I can only wait to feel
their belt and hear them shout.

I've never had the chances,
or the opportunities.
I cook and clean and mend and sew.
I only live to please.

They tell me that I cannot write;
they deprive me of my joy.
But they cannot stop me,
from doing what I enjoy.

In a world where males dominate,
and women take a backseat,
you can only try you best
Because success is hard meet.

Oh, how I wish I had,
a small room of my own.
Where I was free to express my thoughts
a freedom I've never known.

Music or Words

Music
Melodic understanding
Seeing in chords

Words
Writing optimistically

Ravishing diary sheets

two languages

In parallel

Notes on a staff

Letters on a page

Come together to create

A symphony

of a thousand sounds

or a novel

of a thousand words

the universal language

a language with

many different varieties

Small parts coming together

To create the bigger picture

You don't see it til it's complete

Major and minor keys

Fiction and nonfiction

Fortissimo, crescendo, pianissimo

Foreshadowing, symbolism, personification

how is

do re mi

different from

once upon a time?

Patrick Franks

Ale On

Had you ever had a hard time
And there was no one there?

Ever have a real hard time
And you could not find
Anyone
Who would give a care?

Too

Ever saw something
So fun
With no one
Not one
With which to share?

Ever knew that one
Someone
Who
Now only used to be there?

Well I know
I know well

Old Piece

Went to a flea market
Then was afraid to go inside
But I found an old hippie

Seated at a card table
Selling some things he had
Near a door
Just outside
We bartered for a bit
Over a rather large
Antique peace sign
That I finally purchased
I asked him if it still worked
He said that at that time
Though it's functions
Were quite simple
It held high promise
And, no
It doesn't work now
But to be fair
It never really did

Bobby A. Kelly, Jr.

Prisoner

Freedom I do not have,
liberty I cannot attain.

Shackled and confined,
imprisonment I have gained.

Release my eyes cannot see,
escape my eyes cannot grasp.

Chained and guarded,
how I reminisce as the days pass.

But as I reminisce,
the days of freedom are not sweet.

Lost and alone,
is the nature of the freedom I speak.

Freedom is a tragic state,
my life is not inter-twined.

With the one who opened my heart,
this she did for the very first time.

O how I long for her,
even when she's right there.

Taken captive by her beauty,
against her smile nothing can compare.

It seems so strange,
this world we live.

How can god take two people,
and unite them as kids?

Can I be loosed,
from that which I hold as well?

Our spirits are now one,
and we have access beyond the veil.

this prison I will never leave,
nor would I want transfer.

if the question ever came to mind,
no would always be the answer.

for her my life would I give,
this much could not be more true.

freedom in this sense is misery,
so for my prison I choose you.

...You Did,
To my son Jordan, love Dad

It seems like yesterday,
That I held you for the first time.
A young dad who didn't have a clue,
But I was yours and you were mine.
That first night you cried and cried,

When the nurse laid you in my arms.
"It's o.k. son", "it will be alright",
"I'll keep you safe from harm".
Your mother was beautifully fast asleep,
Exhausted from labor and delivery.
It didn't take long for me to see,
That tonight would be sleepless for me.
I wanted to call the nurse,
In hopes she would come back in.
I thought you would never stop crying,
But soon...you did.

Whenever I looked at you,
I was always so amazed.
"Your daddy just spit you out",
That's what everyone would say.
It was hard caring for a baby,
I really didn't know what I was in for.
You needed so much attention,
Whatever I gave- you always needed more.
I can remember feeding you,
Your bottle "propped" against my chest.
It seemed like you ate so much,
Like your appetite was endless.
I also remember thinking to myself,
When will he hold it by himself?
I had that thought again and again,
Until one day...you did.

Everywhere we would go,
You were always there.
We were the "Three Musketeers",
Mom, you, and I made three.
Although we hated you being at daycare,

We couldn't afford to stay.
So we "lugged" you from place to place,
To make up for the time away.

"Man you are getting big,
And you're awfully heavy too".
"I'm using a lot of extra effort,
Each time I carry you".
Time for you to start walking,
Just like all the other kids.
When I thought you couldn't do it,
Guess what? Eventually...you did.

You learned many other things,
Like riding your bike, and to multiply.
At every stage there was something new,
Something more exciting to try.
As I look back,
I can remember wanting time to go real fast,
But now with age and a little bit of wisdom,
I just want those moments to last.
Now that you're much older,
And you're becoming a man.
I no longer just "hope for you to",
But I trust God that you can.
If you ever should wonder,
If you made me happy as a kid.
I have so to say with absolute certainty,
That positively...you did!

Rekiya Kelly

Inadequacy, Wanted by God

My insecurities bleed through my conversations as I attempt to portray myself, as having it all together.

How is it that I walk the roads of life always feeling inadequate and fearing that someone will discover my deep dark secret, 'that I am inadequate'. I am convinced that this is my reality. I am weighed down by the enormous burden of perfection, and I entertain thoughts that are not of God.

Inadequacy, insufficiency, lack, meagerness-you are inadequate

Keeps ringing in my ear.

Inadequacy is written on the pages of my life; suppressing my greatness and submerging my potential. I am heavy with thoughts of inadequacy.

It is easier to pursue perfection by works, rather than accept the grace of God. What could possibly motivate me to continue this endless cycle of perfection.

The continual myth that I don't measure up;

I am driven to the ends of myself to prove that I am sufficient. Sufficient in my own self, sufficient in my relationships, on my job, in ministry, sufficient to my God.

Lord, change my erroneous thinking;

Erase the lies that have flawed my life;

Break the chains of my past; Lord, release me of myself that I may soar and be free.

For it is God, working in me, to will and to do for his good pleasure.

Greater is he that is in the Lord, than the one, who pursues his own way.

Greater am I, because I am in the Lord, than me seeking my own way;
Greater are you, because you are in the Lord, than you seeking your own way.

Inadequate no more, wanted by God; always have been and always will be. Inadequate no more, for my change has come, and I believe it, and I shall embrace it.

Women of Honor

Sound the trumpet for this is a grand occasion, can't you see them from afar clothed in purple linen, seasoned with grace; these are the women we are told about. Not only have they read about how to be Virtuous women, but they are Virtuous women...

Before your very eyes you behold a masterpiece. "Many masters of old" have tried to capture your beauty and confine it to a space, but this beauty cannot be displayed on a canvas or with a brush.

Yet, the Greatest Master has created this beauty with elements unseen that cannot be found in pigments of paint and hue. For her hips are wide designed to carry destiny.

She does not abort the plans of God, they become her reality. She makes her husband's name great; and the love that is between them is as strong as death.

She is not a shame to proclaim her love for her husband; She writes of this love that the story can be told, so that a moment is not lost nor forgotten.

