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Special Thanks for Their Help:
Student Forum
Woody Logsdon from Royal Printing
Prof. Bruce McCoy

Editors’ Remarks

"Painting is silent poetry and poetry is painting with the gift of speech."
~Simonides

This year’s edition of Forté was created with the intent to expose the vast talent of the Arts here at Illinois College. This college is fortunate to have many talented writers and artists, some of whom have made this publication possible. This issue, as well the Spring issue, will show the increased desire from students to promote Art. We encourage students to take advantage of this opportunity to share their work with the college community.

This issue marks a return to the old Forté tradition of publishing two issues a year. We would like to thank Student Forum for its generosity, without which this great issue would not be possible. We would also like to thank our staff, Prof. Randy Norris, and Woody Logsdon of Royal Printing for their continued help throughout the process of creating this issue.
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Father

Father, do you feel alone in your empty home sometimes?
Father, did you know that I think about you all the time?
Are you feeling sad?
Do you need me there?
Would it matter if I'd stayed?
And if you don't mind,
Would you drop me a line
Saying that you are still alright?
Father, were you always cold or grew sad and old with time?
Father, do you know that I have forgiven you in my mind?
But can you look beyond
What you've always known?
Can you look me in the eye?
Or when you look my way
Do you feel ashamed
That you never took the time?
Father, do you ever cry when you think about your life?
Father, if I needed you, would you try to make things right?
Is it still too late?
Have you lost all faith?
Did you have it from the start?
And you could have known
Someone of your own
But you had to make it hard...
Marina Verenikina

Sometimes

Sometimes I look at the sky and
I am wondering about the reason
What can we hide when we're only inch wide and
What will we be like in a million years...

CHORUS
But we keep walking
Never knowing where these stars may take us
The compass is broken
Or was it there in the first place?

What's around the bend, tell me,
Who's waiting there?
But we can't even tell what the past has been
Bring me your god
I have one question to ask,
And these aliens laugh with their halos

CHORUS

You look at the sky, tell me, is it your time?
Tell me if I'll ever see you...
You throw the dice, you hear that your baby cries
Will she know why she's here?

CHORUS

Cassie O'Connor

Bonsai Sketcher

I can't tell where the color stops
Surely there must be a map of
The purplish route spidering the underside
Of your arm, where the freckles
Fade and the insect wings hide
And liven
The faint fluttering of your wrist,
Such travel so undetectable and
Practiced
How do you know you move?
Why not etch the world on
A grain of rice?
Or measure that particle
Of sand on the left eye of the Sphinx?
But you don't pinpoint your minuscule journey,
Route only shadow

It is hard to understand
How you fly.
Each move so stretched with
Struts of lace and fishing wire
From here your wings hum visible only
On the back of your hand by
Bowing of hairs

But why show me a
Half dead bonsai
Dandelion overshadowing the
Notre Dame?
The exaggeration rapid
and restless,
And remembered

Recollected by even a postage
Stamp of a rural church.
Now I look at
Fractured pavement.
Yesterday I walked into a
Parking meter as I
Followed a fault line forest.
Cassie O'Connor

Four stitches and my left
Big toe fractured.

My injury journalized as
Lost Dedalus trying to be the
Bishop.
The meter resonated
One o'clock
The snapping red flag -
VIOLATION.
Still not the same stain
As the Son of man.

And that one fine leaf
Asymmetrical and gnarled by insects
A green smear on the
Concrete like a newly dead firefly,
That purplish phosphorescence paling.
Surely there must be a map
I can't tell where the color stops.

Megan Cook

Ice

That high, cracking voice
shreds my nerves on a steel grate
I dream you frozen

Missy Olinger

Intuition #1

Missy Olinger

Intuition #2
**On the Stage**

We don't know her name,  
but she'll stand up and yell.  
She'll take a chance;  
she'll embarrass herself.  
They all sit down  
and mock her in shame;  
She screams to the sky  
and hides in her fame.

But off the stage  
she's lost in the sound;  
No spotlight for her  
when she's down on the ground.  
On the side,  
she keeps her head bowed;  
Who is that faceless idiot  
in the crowd?

**Villanelle**

Ask me who I am.  
Dig deep into the temple  
And don't forget my name.

Stop me in the street.  
Look me in the face.  
Ask me who I am.

Rely on my resilience.  
You remember my face.  
But you forget my name.

Catch my lips in your teeth  
and strongly stroke my back.  
Ask me who I am.

Lie down on top of me  
like I'm in an underground tunnel -  
An echo to forget my name.

