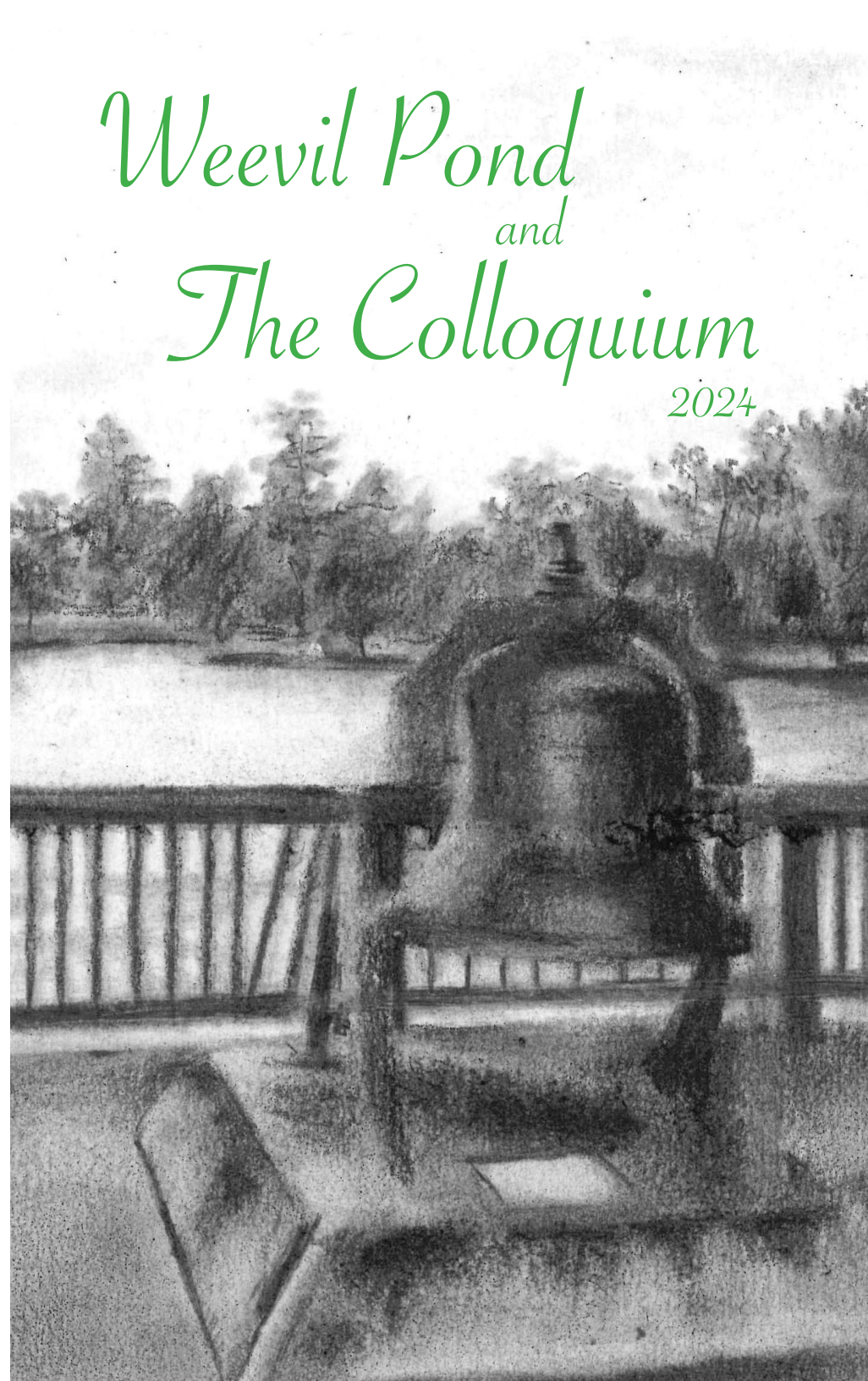


Weevil Pond
and
The Colloquium
2024



Cover:

"Weevil Pond Drawing"

Alexia Lams

Graphite and Charcoal on Paper 8.5"x11"

2024

Editor's Note: Weevil Pond is the annual publication of the English program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Our mission is to highlight the creativity of the UAM community. This volume features work from current UAM students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Weevil Pond 2024*Introduction*

- "Dipping Our Toes into Weevil Pond" 4
by Dr. Craig T. Olsen

Art

- "Lost in Space" 6
by Samuel Wallis
- "The Misfit" 7
by Samuel Wallis
- "Drained" 8
by Ashlynn Ebarb
- "Lost Boy" 9
by Kai Morphis
- "Gingy Baby Bread" 10
by Kai Morphis
- "Pie" 12
by Brian Thomas
- "Lae'zel of K'liir" 13
by Destiny Forrest
- "Snow Day on the Farm" 14
by Anastyn Graham
- "And Then Spring Begins" 15
by Anastyn Graham
- "Southeast Sunset" 16
by Anastyn Graham
- "The Unexpected Beauty of Wall Art" 17
by Dr. Carol Strong

Poetry

- "Chant of an Escaped Skeleton: An Ekphrastic Poem" 18
by Kailley White
- "The Fine Art of Healing" 20
by Dr. Craig T. Olsen
- "My Feet are Not Longfellows" 22
by Dr. Craig T. Olsen
- "A Rabbit's Tail" 23
by Dr. Craig T. Olsen

- "Musing By the Bed You Die In" 24
by Destiny Forrest
- "Ode To Sleep" 25
by Ezekiel Nail-Clemmer

Prose

- "Hey Siri, Can a Vampire Get Anaphylaxis?" 29
by Eden Rozing
- "Potato Soup" 37
by Kailley White
- "Semicolon" 45
by Ezekiel Nail-Clemmer

Music

- "Springtime Around The Pond" 48
Composed by Henry Thomas

The Colloquium*Introduction*

- "Traditional Expository Writing: A Dying Breed (?)" 58
by Dr. Kate Stewart

Essays

- "Sartre's Physical and Psychological Wall:
The Philosophy of Autonomy" 59
by Destiny Forrest
- "Waiting for the End" 68
by Joanna Poole
- "Bowing Down to Death in Jean-Paul Sartre's 'The Wall'" 73
by Kaia Young
- "Pablo Ibbieta's Psychological Wall" 79
by Rylee Griffin

End Notes

- Contributors' Biographies 84
- Editors' Biographies 87

Dipping Our Toes in the Weevil Pond

Greetings and salutations dear readers and thank you so much for picking up a copy of Weevil Pond and The Colloquium 2024. Allow me to take this opportunity to explain a little bit about this journal, the process behind it, and what it means to not only the School of Arts and Humanities, but UAM as a whole.

Weevil Pond is a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on, but is not restricted to, local writers, artists, musicians, scholars, and anything else that can fit comfortably in print. We are so pleased to share with everyone our submissions for poetry, prose, music, and especially art (as it was our largest area of submissions for this year). Weevil Pond puts out an edition every time the corresponding class is offered, which as of the printing of this collection, is every spring.

The purpose behind creating Weevil Pond is two-fold. First is to make sure that people who have creative/academic endeavors they are proud of can showcase these achievements in a tangible format. The second is that Weevil Pond is constructed by students as a part of a class (ENGL 3333). The learning outcomes of the Weevil Pond class is to give students the opportunity to work with advanced programs such as InDesign, Photoshop, Google Drive (and all the programs that go with it) along with learning about the process of planning, advertising, editing, and finally constructing an academic journal.

From the way this class and the process is set up, it needs to be made clear that Weevil Pond is indeed considered a peer-reviewed journal. The selection process was done in such a way that all identifying marks were removed from the submissions and the editors selected the pieces they wanted to include based on merit and not who the author

was. There were even fail-safes in place for the submissions done by the editorial staff to make sure that everything was done properly, and so authors would not be able to vote on their own pieces.

What is new this time around is the addition of The Colloquium. This publication has been put out by the department of English yearly to share the achievements and the final project done by the soon-to-be graduating English majors as a part of the capstone course, Advanced Composition (ENGL 4763).

Classically, Weevil Pond and The Colloquium have been published separately. However, Dr. Kate Stewart (Advanced Composition's professor) and I decided that we would try out having both published together as it is a strong showcase of what Arts and Humanities have to offer. There is so much I could say about The Colloquium, but I believe Dr. Stewart's forward later in this collection will do a much better job of showcasing everything.

With all the previous information in mind, we (the editorial staff) are so excited to present to you the first publication of Weevil Pond and The Colloquium. Thank you so much for supporting the School of Arts and Humanities, and if you have any creative/academic pieces that you want to see in print, make sure to keep an eye out for our next year's edition.

Dr. Craig T. Olsen



"Lost in Space"
 Samuel Wallis
 Pen, Ink, and Pencil on
 standard drawing paper



"The Misfit"
 Samuel Wallis
 Hard and soft charcoal with white colored pencil



"Drained"

