

ORPHEUS

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Orpheus

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The Lyre of Orpheus Placed Among the Stars
Drawing by Eduard von Engerth (1818-1897)

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The Legend of Orpheus

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Back Cover Photo, "Trixie," By Emma Starnes

Editorial and Standards Policy

The editorial staff of *Orpheus* welcomes and encourages submissions of poetry, short fiction, creative nonfiction, artwork, and photography from any current Lindsey Wilson College student. While preserving the freedom of creative expression, responsible standards of decency regarding language and images are carefully observed. The editors reserve the right to edit both the form and, in rare cases, the content of submissions. Final decisions regarding acceptance or rejection of questionable content are reserved for the editorial staff in consultation with the journal's faculty advisor.

All submissions to *Orpheus* must be typed and must contain the following information: name, phone number, local address, class, major, and hometown of the writer/artist. All artwork and photographs should be submitted in camera-ready black and white or color.

Editorial and other staff positions are open to any current Lindsey Wilson College student based upon experience or interest.

The ideas and views expressed in *Orpheus* are solely those of the writer/artist and do not necessarily reflect the ideas and views of the editorial staff or those of Lindsey Wilson College.

Preface

If you do not breathe through writing, if you do not cry out in writing, or sing in writing, then don't write, because our culture has no use for it. ~ Anaïs Nin

Orpheus continues to evolve and this year's volume provides further evidence of that evolution. Year after year it is always a delight to see and publish emerging student talent – in fiction, poetry, and photography. And the journal has always been and continues to be a place where student writers are free to express themselves openly through art. As the Anaïs Nin quote suggests, now, more than ever, our culture needs the creative visions of its writers and artists to breathe and cry out and sing for us all. In a world fraught with peril and destruction, it is possible, indeed, necessary, to create in words and images a countervailing presence that *Orpheus* continues to offer its readers every spring.

We are especially pleased to publish several poems by Kaitlyn Grant, our featured poet in this year's volume. Kaitlyn is a senior at Adair County High School and has taken several classes at Lindsey Wilson College. She will be attending the University of Kentucky in the fall. As you will see, she has a remarkable way with words and images that speaks to more than just her own generation, and ranges freely from the personal to the cultural and the political. We are grateful to Kaitlyn for allowing us to feature her work.

Many thanks to the faculty of the English program for their continued support of *Orpheus*.

THS
April 2016

We Learned About Poetry

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

We learned about poetry
In the second grade.
Rhyme words like
Cat and *hat*
House and *mouse*.

We learned about poetry
In the fourth grade.
Four lines of poetry is called a stanza,
A conventional home for words.

We learned about poetry
In the sixth grade.
Haikus are just lines
Of stress over syllables
Count five seven five.

We learned about poetry
At seventeen.
When the weight of the world
Rests too heavy on childlike shoulders
And you see your name written in
Sharpie on a bathroom wall.
That boy who swore he'd always
Love you steals the stars out of your eyes
And paints some other girl's universe.

We learned about poetry
Not at little crayon-stained tables
Or in dimly-lit classrooms
But with our heads in toilet bowls and
In the folds of our lovers' arms.

We learned about poetry
And how it isn't conformed
Lines. And syl la bles.
It's the taste of blood on your
Tongue and not being scared to
Let your sentences run because
Honestly, what do we have to lose?

We learned about poetry.

Every. Bone. In My Body.

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

*Every. Bone. In my body.
Is broken. Because I fell again
And I hit. The ground so hard. Hard.
Do you see. All that red on the. Ground?*

A familiar stranger called me tonight
And I stared at the name because

These are the badlands and we don't go there we don't go there we don't we

I answered and I heard your words smashed against your teeth and they all taste
Like metal to me because I'm biting my tongue and I'm bleeding

Blood transports nutrients to the rest of the body and it is red because of iron

You wish me a happy birthday and even tell me that the world is a good place
Because I live and you beg me

Don't die please dear god don't go and get yourself killed

I hear my own laughter and I'm sickened by that sound because
I am a coward who is afraid to say the words worth saying.

The dashboard radio keeps blinking the minutes, which are passing, which means
Time is passing and I am alive and I'm not passing

*The average human will bleed out in ten to fifteen minutes unless given medical
Attention*

Goodbye, it was nice catching up with you. Take care of yourself.

I love you. I've loved you all this time. I'm bleeding for you.

For you. For you.