Gaze through my heart.  
Dig deep into my temple.  
Ask me who I am  
And don't forget my name.
Lindsay Cors

Alone

Love flowed out like lava,
Yet with nothing
Strong enough to receive it,
After a while
It cooled and hardened,
A fiery, hot hate
Blackening by each second,
Forming in the midst
Of an ocean of souls,
An island
Alone.
A Wretched Desire

Out of my soul I feign dispel,
Lust that beatifies my sin,
Which I'll try to describe with pen,
Within my genius doggerel.

She walks in beauty to Byron.
In one epoch we shared like-minds,
But seeking a shepherd me-finds
Sheep caught in jaws of a lion.

Such beauty should not be allowed!
Especially in one whose death
Of nobility steals men's mirth,
Like fallen Lucifer the proud.

How rare is a beauty so pure
That would shed her skin to reveal
Greater beauty longing to feel
My soul who she'd never demur.

But within my eyes 'tis innate
To accept and to not refute
A character so dissolute:
A mere beauty that's second-rate.

So I search in vain for the fire
That will purge my eyes, mind and soul
With her pellucid beauties whole,
And absolve my wretched desire.

The Human Condition

Born into a world steeped in sin,
Cold and wet from my mother's womb,
Cradled and fostered in a tomb,
For there was no room in the inn.

Cornered by fools writhing in pain
Whose sole anaesthesia's laughter
Still heard in their tomb long after
Relapse into their life again.

Augustine knew the condition:
Ever since birth you are dying,
Although you prefer the lying
Sheep who claim there is remission.

Words bleed profusely from my sores
In a mouth with no tongue nor tooth
Pronouncing ineffable truth,
Unintelligible to whores.

So instead I've chosen to weep,
Until we return to the earth,
When this soul-sickness ends in mirth,
When my soul will know sublime sleep?
Por la Noche

Me emplea el día,
Pero me falta la noche.
El rebaño duerme con ojos abiertos
Por el día.
Los esclavos funcionan con manos atadas
Por el día.
Por eso, huyo del sol brillante,
Que me ciega cuando admiro su brillantez,
Y rendo homenaje a la luna y
La compañía de las estrellas.
Qué bella son las estrellas y su madre la luna!
Son más fuertes y más amistosas las estrellas,
Con un suave brillo sublime que me cumple,
Me llena.
"Los peligros" de la noche no me asustan;
Los tiranos que roban las almas y asesinan las mentes
De los ciegos por el día,
Me asustan.
Pero tengo seguridad bajo el doselete de tranquilidad
De las noches, cuando
Vivo, aprendo, echo a broma
Con los refugiados de la noche, muertos y vivos.
Caminé con Zarathustra y Marx,
Por la noche.

Steve Mathes

The Other Side
Of
The Grand Canyon

The letter had no return address.
The stationery was gray,
from some hotel in Detroit.
The letter was written
in black ink
and was smudged
around its edges.
The envelope contained
a postcard of the Grand Canyon,
a recent photograph,
the afore-mentioned letter,
and was post-marked
Miami Beach
F.
L.
A.
It was stamped with forty-nine cents postage paid,
twenty cents more than necessary.
The letter read...
"Hope you’re happy.
Love Dad."
On the back of the fifty-seven cent postcard of the Grand Canyon
purchased outside of Flagstaff,
was inscribed the sentiment...
"This, this is the gap that divides us."
Banana Bread

tears well up in the kitchen—baking
no onions, only bananas-
sugar (cause I'm sweet)
baking soda (to help it rise)
flour, eggs, and all the rest
mix it up into a gooey mass
Apron much too big
Standing on the stool
Both hands on the wooden spoon
now an electric mixer
tinfoil still keeps it moist
warm with lots of butter
the sweet hot brown
burns the hollow of my stomach
the ache of beef-vegetable soup
some tea with my milk and sugar
inside the chest, heaving breath
it all smells too sad
with no Grandma
Valerie Flowers

When Time Passes

Through the course of time and time again, the scares of life keep growing deeper and deeper. Images that tease and torture the human spirit are like never resting visions that dance on my mind, sometimes making it hard to breathe, live, or survive the mere existence of life. All of which brings me to the conclusion, without making judgements, that memories are like razor blades. When reminiscing is the purest form of self abuse, leading to one's very self destruction. All then to do is hide in a self-made persona, so no one sees my pain.