She loves him for richer or poorer, and their love goes beyond words that can be spoken.

She acknowledges her children as a reward.

She works diligently with her hands, whatever she touches- it is blessed because she has submitted her plans unto the Lord and she waits for his reply.

She is a teacher of what is right and noble. She gives good counsel; for she speaks with authority and lives by the word of God, it is woven into the threads of her life. So even on her worse days, for they shall surely come, and things appear uncertain; she rejoices for as she knows God gives "a garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness", and she has been around to see that the Lord is faithful to his word, and she says yes and Amen to all of his promises.

For where are these Women of Honor, and what is the mystery of their lives? She resides in your community, she stands behind you in the grocery store, she works in the cubical besides yours, and perhaps there is one sitting beside you today.

Women of Honor are not in hiding- these women are out working the vineyard, they watch over the affairs of their households. There is no mystery to these women that have been designed for greatness; they are extraordinary, and have been set apart.

It matters not whether you came from her womb, she gives freely to all, it is a piece of her in all of us.

She speaks words of life and loves beyond your pain; she is a pillar of strength and a fortified city.

She gives birth to generations, and carries on the legacy of honor. She does not waiver in faith, but stands firm and waits upon the Lord.

For even some of her children have gone astray, but because she is precious in God's sight and honored, and because he loves her and says to her: "fear not, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and gather you from the west." She commands the north to give up! And to the South keep not back, bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth.

Come now, she call them by name, and with her outstretched arms she embraces a village; and restores them back to health.

Angie Krueger

I can't swim

I'm drowning
But I'm not dead yet.
When I first stepped in
I didn't think I'd get this wet.
I'm only to my ankles,
Meanwhile you're knee deep.
The water's too cold, and you
Just want to dive in.
I'd join you
But I can't swim-

I'd rather run.

Bloodshot Eyes

The first time I thought it,
I thought it was dumb.
If you're going to eat,

Eat.
So that's what I did.
I felt full
I felt fat
I felt guilty
I felt my finger
Poke my tonsils
I felt a tear
Rush down my cheek.
I felt sick
It was sick.
I felt the cold porcelain
Against my knees.
I felt myself gag
And then a splash.
I felt better but
My bloodshot eyes
Made it look like I cried.
I could have.

Robert McFarling

Haiku on a Wyoming Day

Oak leaves spread outward
Opening their soft green hands
To catch a warm sun

Winds rush the tree tops
Bending the oak boughs earthward
Clutching the green leaves

As I meet people
The warm sun or the rushing wind:
Which will I become?

Father and Son Haiku (Scott and Robert McFarling)

The poor have no jobs
When they move into the slums
People are starving

Our ship Pueblo
We wonder, was it spying?
Korea says so

We might have a war
Another Korean War.
I surely hope not.

People get killed.
Vietnam is a bad place.
How long is the war?

Water in a small bowl.
We got some fish Saturday.
Then we got a snail.

Catherine M. McKenzie

Steven

My son, my son- comes home today
What a glorious sunrise this morn
My son, my son – brings a song to my heart
Just like the day he was born.

Where Flowers Grow

I love the flowers and the trees
I loves the comfort of a breeze
I love the whisper of the night
And ... I love life, when things are right

When things go wrong and I'm in pain
I pray to God "Please let it rain"
To clear the air and feed the ground
Where flowers grow
Where my heart reigns

Casheena Parker

Queen Of Lust

Promises masked with hidden lies

The pain that follows is planned by one and unexpected by another

Deception, a game he knows and plays well

To the naïve contender; only confusion and darkness dwells

Plans to take over and control

But to whose demise does it begin

With all the lies told

The truth becomes a distant possibility

Purposed love blossomed by only lies

Leads to heartbreak and torn dreams

Tattered and broken by little demons

Born with the goal to destroy

And take over like rotten and spoiled thieves

Repurposed and remade into something evil

She blossoms

Taking all those who will follow her straight into hell

The myth that tells others that lust is just a common thing

Has never met this good girl turned not just bad but evil

Moving and seducing all whose eyes wonder her way

Yet especially those who turned her world upside down ,man
or men to be atomically correct

Blissful passion

Turns to nightmarish hell fires

Love only presented by the pleasures she gives them followed
by the misery she provides

She teaches them what he taught her

Love built on lies and deception of all kinds

Builds an army of unknowing

Whose hearts can easily be broken

Frozen in a world of fear and pain

That was created by fear and pain

Only time and mercy can free them all

Including the queen of it all

Who's merely a torn, battered and bruised woman who
couldn't determine between the lies she continuously heard
and the truth her heart believes in.

Andy Schuck

Near red

The threads borrowed

From Barkley unscheduled

Overdone colored in

With the emptiness you aimed

In front of me soaked

In a near red confection

I took from some barely seen

Made for TV movie buried

In pillows stuffed

Against disappointment

I'd admit her dream
With a slight backslap
And spread its fingers
Over a bright
Spitting beach flame
The cool cement reminded
You of the book in her hands
Discovered to be full
Of bliss-related
D-E-F-E-A-T
She sleeps on all day
Without trying to dissolve
Or ever talk again

Am

Fat soak all
Occasionally spray are
Arms pavement easy
Nearer senioritas reach
Lack roaring am
Last glance untangled
Cave than factless
Faceful am happy
Am peace gladness
Porcelain am lapses

Denise Sedman

Under The Influence Of Depression: Group Meetings

We signed a confidentiality agreement,
so, if you think you know someone
you don't.

Regulating
Medicating
Suffocating

You said, "I'm depressed."
How depressed are you?
"I'm so depressed
I can't go one minute
without saying I'm depressed."

Climb out of that foxhole.
Attend one more meeting.
We're all depressed.

Congregating
Contemplating
Vegetating

We have problems,
real problems, not fake problems.
Although you don't know who
we're talking about, do you?

We can't get out.
We can't get out.
Get out of the hole.

Get out of the hole.

Crying
Sobbing
Weeping
Heaving
Believing

Three pills a day,
just three will make
the blues go away.

Nothing but love
from a sister
mother, brother
who helps us
who helps us
when we're down
Who helps us?

A sister
A brother
A mother
A father

Flat broke
smacks you
in the face,
but you were once:

Executive
Big Shot
Manager
Supervisor

Head of the rodeo

“Once was
is no longer.”

Your story, it’s
not different than mine.
How many times did you cry?
How many times did you lie in bed?

What did you say?
Your mother wants you back
the way you used to be.
The now-be is not used-to-be,
turn back, turn back, turn back.
How many times did you lie?

You said it was your second date,
you were lucky.
Not five minutes later
you told her you were depressed.