Monsters

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

Monsters live under the bed
And we see them out of the corners
Of our eyes when we're kids
When we're afraid to close our
Eyes at night.
But they beg to know
What makes them monsters?
Why are they scarier
Than anyone else?
Who decides?

What's even scarier than those monsters
Under the bed, are the ones
Living in our heads,
Living like tumors in the sulci of our brains.
When we're afraid to close our eyes
Because even then, the monsters will still be there.
The worst and best conversations
I have ever had, have been with them.
They slither out of my ears and
Stroke my hair. They whisper hollow
Words to me and sing me to sleep.
Sometimes I listen to them.

They told me that the oily lies that poured
Out of my mouth were like hymns and that
My body was ugly because I let him touch it
And they repeated over and over and over
No one will love you, no one will love you
Do you hear me? You are unlovable.

*They tell me things, Momma.
They tell me who I am.
They tell me who I'm not.
Can't you hear them?
They're real. They are real and they are monsters
Because they're mine.*

A Cage is a Cage
Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

There's a baby bird
Sitting between my lungs
Perched on my left rib
And I can feel him fluttering and
Stretching his wings as the days fly by
He sings during the day
And sighs at night.

He grows day by day
And I hope my blood can nourish him forever
I love his voice and his featherlight graze against my lungs, which
Takes my breath away.
He sings to me and I mimic his song and pray that he stays.
His heartbeat drums through his little body
Reverberating through mine, giving me life.

One night as I lay awake I could feel him
Struggling under the weight of my ribcage
A cage is a cage no matter the structure
Of your bones. He pecks and scrapes against the
Home I built for him, beating against it like a pulse
And I feel guilty because I've turned love into a prison.

I cup my hands over him and pledge
To love him better and to sing on key next time
Because my love will save us both.
He breaks through the pale skin of my chest
And flies through the darkness of my room.
He looks back only once but we both know
Love is freedom, fight or flight.

He Said, Write a Poem About Me
Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

I wanted to write good poetry.
The kind where the words crawl
Off the paper and personally
Tug at your heartstrings,
Or some other cheap cliché
Like that.

I wanted to be the voice of a
Generation, where school girls
In band tee shirts would pour over
My words like the latest teeny-bop
Album, trying to identify with feelings
They hadn't yet felt.

I thought I would appear out of
The Technology Era as a savior:
With dark circles under my eyes and
Rumpled clothes and people would
Understand that of course I looked
That way. I was a tortured artist,
That's what we look like.

But this silly little boy that I wrote
These poems about told me
That I was good. Really fucking good,
He said. But not the Madonna of the
English language. I wasn't sent to
Reincarnate poetry because
There's another angst-ridden girl
Down the road writing poetry
About the same shit as me.

So I put down the pencil, and closed
My journal. I took a deep breath
And kicked my feet up on the table
And I wrote this.

Guide to New York City

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

They don't give you a guide
On how to see New York City in
Only four days, because our feeble,
Mortal bodies can't handle

304 square miles
(That's 76 square miles a day)
Of condensed urban jungle and human emotion,
Mingled with the relaxed notion that the sky here really
Has no limits, because here, buildings shake hands with the clouds.

469 subway stations
(That's 165 miles of underground commute a day) to travel upon a complex
alphabetical maze that New Yorkers read like bibles, or the *Times*. It's the Magic
Carpet to this city, crossing under the concrete sky, which floats above to every
avenue in this vast Promised Land.

8.4 million people
(That's 16.8 million eyes to look into)
To come to know as your brother or sister. You have to hear their stories and see
the lineage of generations ago immigrants who settled into their utopia, and love
them as your own blood.

But I will give you this guide to New York City as I know it:

1. Tread lightly, for dreams litter the streets like ticker tape and someone might stop and pick one up (maybe even you).
2. Go see Lady Liberty, kiss her hand and thank her for standing for the principles we uphold, brighter than her copper torch, and for guarding this place she calls home.
3. Change your heartbeat to match the thrum of the city, so your pulse matches the sigh of footsteps on worn pavement and taxi engines on the crowded streets.
4. You are a stranger amongst a sea of millions of other familiar strangers. You can melt into any version of yourself you want because no one knows you either.
5. Understand that you will never be able to see every nook of this city, but that She will always be here, hold Her arms open wide to you, beckoning you back again.
6. Return to your home not as a visitor to a foreign land, but as a citizen of an electric country. Tell other immigrants about the city that changed you.