---

John Cline

Untitled

warm winds touch
under April skies
soft haze lights
hallways
and faces
the wind undresses her
bare, supple arms
***
images pass in
a soft parade of light
during the spring months
country roads & open windows
passing cornfields in automobiles
terribly beautiful
forgotten
***
Again, I write this song
of yesterday's longing
Tomorrow the same.
Thought

Echo
loud and clear
speak again
but ever so softly
come here

Eyes blurred by little mind
broadened by love to
heart and mind. Souls
erupt with momentous
praise. Sword stabbed in
playful game. Cleft
in two a heart aches
for another who has
already set the stake.
Passion burns deep and
long, drop by drop the
essence lost. Where it
goes and how long it stays,
only up to one mind
that has no feeling.
No more face, cold
setting in, not understanding,
a mind rambles a thought.
Jumps.
yet a fluid sentence can’t
contain. I have taken
a stand, yet strength trickles
out down my thigh, yellow
to the core, I hope not
till I die. Grumbling
from deep down low I
hate to see it go. I rage
just like any other against
the dying light, voice unheard
in a losing plight. Scream.
Nothing comes to mind
but, a Rose wrapped in
the petals dreaming of
a blissful night. Moon,

O tempestuous Moon. Why
have you sought me
out tonight,
pull at my
innards and wrench
my soul, making me
wonder what I have
in store? Giving enough
light to write by but
not enough to see the
truer vision of this meaning.
Now I know this has
been oblique and leading.
A mind can go unchanged.
The grey matter can lie dormant,
unused, congealing on
the skull floor. Never
wanting to hear a slamming door.

The Blue has spoke to
me “fulfill your duty to
you and me.”
enjoy in the years to come
that may end in time.
but beware what lurks
in the shadows
of life’s rhyme.
“Corde natus ex parentis”
(the evening after Auschwitz)

The train chugs out of Krakow and we’re three in the compartment, me facing what we’ve passed as they stare straight ahead. Six hours since we left Auschwitz, six hours since we stared at a brown pool piled with ashes of the six million dead-before-their-time. The silence is still tinged with our sorrow. Anna slips across the bench seat she shares with Anders. She reaches out, for his papers or his person I can’t tell, and I sink further in my corner so as to give them space.

They touch and then they break; their hands cannot quite meet and Anna can’t sit still. It’s too new and still uncomfortable. We sit opposite on the international train, the lovers and the lonely, blue eyes versus gray, two Christians and one of the Chosen. Anna begins a hymn that I don’t know, as humming, and Anders adds in the Latin. I watch, keeping carefully to the outside.

Grass and trees rise up from the ashes of Auschwitz and I want to rise up too, not like nature and their Messiah but at least like they are, half holding on and half held together, creating a circle of two as they rise above the rubble of this wretched day. “Corde natus ex parentis” Anders sings, and Anna echoes after, “Born out of the Parent’s heart.” I close my mind to all but the music, hoping their song can wrap around me, so as to hold me through this night.

I can comprehend neither Latin nor Christ, but that’s not what is keeping me quiet. I’m still seeing the grandfather and grandson who cycled through the battered remains of Birkenau, all the while smiling as though it were some Sunday afternoon in a Central Park surrounded by the crumbling of a concentration camp. I’m still sick with something, anger or sorrow or maybe envy at the calm they all seem to have come to, both the pair cycling and the two across from me who sing. That pair of voices blends and it’s so beautiful I can’t stand it; they’re so secure in this love they sing of that it transcends the uncertainty of before. I sit still on the sidelines, simmering with an entire people’s anger and six million souls’ worth of pain. They sing on.

She corrects his pitch and he orders the verses; I can hear how she’s too high and his baritone can’t quite find the notes. But for every clash they share this moment of pure harmony, of meeting beyond the limits of key signatures and clefs. This is as it should be, two thousand years of metaphor summed up in six verses of a song.

Their song-circle rolls on and on; I settle in, miraculously at a point not on their tangents, to watch with the writer’s eye. “Are we bothering you?” Anders asks at the last verse, the song stopping for a second. “No,
it's sustaining." He chooses not to question my response and gathers her in arms. Regrouped and reaffirmed, they begin again to sing.

Two tongues, two parts, two hands joined softly, each stroking the other's fingers. Blinded by their own light, they don't see as I sit staringly to the side. It's hours since sunset but they're still shining; I search around us for a shadow so that they might sit in peace. Here, and not there, I mourn the millions and my loss while they praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost for the oneness they've gained.

Beneath my silence I am grateful for this gift they're giving me. Like the twice six million who lived, they carry on into this frozen foreign darkness because they're anxious to reach tomorrow together. Even those who perished pass on a legacy larger than each of their lives, one that outlives the human body. I can't sing along but I can add in a countermelody of prose, turning three into one, so even I can praise.