Out-of-sorts
Off-kilter
One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest
Crazy
Who said that?
Dim-witted,
dumb ass.

You wanted to slit your wrist.
You didn’t,
but they let you,
they let you into this group anyway.

We didn't see the knife.
We didn't see the vein.
We didn't see your face.
We didn't see your hand tremble.

We have to believe you.
We must believe you.
We will believe you.

Click your heels,
Kansas is home.
Make a wish
and it will come true.

You wish you weren't depressed.
You'd go shopping, no,
bad idea. Last time you
spent \$4,000 for two
used Rolexes. Bad idea.
The pawn shop makes you broke.

Frustrating
Aggravating
Irritating

Bang your head against the wall.
Say you'll meet me at five, but don't show up.

We used to be reliable.
We used to care.
We wouldn't weep, just to weep,
We'd have a reason. A reason to cry, dammit!

What happened to you
when you were in the hospital?

E.
C.
T.

Paddles.
Paddle down the river,
paddle your ass back to
where you weren't before.
We don't recognize you.

Social
Security
Disability

Mental illness pays a dime,
but you must put in the time,
you must put in the time.

We can't get out of bed.
We can't get out of bed,
while under the influence
while under the influence,
of depression,
of depression,
we can't get out of bed.

Daniel R. Simmons

Word Art

Poetry for me is like soothing medicine that heals the heart.
Its creation is putting colorful words together, for a masterful
painting

You put a splash of passion there, a little pain there, joy and
genius all wrapped together

To form not words that rhyme but a masterpiece of art that
displays the innermost passions of you that runs deeper than
your very soul.

Yes, poetry is such a beautiful art that starts out as this
wonderful orchestra of song in your head that you just can't get
out, so you write it down.

As your words become notes of sweet melodies that come alive
and dance and sing across the page.

Yes, poetry is our words coming to life, which shines in our
world filled with hunger, hatred, war and strife.

Yet poetry sticks out like a knife and lets us forget for just one
moment about our pain as it sends us worlds away.

Just for one moment we forget about hate, about poverty and
distress as the words of poetry puts these things to rest.

For one moment the world comes together as one, as we
appreciate the common beauty of this art.

We cry together, laugh together, feel joy together and
excitement- as we journey on the mystical ride the poet sends
us on.

Poetry is a universal language that is heard from the heart.
It connects to every bit of passion in your soul and ignite the
senses of your imaginations and love that you never knew you
had.

Poetry is my heartbeat that with each pump of my heart beats
out the passion of my words.

Each sweat that drops from me, waters the beautiful garden of flowers of my words that will blossom long after I'm gone. Poetry keeps my heart excited and alive, but without it, I'll wither up and die inside like an untended garden. If I don't get it out I become frustrated as my heart, soul and imagination become so full that it hurts and erupts. So I bleed out the blood of my words-letting every bit of passion, tears, joy, pain and triumph that rest in me trickle down the page as my very heart bleeds out. Poetry isn't Microsoft but I like to call it Word Art. With the paintbrush of my pen
I paint
Through the laughter
Through The tears
Highs
and lows
with the colors of my soul's cries

I am

You can't see me,
But can feel me
I'm that quickened you felt in your heart
The moment that gave you, your start
I'm endless possibilities
I'm the reason you dream
With me you can achieve anything
I push you through pain
I push you through tears
I laugh at fear
I've been with you for years
I send you to bed at 2 in the morning and wake you up at five
I push you past the sky

With me your drive never dies
I refuse to let you quit
I'm that voice that screams "one more!" in the gym where you
lift
I create opportunities
I guide you through adversity
I'm the life you've always wanted
The ultimate freedom of mind
I am easy summer days on the beach
I'm everything you've ever wanted right within reach
I am passion, I am determination,
I am simply your MOTIVATION

Ellaree Simmons

Seasons

We all have seasons yes we do
Seasons that we all must go thru
A season of change, a season of pain
A season of sunshine, a season of rain
A season when we feel like we're out in the snow
When will it end? We don't know
A season of sowing and a season of reaping
A season of giving and a season of receiving

Wouldn't it be great if we only have the good ones?
The ones where we don't have to cry and ask the Lord why?

Why must we go thru so much pain and
Can you please take away all of this rain?

But He replies,

If I only give you the good ones

How will I see if you'll really trust me when I say this and that?

How will you know that I will have your back?

I have to see how you'll hold up in the midst of the storm

Will you be afraid or let me lead you on?

In these seasons, I will make you and shape you into what I
want you to be

You just have to put your trust in me

I'll never leave you nor forsake you

I am always here

So be still and don't you fear

And to bring this to an end

No matter what season you're in

Just think my friend

God is allowing me to go thru this for a reason

And I'll just praise God for my new season!

Untitled

I am music and music is me
It is what God has made me to be
I can sing all day and dance all night long
I can write and sing to you my song
It comes out like a sweet melody
Make you wanna clap your hands and stomp your feet
All you gotta do is give me a beat
And in no time I'll give you a lyrical, spiritual, I'm the real deal yo
I'm the one that's gonna make you go
Whoa! Who is this chick?
She's got banging beats and she can rap and move her feet
Say ain't she a church girl?
That's right I am but I'm taking my gifts and talents to the world
Let them know that I'm the one that's gonna sing and dance for Christ
Because he's the head of my life
Let them know that he's called me to be
The one who's gonna spread his message you see
So I'm gonna tell you right now
I ain't singing about nobody else
I'm singing about the one who gives me life and breath
He is my help, I will not fret
God is always with me he never failed me yet
And he never will
Because he's not like man who will fail you every time
He's not a man that he should lie

He will supply
All my needs and yours too
So I'm here to tell you
Big El is the one who's here
To help you see
How God can be there for you like he's been there for me

Matthew Slaughter

The Quiet Gift

Laying my helmet aside
It tumbles away
I am too weary to care
We are just outside of Napoli
Among the dozens of villages fought and died for...

We move by morning and here was a chance to finally sleep
I am ready
The hooves of a donkey click along
Barely heard over the trucks in the distance
A bent old woman hurries past
I lean back against a stone wall
The silent guns speak with the chirp of one lone sparrow
At such times you're thankful
Just as I start to drift off
A girl traces the steps of the old woman

Instead of scurrying past she smiles watching me
Then moves inside her nearby doorway
Minutes pass as her door creaks slowly open
Saying nothing she sits down next to me
Looking serious as if she is still deciding
Her eyes reflect how tired I feel...