Bigger

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet

The first time I was in an airplane
The girl sitting in front of me
Murmured something about feeling huge
Seeing the world this tiny.
My eyes were heavy and I wanted to close them.
I was so small, though, and if I closed
My eyes, I'd disappear. The black night
Was bigger than me, the metal bird bigger than me.
The silence bigger than me. The obvious truth bigger than me.

I leaned across and looked out the window
At the city, the kingdom lights shining
The veins of that city electrified and glowing.
I touched the window
And I touched the city
And I felt a little bigger.

Ever-Ending
Alissah Clapper

I look at the clock
Wishing time would tick
Ever quicker.

Every moment
That passes
My anger thickens.

My heart,
Like a brick wall
Slowly being molded
And pressed into place,
Held together by the hypocrites of
This world.

They say one thing,
But mean another.
Why can't they
Just say
How they feel?

Be honest
For once,
Will you?

Listen to others.
Open your heart.
Take down the wall.
One brick at a time.

Time isn't ever-lasting,
But instead, it is
Ever-ending.

Little Did You Know

Aaron C. Estes

I had forgotten what it felt like to be lost; it had been months since I had felt this empty. I couldn't help but think it was my fault because it often was. I remember all the amazing memories I once was living; now just faint images streaming through my head like an old film. Life used to be a lot simpler back then just chasing a boy who didn't love me and having the time of my life while doing it. Sure there were many downs but the highs were so significant it didn't seem to matter. It felt as if I had one goal and that goal was the only thing that I focused on. Now I seem to have many goals that will make my future a success but aren't very fun at all. It feels as if I'm growing old too quickly and that is what's setting off my sadness. When I was numbed with pain the future was blurry; I can easily say I didn't see myself having one. Now I've been driving myself to do well in life I've been happy and somehow that is making me lost. A very odd thing to find a journey only to realize it's wrong in a way. People have pounded into my head for years that I need to know who and what I want to be when I grow up. That I have to go to college to be somebody; they've barked orders that have always seemed very strange. Why spend my entire childhood trying to be an adult by making decisions like that only to spend my entire life miserable at school and work. In my mind that just seems silly, we only have one life why not go make the most out of it. I want to travel to far off lands and meet strange people. Sail around the world to see the most breath taking sunsets. I've just always imagined my life would be short and amazing. It would burn bright like a match then flicker out. But the sad truth is I'm right where I said I never would be. Going to college to better my education so that my children can live a better life than I did. That's my only goal in life now, having amazingly beautiful children that I can love forever. That's the one thing I've always wanted, always dreamed for. That is the beacon of light in my lost mind. I can feel myself drifting farther and farther out to sea, no one noticing as I float away. I keep telling myself that's things will get better I just have to keep myself together, It just seems to get worse honestly. I have the worst anxiety and the world just wants to see how far I can go before breaking. I need something exciting amazing even out of this world to happen soon or I fear the worst will come. I will become so lost I'll be unrecognizable and disconnected. I will be nothing more than bones in a skin suit. I won't be able to control my mind my body or even worse my actions. My heart will be ice cold while my anger will become hotter than burning coals. My personality will vanish in thin air my kindness will forever be lost in the madness of my heart. I will never be the same again yet to those around me its transparent no one sees it no one stops to ask if I'm okay. Genuinely ask if I'm okay and actually listen to my answer. In my life I'm that person for everyone, when someone needs to talk maybe even to just cry I'm the person they run to. Yet when I'm screaming for someone to help everyone has gone, there's not even a dog to talk to. But I'm not complaining I've never been one to talk about what I'm going through or the pains I've felt. That's what I hold close to me; I was raised to believe that pain made you weak so I never let anyone in. Funny thing

is people sneak in when you least expect it, you don't even realize that they now know so much about you. I love the people in my life I couldn't have picked more amazing characters out of a book. They brighten everyday of mine. I can't imagine trying to go through life without loving caring people to surround myself with. Without them I don't think I'd be sitting here writing this right now, I wouldn't be able to conquer my sadness and fear without them. So I think it's better that way now that I've experienced it. Let the people who want in, into your heart. There's no greater satisfaction than when they find out who you really are; and still love you.

Dream Deferred?

Caitlin Freeny

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it make you thirsty
Like a hot day?
Or does it hide from you
And harden like clay?
Does it wait at your door like a dog?
Or does it slip through your fingers—
Like the morning fog?
Maybe it gallops away
Like a horse.
Or takes some other course?

