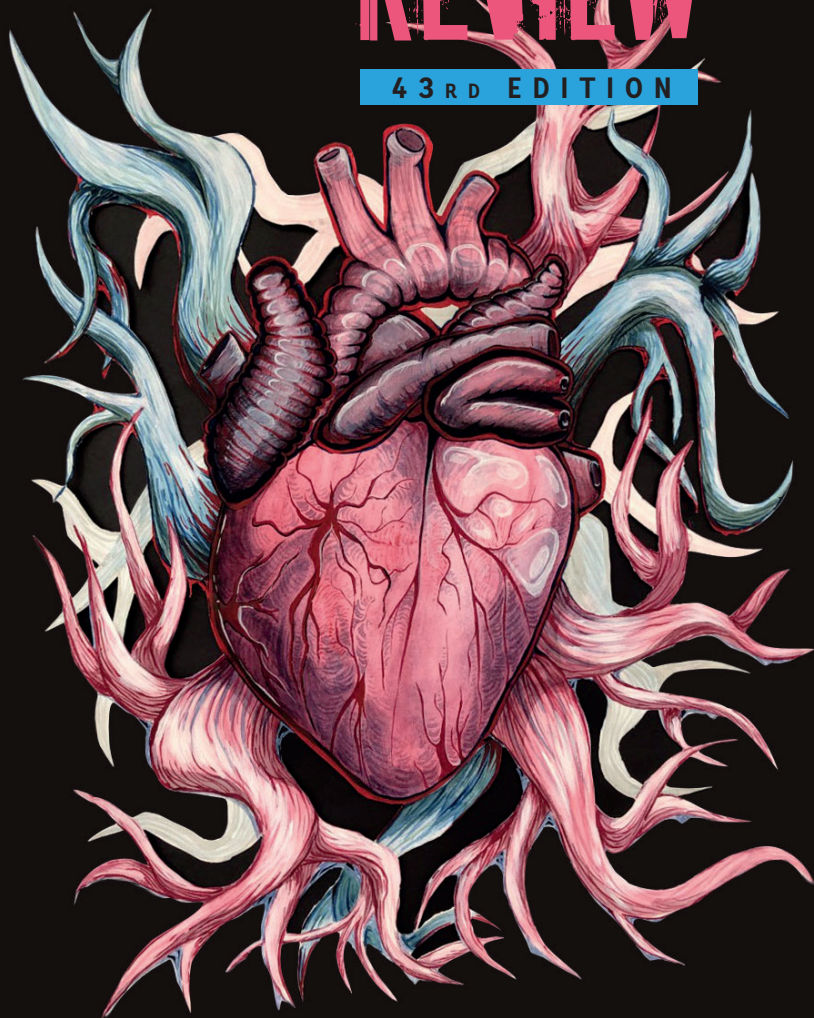


# THE TUSCARORA REVIEW

43<sup>RD</sup> EDITION

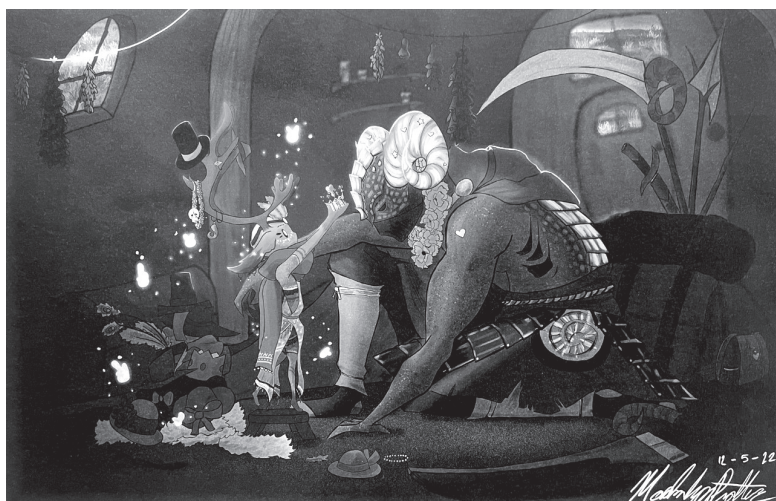


A FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE MAGAZINE OF THE CREATIVE ARTS

# Mission Statement

The mission of the Frederick Community College magazine of the creative arts, *Tuscarora Review*, is to provide an annual showcase for the outstanding literary and visual art created by the College community.