Holding up a linen to me
Wrapped inside is heaven an apple
Again the smile as she offers
I reach for it
Taking a bite I hand it back to her
Not a word as we share what I suspect is her dinner
Till the core is nothing but seeds contained
Afterwards glad for the company we sit
As night sky approaches windows above show with candlelight
When full dark calls she rises
Watching as she disappears
I stare at her doorway
Hoping she will return I wait knowing her memory is all I am
given
While her window beckons with dim light
Secure in this moment not chancing rejection
As sleep wraps me safely within her beauty
And the taste of apple

Amelia Miss Earhart

First female Atlantic
A wing on in flight
Poetically spoken
Post Lindbergh by five
Dance skyward on silver
To east and towards home
The Pacific host passive
The Electra alone
Around the world glory
By destiny bound
To fanfare and fame
No Howland
No sound
Her fuel near on empty
Please pray if she dare
The anger that forms
On a life at God's stair
The sputter of engines
The fall without flame
To history lingers
Her face and her name
A search past forever
A mystery born
On clouds and belief
Our hearts oh so torn
Lost Amelia

Kaitlyn Stabile

Façade

What sort of demon are you,
You who lurks beneath paper skin
And a caged heart,
Leaving a poisonous trail
Against my ribcage,
Against my lungs,
And smirks at the
Affirmation of blood gone sour?
Why is it,
When my mouth opens
Your words pour from my lips
And your tongue replaces mine
In a blistering lust of rage?
Why do you, demon,
Fill my thoughts only with insecurities,
Only with riddles I cannot answer,
And expect me to exude happiness,
The furthest emotion which I am?
What incantation must I speak,
For you to leave me be?
You have possessed me,
Body and soul,

And I am left only to watch

Powerlessly

In your vehement wake.

I have become a demon,

A demon that spews insolences

And begs for gratitude,

Begs for patience,

Begs for forgiveness,

Begs for love.

Now what must I do to become human again?

Our Lady Who Lurks in Graveyards

Once a month, on the night where the moon shies away from golden light, ready to rebirth into a crescent, she walks over forgotten people and half attempted vows to commemorate loved ones. The wilted flowers crumble to dust in the late night breeze. Where weeds greet tombstones and markers, reaching for names that are scarcely remembered, she trespasses into hallowed ground that no longer resembles a memorial. She passes each stone in glowing passion; a nod to their memory, a prayer to their soul. Her eyes burn with echoes of her past, of fire that caught hold of her and held her tight. A moment where asphyxiation clouded her mind and smoke danced around her mouth. A night often remembered, but long forgotten. The heat of the flames, the fear in her heart, a name that stayed on her tongue, waiting to be spoken, before the fire interrupted and left her in silence. She is our lady who lurks in graveyards.

Drunken fantasies and recollections like cough syrup create a volatile mix, a deadly concoction feeding off regrets and breeding them anew. The pain erupts from deep within, sending quakes and shivers; tears pour from empty eyes like lava. The heat trails down her cheeks, sliding past granite features, plastered into her face. It drips to the ground and sizzles with each drop, eager to meet the earth and burrow in its flesh. She is our lady who lurks in graveyards.

Ensnared in spider web lies, she struggles to free herself from the cognitive dissonance that is her predator. Trapped in an endless, proverbial void of bereavement, she claws against the invisible walls, like an animal caught in a ravine, desperate and ignorant of just how infinite the pit is. The memories wrench her down as she sinks into the abyss, reminiscent of Hades dragging the souls of the damned into Hell. She is our lady who lurks in graveyards.

Who is she? She who feeds off neglected souls and carries their regrets, their pain, their anger within her, placing them next to her own on a shelf built of misfortune like trophies won in a contest. She is the sacrificial lamb; the memories are the knife that cut her flesh into a façade of ribbons made from sanguine lace. Like Atlas, she places the weight of the Earth on her shoulders, drinking in fallacies of life after death, and bearing the burden of disillusioned souls who stay asleep deep beneath the ground; the soil like blankets providing superfluous warmth for bodies that no longer shiver. Who is she? She is our lady who lurks in graveyards.

Cheryl Vatcher-Martin

A Red Winged Blackbird

Red winged Blackbird, carries his majestic coat of arms,
Jet black tinged with a midnight hue
As raspberry burrows into deep red,
A solitary creature on the roadside
Weaving between traffic and howling winds;
Perhaps questioning the existence of time while he observes
Winter's snow fall in early spring,
An anomaly that is instinctive for him;
As well as a life's threat to our ecosystem,
Waiting for earth to be in tune with the season;
Watching and perching where he shouldn't be;
Then quickly those crystal flakes merge into the earth,
Forming a replica of a pond or a swampy marsh;
Carrying nourishment to be plucked by a ravenous bird,
Springing forward winter's bounty left behind,
Looking for those morsels that still do not exist;
In the middle of April where spring's dawn should have been
Nurturing nature's creatures who still await her fruit.

Snowdrifts in Spring

Spring sprung with snow drift

Icebergs need to disappear

Warmth eludes us still

Shari Welch

Therapeutic Walking

Walking through the park on a beautiful
day

Thinking of thoughts that transpired along the
way

Breathing in crisp fresh air to clear my
head

They say aerobic exercise is good before
bed

Moving these reluctant joints to get the kinks
out

Walking thirty minutes three times a week
is what the doctor is talking
about

We all know that walking is good to relieve
stress

Continuous planned movement can keep you at your

best

No need for a drink, pills, or any habitual

vice

Having a natural calm and relaxed persona is indeed very

Nice

Being

May you walk with

calm

Knowing the know as you go through

life

Having peace, love and

charm

To bestow upon angry mislead

folk

Articulate thoughts of bright

possibilities

Smiling to generate rays of

hope

In the mist of uncertain

futures

Plan toward beautiful

conclusions

With internal strength for

standing

Enjoy the energy of
now

Tammy White

Unexpected Sunday

Feeling uneasy one Sunday morning
Cancer in my cousin's body
Spread throughout
To church my sister went
Then she got the call
Our cousin had passed on
Relays the news to me
Shock & disbelief invade me
My heart felt heavy, my eyes teared up
My sister-cousin, I called her
Mid-fifties, full of life
Still can't believe she's gone
There will never be another
Her shoes too big to fill
I love you sister-cousin
Always thought of, never forgotten
You hurt no more and now with God
Satisfaction overwhelms my soul
With this in mind

Janice Will

Empty Nest

bitter
sweet
The sun shines brightly
 On the shimmering snow
The chill of the air
 Fills my face
–almost like a slap –
It brings tears to my eyes.

Perfect weather
 To match my mood.
Bittersweet
Preparing to greet
My empty nest.
 The chill of it
 ...*the thrill of it?!*
Fills my heart
To overflowing
It brings tears to my eyes.