Heartbroken

Caitlin Freeny

Me, heartbroken?
You're kidding, right?
Sure I loved you,
But I didn't go too far.
Kept myself from becoming
Enslaved to your aspect.
I can't love fully
When I'm not loved at all.
Don't get me wrong;
You meant a lot,
Just not so much that
It was incurable.
If you want me someday,
I'll come back,
But no, I'm not brokenhearted.
You're replaceable
But my love is not.
You're the one missing out.
Because I would love you
With a burning passion,
Brighter than the sun
And more beautiful than the stars.
I'm not brokenhearted,
But you should be.
You can never break my heart
Unless you give some love
To me.

Trust
Olivia L. Garlt

I am broken easily, and almost never repaired,
still I am stronger than any weapon.
Without me relationships burn like comets
beginning beautifully, with great passion, and blinding hope.
But soon they encounter obstacles,
Deception, Jealousy, Anger,
and so their descent begins.
Breaking through the atmosphere the comet itself begins to shatter.
As it burns away, it rockets toward the Earth, with only one inevitable fate,
to explode, and damage everything in its wake.

To have me though,
it's like capturing a fairy.
You hope to keep it near your heart always,
never wanting to let it stray too far
in fear of shattering one of its glass wings,
but still so eager to test its wand's power to
Forgive, Love, and Create

But mind you,
all of this I choose to give
asking only in return that you care for me as you do others.
So many people feed Anger day in and day out.
They speak to Jealously every time he feels lonely.
And they brag on Love constantly, giving her her own day and spending months
cultivating her for meaningless relationships.
Yet often I am thrown to the side,
only useful in times of destruction and repair.

But while you may forget my name, and how much you once protected me
I will stay near your heart.
Being that needed companion who is Loyal to the bone.
I will come anytime you call,
no matter who it is you wish to share me with.
I will give myself to them.
Bestowing unto them
your Trust.

To Fight With a Snapdragon:
A Poem of My Mother's Strength
Olivia L. Garlt

Just as you made me, I made you.
We were born together,
and in the unmarked territory we ran.
Hand in hand, with wind in our faces,
and tears in our eyes
we conquered the new,
and terrifying world around us.
From monsters-under-the-bed to report cards,
we fended off every enemy that came our way.
Our swords made of Snapdragon petals and fallen leaves.
But while we continue to fight, our enemy has changed.
And I now fight alone.
With only my silver tongue and calloused skin,
to fight against these self-made demons.
Having learned this terrain I cross the border we had created,
so that I may chart new territory all my own.
Keeping always with me the memories of your:
strength,
selflessness,
and love.
In hopes that one day,
when I am born a mother,
I can once again fight
with a Snapdragon sword.

Sin Spreads

Olivia L. Garlt

There was a funny little man
who stopped me on the street.
Offering sweet songs of love,
and promises no one could keep.

Each day as I walked to school,
I would stop and listen to his siren song.
Embraced with so much warmth,
I thought nothing could go wrong.

One morning I left my parents
for the last time,
I promised myself to him
and gave up all that was mine.

For months he protected me,
never letting me stray
little did I know
to him I was only prey.

Then one night he left me.
Singing those same sweet songs to another,
for she was young and beautiful
and due to be a mother.

When I woke up without him
I was shocked to find,
that my skin had yellowed,
and my breast speckled,
but I was no longer blind.



Sky Tree
Emma Starnes

Homelessness

Sandra Harbison

I am frightened but act brave, I am cold most nights and find it uncomfortable sleeping on the hard cold ground.
I try to behave but predators are lurking all around.
I try to close my eyes to sleep but it's dark and cold and I always peep.
No good rest again for the millionth time, I am hungry but without a dime.
I get up early and rub my hands, finding warmth beside a fire stand.
I smell fresh doughnuts lingering in the air; people walk past me eating them and repeatedly stare.
They know I'm hungry, they see it in my face, but they scurry on along to another place.
If I make it to the shelter by noon I can eat, but this place is ten miles up the street.
I walk as fast as my legs will carry, I did not make it and my time is scary.
If I sit and rest and try again tomorrow, because I'm so thirsty I can barely swallow.
Another sleepless night of tossing and turning, my belly is sad it is really churning.
I wake up again to find in disbelief, that a man is dead beside me- good grief.
Did he freeze or did this man die from hunger? No one will know he was just a monger.
Does he have family, does anyone care. Ungrateful people just walk by and stare.
He lies like an animal died there on the street, people step over him and shuffle their feet.
I stumble along because I'm lost for words; I wonder when he'll be swarmed by birds.
I lose these thoughts as my body hurts, all I know is my legs need to work.
I need to find food as soon as I can, I'm hungry you see, I am a very thin man.
I can see the shelter its just up the road, the line is long as I carry my load.
I must hurry if I get a hot meal, the line seems like it is standing still.
So many humans who live out on this street, they all are yearning for something to eat.
I make it inside as I sit down to feast, On two pieces of toast that's made out of yeast.
That's all that was left when I made it inside, But I made it another day and I had not died.
The shelter is full no beds to lie down; it's back on the streets but wishing heaven bound.
I try to seek work, But I smell awfully bad, and there is no contact number to be had.
No transportation to get to and fro, so how can I ever make any dough.
My toes stick out of my shoe as I walk; people make fun they bully and mock.
I haven't shaven for days so I look like a bear. Tell me one day will somebody care?
That we just need a break or a helping hand, to get a start in life or take a stand.
To be a human being like everyone else, to have basic things such as a house.
To sleep in a warm bed at night, and food to eat, watch TV or just have a seat