Submission information for the 2024 edition is available at:  
[www.frederick.edu/tuscarorareview](http://www.frederick.edu/tuscarorareview).



MOVIE STILL    **Mads Piøtter**

Digital

Pictured on the front cover:

LINEAGE    **Mina Yanek**    Watercolor



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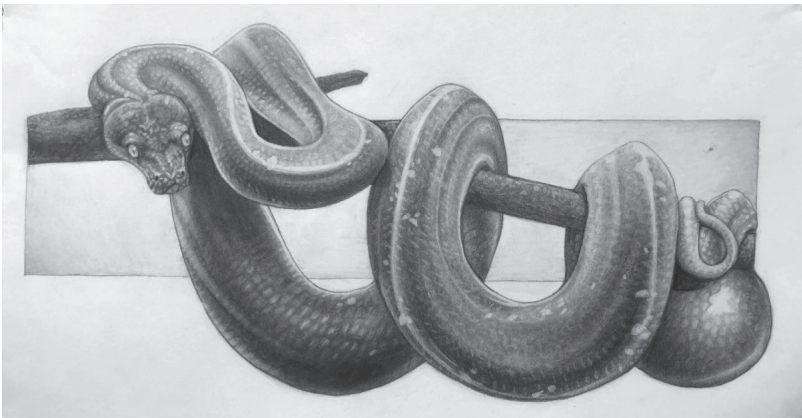
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## Colophon

The magazine cover is printed on 80 pound Endurance Gloss Cover, the four color inner pages are printed on 70 pound Endurance Gloss, and the inner pages are printed on 60 pound Finch 94 Smooth White Offset. The fonts used are TrueType—Breuer Family, Open Type—Rusted Brushpen, New Baskerville Family, and Wingdings.