Ashlynn Ebarb

Black sharpie on paper

March 2024

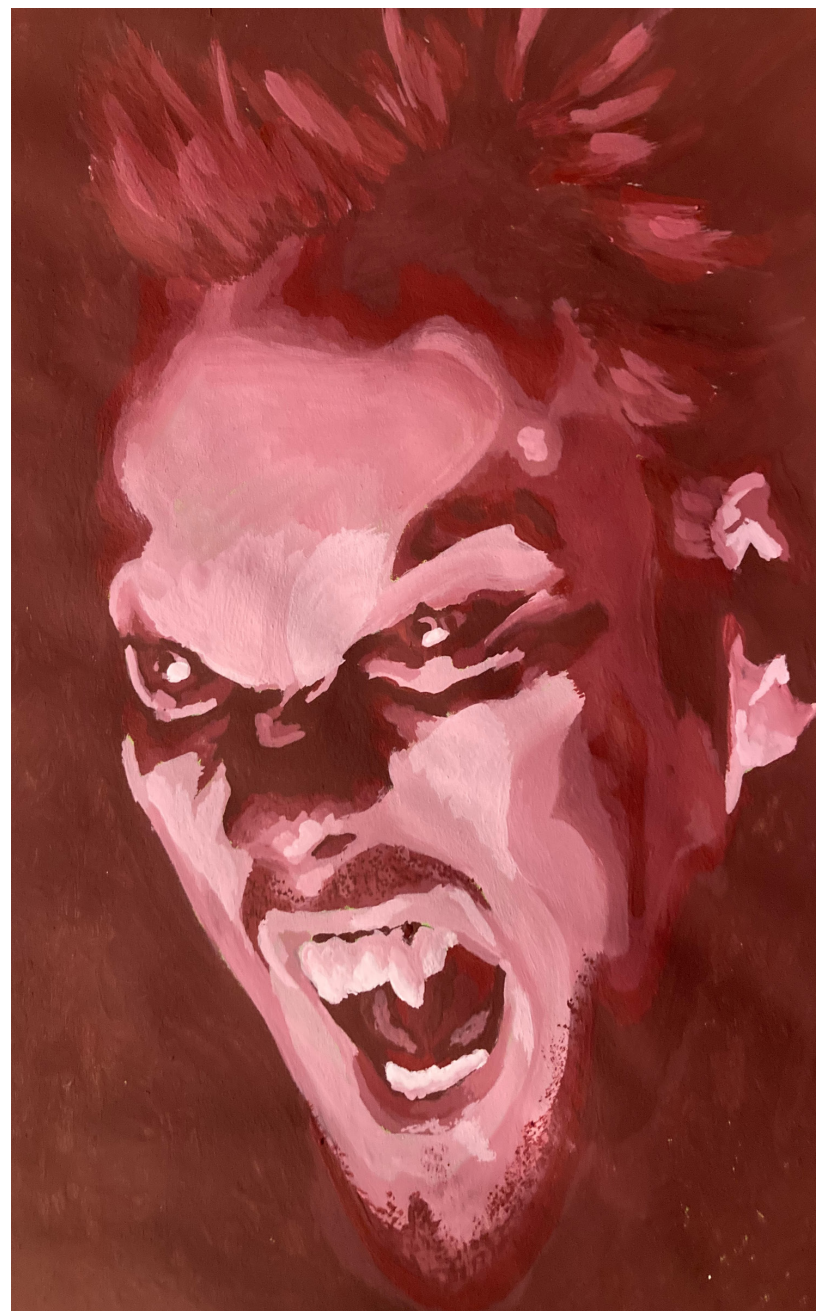
"Lost Boy"

Kai Morphis

Acrylic paint on sketchbook paper

July 2023

"The piece is inspired by the classic 80s movie. It is in a monochromatic form to capture the horror essence of the movie."





"Gingy Baby Bread"

Kai Morphis

Digital drawing

July 2023

"The piece is inspired by my cat Gingy Baby Bread (named by my youngest sister). It was a nice summer day and he was sprawled out on the grass. He looked peaceful while taking in the summer sun. I encaptured his essence through bold colors and choppy line markings."



"Pie"

Brian Thomas

February 10, 2024

Acrylic paint, sharpie



"Lae'zel of K'llir"

Destiny Forrest

Gouache on cardstock

December 2023



**"And Then Spring
Begins"**

Anastyn Graham
March 20, 2024
Digital Camera



**"Snow Day on the
Farm"**

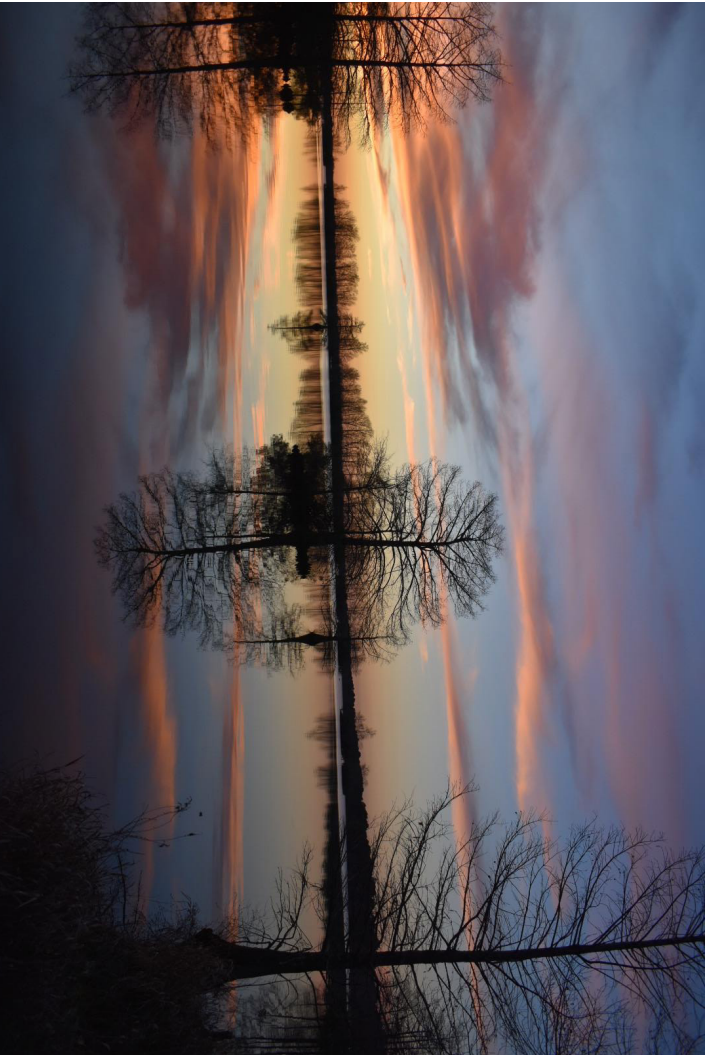
Anastyn Graham
January 15, 2024
Digital Camera



"The Unexpected Beauty of Wall Art"

Dr. Carol Strong
2017
Hand-Held Camera

Under the Charles Bridge, Prague,
Czech Republic



"Southeast Sunset"

Anastyn Graham
February 23, 2024
Digital Camera



*Painting: "Skull of a Skeleton with Burning Cigarette" (1885-86) By
Van Gogh*

Chant of an Escaped Skeleton: An Ekphrastic Poem

Kailley White

Home from work, I look in my parlor,
I see a Skeleton Man in my parlor.

"What misfortune has fate bestowed?"
I ask the soldier so grand in my parlor.

I'm not surprised by a skeleton in my home,
much less a man, making his plan in my parlor.

There is no one else in this house, no other
reason to stand like the Boogeyman in my parlor.

My heart begins to beat loud and louder,
drowning out noise like rocks in a can in my parlor.

Peril! Danger! They shriek in my attic,
better there than here in my parlor.

The skeleton moves, his cigar burning;
Burning brighter than I ever can in my parlor.

My burning house; no Skeleton Man.
No White bones; none of what he began in my parlor.

The Fine Art of Healing

Dr. Craig T. Olsen

I hate that he stole your art from you,
Through rage, neglect, and lies.
Your art was beautiful, drawing my attention,
Inspiring me to be an artist like you.

Your hand was strong, yet swift with creativity.
Able to construct alluring sirens,
Colored in fiction and fantasy.
But the hand I made to mimic yours was lesser.

One day, you told me you loved my music,
So freely shared and created what I could.
It was a fire that painted symphonies for your approval,
But I didn't realize you didn't need a composer back then.

While I was lost in harmony and chords,
I wasn't there to protect you from your monster.
When I was there, I hoped I could sing you back to life.
But I never noticed he had dug his heels into your hands.

Yet when life had taken my music from me.
You remembered my songs and sang them back,
Crushing loss into silver vibrations of warm healing tears,
Cupping them in your palm alongside the stains
Of rainbows and blood.

The music was louder than I remembered,
A little discordant, with sparks from passing time.
Yet your records were faithful, as relative pitch recalls,
Now more precious as they are embossed
With your phantom fingerprints.

I know it's been too long to save your hand.
So, what if I give you mine?
After all, I only ever grew it for you,
Making it yours all along.

My Feet are Not Longfellow's

Dr. Craig T. Olsen

I am often astonished by poets,
With their power to weave songs filled with gemstones
Perfectly flawed in their visions
Of thousands of years of rebirth.

Meanwhile, I am wearing orange today.
Not rust
Nor a scrap of dawn
Not amber or starlight or the stagnant air of Hell
Not even the fruit.
Just orange.

I have read the treasures
That these sorcerers of mirth and passion
So effortlessly smith from galaxies
For gods and entropy to envy.

Right now, I am hyper aware that my nose itches.
My feet kinda hurt as I am wearing my shoes without my
insoles.
I also wish I had remembered to wear my glasses today
As I am feeling the strain from just trying to see.
I think I left them by my medication.
Did I remember to take them this morning?

I cannot fathom this dimension that poets traverse.
After all, I am still wearing orange.

A Rabbit's Tail

Dr. Craig T. Olsen

I wish that I had never known you, Mr. Rabbit.

Whenever I would see you,
You seemed to shiver in fear at the idea
Of being outside your burrow.
But even then, you would still wave to me
And ask me about my day.
You would remind me where all the best carrots were
And how to appreciate the song of the winds and leaves
All while your eyes scanned the world
Looking for foxes.

And yet, I wish I had never known you.
Because we should've been friends.
Maybe if we were,
On the day when everything went wrong
I could've reminded you I was a bunny too.
And as a fellow cottontail, I could've showed you
That there is more to being a rabbit
Than satiating a fox's appetite.

Musing By the Bed You Die In
Destiny Forrest

We take you to the beach, and I sit with you watching waves crest,

the golden sun nests in still waters at the horizon, honeys your sandy hair,

my dad and mom and brothers are all there, too, together,

burying shell and seaweed treasures, digging castle-less moats with our toes,

you wade half-calf-deep, and the slow surf catches your rolled-up jeans at the hem,

then, looking out over the calm ocean, glittering in waning light,

the entire world stretching back behind you in diminishing scale,

you exhale, and, finally, your shoulders rest.

Ode To Sleep
Ezekial Nail-Clemmer

I can't sleep, and when I do I'm not blessed by Morpheus most nights. I'm stuck in the void; the black abyss that will soon consume us all. It's the true meaning of nothingness. Some nights, however I am able to dream, and what I see are moments of clairvoyance scattered along the timeline. Sporadic moments and tiny pieces of information, that pertain to nothing specific going on at that moment in my life. What does this mean Lord? Why are you showing me these snippets of information? Why do you curse me with future knowledge? Why do you curse me with sight of the end; why do you curse me with the abyss?

The only dreams I see are when my eyes are filled with light; when my eyes view the waking world. These visions I see are hauntings from memories past. Relaying every moment of my life and then after altering the circumstances, or what words were exchanged to obtain a different outcome to show what life I had missed. To taunt me with the joys and opportunities that are now forever lost to me. To show me realities I can never be a part of, because I didn't make the proper choice to do so. To curse my agony and dread with my young obsession of knowing.

At night I swear I can hear this rhythmic beating around me that causes the shades to dance, and ripple through the abyss. But that must be impossible because everything is shade. I see it though; night after night I see it, and as each night passes I think I can see it a little more clearly. What is this thing in the abyss?