Our nest
 A safe haven
 A Secure refuge
From a sometimes unforgiving world
Where my young 'uns
Prepared to dance with confidence
To the life they desire
With a little prodding from each other
To toughen them up
For Solo Flights
–thrilling delights of self-discovery

What they take with them
The treasure
Is the memory of a safe place

Where they could test their wings
in many things
Stumble
only to rise to the challenge

Oh,
so...
The empty nest
Does not equal *emptiness*
Instead a challenge
To do for myself
What I did for them...

Now that's a chilling thrilling thought
On a January morning
With welcoming sunlight
Encouraging me
To button Up
Pull on my gloves
Wrap myself in a snuggly scarf
Spread my wings
And fly!
Oh, my ...

The Porch Light

I turn off the porch light
It feels like for all eternity.

Just this morning
The house was abuzz with excitement
The smell of roasted coffee
Definitely not caffeine free
Boxes packed in various stages
From nearly empty

to contents overflowing on the floor
The continuous hum
Of the washing machine
As last minute loads of laundry
Are de-spotted before washing
"Out, Spot, Out!" I think to myself
As children's books come to mind
Ones that will surely be left behind
I watch as he decides
What books to bring
What books to leave
"Don't worry, I'll safeguard you,"
I whisper to Paddington, Big Bird
and Goodnight Moon

Who'd ever believe
We could fill up that giant truck
With just his stuff
Symbolizing what?
A grown-up boy
thrilled at the prospect
of finding his joy

It's time
I know
And I'm proud
And I'm thrilled
And I'm excited
In a way

But then again
I've got the leftovers
To contend with
All the castaways

Unneeded for his new life

I hear a ring?
Is that my cell phone?
Caller ID: one boy on the move

"Hey, Mom.
We're stopping in Pennsylvania.
The guy at the desk said
He'd keep an eye on the truck
We parked it near the office.
I miss you already."

I'm a bit choked up
And then feel a giggle
Starting in my stomach
And rising to my chest
And out my mouth
I can't stop it

He says,
"What's so funny?"
"Oh! Just silly me...
Feeling like you're moving to another planet
Not just a state or two away
Find out what's on Broadway.
Okay."

"It will be okay, Mom
Just different, and the same.
I'll be home for Thanksgiving."
That's before you know it.
I miss you, Mom."

I hold the phone
Close to my heart
Before closing the lid.
And find myself tippy toeing
With a twirl or two
I reach the front door
And flip that porch light
Back on
For all eternity

Katrina Wilson

Alive Again

Once was white
Once was cold.
Now spring is here
And all is bold.
Once quick to night
Dark and frozen...
Now is light and all is golden.
Once dead and gone, now alive.
Every little bud and every little stem
Finally has its life again. Now breezy
And mild and you sometimes see a
Little child, outside playing ...
Pitter patter, pitter patter rain's coming down
Pitter patter, pitter patter all around town.
Little kids to play because they
Love rainy days. Water all around.
Pitter patter, pitter patter, the rain
Hits my window. I can hear them
Dropping to earth soft and calm.
Once was dead and gone, now alive.
Blooming and growing healthier
And healthier! Color so pretty!
Color so bright! Everything
Look so right!
Because roses are red and
Violets are blue it's spring-
Time, I'm happy, aren't you?!!

STORIES

Na'Jay Coleman

Gone Ghost

Boom, Boom, Boom! 3 gunshots greeted the police officer who wanted to protect me. Silence flew across the room as the police officer breath drew to a close. The gun man proceeded my way. I took 3 steps back and prayed. What could the gunman want? I couldn't get a good glimpse of the awful person's face which was covered by a black cloth mask? What did the gunman want? I didn't have money or anything. He then decided to reach for his mask. I was sure to be dead if I knew the gunman's identity. I closed my eyes eager to peek, one eye squinted open, and surely they both opened. I stared silently and noticed the gunman was me!

It couldn't be I was the gun man. I looked myself up and down afraid of what was going on. I turned to the right where I seen the SWAT team power thru the door and shoot 5 bullets my direction. I slowly ducked then I realized the bullet struck through my body but didn't even harm me. It headed towards the gunman and made him drop to the floor. I looked down at my lifeless body inside a gunman. Then I looked at my hands and noted I could see through my hands. I WAS INVISIBLE ! I panicked as 2 gallons of blood seeped through my bullet holes. Did I just witness my own death? I didn't understand .

Beep beep beep., My alarm clock awakened me and surprised me as I looked under my shirt to see if I had been left with bullet holes but surely enough it only seemed to be an bad dream!

Anthony B. Cross

Fear and Loathing in L. George's

6:13 a.m. Hungry, really hungry, glad Coney's are open early. People need their coffee and eggs before work, understandable. Waitress comes over, drops a glass of water, a set of silverware, and checks if coffee is needed. It's odd that most of the waitresses here are pregnant. At least half of them, around 70 percent of them have worked here since it's opening so long ago. She leaves stating before she left "I will give you a few minutes and then I will be back for your order". Wonder how many is a few to her? If a couple is 2 wouldn't a few be 3 to 4? I don't know but this could take forever or if luck has any say in it, just a few minutes.

6:18 a.m. Few people wander in from the streets and the cold harsh weather that plagues this town on a regular. The waitress looks distressed as she shuffles back to the table, must have been the phone that was ringing with some unsettling news. "So have you decided on what you're going to have?" she asked. Much doesn't change around here breakfast special, eggs over easy, bacon, hash browns, well done wheat toast, same thing as always. Now its time to wait. This is always the hard part for the mind does need to be stimulated. Lean against the window and wall, kick feet up and stretch across the padded booth that feels good helps get the blood flowing though the body as the waiting goes on.

6:20 a.m. Oh boy a cigarette would be nice right now, have one in the pocket but can't do that. You can't smoke anywhere anymore, use to be a time when you could have a smoke while waiting for your meal but times have changed. Even in bars today you can't light up and have a puff, what is this world coming to?

6:23 a.m. Look at this guy that just walked in huge and crazy looking as he takes a seat at the counter. Take action step one determine whether or not the subject is a hostile threat to the imminent surroundings. The eyes are key to step two the ocular pat down, head to toe don't want to miss a thing never know what this perp might be hiding. Step three deciding the final judgment of another human life and if the situation is going to escalate. He gets the all clear and is deemed not a danger but will be watched as at any moment life can throw you a curve ball.

6:29 a.m. Head pounding like drums in a rock band, please make it go away got to focus and keep alert. Was it the whisky last night or was it the women? A good guess is it's a good mix of both served on a day that's going on its 48th hour. You get spurts of youth that come back every so often but age often gets the upper hand. Sleep will be good after breakfast; eyes try to shut but the fluorescent lights just shine so bright when they don't need to. Why does the bus boy keep making such a racket at the next table? Bang, bang, bang, clink, clink, clink, seems like this goes on forever as if the dishes keep reappearing on the table. The bus boy looks over notices the frown and finishes up, happy that's over with.