INTERTWINED **Emily Rose Benson**

*Pastel*

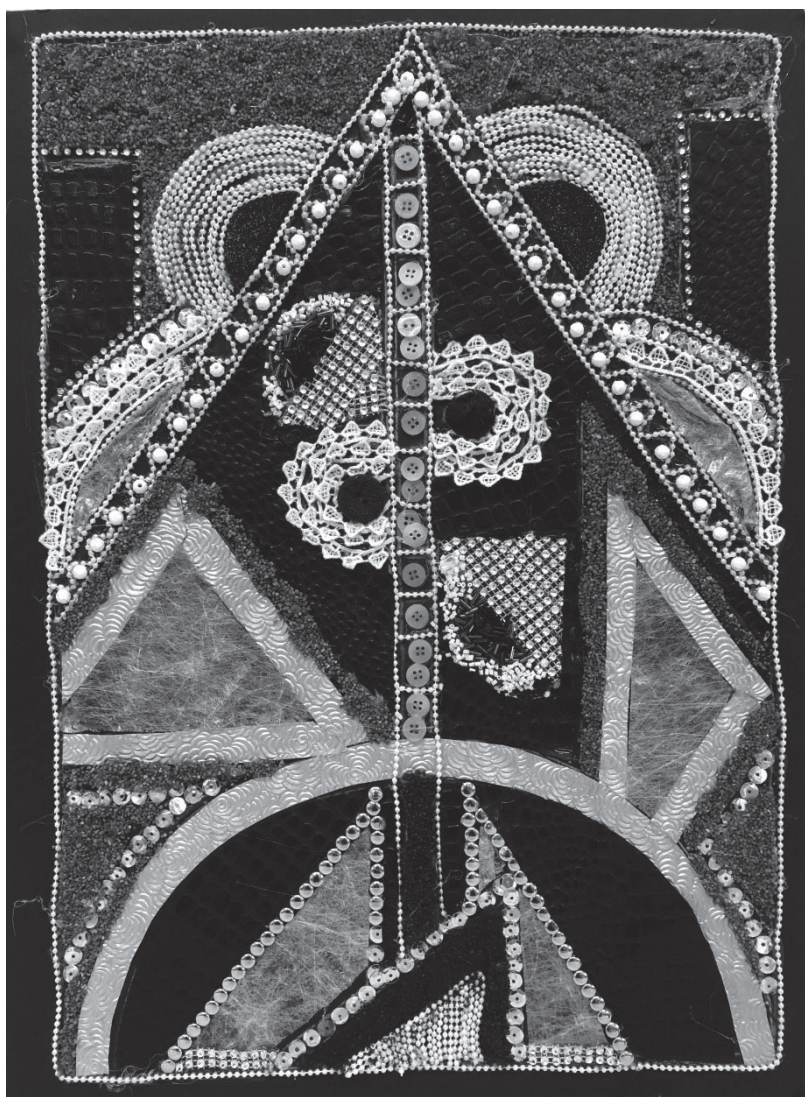


# Dedication

*“We read to know that we  
are not alone.”*

— C. S. Lewis

Literature is all about speaking out and being honest in one's work. We read and write to find the truth of who we are and of the world around us. We learn not to fear what we feel, and to be more authentic in our expression. For this issue of the *Tuscarora Review*, we received multiple submissions with a recurring theme that revealed the struggles our fellow community members face regarding stigma and biases related to who they are, and especially factors outside their control, such as race, gender, and sexuality. We want you to know you are not alone, and we hope this issue validates the stories you've bravely chosen to share with us. In this edition of the *Tuscarora Review*, we want to elevate the voices of marginalized stories, ideas, and topics to destigmatize these experiences that are simply everyday life events for many. Therefore, this 43rd edition of *Tuscarora Review* is for those who were ever too afraid to speak their truth, for those who ever felt silenced, unheard, or dismissed, and for those who have felt alone. ■



AL\_AGASA **Muntaha Darwish**

*Mixed Media*

# A Letter From the Editor

I remember picking up a copy of *the Tuscarora Review* in my first semester at FCC. Now, almost two years later, I have had the pleasure of editing the 43rd edition of *the Tuscarora Review*. This magazine is deeply tied to the FCC community. I have seen it being read in the Cougar Grille. Parents have picked it up at high school outreach events. I have seen art students looking at the colorful centerfold of the magazine. *The Tuscarora Review*, no matter the edition, has something for everyone.

The staff this year had the pleasure of reading so many wonderful submissions and looking at a plethora of beautiful art pieces. Even if your submission did not make it into the magazine, we want to commend you for writing stories and submitting artwork that provoked thoughtful conversation among all of the editors.

This edition could not have been possible without a dedicated team. I want to thank each member of the Editorial Board for all of their contributions.

To Hannah, our copy editor, thank you for correcting all of the spelling mistakes that I have made and catching all the grammatical mistakes that I would inevitably overlook if I were in your position.

To Emily and Katy, our assistant copy editors, thank you for fine-tuning all of the work that is in the magazine. I am so grateful that the two of you were able to help each other get things done.

To Catie and Jess, our art directors, thank you for taking the time to curate the art selections for this magazine. Without your creative vision, this edition of *the Tuscarora Review* would not be privy to all of the dynamic artwork that you helped to select.

To Sophie, our social media director, thank you for creating *Tuscarora Review* TikToks that always make me laugh.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *the Tuscarora Review* as much as we do! ■

—Alexandra Alward, *Editor-in-Chief*





SUCKLE STILLSKIN **Michael Vizas**

*Pen*

# Saturn Devouring His Son

*After Francisco Goya*

ALEXANDRA ALWARD

Leather skin stretched over boney points  
Knees like sharp stones resting upon the ground  
Subduing the earth beneath  
Daring the tendrils of blackened space to outstretch their arms  
in solace  
This thing, this man, is not entirely human  
Flesh molded over joints and twisted over bones  
Like a shrunken shirt, skin grips to crevices it shouldn't