Days are never pleasant any more. My color has entirely vanished and I'm left with a monochromatic world. No more beautiful sun rays. No more blue skies. No more

glistening oceans. Even my visions are coming in with a distorted color. It feels like the void is coming to my days breaching out of the night. My escape to freedom feels like it will soon be freedom no more.

Will this hell be my eternity? Unable to run and hide? Unable to seek help? Just trapped in the void, constricted by these chains that no longer clasped my wrists, but rather draped around my body, tighter and tighter like a boa around its food. My faulty mind was right there is a

rhythmic beating. I feel it coursing through me as I lay through this fictitious surface, a construct I hope to be there. Since this is a realm beyond the sorcerer of sleep, but still seeming to be in the same facet of the universe and the cosmos, the bases of physics and the other sciences don't apply here. I'm held solid but yet I am loosely floating in this nothingness. Everyone keeps asking me if I'm okay, but I'm not sure what to tell them. If I say yes they know it will be a lie due to the dark rings around my eyes, my frame is becoming more frail by the day leaving me looking hollow and sunken like the aged dead. If I tell them no they will have me placed in a padded room and possibly lobotomized.

The shadows started talking to me, whispering in my ear in a language I did not understand. Garbled and distorted like nails on a chalkboard mixed with ritualistic chanting. It hurts my ears, and my brain is starting to ache. The more they talk the more my ears start to ring.

Every day I stray further and further from the person I was. But what is it for? Why does this keep happening? Every time I look in the mirror, I don't recognize the person I see. My ashen gray skin matches that of the recently dead. I've lost thirty pounds over the span of a few weeks, and my rib cage pushes against my skin as if it is trying to escape.

My eyes are hollow, and the rings around them are dark and deep. I was a man merely in his twenties just weeks ago; now I match that of someone in his sixties. The creases and folds upon my face run deep, and my hair is barely stained with the amber color it once was. I'm afraid soon I will be nothing but the corpse my body is trying to mimic.

They started tearing the hide from me. Every slow strip makes me call in pain, screaming to the gods above. What sick and twisted god has cast this curse on me? The memories started flooding back to me.

My mother. A face I haven't seen in so long. I'm sorry mother. I'm sorry for how vile I have become. How cynical of a man I grew to be. but feeling so alone will cause a child to grow to be a hollow vessel.

To my father. I wish you were there more, or not at all. The false doubts and securities that no child should encounter. You were never there when it mattered, and these fears and insecurities ravaged in my teenage life. When are the rest leaving like you did? It's inevitable, it was one of the sad lessons you taught me.

To my sisters. I love each one of you. You mean the world to me. I'm sorry I learned too well from our father. I'm sorry that I may never see the futures that you bring, and be able to see the lives that you lead, but I believe in you. Every. One. Of. You. You will be great.

To the sick god that has taunted my dreams for what feels like eons, molding my stature to that of a skeleton. Whatever I've done I'm sorry. I can't take this anymore. I can't sleep. I don't gain rest. Please. Please dear tormentor make it end. Life is not worth living if I can't dream. I just close my eyes and spot a hellscape. Trapped, taunted, tortured, manipulated. All for what? Some sick game? Some un-

knowing lesson? What is this to teach me? I haven't left my house in months. Each day that passes, my strength along with it. My once physical prowess deteriorated to a hollow vessel with protruding bones.

Please lord. Please make this end. Please don't let this be my eternity.

Hey Siri, Can a Vampire Get Anaphylaxis

Eden Rozing

“As the children say nowadays: ‘I’m gonna do it.’”

“This is the worst idea you’ve had this century,” Emilia said.

“Consider! The medical marvels of the modern world have presented me with a glorious opportunity!” Godfried retorted. As he spoke, he unscrewed the cap of the opaque plastic bottle and shook out two pink pills. He continued, “I’m telling you, Emilia, this will be my finest achievement. A new dawn for our kind.” With that said, he popped the pills into his mouth and swallowed them down.

“A new level of stupidity, maybe,” she drawled.

“You’ll be green with envy soon enough. My delivery tracking says that ‘Sam’ will be here in three minutes, and I received a discount since I purchased less than four items.”

“Fewer.”

He leveled her with a look that had once made hardened soldiers weep. She simply smiled back at him.

“Why are you like this?” he sighed.

Her smile widened to reveal sharp teeth. “You made me this way. What exactly did you expect?”

“A delicious snack and perhaps a loyal minion.”

“Not your minion, Godfried.”

“I noticed,” he said dryly. “Really, my dear, I should have known that you would take to eternity with such aplomb.”

“Aww, you’re getting maudlin on me,” she cooed. “Finally realizing how idiotic this plan is?”

“As I said before, my actions here will mark a new dawn for the children of the night.”

“Because we do so well in the light of dawn.”

Just then, a cheery doorbell chime sounded through the house.

“It’s arrived!” he shouted, hurrying to greet their guest. The delivery boy on the porch seemed a bit startled, but he handed over the food and accepted payment (with tip, of course, Godfried wasn’t that kind of monster) without issue. After thanking the gangly young man, he promptly slammed the door and returned to the kitchen. Emilia sat waiting at the table.

“You’re really doing this, huh?”

“Of course. In all my life, I have never faltered from my chosen course, no matter the obstacles in my way.”

“Pig-headed, stubborn old fool.” She shook her head. “When you die, I’m claiming all of your stuff.”

He chuckled, “So be it, my dear. But rest assured, I have no intention of dying again anytime soon.” He lifted a single piece of golden, garlicky goodness out of the box.

“Last chance to back out,” she said, eying the food warily.

He flashed her a fanged grin, winked, and took a bite. Silence fell as he chewed.

“Well?”

“Extraordinary,” he breathed. He swallowed and picked up another piece. “Truly, one of the finest accomplishments of mankind to date.”

“Huh. So, the antihistamine worked then.”

“Oh, it distinctly did not,” he mumbled around a mouthful of bread. “I can feel my throat starting to burn. After I finish, you may need take me to a hospital.”

“Are you serious?!”

“As the grave. It’s quite painful.”

“Then why are you still chewing!”

With no small amount of difficulty, he swallowed another mouthful. “Because this must be what ambrosia tastes like. I will not waste this opportunity to broaden my horizons.”

“Clearly the allergy medicine did nothing!”

“In truth,” he said, voice noticeably rougher than before.

“Part of me is not surprised that it failed. It was designed for human use, after all, and I have not been human for a long time.”

“So much for the ‘medical marvels of the modern world,’” she muttered. Godfried finished the piece that was in his hand and moved for another. She shoved the box out of his reach. “Enough. You’re going to kill yourself, and I don’t feel like dealing with that tonight.”

“I wouldn’t die from this,” he argued. “I’ll simply be in acute physical distress for a while.”

“Oh, that’s so much better,” she said. “And I guess I’ll take care of you while you’re indisposed, as I always do after your little schemes go awry.”

“If you would be so obliging. Though you would be within your rights to say, ‘I told you so.’”

Emilia stood up and slammed her hands on the table. “Yes! Yes, I will say it: I told you so. I said that this was a stupid idea, but did you listen? No! You never do. You act like I’m

still a little fledgling who needs to have her hand held. I'm almost a century old! That may seem like nothing to your Elizabethan ass, but it's something to me. I can make my way in the modern world a lot easier than you can, but you never ask me to help. I just have to hope that I can keep you from accidentally offing yourself during one of your harebrained schemes. Your pride isn't worth your life!"

At that, she collapsed back into her chair, head in her hands. "I just don't want to lose you. I'm a century old, but I'm not ready to be alone yet."

Godfried sat in stunned silence for a few moments, attempting to reconcile her outburst with the sarcastic, devil-may-care young woman he knew. "I had no idea that you felt this way, my dear," he ventured.

Her head snapped up, fangs bared. "Of course you didn't," she said. "You've never bothered to pay attention to how I feel about anything." She stood up. "I need some air."

He didn't dare point out that neither of them needed to breathe anymore. She strode over to the back door, yanked it open, and stalked into the night.

"Well," he mumbled to himself. "I certainly could have handled that better." She seemed inured to his shenanigans most of the time. Then again, just because she was used to putting up with his nonsense didn't mean that she was alright with it. And, he mused, she was right: she wasn't a fledgling anymore, but she still needed him around.

He remembered the early days of his own immortality. If he had been left to his own devices before finishing his first century, he certainly would have turned out for the worse. The passage of what would have been one's human lifespan presented numerous challenges and moments of regret. Emilia was young yet. She needed a mentor, a guiding

hand—one that was neither too controlling nor too lackadaisical. In all their years together, he had swung between those two extremes. It was past time that he did better.

Still, it would likely be wise to let her have a few minutes to herself out there before he apologized. Best to wait, to give her space and to give myself time to gather my scattered mind. And I can tidy up while she is out. His gaze fell on the half-empty box of garlic bread. His throat still tingled faintly, but he was nevertheless seized with the urge to take another bite. Remember yourself, he admonished. Although he abhorred the idea of wasting a perfectly good meal, he had to admit that Emilia had been correct yet again: fleeting pleasure was not worth risking his life. He stood and put the box into the garbage bin without so much as a second glance.

He then set about cleaning up the grease stains left behind by his little misadventure with the lemon-scented spray from under the sink. "This canister really is an intriguing device," he said to the empty kitchen as he worked. "I should ask Emilia to purchase a different brand next time so that I might compare the mechanisms." He paused. "But if she deems this a bad idea, then I shall listen. I may be her teacher of the vampiric arts, but she is certainly more than able to be my guide to the modern world." He finished cleaning the table and sighed. "And now I must give my pupil the apology that she deserves."

He put the cleaning spray back into its cupboard and headed out the door. Under the waning moon, he made his way along the footpath that wound through the carefully tended flowerbeds, keeping an eye out for his wayward companion. After a bit of wandering, he found her on a marble bench near the ornamental fountain. She was staring into the dry basin. Another project for my future self, he

thought. But now I must focus on the task at hand. He came to a stop in front of her. She didn't look up.

"Emilia," he began. "You were right."

She snorted. "He finally says it." She turned to him. "About what?"

"About everything, about all of it," he replied. "It isn't fair of me to treat you like a child when you are nearly through your first century. You have knowledge and experience, and it is wrong for me to disregard that to follow my own whims. And it is equally wrong for me to be so careless with my own life when I have so much left to teach you." He sat down beside her. "Can you ever forgive me?"

For a few seconds, neither vampire spoke. Godfried looked up at the moon, the only spot of brightness in an otherwise dark sky. Emilia brushed her fingertips over a nearby lily bud. She had first planted them decades ago in memory of her mother, who used to call her "Little Lillie."

"I was just so angry with you. Still am, in fact." She kept her gaze on the flower. "I hate how you act like I know nothing."