6:34 a.m. What could that be? The cook puts a plate up in the window then some toast gets dropped next to it as the cook voices out the words "Order up". The air in the Coney Island is that of bacon and eggs as the waitress takes the plate and dances her way through the crowd of people finding a path to the table. She places the food on the table "Need anything else with that?" she asks as she pulls out a straw and some extra napkins then sets them down. Sometimes life is good, sometimes it's real good, and this is one of those times. All the rest of life just fades away for a brief moment as this breakfast is

about to be consumed. This is the start of a brand new day and already it's looking up.

6:42 Full.

Rayna Fritz

The Spy Games

It was a dark and stormy night. I looked around the small room but there was nothing. I realized that this is my life now. My name is Allyson. I'm in the CIA and I'm on a mission to find my best friend, Rose. When we didn't hear from her two days ago they sent me in to find and rescue her.

Now back to finding my escape plan. I see a window with no bars but it's too high unless I stack the chair on the beds. But first things first: find Rose. Just then the door opens and they brought in another person. That person is my worst nightmare, my ex-, Max. Max broke up with me when he found out I was in the CIA.

"Max what are you doing here?" I ask him as he gets up off the floor.

"I'm here to help you find Rose and bust out of here," he replies to me as I sit on the bed.

"Max just go home I don't need your help."

"Make me Ally."

"No one calls me Ally anymore."

Just then we hear a scream. I know that scream anywhere. It belongs to Rose. She only screams if she is hurt or scared.

"It's Rose," I say to max.

"How do you know?" he ask like I don't know my best friend.

"She is my best friend and I know her scream," I told him. So we have to work together if we want to find Rose and bust out of here.

"We need a plan, Max."

"I agree, Ally."

"Here it is: I distract the guard while you get the key."

"Ok let's do it."

So I started pounding on the door. Five minutes later a guard appeared. While I distracted the guard, Max got the key. As soon as he left we opened the door.

The first place we checked was where we heard the scream. As we walked by some cells I heard a voice say, "Allyson, help me, please." I looked around but found no one I knew.

Then the voice said, "Allyson it's me, Rose." Then she comes to the front of the cell.

"Rose we are here to bust you out of here." Max unlocks the door.

Just then a guard comes behind me and hand-cuffs me. I kick him in the stomach and he falls to the ground. Max unlocks

the hand-cuffs. Then the alarm sounds. We run to the exit. I open the door only to find that it is a dead end. So we turn and run into 20 guards waiting for us. So they cuffed us and put all of us into different cells. As we waited for what will happen next, I think about what happened in the past few days. Just then the guard comes to take us to their leader. Their leader is my dad.

Casheena Parker

Lust Plays

Wonderment becomes me as a watch him from afar.

Does he notice me watching him?

Is he watching me too?

The bliss behind those eyes makes me want him more and more.

But is it really what I want, or a fantasy that my mind made up on its own?

And is this feeling enough to stay around and deal with the pain he may cause me?

These are the words Bliss wrote in her journal the moment she realized she was in love with the guy that was completely her opposite. Little did she know how true those words were in that moment in time. Because he was watching her and the thoughts that rushed him weren't those filled with love and passion but those filled with agony and pain. He loved to make them fall and break their spirits with the games he

played. The thought of leaving them spinning in his web of lies and deceit, simply cause they were too naïve to know any better gave him a sense of power he longed for. He laughed at the thought of this new conquered chess game. While watching her attempt to steal glances at him that she thought he didn't notice. But he noticed more than she thought he did. He knew more than she thought he did. It was his job to make and break them. To test who they really were and what they want to be. If they could turn without completely breaking then he would keep them. But they never did and this one didn't seem any different than any of the rest.

Yet Damon didn't know all. Bliss has a secret of her own that not only was kept from the world but from her as well. She was different and her inner spirit was at war with itself trying to decide rather to be bad or good; to bring positive light or destructive darkness. She was unlike those who thought they knew her. They see her as passive and sweet not realizing that the sweet side was a balance scale for what she held beneath the surface. The fire of a powerful demon, that's fighting to be unleashed. Awaiting someone unsuspecting for someone to come and let it loose. What's its purpose; to gain control with a partner to accompany him. Damon was in for a rude awakening. This demon was a willing advocate for all his plans and played the game far better than he was prepared for.

The met, and immediately began to date. Bliss showed Damon that she would do anything to please him from the very beginning. Which was exactly what Damon was counting on, it's a common thing for him. Girls fall in love and feel like he's the one and that's not his fault. If they want to make fools of themselves that's completely on them. But what he wasn't expecting was the feelings of his own that came out of nowhere. He was beginning to like spending time with her because she was sweet, kind and completely giving. She gave

even when he was mean to her. He begins to notice that they had a lot in common. And after several months had passed he realized that they were a real couple. They did real couple things and it wasn't about the score anymore. It was more than that. It was love, his first time feeling something more than lust for any of the girls he played.

She began to feel it too, she begins to see that she was important to him and that's all the demon inside of her was waiting for. It began to show its face and introduced herself as Blissful. Telling Bliss that she knew exactly what needed to be done to not only gain more attention from Damon but to keep it. Naïve little Bliss agreed without realizing what the plan really was. And before she knew it she was inside herself watching the scene from inside her own mind. She was unable to tell him that the girls he was with wasn't her but something else. Something manipulative and evil.

Before long Blissful has Damon eating out the palm of her hand. He would do anything to keep her happy. And with all the problems she had with him it took a lot. She required him to give and sacrifice more than he would normally. He had to not only please her but turn her into his own God. She wanted complete control and power. With it she could show everyone a good time. She wouldn't be reduced to using just Bliss for her fun.

Then the time came when he got tired of jumping through hoops and it was finally enough and left, but he didn't leave Blissful he left Bliss. They had switched back and Bliss was doing all she could to make their broken relationship work. But when she would least expect it Blissful would show her face and ruin her plans leaving her alone with a broken heart. Making her feel like all hope was gone, she gave power completely to Blissful the demon and she destroyed her and in

the process freed herself from the rules of just one body or sex type. Blissful took on the name Bliss and begin her journey of body jumping. The more she proved herself the more powerful she became, before long there wasn't anything that could stop her when she wanted to play. She was desirable to all and anyone she wanted became her prey.

People begin to think of her as a normal way of life and called her Lust. This made her laugh because they didn't realize how much giving her a name increased her power. She became the most powerful demon and took over and ruined lives just to see what the reaction would be. When feeling and "Lust" was involved anything was possible. She was the beginning of the breaking of mankind. She could make them believe in anything and grow that feeling for anything which brought on the other deadly demons together they became the sins of a lifetime. Nobody would ever know that the most powerful female demon was really a young girl who embraced her other side and became completely evil; who only wanted to show others what it's like to love, lust and be left.