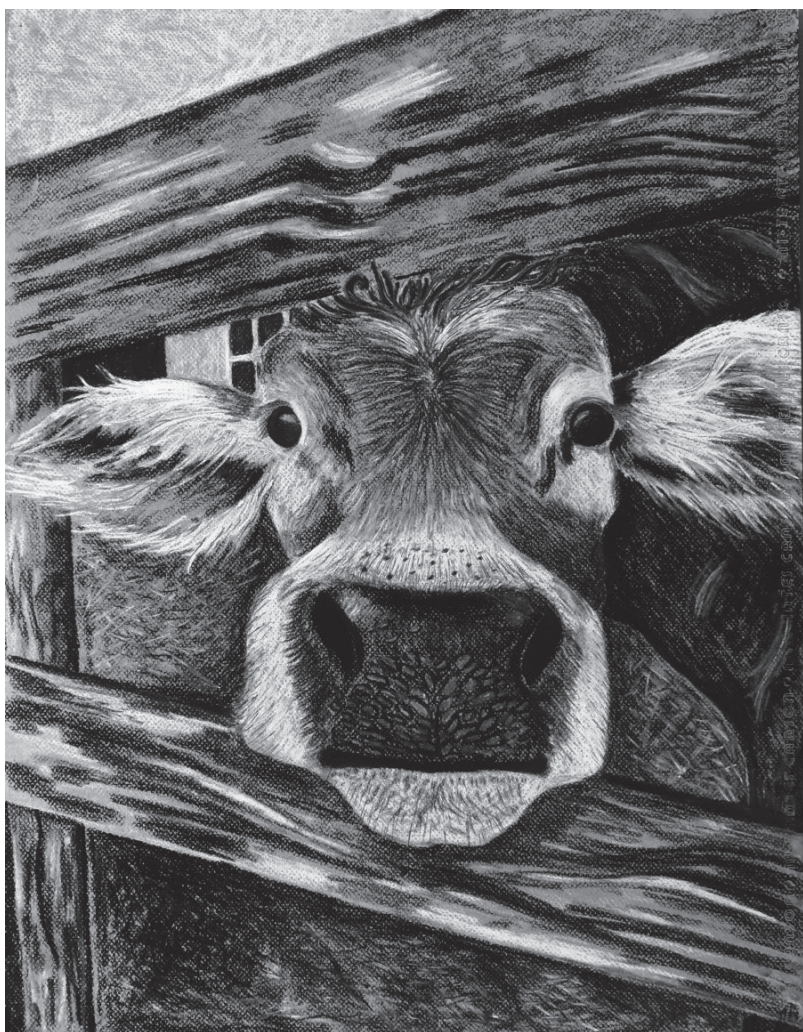
His eyes are wide like full moons  
Though they hold darkness as if the moons were reflected off  
of deep navy waters  
Each crashing wave the blink of an eyelid  
Slamming onto shore, lashes fluttering  
The water spray meets the sand.  
But his eyes are all dried up, there is no ocean, no water spray  
Instead, a desolate landscape plagued by a drought  
These eyes have seen no tears, nor will they  
The stinging matters not  
He must not blink them

Below the eyes lies the mouth  
A chasm of canines  
Teeth behind lips  
Darkened by the stain of blood  
His lips encircle pale flesh like the rings of Saturn wrap the  
planet