"I don't think that you know nothing. Rather, I assumed that I knew everything."

"Assumed,' as in past-tense?" she asked.

"Well after the burnt esophagus and your rousing speech, I believe that I've learned otherwise," he said wryly.

She huffed out a laugh. "I'm glad."

"You have valuable wisdom to share, and I intend to listen to it from now on."

"First bit of wisdom then: no more garlic bread."

"No more garlic bread," he agreed.

"How's your throat?"

"Still twinging, but on the mend."

She nodded, then frowned. "And the rest of your apology?"

"I meant every word. You are a capable and competent vampire, but there are still many lessons left to be learned. For both of us, in fact."

"Sap," she said fondly. Then she grinned. "Does this mean you'll finally tell me the secret of how to make the perfect Bloody Mary?"

He returned her smile. "That and more. You've come so far from being the scared, angry young woman that I turned during the war, and I cannot wait to see how much further you will go."

"And as long as you don't do anything stupid like gorging on garlic bread or attempting to watch a televised mega-church sermon again, you'll get to see it."

"Those were admittedly not my best ideas."

"I told you so," she half-sang.

"From now on, I'll trust your judgment and cease my reckless experimentation."

Emilia looked at him, aghast. "What?"

"Just what I said. I will not risk leaving you alone quite yet."

"I don't want you not to experiment, you old fool," she said, "Just that you should be more careful when you do."

"Oh," he said.

“Yeah, oh. No need for the dramatics.”

“Then...perhaps you could purchase a different cleaning spray from the grocery store? I have some ideas to improve the dispenser.”

“Sure. I’ll grab one next Thursday. Lemon-scented?”

“Yes.”

“No problem then. I doubt that even your tinkering could make that dangerous.”

“You never know,” he teased. “I could come up with something.”

She cast a pointed look at him.

“I’ll try not to,” he promised.

“I’m holding you to that.”

“Excellent!” Godfried clapped his hands together and rose from the bench, offering her a hand. “Now, with that out of the way, shall we hunt down dear Sam and see about getting a proper meal? The night is young.”

Emilia took it and stood. She stretched languidly, fangs gleaming in the moonlight. “Yes.”

Potato Soup

By Kailley White

“There, done.” Marci stood, adjusting her smoke mask and goggles. Hands on hips, she surveyed her work, satisfied at her efforts. She had spent the past three hours repairing the raised beds of the nightshade flowers. Through her mask, she caught a faint hint of the sugary silkiness of the honey-flavored smoke which had put the whole Tranquil section at ease. The flowers swayed, intoxicated. Marci liked to imagine they dreamed of monster-and-nightmare-feasts. She smiled at her family’s flowers. Well, they were her flowers now as she’s been their sole caretaker for the past seven months.

Looking around, she triple checked all her completed tasks needed to maintain the cage. There were a proud total of four Tranquil species in their greenhouse: nightshade, lilies, orchids, and gladiolus.

Her chores finished, she exited the pen, careful to lock the door behind her. She pulled off the mask, breathing a sigh of relief. She replaced her earpiece, stored the mask on a shelf, grabbed her clippers and headed to the needs of the other flower varieties.

The greenhouse was circular in shape with its highest point reaching twenty feet; its diameter stretched eighty-five feet. The pen for the high-level Tranquil flowers were at the center. Expanding outward from the pen were the wild and more ordinarily fancy variety. Paths, patterned like a spider’s web, connected the flower beds, all with access to feeding troughs running in between the rows. At one end of every trough was a tube connected to a larger system running to the top of the pen into a larger tube, and then straight up to the top of the greenhouse and into a funnel.

The greenhouse itself was made of steel beams covered by five-inch-thick glass. For times in the summer when the heat was a bit overbearing, Marci's father constructed a pulley system that with the push of a button, a tarp would cover the top half of the greenhouse for four hours.

Humming to herself, Marci knelt to tend to the marshmallows when her father's voice erupted in her ear. "Marci, the potatoes are here!"

"Coming, Dad!" Marci put down her clippers and walked carefully to the greenhouse door. Finally, she thought. Those potatoes have taken forever to get here. She brushed the dirt off her apron and swept back the snapdragons from the door, depositing her apron and mask in a box. From the doorstep, she could see the other greenhouses in the distance, all various sizes. Drone shots of the region highlighting the symmetric beauty of the farms plastered her bedroom walls. She sighed. What a life to lead!

Mr. Leonard, the family's potato farmer, chatted with her father as she trotted up. "...and this morning, some wannabe florists rented the old MacGyver place," he said, chuckling at the naiveté of the noble hearted newcomers. Marci smiled as she examined the potato sacks. Her excitement almost made her forget the rotting odor of the sacks. Turning to Mr. Leonard, she suppressed her gag reflex and pulled out her pocketbook. She purchased twenty-five pounds of potatoes.

Every year in May, there is an uptick in applications to become Florists. And every year by July, most of those people disappear, gone either from exhaustion or plain stupidity. Marci chuckled to herself remembering a young, pretty, city boy running for his life after getting physical with a Nipper.

"Oi! Ms. Marci. You're losing potatoes." She started, correcting the bag that had opened spilling its contents.

"Thank You Mr. Leonard," Marci said sheepishly, picking up the potatoes. Then she hoisted as many sacks as she could carry, "Have a nice day," she called over her shoulder. Walking one-sided from the weight, she came round to the east side of the house passing by the kitchen window.

Her mother, kneading some bread, looked up, smiling at her daughter.

"Are those the potatoes?"

"Yessum," nodded Marci.

Her mother looked at her for a long moment. Marci saw nervousness cross her face; pride also. Silently, she nodded her approval and signaled for her to continue on.

Marci nodded in return. To prevent the stench from permeating the whole house and surrounding area, the sacks were stored safely down in a cellar located ten yards from the house. Making sure to lock the door, she put on her hat and returned to the greenhouse. Potato soup may be a central part of their livelihood, but the chores all had to be done before the soup could be made. Routine demanded it; and a certain catastrophe two years ago which still kept her up at night.

Rejuvenated by the arrival of the potatoes, she reentered the greenhouse, surveying the last of the chores. The flowers were calm, even playful when they had the sun on them. Inhaling the various sweet aromas, she gathered her materials and got to work. As she pruned a sunflower, she couldn't help but ponder her situation and career choice.

In fifth-year history class, the teacher had whole unit on the flowers and their sudden animation and consciousness

two-hundred years ago. Put simply, it was an accident. A botanist and an archeologist were examining a newly discovered temple deep in the Amazon. In one of the fifty rooms, which was locked in thirteen different ways, they found two sealed vases; once opened, they discovered seeds in the biggest and an ovular lump in the smallest. Their flashlights dead, they took the vases outside. The seeds were spread by the wind and sprouted. In just eighteen months, the entire flower population in South America had been fertilized by these flowers, sprouting carnivorous hybrids.

“Ouch!” she yelped as her hand slipped up and the sunflower cut her. Clutching her hand, she backed away. Exposing blood around the flowers, though not usually leading to any incidents, was never a good idea. She quickly bandaged the cut and wiped her hands in the makeshift kitchen near the greenhouse entrance. She sighed heavily, berating herself for allowing her mind to stray.

Kneeling down beside the marshmallows, she took out her clippers. She liked the marshmallows. They were the most docile of the Nippers and required minimum care and attention. After the marshmallow plants were satisfied, she turned to the roses and oleanders. Gnashers and Slicers were always the trickiest to care for as they were the snobbiest.

Though they were perfectly capable of surviving on their own, Marci had to water, prune, and feed them; Every. Single. Day. And even worse was the fact that they required a disgusting composted blend of eel and fish. Once they were fed, she tended to the lavender Nippers and rhododendron Biters, making sure they had all they needed for the night. Fortunately, the only Gulper variety her family took care of were the tulips, who were content with minute pruning and

sugar water. She took a security turn around the entire circumference of the inside of the greenhouse. No new holes or breaks could be seen. She flushed and winced, rubbing her thigh as she remembered the last time she forgot to check.

All the chores done, she locked the doors and went to the house. It was time to prepare the potato soup.

In between the greenhouse and the family house lay a large fire pit with two forked posts on either side of the pit and a twenty-five-gallon cauldron hanging on a swinging rod between them. Marci laid down the last of the potato sacks and studied the pit. She mustered her confidence and got to work.

She first filled the cauldron three quarters of the way full. As it heated, Marci quartered two dozen of the large potatoes wincing at the smell. Once the water boiled, the potatoes were submerged. “You must always be careful during this part. Cook them too little, they’ll be hard and tasteless. Cook them too much, they will disintegrate.” Her mother’s words echoed in her ears.

The potatoes al dente, she added a gallon mixture of water, flour, and cream thickening the soup. Marci stirred constantly, then pulled the pot away from the fire so it could simmer.

Next was the meat. Donning a protective apron with a large bowl in hand, she headed to the cellar which lay just on the edge of the woods. The smell gagged. Several carcasses hung from racks crisscrossing the ceiling. It still made her nervous to walk among the creatures; when she was little, she was terrified that they would come alive and eat her. Cutting off as much as the bowl would hold, she headed back making sure to lock and bar the cellar doors after. The

trek back to the house was longer due to the bowl's weight. Her mind strayed again.

Thanks to their new genetic information, the hybrids evolved quickly. It was chaos the first year. With the flowers growing out of control, much of the world's activities and events came to a halt, and through the chaos, the flowers developed a taste for meat. It started with rats and mice, leading to horses and cows. Eventually... Marci shuddered remembering the images and videos shown on the classroom screen.

Checking the soup, she carefully sliced and diced the meat, dropping them into the soup. Boiling allowed the meat to cook at a measurable rate, moderating the necessary bloodiness to slake a green palette.

Scientists struggled to reverse the genetic manipulation. Eventually they realized nothing could be done in the time they were given, so focus shifted to the second vase. They quickly found that the ovular lump, when ingested by a hybrid, had a calming, even taming effect. Reverse engineering resulted in mass reproduction in large quantities and Potato came into existence. They called it Potato due to the writing on the vase and, as the script was a dead language, they went with what the script looked like in English. Potato worked wonders, calming the international crisis and producing the honey-smoke as byproduct. The only downside was the horrid stench and the way they made people violently, sometimes lethally, sick.

Marci shook her thought process and got up from her seat to tend to the soup, growling at her inattention. A hissing interrupted her thoughts. Panicking, she looked at the pot and to her horror, it was boiling over the edges of the cauldron! Running towards the pot, she grabbed it with her bare hands and yanked it off the fire pit, spilling some of the

contents in the process.