We cross the border; a soldier asks for our passports, in Polish. Anders fumbles in his pocket and Anna jumps up to retrieve her things. The soldier leaves as she sits down again. The music is lost but not their quiet calm, which reaches across the compartment to wrap me in its armless grip as we rumble on through the icy night.

John Cline  Switchtrack

Julienne La Croix

Canopy of the Sun

The whispers and rustles of the soft breeze sing to me

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

Standing beneath the tall oak tree staring up at the long branches dark, contrasting the bright leaves that swing by their stems waving to me

"A time to be born, and a time to die a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted"

The end of their season in the sky

An umbrella surrounding me filtering the blinding sunlight into a warm glow that inherits my body

Canopy of the sun intense, brilliant gold lamp illuminating my soul with the candle light of the earth

"A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away"
Julienne La Croix

My spirit soars to the tree top
riding on a yellow leaf, it
floats to the ground
reborn
in a pile of leaves,
the tears of Mother Nature

"A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance"

The soft, crunchy
paper leaves
like pages in my journal
comfort and protect me
from the callous ground

"A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak."

I sing to myself
and laugh with the wind,
cry with the Earth
and lie under the tree
captured in its world
surrounded by words
that float to the ground
and fall past my head
escaping
my grasp.

"Still, there is a calm, pure harmony, and music inside of me."
—Vincent van Gogh
Last Night

The monkeys fly from the witch's window to find Dorothy. Those monkeys always scare me, I thought. Monkeys aren't supposed to fly. My eyes wander from the screen over to the framed pictures perched on the shelf above the glowing TV. The smiling faces of my friends and Tim seem to be my only connection to the outside world today.

Ring Ring . . . Ring Ring

Double ring! An off-campus call, a very welcome interruption. I wonder if it's Tim. I hurdle the laundry basket in the middle of the floor, hop over a tall stack of Tamara's books (which she never has time to put away) and dive for the phone. I know it is somewhere next to the door. I scramble to find it beneath the pile of clean shirts Tamara threw on the floor this morning when she claimed she had nothing to wear. I grab the phone right before the third ring, desperate to hear the caller's voice.

"Hello?" I finally breathe into the receiver.

"Aimée?"

It wasn't Tim. I could feel my heart sink to the carpet as I let myself fall back to sit on the floor. "Yeah, this is." I pull my thick, brown hair behind my shoulders and twist it to keep it from falling back in my face.

"Hey, it's Mary." Mary Ratkins, a friend from high school. She goes to Western Michigan University with Tim. Tamara and I chose to go a little farther away from home, to Central Michigan University.

"Oh, hi Mary! How are you?" This is weird. She never calls me. I only see her when we go out with the gang.

"I'm okay. How are you?"

"Fine. I was just watching 'The Wizard of Oz' for one of my classes. I have to analyze the personalities of the characters according to Freud's theory. Sounds exciting, huh? What have you been up to?"

"Oh, not much. I just wanted to give you a call." She cuts off her thought, hesitating. Something is wrong. She isn't the happy, peppy Mary that she usually is. I hope she and Kevin didn't break up.

I venture to find out, "Is everything alright? What happened?"

"Well . . ." she stops.

"Mary, what's wrong?"

"I shouldn't be the one to tell you this, Aimée."

"Tell me what?" Like frostbite, fear spreads from my fingertips through my entire body until I feel a nervous shudder in my chest. "What is it?"

"Have you talked to Tim lately?"

"Not since Thursday. Why?"
and crimson leaves from the air like raindrops sprinkling the cold ground. I wipe my wet cheeks and pick up the phone again. I listen to the dial tone for a moment and think about what I am going to say. Don't sound sad, I advise myself. Just be normal and happy.

I dial his number: 1-6-1-6-9-8-3-1-3-5-8, and wait for it to ring. It rings almost five times before someone picks up.

"Hello?" I hear a familiar voice, coarse and agitated. It is his father.

"Uh hi. Is Tim home?"
"Tim? Yeah. Is this Aimee?"
"Yes it is." Do any other girls call for Tim?

He lets out a long breath of air right into the receiver. This is the typical response when I call. He replies, "Hang on. I'll go get him."