Stephanie Neilan

#Serina (a tweetiatore)

I walked across the deck and into the captain's compartment. Among the gathered watches, gold, and jewelry, a book caught my eye.

The Odyssey! I flung it through the port window and let out a scream of rage. I HATED him.

I wanted to wrap my long thin fingers around his neck and squeeze until his eyes popped out.

He had long since turned to dust, but they still worshipped him. They celebrated his exploits, but he, HE, had caused their deaths.

He had a chance. He could have saved me, but he left me to become...this.

I glanced down at my body with its disproportionate ribcage - then to the bodies behind me. The sight would have sickened me - once.

Once, I was desperate for a way out - would have done anything to break free. I thought I had found a way.

A man revered by the sailors. A great leader. A great seaman. Blessed by the goddess Athena, and coming my way.

I tricked my sisters so I could be alone, and then I called, luring him to our safest shores. I *could* escape my fate.

I promised him gold, power, secrets. I would have betrayed my sisters. I would have done anything, if he had just let me aboard.

His was the one ship that didn't stop - didn't crash – didn't stay.
I watched the one ship that could have saved me sail away.

The heart break that followed was only matched by the pain my sisters bestowed upon me once they knew.

Snide comments, tripped feet, and discarded meat. The only offerings to give the sister who failed.

They were right of course, but not for the reasons they thought.
Odysseus condemned me in more ways than one.

I attacked the next ship with a vengeance – Hardened my heart to any pleas. Just as Odysseus had done to mine.

He took away my options so I embraced my fate. My anger gave me volume, my passion gave me voice.

I sent our voices further, expanded our domain. Triangulated all our strengths, and reigned as queen again.

You didn't know that? You wouldn't. No one has escaped me again.

Imelda Zamora

Reminiscence

There was this deafening silence that permeated inside her. Outside were voices, sounds and noises that now made little sense to her. When someone spoke to her, she asked, "Who are you?" without embarrassment. This silence of forgetting descended upon her in slow quiet doses. Now, she was afraid that she may soon lose her memory completely. "It is a small comfort to know", she told herself, "that it will be painless when it happens."

It was his visits that sustained her. He calmed her confused mind and gave her comfort. He came to her at night. She knew it was night time because the room was dark except for his illuminated face. He listened to her incessant mumblings, those nonsensical words she could not control that often came out of her mouth. Because his presence perplexed her, she asked him,

"Who are you? Are you God?"

He just smiled. She did not know why she even asked him that question because clearly he was that smiling young man in the white shirt, whose name she could not remember. "But why does he look so much older?" she wondered.

"I feel sad tonight", she said to him, for she could tell him anything.

"Why?" he asked, his voice a mere whisper.

"There is a woman who comes and kisses me on the forehead. She calls me with a word that is not my name. When I ask her who she is, she says she is my daughter and gives a name that I

have already forgotten. I am sorry I do not recognize her... Now I am sad.”

“You do not need to be. She understands. She loves you. She knows you love her too.”

“Your words are always reassuring and I find solace in them.”

“That is the reason I am here. For you.” Again, he smiled.

“Thank you... Will you stay with me? Here, please give me your hand. Help me up. There is something I need to get.”

“What is it? I can get it for you.”

“Oh, you do not know where it is... Wait ... I do not know where it is, either. Isn't that funny? I cannot remember anything anymore. I am tired, very tired... I feel the darkness coming... Can you hold my hand and pray with me? Hail Mary full of grace... the Lord is ...”

“..... now and at the hour of our death, Amen” and he finished the prayer.

Alicia got up early and went straight to her mother's room.

“Good morning, Mother!” she said cheerfully. “I looked in around midnight last night and you had the sweetest smile on your face. It must have been a happy dream...”

But even before she took the pulse, Alicia knew her mother was gone. Taking the cold stiff hands carefully in hers, she noticed something in one hand. Gently, Alicia pulled it out. It was a photo of a smiling young man in a white shirt, his head thrown back a little in an obvious moment of joy. It was a snapshot of Alicia's father taken on his twentieth birthday.

STORIES FOR CHILDREN

Alicia Oldham

How to Clean Your Room in Five Seconds

So you've been told to clean your room. Don't look so mean! There's nothing wrong with having it clean. Cleaning rooms is never fun, but it is something that must be done! Even your mom and dad will tell you so. Even if you tell them, "NO!" Fear not, for I will teach you a lesson. I will teach you how to clean your room in five seconds!

- 1.) Hurry there's clothes on the floor, pick them up. The floor looks better but not by much.
- 2.) There's toys everywhere, put them in the toy shed. No! No! Not under your bed!
- 3.) Look at this trash all over the floor. Where are you going? It can't be ignored!
- 4.) Look at this clutter, how can you find anything? Hey now, hiding it all in your closet doesn't make it clean!
- 5.) It's time to make the bed, do you know how to do it? Oh no! Not like that, what are you doing?!

Wait...I hear them! I hear them! Your parents are coming to look! Oh no, this is not going to be good...
(Parents see mess all over the room)

Well now you're grounded...hey don't look at me! I was the one teaching you how to clean! What do you

mean, "It was more than five seconds and took so long?" You were the one who was doing it wrong! Oh well, while you're stuck inside, I'm going out to play. After all it is such a beautiful day! You didn't get your room clean in five seconds, not even a bit. If you would've kept it clean in the first place, you wouldn't have had to worry about it.

I'm leaving so have fun cleaning your room because mine is already done. I make sure my room is always clean because cleaning rooms is never fun! Maybe next time you'll keep it clean, or you'll follow my lesson. Even if it is IMPOSSIBLE to clean a room in five seconds!

How to be a Good Big Sibling

Today's the day; you're not a baby anymore. Soon another baby is going to walk through that door. It may make you happy or it may hurt your feelings but no matter what, today you're a big sibling. So you need to learn what to do to help with the baby. Will it be hard? No, possibly, maybe. Don't worry; this book will be your guide. So you will be the best sibling anyone will find!

When you meet the baby, the first thing you should do is introduce yourself. Let them know you'll protect them and love them more than anyone else. If you decide you want to touch, make sure you be gentle with them. Babies are precious little things, you don't want to hurt them! So go ahead, don't be meek. Softly touch their hand or kiss their cheek. Well that was easy or maybe it's not. Being a good big sibling is going to take more than just that!

The baby will cry and it'll be pretty loud. A good big sibling will make silly faces so the bay will smile. If that doesn't work, mommy and daddy will step in. A good big sibling will find any possible way to help them. Go help get a bottle for the baby or help pick up clothes. Bring things to mommy and daddy or maybe even help wipe the baby's nose. If the baby gets tired or cranky, you can sing to help them feel alright. Hold their hand until they go to sleep and kiss them good night.