Her hands burned, she stared at her soup. The catastrophe from two years ago flashed in her mind. It was just like last time, the only difference being that this injury was just second-degree burns. Her mother, having heard the crash, came running out. Her head down, Marci's eyes welled, and she felt her face burn as hot as her hands. Just before the tears fell, she felt her mother's arms envelop her.

"It's alright, Ci. Everyone makes mistakes."

They hugged tightly, her mother treated and bandaged her hands, and together they cleaned up the mess, salvaging what they could and replenishing the lost amounts.

The soup finally completed, Marci and her father pulled on heavy duty harnesses. Making sure everything was in place, Marci and her father carefully lugged the pot to the greenhouse as her mother carried a large, heavy rope attached to an iron net. It was night and the moon was high in the sky when they got to the greenhouse. Her father set up the ladder and at the sound of the ladder hitting the wall, the flowers erupted with screeches and shrieks.

Marci and her father put the pot in the iron net. Climbing the ladder, her father pulled the rope with him till he got to the top of the green house. He put the rope through a pulley system and gently pulled the pot to the top. Marci climbed the ladder as it rose, guiding it along the way.

Then came time for the most dangerous part. He opened the hatch and poured the soup into the funnel. The entire greenhouse erupted with happy, greedy meeps, cheeps, and roars, all of which quieted down as the flowers ate their fill of the potato soup.

At the bottom, Marci waited nervously for the verdict. She

flinched as abrupt screeches came from the greenhouse. This was the most terrifying part: The Judging.

A loud burp came from inside the greenhouse. Leafy purrs followed. Marci and her parents laughed in relief.

The verdict: Delicious.

Semicolon

Ezekiel Nail-Clemmer

A semicolon holds a lot of meaning in the constructs of language. The Oxford definition of a semicolon for the English language is “a punctuation mark indicating a pause, typically between two main clauses, that is more pronounced than that indicated by a comma.” We’re all familiar with semicolons and their use, but there’s one definition that Oxford does not talk about. A semicolon is a symbol of strength and hope. It shows that you can make it through whatever hardships may come. Normally those that wear this tattoo wear it as a sign of remembrance either as a time they tried to end their story early, or in honor of someone close to them who had ended their story too early.

A semicolon represents all of the struggles and invisible battles that an individual has fought, but how did it get this meaning? In April of 2013 a person by the name of Amy Bleuel took to social media asking everyone with a mental illness to draw a semicolon on their wrist and post a photo of it online; the tagline for this phenomenon was “Your story isn’t over.” Since that moment that concept and movement has grown drastically to what Project Semicolon is today. Project Semicolon helps people find resources involving mental health, common medications, coping skills, support groups, and so much more.

In a modern day when mental health and suicide are more acceptable topics of conversation, groups like these are no longer taboo or have to stay hidden which is amazing. Struggling with mental health is a common occurrence, and depression and suicide run fairly rampant.

Topics like mental health, self-harm, and suicide weren’t always acceptable. I remember a time right before Christ-

mas break my senior year of high school a friend of mine, Dillion, was struggling with his own mental health, but he never talked about it. On the outside he was just a goofy kid trying to make people laugh, with a sense of style that his friends enjoyed. He was an alternative kid like the rest of us, considered to be a social outcast, but to us he wasn't an outcast. To us he was Dillion, the six foot three dork who wore band and superhero tees with an affinity for the matrix and gross out cringe humor. If someone was having a bad day he would do what he could to try and make them laugh, doing anything from making a goofy face to saying some of the most unhinged shit to try and pull you back to reality and gain a reaction out of you.

However on the inside he was fighting demons that only he could see with a 12 gauge shotgun shoved to the roof of his mouth. Mental health in every sense of the word was a taboo subject for men and teenaged boys especially in the good ol' American south. He was scared to tell anyone about his fight, until that December night when he pulled that trigger.

Dillion lived down my road. I remember I was out walking, listening to music, trying to clear my own head, when I saw what looked like police lights out front of his trailer. Though I could not differentiate between police lights and standard Christmas lights through the wintery night time haze. The location of his house also made it hard to see if there was any extra cars out front, but I knew when I got the message from his roommate Tyler and our friend Rae. Those simple words "We lost Dillion man," will never leave my mind.

Earlier that night Dillion and Tyler got into a minor fight, for what? I never asked, even to this day it's still too much of a touchy subject, but Tyler left to gain some space, and

when he returned he was met by police tape and Dillion's parents.

To this day he wished he never had left.

To this day I wish I checked in more; if I did maybe he would still be alive.

As I sit here and think about the life of my friend it makes me think about my friends, ex's, and family with that semi-colon on their wrist, and what demons they have fought. What part of their life did they decide was too much? Are they doing better now that they stayed, or are they still trying to find themselves and pick up the pieces to their damaged mind, hoping to put themselves back together? I cannot truly speak on their experiences, because those are not my stories to tell. The only stories I can speak on are my own.

Score

Springtime Around The Pond

Thomas Henry

Moderato (♩ = c. 104)

Flute *mp*

Oboe *mp*

Bassoon *mp*

Clarinet in B-1 *mp*

Clarinet in B-2 *mp*

Bass Clarinet *f*

Alto Sax 1 *mp*

Alto Sax 2 *mp*

Tenor Sax *mp*

Baritone Sax *mp*

Trumpet in B-1 *mp*

Trumpet in B-2 *mp*

Horn in F *mp*

Trombone 1 *mp*

Trombone 2 *mp*

Baritone (B.C.) *mp*

Tuba *mp*

Mallets *mp*

Percussion *mp*

Percussion II *mp*

2 9 Springtime Around The Pond

Fl. *mp*

Ob. *mp*

Ban. *mp*

B♭ Cl. 1 *mp*

B♭ Cl. 2 *mp*

B. Cl. *f*

A. Sax. 1 *mp*

A. Sax. 2 *mp*

T. Sax. *mp*

B. Sax. *mp*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mp*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mp*

Hr. *mp*

Tbn. 1 *mp*

Tbn. 2 *mp*

Bar. *mp*

Tuba *mp*

Mal. *mp*

Perc. *mp*

Perc. II *mp*

Springtime Around The Pond

5

34

Fl. *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ob.

Ban.

B♭ Cl. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp*

B♭ Cl. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp*

B. Cl. *mp* *mf* *mp*

A. Sax. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp*

A. Sax. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp*

T. Sax. *mp*

B. Sax. *mp*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp*

Hrn.

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Bar.

Tuba

Mal. *mp* *mf* *mp*

Perc. *mp* *mf* *mp*

Perc. II

Springtime Around The Pond

6

42

Fl. *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

Ob.

Ban.

B♭ Cl. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

B♭ Cl. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

B. Cl. *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

A. Sax. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

A. Sax. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

T. Sax. *mp* *f*

B. Sax. *mp* *f*

B♭ Tpt. 1 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

B♭ Tpt. 2 *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

Hrn.

Tbn. 1 *f*

Tbn. 2 *f*

Bar. *f*

Tuba *f*

Mal. *mp* *mf* *mp* *f*

Perc. *f*

Perc. II *f*

Sn. Cymb.

Springtime Around The Pond 7

This musical score is for the piece "Springtime Around The Pond" and spans 7 measures. It is written for a symphonic band. The instruments included are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bsn.), B♭ Clarinet 1 (B♭ Cl. 1), B♭ Clarinet 2 (B♭ Cl. 2), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone 1 (A. Sax. 1), Alto Saxophone 2 (A. Sax. 2), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Bass Saxophone (B. Sax.), B♭ Trumpet 1 (B♭ Tpt. 1), B♭ Trumpet 2 (B♭ Tpt. 2), Horn (Hrn.), Trombone 1 (Tbn. 1), Trombone 2 (Tbn. 2), Baritone (Bar.), Tuba, Mellophone (Mal.), Percussion I (Perc. I), and Percussion II (Perc. II). The score features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The percussion parts include a triangle and a snare drum.

Title
"Springtime Around the Pond"

Composer
Henry Thomas

Medium
Symphonic Band

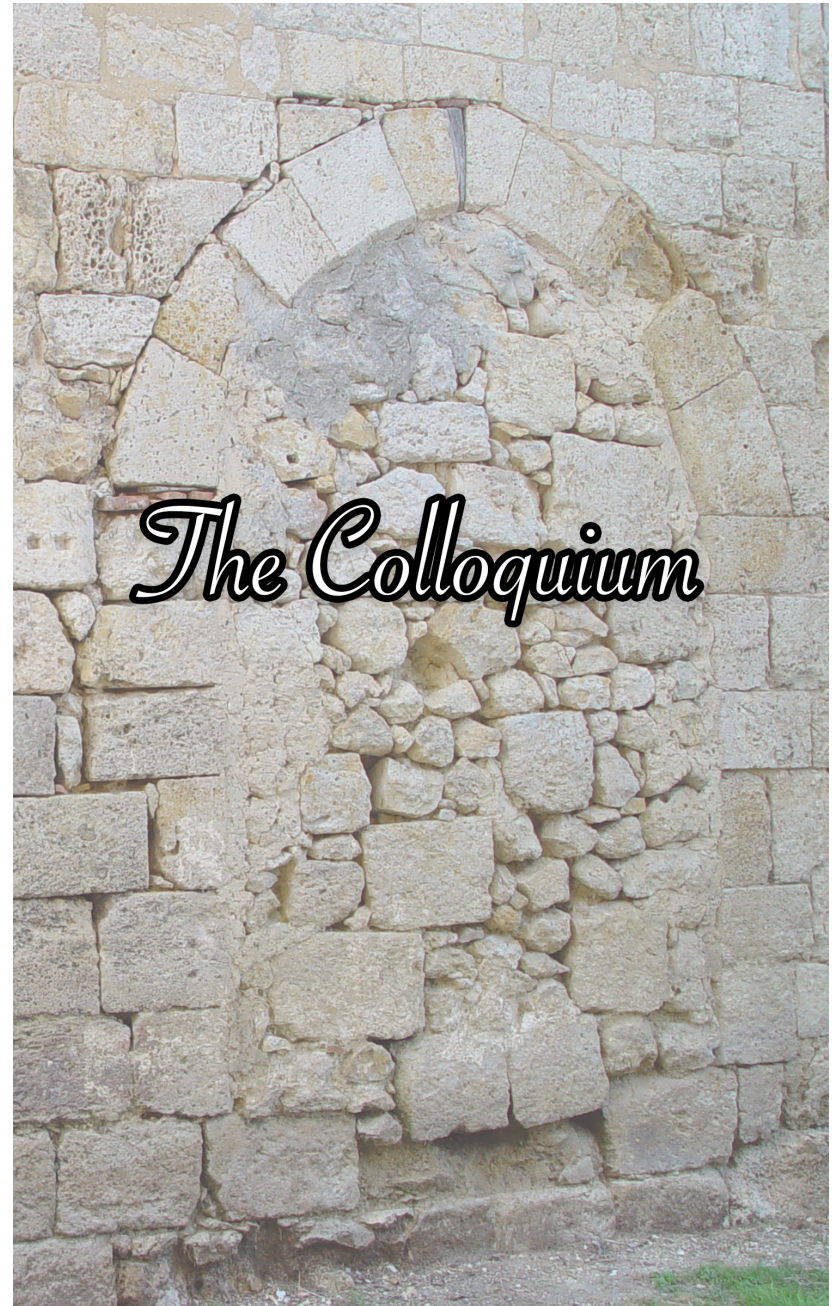
Electronic Medium
Youtube

Date
2024

Runtime
2:55

URL
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXCWfXLfhG4>





Traditional Expository Writing: A Dying Breed (?)