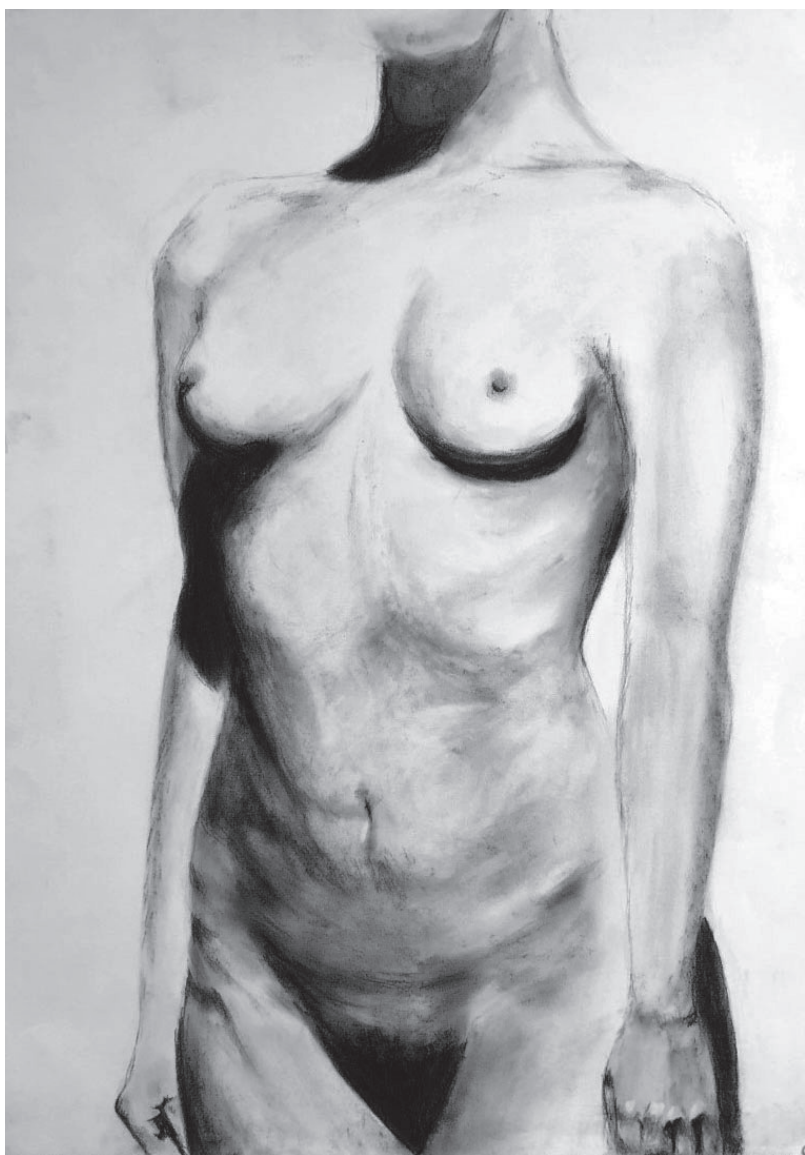
If you blur your eyes, his snack of bone and skin loses its  
human shape  
It becomes just meat  
The head gone, he has already feasted  
What is left is a torso  
Barely identifiable by the shape of legs that jut out from his  
suffocating hands  
The only way he could complete the act was to remove the face  
  
Then his son ceases to be his son  
Becoming only a body  
A father's rage tearing at limbs  
Pulling back skin and reaching for the core  
  
His tongue has tasted what came from him  
Blood called to blood  
Flesh returned to flesh ■

**Author Information:** I was inspired to make this piece because I have always been fascinated by cannibalism, especially when it is portrayed in a fictional context. I also have a deep love for mythology. One of my favorite paintings, by Goya, depicts the Titan Saturn eating his son. Not only does the painting encapsulate both my interest in mythology and cannibalism, but it shows the brutality that parent-child relationships can take on.



PETEY **Amanda Lyon**

*Pastel*



SOLITUDE **Yasmeen Diawara**

*Charcoal*

# Fully Known and Fully Loved

KAYLAN VASQUEZ

**Editors' Note:** *We appreciated receiving a submission that addresses a highly stigmatized but common experience. We recognize that pornography use can be part of healthy and consensual sexual expression; at the same time, we affirm those who are struggling with pornography misuse and those who love them. If you or someone you know is struggling with pornography misuse, we encourage you to seek support.*

Sean and I settle into the cushioned seats of my silver Corolla, protecting us from the night's April showers. I reach for my buckle to put it in its place; he runs his fingers through his dirty blonde hair and has an unusual downcast face once his hands land in his lap. I release the grey seatbelt from my grip and ask, "What's wrong?"

His hands fumble in his lap, "I have something I have to tell you," he states, his eyes avoiding mine and his body adjusting to find comfort.

The sound of my heart becomes loud in my ears and the pace feels like I'm running a marathon. "Is this the thing that you've been telling me you need to tell me, but the time hasn't been right?" I question.

"Yes," he says, fingers still fidgeting.

I shift in my seat. He takes a deep breath, preparing for what he is going to say. I take a deep breath hoping it'll relax my heartbeat.