Have a normal adult conversation, and know of a soap and shower combination.
The touch of a woman so soft and sweet, And feel like I'm rested and not so beat.
Will I ever know life as I had once before, or will my mind and body forever be sore.
Sometimes my faith in God grows weak, as the salty tears run down my cheek.
I just want a life or God to take me home; Heaven seems like a nice place to roam.



Into the Light
James McIntosh

Second-Hand Therapist

Carrie Mason

If you are looking for a good therapist turn left at Dixie Highway, go straight and then turn left again on Fourth Street. It is the seventh building on the right.

I had a dream that I was pulled over for running a red light. I only ran it because I couldn't reach the break nestled under the seat. I stretched my legs and pointed my toes, trying to tap the break, but my foot only slid off, over and over. Once I got out of the car, I realized I had been attempting to drive from the backseat, arms wrapped around the chair in some sort of awkward, reversed hug. My therapist said it was time to let go, that the dream was some sort of message from the recesses of my brain. After twenty sessions, I'm still not convinced that she knows anything. There must be some sort of time limit on bad advice.

I always know where the breaks are. It's impossible not to. Everything goes too fast these days anyway, people are born and dead within moments. Nothing you can do about it. It is a lonely world.

Ethan, a transfer from the shrink at 42 Adcock Street, is here as well. That counselor is some sort of quack, it only took two sessions for me to know and move on. For the past few decades I've been talking about my issues. Perhaps all therapists are quacks. Not the marriage and family one, on Melva Avenue, she is nice. Couldn't do much for me or Lizbeth, but nice enough.

What baffles me is why the officer in the dream asked how fast I was going. I ran a red light, what does my speed have to do with it? I always know where the breaks are and I have never sped in my life. Well. Expect for that one time with Johnny Sloan at the fairgrounds, that was much, much too fast. I married the man later, so I suppose it was fine. I would have to consult journal 23 for full details.

Unless you're into brain frying and expensive medication, stay far away from the office between the used car dealer and Wal-Mart.

Documentation is of the utmost importance. It's how we know we exist. How others know we are real. If you don't document, well, anything can happen. Erasure, most often.

The dark is terrifying. How do you chronicle something you cannot see? Journal 44 touches on the subject. Some people do not understand. You can *see* the dark, you can't see what is *in* it, that's what they always say. They are wrong, of course, darkness is the absence of light. What you see isn't there.

Right across the mall in Shepherdsville, there is a male therapist, he's pretty decent, for a man. Even though he specializes in addictions, I had four sessions there. He was too attractive to be intelligent and so I went next door to Dr. Wells, an ugly illegitimate if I ever saw one. Besides, the other one was kind of pill happy for an addictions counselor.

During my first few sessions my husband said that everyone needs a little help. When the little turned into a little more, it was just a little too much. It doesn't bother me at all, really, not too often, anyway. That's not why I am here. It didn't come as a surprise, that's for sure. Four weeks before he left, I dreamt about the tortoise and the hare, you know the fable, about diligence and time and cheating? In my dream the tortoise had rabbit ears, some mutant creature who couldn't accomplish anything important. Journal 20, if you're interested.

Back to documentation. Recording absurdities is both exhilarating and exhausting. Why did I have to get out of the car? It was a ticket. Writing anomalies down sometimes irons them into normalcies. More frequently than not, it just makes you more insane. I have even left a therapist because she had shoddy paperwork. I don't care about expenses, but paper work should be immaculate. I refuse to pay for carelessness. Good help is simply hard to find.

Susan thinks she has it all together, but she is more frazzled than Ethan and Lizbeth combined. She enjoyed shock treatment a little too much.