The UAM Catalog description for ENGL 4653: Advanced Composition reads: “Capstone course for English majors on the literature track [all English majors now]. Will include major research paper and compilation of a portfolio synthesizing the student’s college career.” Still included in the current catalog in this form, this description is woefully outdated. Now, the course emphasizes improving university-level writing skills through topic development, editing skills, and research.

Of late, Advanced Composition’s place in UAM’s academic world is less secure because “we” have decided that more sophisticated expository writing no longer deserves a spot in the writing landscape. Differing from contemporary attitudes, however, such courses as Advanced Composition should be a significant player in academe.

Over the last month or so, I have evaluated over thirty entries in a scholarship competition for Alpha Chi National Honor Society. The rubric for judging includes the following: (1)Focus and organization; (2)Depth and complexity of treatment, including use of research;(3)Engagement with the audience; (4)Contribution to scholarship in the field ; and (5)Correctness of form. Advanced Composition advances these exact skills. Notably, the rubric for Alpha Chi crosses all academic disciplines and undergirds the core principles of academic writing. When academics attend their professional meetings, moreover, they hear scholarly presentations, which display the same fruit.

Is Advanced Composition, therefore, worthy of the junk pile?

Dr. Kate Stewart

Sartre’s Physical and Psychological Wall: The Philosophy of Autonomy

Destiny Forrest

Complex systems of inextricable elements are characteristic both of real life and of good fiction. The notable difference, however, lies in the thematic meaning skilled writers can draw from these webs. In “The Wall,” Jean-Paul Sartre interweaves physical and psychological descriptions of his titular character, Pablo Ibbieta, in the hours anticipating his execution with his own tenets of philosophy to unravel and explore the intricate concept of autonomy.

Pablo’s psychological journey over the course of the work colors all else. He begins unaffected by death and its implications but ends wondering how he had ever “ran after happiness, women, and liberty,” and believing that his life “wasn’t worth anything now that it was finished” (Sartre 2170). His approaching execution catalyzes this realization; he admits that he had previously “never thought about death,” but now had “nothing else to do but think about it” (Sartre 2165). He thinks only in terms of death. He is dead, his cellmates are dead, and the rest of the world comprise the unfathomable living. Every overarching ideology that had defined his existence shrivels and dies: through him Sartre reveals that purpose in life is manufactured, not inherent, and that convictions unchecked against mortality are subject to annihilation. A physical journey, however, parallels this psychological one and reveals a hidden struggle within Pablo: a struggle for autonomy.

Pablo narrates the land of the living, at least the living among the dead, as physically cold. Before he is burdened with the knowledge of his impending death—before he joins the “dead”—he describes his cell as “terribly cold” and

“drafty,” saying “[they] had been shivering all night long” (Sartre 2163). He responds to physical stimuli in an appropriate manner when death does not concern him. Later on, he describes the doctor inexplicably ordered to accompany them through the night in a similar manner, “ha[ving] the gestures of a living person, the interests of a living person,” “an obedient, well-fed body,” and “shivering in [the] cellar the way living people shiver” (Sartre 2169). While these descriptions appear insubstantial taken at face value, the physical changes that Pablo endures as his worldview shifts shed them in a different light.

As Pablo psychologically departs from the living, so too does he depart physically from the cold. When the doctor, among the living and “purple with cold,” asks Pablo if he is also cold, Pablo, answering in the negative, realizes he is “covered with sweat” (Sartre 2166). Pablo is alarmed at his lack of awareness for his physical self. Instead of, as it had before, his body responding appropriately to a physical stimulus, it reacts erratically against his will due to emotional stimuli. As his execution draws nearer, his symptoms exacerbate, with the room he is eventually taken to “so hot it seemed to [him] suffocating” (Sartre 2173). The only others affected by this phantom heat are Juan and Tom who, like Pablo, inhabit the world of the “dead.” Sartre’s decision to depict the living as cold and the dead as sweltering is odd; death is cold in most representations. However, his main aim is to separate the dead from the living physically and psychologically, and the living would have no reason to react to their environment, which is very cold, inappropriately. The bodies of the dead, however, not in control of their paths, react in any obstinate manner they can.

Though Pablo is hesitant to admit that these physical reactions are indeed correlated with fear or anticipation of death, he does acknowledge that they are beyond his con-

trol. He begins to speak of his body almost as if it were an entity separate from himself:

My body—I saw with its eyes and I heard with its ears, but it was no longer I. It sweat and trembled independently...In fact, everything that came from my body had something dubious about it...I didn’t feel anything other than a sort of heaviness, a loathsome presence against me. I had the impression of being bound to an enormous vermin (Sartre 2171, 2172).

His physical form reflects his emotional state. Pablo believes he will be executed, that the rest of his short future is set and that he no longer possesses autonomy over his life. Neither does he possess autonomy over his physical body. However, his journey is not at this point complete. Pablo, believing that he no longer holds any sort of power or autonomy, lies about his uncle Ramon Gris’s location in an attempt to make a fool of his captors. Later, after he is released for a reason unknown to him, an acquaintance informs him that Ramon Gris was caught and Pablo “[begins] to tremble” (Sartre 2175). His body does not tremble, but Pablo himself, using “I,” Pablo, no longer immediately facing death, rejoins the living and reveals a unique horror: he must now bear dire consequences for a version of himself he can no longer recognize or understand. Just as Pablo’s description of his physical sensations marked his loss of autonomy, they herald its return with all its grim implications.

A more thorough understanding of Pablo’s loss of autonomy in “The Wall,” however, comes from Sartre’s own philosophical ideas. The “look” is a concept in Sartrean philosophy that is difficult to get away from in any of his works. Sarah Horton, specialist in 19th and 20th century continental philosophy, says that “the look alters even [one’s] own relationship to [one’s] body,” and that “when

[one] become[s] an object for the other, that becoming an object...occurs within [one's] bodily existence. In shame, [one's] body is no longer simply [one's] own, for [one] [is] alienated even from it" (Horton 81). The "look" here refers to the idea of being gazed upon by others and being subject to their interpretation: to become an object with no control over how it is perceived. Pablo's loss of physical control over himself is obviously correlated with his impending execution, but is perhaps also subtly correlated with the "look" itself.

Horton emphasizes the importance of the "other" within the "look": "It is through the encounter with the other, therefore, that I realize my limits, including the most fundamental limit to my existence, which is that I cannot become my own ground...But I cannot annul my fragility, my finitude, my mortality; I can only choose what meaning I assign to them" (Horton 85,86). Essentially, one cannot control the objective factors of their existence, only interpret them, and it is the presence of an "other" that makes this obvious. Pablo's revelation is not necessarily tied with the acknowledgement of a specific "other" or of the "look," but is a result of his acknowledgment that he cannot control one objective factor of his existence: his death. The concept of the "look" does not provide a direct insight into Pablo's situation, but is closer, rather, to a parallel.

In Sartre's *No Exit*, another work with a heavy philosophical influence, he creates a more obvious link between death and the "look." *No Exit* sees three individuals trapped together for an eternity in hell—the idea being that they are each other's torturers—and the infamous line: "Hell is—other people!" (Sartre 69). Garcin, one of these individuals, is particularly concerned with how he is perceived, both by those from his former life and by his two new companions. He laments seeing his living friends grow to think him a

coward and truly believes that their perception shapes reality: "I've left my fate in their hands...I'm locked out; they're passing judgment on my life without troubling about me, and they're right, because I'm dead," he says (Sartre 52). This development creates an odd parallel between Garcin and Pablo, on the basis of autonomy.

Where Pablo experiences a real stripping of autonomy, Garcin only perceives that his autonomy has been lost. Garcin even attempts to leave hell, and finds the door unlocked, but refuses to cross the threshold until Inez, who despises him, no longer believes him a coward, unable to "leave [her] [t]here, gloating over [his] defeat, with all those thoughts running about [him] in [her] head" (Sartre 57). This is by design an eternally unattainable endeavor. Inez hates Garcin and will never release him from the torture of his own desire to be perceived a certain way. If hell is other people and the way they interpret us, a truth that Garcin sees but fails to surmount, then death is the cementation that we will never regain an opportunity to control our perceived selves: the ultimate and irreversible stripping of autonomy. While Pablo does not succumb to this fate in "The Wall," he brushes against it, and is forevermore burdened with its knowledge.

Sartre weaves elements of his philosophy other than the "look" throughout Pablo's narrative in "The Wall" as well. Hazel E. Barnes, translator and scholar of Sartre's work as well as a philosopher in her own right, in "Sartre's concept of the Self," outlines many elements of Sartre's philosophy that relate to the concept of autonomy in "The Wall." Particularly, Barnes's discussions on Sartre's idea of the future self, or the self as a value, shed new light on the philosophy behind Pablo's march towards death. Barnes believes Sartre "calls [the future self] a value because it is always the unattained object of [one's] desire"; consciousness, the for-it-

self, “desire[s] to be the in-itself-for-itself, which Sartre describes as the self-contradictory passion to be the Self-cause, or God” (Barnes 143). In other words, a fundamental human desire is to be both a concrete, knowable entity, and yet also one free to change and grow at will—as paradoxical and irritating as it sounds.

Pablo’s sense of impending doom forces him to confront this innate desire—and its inevitable disillusionment—in the short span of a night. Where this desire would normally manifest in imperceptible shifts over decades of life, it becomes a matter of critical urgency that Pablo cannot ignore. The contradictory future self that Pablo desires, that all humans desire, devolves quickly from a vague silhouette in the fog of the future to a startlingly familiar reflection of himself, fearful and despondent. The time to change, to become an impossible paragon of a lifetime’s worth of hopes for oneself, is ripped swiftly and unforgivingly away, leaving him with the realization that who he is is who he will always be.