"So..." he pauses, rubbing his face with his right hand. "Wow this is going to be really hard," he takes another breath. "You know what, I'm just going to say it. Actually I'm going to give you some back story. I was ten and this kid at my school shoved a video in my face and that was the first time..." he stops. The words struggle to leave his mouth.

I take in another breath, attempting to stay calm.



"The first time I saw..." another pause.

My heartbeat quickens with each pause he takes. His head moves around. His cheeks puff with air, stopping the words from leaving his mouth.

Wow, this is really hard for him to say. Be strong and stay calm, he's trying to be vulnerable with you. God, please help me.

"The first time I saw porn," he stammers.

The rain drops are the only sound in my ears.

"I have a porn addiction. The longest I've ever been without porn is 3 months," he says interrupting the rain.

My mind is blank.

Together we listen to rain drops. I am unaware of how many minutes pass before he prompts his next question.

"What are you thinking? How are you feeling?"

In my peripheral vision his head turns towards me, but no eye contact is made. My eyes find the air conditioning vent infuriating. Porn, he's watched porn. I knew it was something that people struggled with, but he never gave me the impression that he would watch that. I thought he was... as pure as I was.

Once I have processed his question, the only thing that leaves my lips is, "Have you watched porn since we've been together?"

"Yes," he says.

My head moves up and down at the pace of a snail, my eyes avoiding his.

"Can I be honest?" I ask, curious if he wants my thoughts.

"Yes," he answers.

I take a breath and say, "I feel cheated on. You are with me and say I'm beautiful and claim all these amazing things about me, but clearly I'm not enough if you go and watch porn." My eyes are now filling with water, the seal wanting to break and flow. He turns his face towards the windshield instead of looking in my direction. A still minute goes by ... nothing but the sound of rain.

Out of my peripheral vision, his head moves towards my direction. He opens his mouth and calmly says, "That's why I'm trying to stop. I never wanted you to feel that way. This is something I struggle with, but it's been a week since I last watched it and I'm really proud of myself for that," he says, a minuscule smile prying at the corners of

his mouth. “I think of you, your mom, and my mom, and I know how disrespectful it is. I want you to know that I really am trying to stop.”

My eyes make a small movement to see his own; they’re still his.

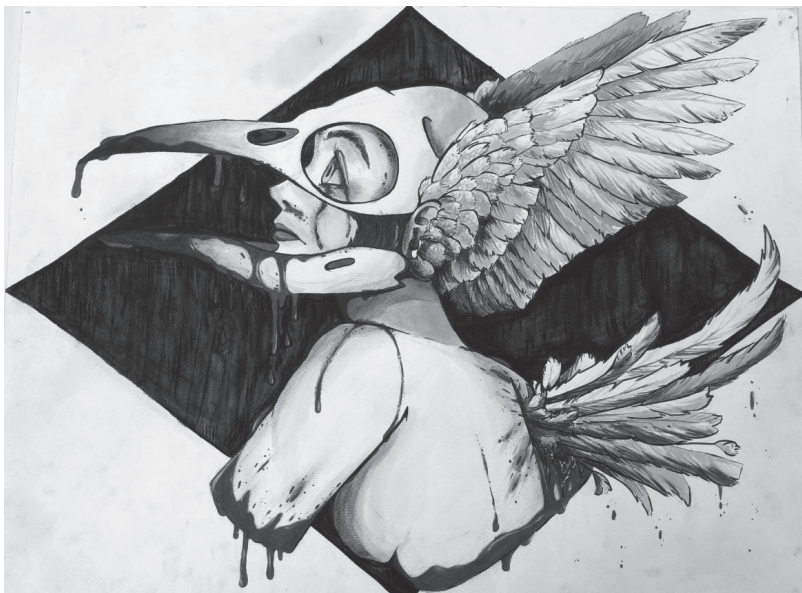
“That’s why I’ve been so grateful for staying at your house late, I have no energy to watch it when I get home,” he says.

Silence joins us again.

He breaks the quiet after another minute, “I’m sorry to put this on you, but it feels really good to finally let it out,” he states as a breath leaves his now relaxed body. “What are you thinking?” he questions, our eyes meeting one another.