When I was a child my family owned a farm that was bordered by a river. Though I was never an accomplished fisherwoman or swimmer I spent every day gently casting my dad's old pole, the canoe gently rocking from the wind. If I was lucky, deer could be seen from the banks, nibbling on new foliage. Here, I was happy. Several years ago, after I was long grown, I dreamt for two weeks straight some entertainment industry turned the river into a theme park ride.

One thing that I just cannot understand is why, after the ticket, I followed the police officer around. I was finished, free to go, yet I just stayed. In fact, I believe I followed the cop for the next five miles. At least, I think it was five miles. Dream time is so skewed. I should document my self-examination.

In two weeks time I will be released from here. Saying goodbye to Ethan and Lizbeth will be strenuous. As a parting gift, I am giving them journals. Ethan knows nothing of record keeping, which is why he is here in the first place. Lizbeth only doodles, to her words do not matter, but she must be made to understand or she will never leave. As for myself, my whole life has been written down, every aspect noted in detail. This is for thorough examination. Maybe one day my children will care more. My first appointment with Dr. Spokane, down on Price Lane, will be two days after I am home.

Travelling Riverside Blues

Carrie Mason

Through the window, the asphalt blends. It is the great rolling tar sea; yellow lines like seahorses bobbing in the waves, evergreens the seaweed along the shore, semis the giant ships parting smooth waters. Brushing the hair out of my eyes, I glance over at my sister. She is oblivious, drumming on the steering wheel.

...

Sometime in January, our neighbors would volunteer to be sponsors for the youth group's yearly mecca to a convention in Tennessee. This was the weekend Jess and I would be appointed as caregivers to their much younger daughters. Seven and ten, respectively, though not much respect got passed around. Bailey, the seven year old, had this weird love of baths. Even Holiday Barbie was submerged under steamy waters, black sequined dress and all. The house had a real bad mouse problem, blamed on the kids eating upstairs, and traps were tucked into every crevice of the home. We were the best babysitters alive. Though some moments, I used to feel a little guilty for calmly accepting our paycheck at the end of the night. Especially The Mousetrap Prank.

"Hey Jess, watch this." I set the trap, gripping it tightly from the back, like my father showed me. The two girls were taking a bath.

"What are you doing?" Jess looked ready, but also like I was an idiot. Smirking, shouting, I flung the bathroom door open, laying the set mouse trap on the water.

That was the first time I noticed the tiny stutter.

...

The afternoon sun filtered through the trees like lights at the boy band concert when we were both too old for such dreams. It was a terrific night. As loud as our music was, vibrating the car door, rippling through my seat, it might as well have been a concert. When the music pulses, it's easier to pretend.

“Jess.”

Instantly, she is alert. Worried, nervous, and I feel a twinge of shame.

“Is a Bagel Bite really pizza?”

She double takes. Irritated and relieved, wrinkles her nose, shoving her glasses up her face.

“I guess, all the ingredients are there.”

I am not satisfied. “But the crust... It’s the heart and soul of a pizza.”

“If you knew why did you even ask?”

“Because now I want pizza.”

She believes I have lost it. “You realize we passed an exit thirty minutes ago?”

I shrug, regret it. “We have time.”

Jess blanches a little.

“Come on, you know you want delicious P I Z Z A” Spelling always makes it more desirable.

“I hate you.” Jess turns the car around.

I always could get her to do what I want.

...

After riding for a couple hours, my body has left a warm imprint on the seat, distinguishable but quickly fading. It’s harder to untangle myself from the blankets than I’d ever admit, I wave Jess’s ever helping hands away. I am independent. I walk as straight and carefree as I can, trying to keep the old saunter. Here’s to hoping Jess has an imagination as vivid as mine. Shoulders are slightly hunched and steps slow and methodical, I can sense Jess’s hand hovering over the small of my back, waiting. Still, I use my dwindling weight against the door and push it open. The place is pretty standard, as far as pizza places go, dim lighting, smoky, bar stools. Permanent grease stains and a jukebox that screams about glory days. That’s okay though, I dig the old tunes. Jess pretends to enjoy strains of Zeppelin though I know she actually prefers “easy listening” sap. It’s hard to drown out thoughts with piano classics. I scoot into the booth, the plastic covering is a little ripped, smooth gliding is

impossible. When our waitress comes over, I've already flipped through the table menu twice.

"Hi, my name is Becky, what can I get ya'll?"