The path which Pablo elects to take in the face of this insurmountable realization is one which Barnes outlines in her essay: “Frequently one rehearses so thoroughly the part one will play in a future event that one blinds oneself to unexpected possibilities and blocks off in advance any chance of spontaneous choice” (Barnes 144). Pablo, in the hours leading to his expected execution, narrates that he “must have lived through [his] execution twenty times in succession,” unable to think of anything else (Sartre 2170). His persistent thoughts of his execution do exactly what Barnes describes, and solidifies in Pablo’s mind that he is dead already. But this development is just as paradoxical as the desire to be the “in-itself-for-itself.” If Pablo had been able to refrain from his rumination, to not blind himself to spontaneity, and he had chosen to expose Ramon Gris’s

location—to live, effectively—he would have unintentionally lied to the guards and secured his execution. Every path for Pablo ensured he would part with some type of autonomy: physical or psychological.

Another element of Sartre’s philosophy provides similar insight to Pablo’s struggle for autonomy in “The Wall.” Though the aging body and the dying body have their foundational differences, the philosophical implications are remarkably similar, and to dismiss their connection would be to miss out on a profound interpretation of both. Kathlene Lennon and Anthony Wilde, in an analysis of the philosophy of the aging body in the works of Sartre and his contemporaries Simone de Beauvoir and Emmanuel Levinas, assert that “Old Age is particularly difficult to assume because we have always regarded it as something alien, a foreign species” and that de Beauvoir “provides an account of ageing bodies that recognises increased physical vulnerability, reduction in physical and mental energy, and susceptibility to illness” (35-36). Pablo is not growing older in “The Wall,” but these symptoms align with his experience. Recall Pablo’s severing of body and mind: “My body—I saw with its eyes and I heard with its ears, but it was no longer I” (Sartre 2171). His loss of control over his own body, coupled with the distress this causes and his subsequent plunge into nihilism, equally resemble the “physical vulnerability” and “reduction in physical and mental energy” that Lennon and Wilde suggest color the philosophy of the aging body. But the importance of this connection remains to be explored.

The issue presented by a failure of one’s body, either through the gradual process of aging or, in Pablo’s abnormal case, the abrupt knowledge of one’s unnatural impending death, is one, inherently, of autonomy. Lennon and Wilde suggest that “we are most fully human when

pursuing active, future directed projects” (36). Both death and old age disrupt this autonomous drive, through either physical decline or the elimination of the concept of the future entirely. The relationship is interestingly quite inverse: the natural aging body becomes passive towards the future from physical limitations, but Pablo, in total lack of a future to anticipate, becomes physically limited. Clearly, physical and psychological autonomy have a complex relationship, and one cannot often persist without the other.

As compelling as Sartre’s storytelling is, the complex web he weaves of the physical, the psychological, and the philosophical would mean little without a greater conclusion with which to depart. Sartre seems to plunge his characters into impossible, distressing situations with no recourse in sight. But his desire is not that his readers succumb to nihilism like Pablo, or stubborn misery like Garcin; rather, they ought to assess the lives of those characters against that of themselves and forge their own paths to avoid such grim conclusions. Sartre implores readers, from the comfort of their relatively stable lives, to do what neither Pablo nor Garcin could: evaluate their ideals against the standard of their own mortality so that they may uphold them, not discard them, in the looming, inevitable, autonomy-thieving face of death.

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Waiting for the End

Joanna Poole

Everything and everyone that is born and grows will one day reach its end. Despite guesses and predictions, no one can know for sure. However, circumstances arise that give people an idea as to when they will meet their end. Some face impending death with denial and depression while others are at peace and decide to accept their fate. John Paul Sartre's short story "The Wall" tells of three men who are captured as political prisoners and condemned to death. Each man reacts differently ranging from denial and anger to indifference and acceptance. Sartre's use of a wall represents the end of life, the mental strain the men are facing, and the physical wall the men will be put against when they are executed.

In the beginning of the story, the reader meets three political prisoners named Pablo, Tom, and Juan. After they are charged and escorted to their cells, Pablo learns that the trial just happened, and their fate will be revealed later in his cell. True to their word, soldiers later

inform the prisoners that they will be put to death and at that point the men start seeing their own personal wall, each with a different reaction.

The youngest of the three, Juan, is the first to speak out about the sentencing. He says, "That's not possible. Not me" (2164). Juan represents how younger people think that they are invincible and live life with a "it'll never happen to me" mentality. An online article on the website www.healthy.kaiserpermanente.org talks about how an adolescent's thinking develops as they age. Due to their concrete ways of thinking, they often "have difficulty with abstract and symbolic concepts" (Healthwise). The website also

states that it is "normal for adolescents to have a sense of being uniquely invincible" which causes the aforementioned "it'll never happen to me" mindset (Healthwise). People denying their reality when facing death is not uncommon. Patients sometimes choose to argue with a doctor when receiving life altering news. Then there are those that live life as if nothing has happened.

Tom chooses to ignore the fact that he will soon meet his end and he talks about everything else instead of focusing on himself. At first, Tom's reaction can be seen as a selfless act because his focus shifts to Juan. He tries consoling Juan, but Juan pulls away and gives Tom an ugly look. Tom talks about other subjects and asks Pablo, "Say, did you ever bump anybody off?" (2165). While Juan's denial was more obvious, Tom is also dealing with his own denial in the form of ignorance. Doctors often see that same reaction when they have to give patients bad news.

Denial in cases of a fatal diagnosis is common. An online article on www.pubmed.gov says that "between 14- 47% of cancer patients who receive a negative prognosis choose to live in denial with elderly cancer patients being more likely to deny" (Pubmed). Patients choose to live their lives as if they were not told that they only have a certain amount of time to live. They may feel that their remaining time is best spent as if nothing is wrong. Many times, they feel like they will be a burden to those around them if they live as if their time is short. Denial can also be viewed as a defense mechanism according to www.verywellmind.com in an article that says, "Denial is a type of defense mechanism that involves ignoring the reality of a situation to avoid anxiety" (Cherry). Tom reacts equally. However, other people want to face pending death head on.

Pablo is the narrator and protagonist of the story, and his

reaction is acceptance. He knows there is no other way out of this situation, so he chooses to die in a dignified manner. He resolves that detachment will be the best way to deal with his future and starts to feel disconnected from his own body and the other prisoners. He even disconnects from Concha, the love of his life, and decides that her love does not matter in the grand scheme of things.

When he thinks about the possibility of getting out of prison and the death sentence, he decides that it doesn't matter because, in his eyes, his whole life was a lie. Pablo even starts to think about how he would feel if he did get out. He says, "if they had come and told me I could go home quietly...it would have left me cold" (2171). He accepts that death is unavoidable and will eventually happen.

Some patients who receive a fatal diagnosis approach the end of their life in the same way. They accept the news and go through the day-to-day motions of living their life. Many patients choose to spend their remaining days in hospice receiving palliative care. But acceptance doesn't happen overnight. An article on the website for the National Library of Medicine says that "Acceptance is an active process where the patient becomes open to and acknowledges all aspects of his or her current situation...to make the most of the time he or she has left" (Pubmed). They welcome death because they know it will happen one day, and for them it is sooner than later. They are at peace with their circumstance.

In the end, Juan and Tom are pulled out of the cell and taken to a physical wall where they are killed by a firing squad. But Pablo, who has come to terms with his pending death, decides to have a little fun at the expense of the soldiers and sends them on a mission that he thinks will be fruitless. He tells them that the man that they are look-

ing for is hiding in the cemetery. To Pablo's surprise, he is released because the fugitive did in fact decide to leave his safe house and relocate to the cemetery. In the end, Pablo lives and Sartre uses Pablo as an example of what can happen when we face our fears and take what is coming head on.

The title of John Paul Sartre's story represents more than just the physical and mental aspects of a wall by exhibiting that life is short and unpredictable. We often picture things going one way without considering how quickly they can change. Tom, Juan, and Pablo demonstrate how fast life can go from good to bad. A person's outlook can be the deciding factor on their quality of life and the negative or positive impact that they have on society.

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Bowing Down to Death in Jean-Paul Sartre’s “The Wall”

Kaia Young

In “The Wall”, the three men’s emotions and process of grief juxtaposes one another as they await their deaths as prisoners of war. Juan, Tom, and Pablo manage the anticipation of their deaths in various different ways. However, as the story is told from Pablo’s perspective, his acceptance to his fate is more extreme than the others. His acceptance stems from a detachment to his emotions and experiences in his life which allows him to see that everything and everyone is really irrelevant. This realization shows through his descriptions and attitudes towards the two other men and towards the Belgian doctor watching them in their final moments.

The closer he is to his execution, Pablo’s detachment becomes more extreme. This first shows through his actions and thoughts about the two men in his cell, Juan and Tom. These two men are the only prisoners that Pablo names despite previously stating “There were several [prisoners] I knew” (2162). By naming Juan and Tom, allows an assumption that Pablo is more familiar with them. Pablo’s detachment begins with Juan as he is conversing with Tom. After a major announces that they will all be put to death, Juan speaks up saying “That’s not possible, Not Me” (2164). His statement leads Tom and Pablo into a conversation that expresses Tom’s compassion for Juan’s fate because he is just a kid. Although Tom is showing what one assumes as genuine compassion, Pablo is showing false compassion. This shows when Pablo states “It’s a damned shame for the kid” (2165), but then follows by “I said that to be fair, but I really didn’t like [Juan]”. Pablo’s first detachment to Juan being put to death is most prominent here

due to his quick emotional change towards someone one can assume is somewhat familiar to him. Although there is not a closeness between Juan and Pablo, Pablo's moral detachment is obvious when looking at his response to Juan's sentence compared to Tom's response. Pablo's attention shifts between Juan to Tom as the day moves forward. He observes Tom "exercising" in order to stay warm in a very intimate way. He describes how Tom's body looks during these exercises which gives off a strange intimate tone. This intimacy goes on during their conversations where Tom asks questions about Pablo like "Did you ever bump anybody off?" and telling in detail his worries about how they are going to die by comparing it to "a nightmare". Tom's reaction and worry is very common when dealing with death, especially those about to die. According to BJ Miller, An American physician and writer, "...most people, the scariest thing about death [is not] being dead, [it is] dying, suffering" (Miller 2015). Tom's fear about whether his death will be painless or not, quickly unveils itself to Pablo which allows their relationship to become real and intimate. However, Tom's intimacy with Pablo is not really reciprocated in dialogue, but rather in his observations of him. However, after Tom's nightmare comment, Pablo's intimacy shifts and just like Juan he states "Actually, I didn't like Tom very much" (2169). The only logical explanation as to why Pablo's mood shifts so unexpectedly and why he has no compassion for other is because of his impending death. Because he knows he is going to die, he has no reason to care about anything or anyone.