“Honestly, I don’t know. I’m upset because I feel cheated on, but I’m glad that it’s been a week since you last watched it,” I say with a small smile. “I’m just going to need some time to process.” He nods his head. We place the unlocked buckles into their secure positions. The gear shift moves into drive, and the rain is the music on our ride home. ■

**Author Information:** I am a 2022 FCC graduate and I haven’t been a writer for long, but I have always appreciated being able to express myself on paper, especially when writing to God.





HORSE DREAMS    **Sidra Saentz**

*Watercolor*

**Author Information:** As someone who has struggled with her sexuality, especially being willing to be vulnerable and express as such, I find seeing that other people like yourself struggle in the same way is refreshing and encouraging. My hope for people who read this piece is to realize they are not alone and that there are many people like them who struggle just the same.

# *I'm Sorry I Love*

ABIGAIL FELTHAM

*I*'m sorry that I look at women the way a girl is supposed to look at men. Watching them smile in delight at a tiny thing that happened to them; maybe a sweet text or a long-awaited accomplishment, my cheeks rosy as I watch. I was raised to be a good girl. To fall in love with a man and, eventually, marry him in a towering church. That church became more like a prison the longer I looked, and the gleaming rings like rusted shackles, impossible to escape from and explore the entire world.

I'm sorry I like men and women. Sorry that I like kind-hearted men who blush when you smile and stammer over their words and fiddle with their keys, rather than rough and closed-off men. I'm sorry that I like strong women who can be loud and soft. I'm sorry I like them both.

"I'm sorry," I whimper, as people I meet say, "You're young! You'll come to your senses when you meet a good man." Years in the future, the tears will become hard and cold, frozen and uncaring ice, blind to the looks and taunts.

Yet I'm still sorry, because if you hate me so much for liking women, how much will you despise me for dating two people, three people, four? Will you lash out? Will you shun me, as if my life is lesser?

I'm sorry I don't know; I don't know what to choose! Should I ignore this part of myself, sequestered to a life of despair to please you? Or do I risk it all—family, friends, love, a home—so I can kiss and hold the hands of the person, the person, I love?

I'm sorry because I know the disappointment you will feel. I'm sorry I'm not the perfect girl, who will fall for a perfect boy and live in a perfect house with a perfect fence and perfect kids.

I'm sorry my perfect is not the same as your perfect. I'm sorry I looked in a way I was never meant to. But I'm not sorry for loving. ■





A WEEPING ANGEL **Caitlin Farris**

*Pastel*

# Glass Bottles

SIMIAH CHARLES

A late, overcast sky hung over the abandoned parking lot where Tyler and I stood. Shards of glass from Hennessy, Tequila, and Corona bottles were scattered around our feet. The police cruiser's tires crackled on the pavement until it came to a complete stop. It was silent, no sirens, no flashing lights. The officer got out of his car. His lips curled as he approached us. A daunting sensation rose from my feet to my heart then back down to my gut. We were silent, no words, no movement.

"Come on," The officer said when he got close enough. "What is this?"

"We were going to clean it up," Tyler said and pointed to the broom that was lying on the ground. The officer's hands rested on his bullet proof vest.

"This is not your property ..." The officer began. "This is vandalism—destruction of property. You are looking at a \$150 citation." I pressed my thumbnail deep into my skin, but I could not feel it no matter how hard I pushed. There is no way that this is considered vandalism. Perhaps littering at best.

There was silence once again—the annoying kind. The kind of silence that happens when the game show host pauses before reading aloud who the winner is. The heart-wrenching kind. My eyes were glued to him. My attention bounced from his face to his black walkie-talkie, to his notepad, and to his gun. In those moments of quietness it did not occur to me that we were two black kids, doing dumbass stuff and not putting two brain cells together. What would my parents think? What will happen to my academic career? I cannot go to jail. Can we go to jail for this?

A gust of wind weaved its way through my coily hair. I noticed that the officer had not looked at me once—just Tyler. I followed the cop's gaze and I looked at my friend. Tyler's hard facial features were unfazed. How was he so calm? I looked back at the officer.