"Yeah, we'd like a half cheese and half barbeque chicken pizza." Jess doesn't like BBQ, but it's my favorite.

"Anything to drink?"

I order a Dr. Pepper, Jess a root beer. Becky leaves us with a promise of return. I pull my jacket tighter. Jess is looking at me. "What?" I say, defensive.

"Seriously? You just had two cups of coffee, how much caffeine are you going to consume?" There is a beat, as if the room was taking a breath. Sometimes, I just wish Jess would leave me alone.

Becky is always keeps her promises and sets the drinks down. I roll my eyes, strip the straw of its wrapper and slurp on the soda. "All of it, and I'm salting my pizza too."

...

About a year ago, when Jess had her first college lunch, she was really nervous. Understandably, irritatingly nervous. I had her back though. It's kind of my job. "Jess..."

"What?"

"Do you know what rhymes with pepper and mace?"

"No." She takes a bite of chicken.

"Salt in your face!"

She is not amused, but she's not jittery anymore. "What was that for? Seriously, you don't just go throwing salt on people." Couple years later, salt would have different limitations.

...

I can't quite finish two slices of pizza, suddenly feeling nauseous. Jess helps me to the car, and the road settles.

The car is always the best place to take a nap. Warm sun through the window, gentle hum of cars passing, lulling mortal souls to slumber. Sometimes, the gradual slowing of wheels wakes me up, a break in steady motion. Other times, depending on how long I've forced myself awake, not even the thunder can interrupt. Waking, stretching, the Spiderman blanket I got for my eighth birthday slipping from my shoulders. The sign says welcome to Laramie, which is funny because we're leaving the dust of Frontier Days behind, on to the next thing. Jess is "getting gas." Gas pumps are her nemeses; she never remembers my debit pin, or how to even work the dang nozzle. Watching her stare at the pump as if the magical gas fairy is going to give her special instructions makes my whole day. She looks at the debit, swipes it again, picks the nozzle up, sets it back down. Finally, she turns to knock on my window, when she notices the stupid grin and sleepy eyes. She opens the door. "Fine. I can't do it."

I grab my note book, and draw a tally on the left column.

"Seriously, are you still doing that stupid thing?"

"Jess one, gas station three."

"You suck."

Gripping Spidy tightly, I climb out of the car and take the debit card from her.

"For real?" Jess looks at the blanket.

"I'm cold."

"It's eighty five degrees out."

I shrug, look at the debit card and the machine. "You had it backwards." I flip the card, slide it in, and take it out, sliding the plastic into my back pocket. I'm getting settled for another nap when, "Hey, what's the?"

"4255."

...

I think about the past a lot.

Running was the most frustrating and rewarding thing I have ever done. Some days I miss the feeling of pavement or trail under my sneakers. It's peaceful. Even now, I recall the Last Day I Ran. It was not with Jess, though we do most everything together, it was with my roommate. The day was sixty, pale winter sun flexing rays for summer heat. Rain from the night gave the earth a spring smell, the woods green. Life abundantly and all that jazz.

...

Unconsciously pressing a hand against my chest, hard bone under skin, I feel syncopated rhythm against the meat of my palm.

"Hey, hey" Jess slaps my shoulder, and I drop my arm. "You good?"

"Yeah, it's just being weird again."

"You need anything?"

"No."

"You sure?"

"Yes, Jess. I'm fine."

There is a silence, but it's not uncomfortable. Squirming in my seat I try to relieve the ache that has settled. Jess, sighs and tosses a pill container at me. "Just take it." I frown, but do what she says. Jess always could get me to do whatever she wants.

"Remember that time you got Jehovah-ed?" I laugh at the memory. It's a good one. Jess laughs too "Yeah, that was ridiculous." We were doing laundry at a friend's house when the doorbell rang. I hid in the kitchen and made Jess answer the door.

"I can't believe you told them we didn't live here."

Jess shrugs, her voice raises and she gets jokingly defensives every time we tell the story. "I panicked. You would've panicked."

I agree, "True, but you know, that they'll 'be back later, just to check up on the homeowners."

Jess laughs easily, no stress, and I look out the window, “Man, that was funny.”

...

There used to be an oxygen tank in the back seat, buckled, because we’re quirky like it was some sort of child. Now it rests against my feet, gently rocking in the floorboard.

...