"How Grief Changes Us", an article written by Karynn Arnold states, "...the feeling of losing ourselves can make a tough time even harder...". While Arnold is talking about grief from losing a loved one, it can also apply to Pablo's grief in losing his own life. These sudden changes cor-

relate to how one's grief changes a person's outlook on life which, in Pablo's case, is stemming from his impending death. Grief, in general, can change multiple things about a person such as sleep and energy, personality, isolation, etc (Arnold, n.d). Pablo's grief turns him into a distant and cold person. He fits in with the personality changes category due to his changing personality towards Tom and Juan. However, one can assume that his grief is also stemming from the impending loss of Tom and Juan since they are the only prisoners he knows by name.

The three men are also accompanied by a Belgian doctor, who is met with hostility from Pablo. The doctor plays a strange role in this story because he is present for seemingly no reason. Pablo's attitude towards the doctor is hostile from the start. Pablo immediately asks why he's there and even makes him uncomfortable by "[looking] him straight in the eye" (2166). Although hostility or anger is a somewhat reasonable emotion during these times, Pablo's hostility dims and "...the presence of this doctor had suddenly ceased to interest me. (2166). This strange switch of emotion and interest is just the same as his compassion towards Tom and Juan. In the beginning, he is either somewhat compassionate, or in the doctor's case, hostile, but then quickly swaps to becoming distant and uninterested. His interest does not only disconnect from the people around him, but everything in his life prior to this moment. This can also be led back to Karynn Arnold's "How Grief Changes Us" article. Pablo's personality is a major look into how he is really feeling about his sentencing. His grief is so powerful that his personality is become entirely hostile rather than starting with a hint of humanity. He also isolates himself more and more the longer he deals with the thought of him dying. Later in the story it states that he "didn't miss anything" (2171). He does acknowledge that there may

be stuff he will miss or should miss, but the fact that he is going to die “had taken the charm out of everything”. This line itself gives a light to why he all of a sudden becomes so detached from everyone and everything around him. Although it is obvious through his thoughts that he has some uneasiness to death however, he accepts his fate because there is simply nothing else to do.

Since death “had taken the charm out of everything” Pablo chooses not to call Concha. This choice signifies that Pablo has officially let go of everything in his life prior to the sentencing. Concha is a very important person in Pablo’s life. He states that “I would have cut my arm off with a hatchet just to see her again for five minutes” (2171). Pablo’s usage of the “would” signifies how his attitude towards life and all things that matters has changed. The change is because now as the doctor proposes the offer to “call loved ones” there is not a lot of time left for these three men. Just like Pablo’s feelings towards Tom and Juan, he is now letting go of everything and his thought about life being meaningless takes over everything he normally cares about. He goes on to explain that he does not want to talk to Concha because he simply has nothing left to say and he does not even want to hold her. This state of mind he is in, by not caring or getting real closure goes farther than because he is about to die, but because the thought of being eternal is no more. He realizes that life itself is meaningless because everyone and everything eventually dies. The doctor may not be getting executed like the three men, but his life will eventually end and they will all be the same. Pablo goes on to think about if they were to let him go home how his view would not change. “...if they had come and told me I could go home... it would have left me cold. A few hours or a few years of waiting are all the same, when you’ve lost the illusion of being eternal.” Pablo’s thought spirals him fur-

ther by extinguishing any hope that he could live. Even if he is able to see Concha again, or live another day, the part of him that he believes to once be “eternal” will be nothing but a void.

Pablo’s reaction to being sentenced to death is strange when compared to Juan and Tom. Grief and death consume him as he accepts his own mortality. His acceptance to death leads to a detachment between not only those around him, but things that would have been important prior. The acceptance is not only because there is no reason to get out of this fate, but because in the end everything must die. Pablo’s realization that life is meaningless stems from this surreal moment that he and everything is not eternal.

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Pablo Ibbieta's Psychological Death

Rylee Griffin

The short story, "The Wall" by Jean Paul Sartre centers around three men who learn they only have hours to live before they will be executed. One of these men specifically, Pablo Ibbieta reacts to that knowledge in a strange way. Once he realizes that he is not "eternal", he loses all interest in life unlike his fellow prisoners who desperately want to live. Pablo is released in an unexpected twist, and yet the death sentence he is promised is still fulfilled. Hopelessness kills Pablo before a bullet has the chance, resulting in a separation of his mind and body, lack of care or compassion towards others, and mentally suffering through his execution.

The separation of Pablo's mind and body becomes increasingly clear throughout the story. This separation seems to happen gradually, starting with his loss of physical feeling such as sweat dripping down his body, he states "I had been streaming with perspiration for an hour at least and had felt nothing" (2167). At this point Pablo's body seems to care more than his mind does, and it is clear there is a pretty drastic detachment happening. On the next page Pablo even goes on to say, "Our bodies were dying alive" (2168). The decay of his living body shows the reader what the knowledge of certain death can do to a person's head. Even though he is not dead, yet his mind and body are already starting to separate. Scholars discuss this out of body experience and write:

The phenomenon which causes those on the threshold between life and death to construct subjective narratives at odds with the flow of external time has been extensively documented over the years, accounts of out-of-body sensations, the life review, and

the tendency for the victim to encounter barriers or thresholds which are impenetrable being commonplace in the testimonies of survivors (Byatt).

When the soul leaves a person, he is usually not referred to as a person anymore, he is just a body, becoming more of an object because there is no life left. Pablo allows the reader to see this happening to him by saying "My body—I saw with its eyes, and I heard with its ears, but it was no longer I." (2171). Pablo himself acknowledges that his mind is in a different place than his body showing that death has started creeping in.

Pablo has very little care or compassion for the others around him in this story and even goes as far as disliking those in the same dire situation as him. Obviously not everyone has been in a situation where they are told they will certainly die in a matter of hours, but many could assume that this knowledge shared between a group would pull them closer together. Instead of feeling a connection with his fellow prisoners or even just seeking comfort in them, Pablo resents and is filled with disgust toward his cellmates. Juan is described as very young but that does not make Pablo feel sorry for him. Pablo tells the reader he only acknowledged it was a pity Juan would die out of "fairness" not real feelings. He says, "I really didn't like the kid" (2165) which seems like an interesting thing to say about a "kid" who's dying a premature death. Pablo also dislikes his other prison mate Tom, stating "I didn't like Tom very much, and I didn't see why, just because we were going to die together, I should like him any better." (2169). This statement comes off as quite callous.

After Pablo establishes his dislike for Juan and Tom, he is asked if he would like to send a message to his lady friend but "death had taken the charm out of everything" and he

"didn't care about seeing her anymore" (2171). Pablo has clearly slipped into a depressive state at this point in the story. The Mayo Clinic states:

Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. Also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression, it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems. You may have trouble doing normal day-to-day activities, and sometimes you may feel as if life isn't worth living (Sawchuk).

This definition of depression fits Pablo's description due to his loss of interest, hope, and emotional and physical problems. He is empty inside and has no cares or concerns for the people in his life from before he learned of his imminent death. Pablo has lost his human emotions and even admits that he is already dead.

The prominent experience regarding Pablo Ibbieta's mental death comes when he tells the reader "I must have lived through my execution twenty times in succession: one time I thought it was the real thing" (2170). Not only has Pablo lost his former identity, control over his own body, and his will to live, but he is also tortured with living his own death over and over in his mind, even going as far as feeling the bullets enter his body "like a lot of little gashes" (2168). Pablo vividly experiences his own death multiple times, even feeling the real pain of death without actually dying. In his work, Argo Moor describes "death visions" and how they bring about an awareness of mortality. He states "In a visionary state or more frequently, in a dream, a person may live through his/her death or meeting with the personification of his/her death. The more realistic and clear the vision or the dream and the higher is the emotional charge of it,

the stronger is the effect of the vision” (Moor). Suffering the anticipation of a dreadful event is often just as bad as the actual experience, frequently worse. If Pablo was shot with no warning, there would be no psychological suffering and his life could end with him being the full of life revolutionary he used to be. Instead, he is left alive but mentally and emotionally dead. His former self is barely recognizable within the shell of a person that remains.

Pablo is given the option of turning in Ramon Gris in exchange for his own life. To make the guards look like fools before he must die, he lies about Ramon’s whereabouts. Shockingly, Ramon Gris is exactly where Pablo says he is. Pablo is released but only after he suffers a mental death that results in the separation of his mind and body, lack of care or compassion towards others, and mentally suffering through his execution. Pablo’s mind and body are no longer one which is comparable to a real death. Pablo loses the part of himself that cares for others or for life itself. He even suffers the death he is promised by imagining it over and over.

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Ebarb, Ashlynn, “Drained”

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Forrest, Destiny, “Lae’zel of K’liir,” “Musing By the Bed You Die In,” and “Sartre’s Physical and Psychological Wall: The Philosophy of Autonomy”

- Bio is in the "Editors" section

Graham, Anastyn, “Snow Day on the Farm,” “And Then Spring Begins,” and “Southeast Sunset”

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Griffin-Brewer, Rylee, “Pablo Ibbieta’s Psychological Death”

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Henry, Thomas, “Springtime Around The Pond”

- Thomas Henry is a music education major and a senior here. While doing his major, he's taken music composition lessons with Mr. Pack. He's also been a proud member of the UAM marching, concert, and jazz bands, both chamber and concert choirs, as well as a proud member of Kappa Kappa Psi.

Morphis, Kai, “Lost Boy” and “Gingy Baby Bread”

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Lams, Alexia, “Weevil Pond Drawing”

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Nail-Clammer, Ezekiel, “Ode to Sleep” and “Semicolon”

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Olsen, Craig T., “The Fine Art of Healing,” “My Feet are Not Longfellows,” and “A Rabbit’s Tail”

- Bio is in the "Editors" section.

Poole, Joanna, “Waiting for the End”

- A senior, is majoring in English with a concentration in Creative Writing. When she isn’t spending countless hours doing homework and cramming for exams, she enjoys listening to true crime podcasts, and working as a professional photographer.

Rozing, Eden, “Hey Siri, Can a Vampire Get Anaphylaxis?”

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Strong, Carol R., “The Unexpected Beauty of Wall Art”

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Thomas, Brian, “Pie”

- Brian Thomas is a junior majoring in Art and plans to graduate in 2025. He enjoys music and cooking.

Wallis, Samuel, “Lost In Space” and “The Misfit”

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White, Kailley, “Chant of an Escaped Skeleton: An Ekphrastic Poem” and “Potato Soup”

- Bio is in the "Editors" section.

Young, Kaia, “Bowling Down to Death in Jean-Paul Sartre’s ‘The Wall’”

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