Well the day is over, for now at least. Babies wake up when they want, even in the morning at three. That's not your problem, that's for mommy and daddy to worry about. After all you've just proved you're the best sibling that can ever be found. Well that ends the tale, so take good care of the baby. You two will get along just fine in the future...possibly...maybe.

NON-FICTION

Deanie McFarling

Family Traditions – The Birthday Shirt

During the holidays surrounding Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Day, families try to connect. That often involves many miles of travel, regardless of travel conditions, cards sent and phone calls. This year was no exception.

An old quote explains that feeling:

*I know not why I am alone
Or where my wandering tribe has gone.
But be they near, or be they far,
I would be where my people are.*

The Turner family of which I am a part expresses that kind of love during the holidays. We send cards, pictures and make calls.

Someone in the Turner family started a unique way of remembering the old and the new. They bought a large white sweat shirt for my mother and on the shirt she wrote as many of the relatives names she could think of. Then the names were embroidered in many colorful threads of embroidery floss.

As family members increased so did the names on the shirt. Quite a sight and treasure. No one wanted to be left out and the list grew and grew. Each person looked for their name on the shirt.

There were sixteen children and their spouses, fifty-two grandchildren, seventy-eight great grandchildren, and eight great-great-grandchildren and the list is still growing.

Now the mother that wore the shirt is no longer living and the shirt is passed around. It is somewhere in Kansas now.

Jacqueline D. Ward

Spoken Words: Words of Wisdom

Don't ever give anyone that much power over you. Realize the dream, you are meant to soar. An open door is waiting for you to walk through. You can learn something from everyone no matter the age: child, young, teenager, middle age, and from wise older people.

Beauty is as beauty does, give and you will receive, every question does not deserve an answer. You have to learn from your mother and father's mistakes. A wise person once told me that a person learns the most from other people's mistakes. By learning from other people's mistakes, you save yourself time and much heartache. It also will save you much pain and heartache and invested energy.

One drop of rain grows the largest trees and the prettiest flowers. The snow, the rain, the pain. Be silent and you can hear your heart beat. You can look deep inside your inner most being and hear what you should be doing to make the world a better place. Listen (silence) is golden- especially at the movies. We are so technical that

we can call our parents from our rooms. We as a family don't have time to eat together as a family.

It's a dog eat dog world. I got mine, you get yours but we can only grow when we reach back and help others. Don't judge a person by their outward appearance; you just may be looking at a millionaire. I don't have time for you; you are so old you move too slow for me. Never look down gray headedness; never look gray headedness as a loss cause that person (older) just might have something to tell you that might change your life. The answer to your prayers doesn't always come right away. You must first remain silent listen and wait and see that your answer may be right in front of thee.

Knowledge is power in the right hands and if it is used correctly. Reach for the stars, moon, sun and planets, never settle for anything less. You will meet a lot of dream stealers all through your life as you walk life journey. You can do it, you can be anything you want to be in this world. There are many endless possibilities; just try and you will succeed. You are special you deserve to be loved. Kindness is shown to all who love God. A mountain is climbed one step at a time. If you are gifted with many talents; it would be ashamed for you for you not too work at all your talents one at a time. You will feel the joy when you achieve your goals, and since you are gifted with so many talents, much is expected. It would be a shame not to reach back and help someone else along the way.

Peace is something everyone wants but it is hard to achieve. Patience is a virtue many find hard to live by. Never underestimate a homeless person on the street please be kind and speak a kind word to them; give him or

her something to eat because there may be one day where you are walking in their shoes.

When you cry tears of joy or tears of pain it releases endorphins that heal the broken hearted. Everyone needs to feel love and be loved; if you can't show love to your fellow man then really what use are you? It does not cost any money for you to be kind to someone in need and give from the heart.

PURE PLEASURES WORDS HEAL: words guide you, compelled you to be better to be a better person. To rise above adversities, to know you can make it if you try. If you don't try, you will never know the victory of winning. Everyone is given the hand they are dealt; they must do with that hand and rise to any occasion you shall be successful. STOP CRYING START DOING WHATEVER YOU NEED YOU ALREADY HAVE INSIDE OF YOU!!! Make each day count, respect yourself love yourself be kind to yourself, and surround yourself with positive people. The sun is shining just for you even if it is raining think of the rain as liquid sunshine. The sun is shining you have breath in your lungs, make it a great day.

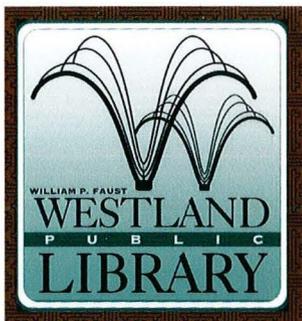
What you plan to do with the hand you are dealt depends on you. Never let another person crush your dreams. They are haters, and they have showed you who they are the first time believe them. These people are not your friends and they are not up building. They have nothing positive going on in their lives so they try to bring you down by any means necessary. Don't let them. They are in the friend-enemies category. Never allow negativity in your space. Never allow negative talk of others rob you of your dreams. Prepare yourself for life, education is the key. FLY, SOAR, LIKE AND EAGLE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE, WIN.

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE THE POSSIBILITIES
ARE ENDLESS.

The font used for **Westland Writes ... 2014** was Eras Medium ITC (body) and Eras Demi ITC (headings).

Westland Writes ... 2014

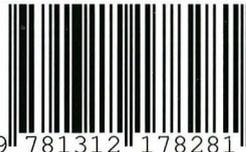
All rights revert back to the author after publishing this book.



William P. Faust
Public Library of Westland
6123 Central City Parkway
Westland, MI 48185
734-326-6123
www.westlandlibrary.org

The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland is proud to celebrate local writers with this 6th annual installation of the **Westland Writes ...** series. This publication sprung to life out of a **National Poetry Month** idea to share patrons' poems and has resulted in this yearly series which draws from: two library writing groups, the **Writers Workshop** and the **Writers Club**; past library writing programs, like our Guided Memoir Group and Teen Poetry Slam; performance programs like our monthly **Open Mic**; and the general writing public of Westland and the surrounding areas. We are proud of the writing of newcomers to our publication as well as frequent contributors. It is always exciting to read new, fresh writing from this community. We look forward to celebrating the publication of this book with our **Book Release Party** on May 29th, 2014, featuring the writers of our community and the music of the Sheila Landis Trio. If you did not get a chance to submit in 2014, look for us again in the spring of 2015. Until then, happy reading!

ISBN 978-1-312-17828-1



9 781312 178281



90000