The First Road Trip was to college. Nothing more than a forty five minute drive as a sidekick to Jess’s new adventure. The Second Road Trip was to New Orleans, this time Jess was the sidekick, just the two of us rambling on. The majority of our time together is in the car. Avoid conversations, engage, it hardly matters. Silences do not have to be filled. Even before, I would fall asleep halfway to wherever we were going that time. Road trips are easy for us. When it became apparent that something was up, when the ache was relentless and my toes got blue and tingly, driving seemed the best option. Away, to, it doesn’t matter. Just going. It’s horribly selfish, and demanding this Last Road Trip. Often, she tries to ask the “What” questions. What’s wrong? What hurts? What do I need to do? I never answer. Even if Jess is steering the wheel, it’s happening to me. It freaks her out. She is a control freak. Today the ache is harsher than normal. Breathing is tighter, fingers are kind of numb. The rhythm is sluggish, little more off beat. I reach over, turn the volume higher and higher, till the speakers are fuzzy, and the bass shakes the windows.



Old Truck
Emma Starnes

Gossip
Jordyn Perry

By all accounts please feel free to
divulge all of her secrets
to me.

The quibbles and quabbles
of your tedious friendship
and your thoughts on that relationship
are my bread and butter.

Really.
Truly.
Please, go on.

What have I to live for
but to hear your reaction to a stranger's account
of a stranger's action
of an acquaintance's friend's
ex-boyfriend's snip
from the lips of another?

Nothing, I tell you.

And really now, it was surely her intent upon
addressing them to you, and only you,
that they should truly come
to me.
That is only common sense.

Insomnia

Jordyn Perry

My sly mistress slinks
along always in my wake.
Her warm, practiced fingers snake so
smoothly through my hair.
Her husky lullaby is crooned
so sweetly in my ear.
In every hard-backed seat,
in every puff of molded air,
in every word out of an elder's lips,
she is there.
Yet the moment I lie upon my bed
and open arms wide to finally take her to my breast
she is always
gone.



Old Chair
Emma Starnes

Notes on the Contributors

Alissah Clapper lives in Greensburg and will receive her Associate's degree in Religion in May 2016.

Aaron C. Estes is a Human Services major from Columbia.

Caitlin Freeny is an English and Psychology major from Maryville, Tennessee. She is also a member of the Women's Swim Team.

Olivia Garlt is an English major from Louisville. This is her first appearance in *Orpheus*.

Kaitlyn Grant, Featured Poet, is a senior at Adair County High School and has taken several classes at LWC. She plans to attend UK in the fall.

Sandra Harbison is a Human Services and Counseling major from Glasgow, Kentucky. She is interested in helping the less fortunate to strive and have a better quality of life.

Carrie Mason. Coffee. Books. All things Irish. After spending the fall 2014 term studying at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Carrie graduated in December 2015 with a BA in English and plans to attend graduate school at U of L in the fall.

James McIntosh graduated in December 2015 with a BA in Media Studies and a minor in English.

Jordyn Perry will receive her BA in English and Psychology in May 2016. Her future plans include becoming a professor and completing independent research. Her hometown is Danville, KY.

Emma Starnes is majoring in Human Services and Counseling. She lives in and takes photographs around the state of Virginia.

The Legend of Orpheus

The ancient Greek mind was both subtle and skillful and the legend of Orpheus amply epitomizes this. Orpheus ('he of the river bank') was the son of Apollo, god of poetry, and the Muse Calliopé ('she of the fair voice'), who gave birth to him on the banks of the Hebrus River in Thrace. Such was his power of verse and song, he could move the trees and rocks and tame wild beasts. He was given the gift of the lyre by Apollo. When his wife Eurydice died from a serpent's bite during their wedding celebration, Orpheus, in his grief, descended to the underworld – no easy task for a mortal – to attempt to win her back from the land of the dead.

Arriving at the judgment seat of Persephone and Hades, rulers of the underworld, Orpheus began to sing his lament for Eurydice. So sweet was his voice that the dead, including Eurydice, flocked to hear him, weeping for the beauty of the upper world, which was lost to them. Persephone and Hades were so moved, they chose to let Orpheus take Eurydice back to the world of daylight, on condition that he not turn to look at her until they had reached the upper world. Hermes, the guide of souls, led them on the arduous journey back to the land of the living.

With his foot on the very threshold of the day-lit world, Orpheus, whether from impatience or anxiety, turned around too soon – Eurydice was not yet out of the realm of the dead. Because the edict of Persephone and Hades was irrevocable, Hermes was forced to lead Eurydice back to the eternal darkness. Though Orpheus wandered for days through the dark caverns and tunnels of the netherworld, pitifully calling out his wife's name, he never found her again.