I don't think his parents like me very much. That sigh his father always makes when he realizes it's me on the other end, it sounds like he is irritated with me or something. I don't think I did anything to make them hate me. I keep Tim out late sometimes and he comes over to my house a lot, but none of that is my fault. I don't tie him down and make him come with me. Maybe his mom is just a little protective of her only son. I would never hurt him in a million years though because I love him so —

"Hello?" This time it's Tim's voice, but he sounds different. It is not his usual deep, sexy voice. He sounds uncertain. But of what?

Sound cheery, I remind myself. "Hey Baby! How're you?"
"Okay, I guess. How are you?"
"Good, but I miss you lots and lots. What have you been doing this weekend?"

"Not much."

"I've had the most boring weekend here by myself. I've been trying to catch up on some homework. Right now I'm working on this paper about the 'Wizard of Oz.' I'm discussing the sexual orientation of the Cowardly Lion and Scarecrow!"

Silence.

"Tim?"

"Yeah."

"Is everything okay?" It definitely isn't. Something happened, but I can't tell what it is. My first guess is another girl. Please, oh, please, anything but that!

"Yes, I don't know. No."

"Why are you at home?"

"Mary drove me back so I could go shopping."

"She called me."

"Mary?"

"Yes, but I'm not supposed to tell you that. Are you mad at her?"

"No."

"So, what's going on?"

Silence again.

"Tim, please tell me what happened." Forget cheery, I sound downright worried.

"Last night..."

I struggle to wait through his silence again. I am overcome with fear and I know if I try to open my mouth to encourage him to talk again, I will break down. I can't believe this is happening. Dialogues rush through my head: he met someone, he kissed her, they made out, maybe they even had —

"Last night..." he started again, "my sister...Kathie"

Oh my god! Oh my god!

"Aimee, she died last night."
**The Arty-Crafty English Major Origin of Bad Ideas**

Yesterday I woke up three
hours ahead of schedule,
full of nothing

- rusted metal moving trees
- broken flashing chords
- atomic sand paper pizza
- hand crafted tableture
- wrathful metal videos and
  the ninety-nine oldsmobile alero
to do, so I looked out the window
at the yard of the house next door:

- plastic apparatus
- local shoe-in
- representative contributions
- shrouded serving dish
- hydroponic birthday cake
- exfoliating vomitron

It's like watching

- television
- barometric fissure
- Bound 2 Stay Bound
- the sun in a wicker chair
- scrambled channel 95

a play before the curtain is drawn.
I kind of feel like

- Kurt Cobain
- smash mutant burritos
- ironing boards and
  draining bad sap trees

Going back to bed.

---

**4:00, February Morning**

Everyone here's to blame. Everyone here gets caught up in the pleasures of their pain. Everyone here hides shades of shame, but looking inside, we're the same...  

- Rob Thomas

She told me that she made a mistake, an action unintended.
And if I want, she'll walk away, and this could all be ended.
I watch her look down at the floor. That tear fall from her eye.
I hate myself, what I'm about to do, and start to wonder why...
I take her hand. I pull her close, to feel her next to me.
I'd rather share than not at all, if that's how it's got to be.
I take the way I really feel, and from her try to hide.
I'll hurt and swear and cry a lot, but do it all inside.
"We all mess up, from time to time," I whisper in her ear.
I want so much to run away. I need to keep her here.
So I'll look past it now, just like before, and then again next time.
I hate the way it feels to know... I just can't say goodbye.

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Merry Everingham  
Mater Dolorosa
Variations .55

This unending protrusion of thought consumes. Emptiness.
Sweet analytical love.
Will he respond, or will The Walk be in vain?
The point has not been taken...

(You are so beautiful, my sweet angel. . .)

Was he floating there?
He mysteriously arrived but ignored.
Will he miss the throw? but touch the. . .

(What's so beautiful about me?)

Thought, being grovels for the slightest sign, no matter how insignificant or invented.
But what does Miss say? And will prodigies ever leave them?
Looks around. . .

(Your body, your spirit, your caring. . .)

I have been raped of my desires by some unknown captain.
A calm politeness overcomes me and I unintentionally, almost try to think of what to say next.
For knowing the aftermath of this scene playing in my mind is too painful, as before.
And Damn whoever will push me to it again.

(I'm sorry I can't keep my hands off of you. . .)

See me, and you will see none of this plagiarism of a whore.
I drift away in sleep finally honestly awake.
I cry.
Tell me that's alright.

(I want you to get inside of me. . .)

The urge to awaken you with a kiss engulfs me. And Miss is still laughing. Mocking.

(I'm sorry I can't be everything that you want me to be. . .)

In response, I tell her that I would marry him today.
And after finding God, she says that she understands.

Elizabeth Jenkins
Self-Portrait