“Just clean it up and get out of here,” the officer finally said. I still held my breath. I did not want to breathe. I did not want to release the tension—not yet at least. I felt like a ghost standing there. If I opened my mouth and reminded the officer of my existence, maybe my soul would return to its vessel.

“I’m sorry, sir,” I managed to say. He barely glanced in my direction and just motioned his hand as if to say “whatever.” Tyler grabbed the broom and handed me the dustpan. The police officer went back in his car and watched.

The broken bottles loaded themselves onto the white plastic pan given the nudge of the broom’s bristles. My hand trembled as I lifted the dustpan and poured it into the black trash bag we brought.

“I’m sorry I brought you into this,” Tyler said.

“It’s okay,” I whispered. It was not like we did this just for the fun of it. We had given each bottle a name—a meaning—before we threw it against the brick wall of the vacant building. We named them mental illness, an emotionally unavailable father, a breakup with no closure, a life stuck in neutral, and a silent God. We thought the act to be symbolic. Bottled pain released in a physical form.

When we were close to being done, the officer motioned for Tyler to come. Not me. I watched the movements of the cop’s mouth and the nods of Tyler’s head. Then the officer rolled his cruiser over to me and waved, making eye contact for the first time. I waved back. Tyler explained that the officer said he was not going to press charges.

“I don’t trust cops,” I said.

“I don’t either,” Tyler agreed. “But I will take his word for it.”

He had not asked us for our names, IDs, or any form of contact. He just had our faces and perhaps surveillance footage from a nearby camera. Could he change his mind? When we finished cleaning up, we walked back to Tyler’s house. After a half an hour of composing ourselves, we decided to go to a coffee shop. We placed our orders, paid, and chose to sit outside. It was sunset, and the sun and mountains created abstract art against the skyline. We admired it in silence while drinking out of paper cups. ■

**Author Information:** I am an English major who has a deep love for creative writing. In my spare time, I like to write songs, read books, and play the piano. It is my dream to one day write movie scripts and books.



NARRATIVE **Alexa Hall**

*Charcoal*



BAILEY **Cole Mahaffey** *Graphite*



# All That Is Lost

ANNA ARRINGTON

*H*e called me Sam again.

It was a short visit in March, down to Illinois. Grandma and Grandpa had 50 years together, and at the party we threw, the tables were lined with silver and gold confetti.

It wasn't meant to be a surprise party, but Grandpa marveled at the fact that we got it past him. My mom and I exchanged brief eye contact that said, "I told him about this time and time again."

Then, he hugged me. His hands trembled against my low back, and I pulled away at the sensation. "Thank you for putting this together, Sammy."

Sam is my cousin.

The fields there are perfect for producing watermelons, sandy soil and whatnot.

Grandpa's shelves were lined with watermelon-themed china, towels, and figurines. His shed of dust-ridden plows and tractors only touched by the hands of us curious younger ones. In Illinois, the grounds were different—sharp and clingy, so my mom insisted we wear shoes there. I never wore them on the soft earth in Maryland, if I could get away with it.

The afternoon following the 50th anniversary celebration, everyone was inside sipping on Grandma's mint tea, but I slipped outside, eager to explore. I followed a trail of these round, green apple-like things that always looked like they rained down from the Illinois sky. Bumpy little things, though all we really knew about them was that we weren't allowed to eat them. On the other side of Grandpa's property was a small house, where raw wood was just sawed off a tree and glued together into a real-life Lincoln log home. I thanked those bumpy green apples for leading me there.

Inside, a dog barked weakly. There were no cars in the driveway, so I peeked into the porch door and the air snapped with silence as his brown eyes looked just past me. The door wasn't locked, and

technically, breaking and entering required breaking—was entering a crime? My hands reached for him, but his ribs were knives and I had never seen so much negative space where flesh should be. Spots of brindled fur were absent along his ears and back.

For the following summer visits, I would spend evenings filling plastic watermelon-printed bowls with dog food and watching from all corners of my eyes for headlights, though I never did see the humans responsible for this dog.

Last summer we went to move Grandpa into a nursing home. It had been two years since we last saw the dog and I wasn't sure if my cousins in Illinois were feeding him. Underneath a bumpy-green-apple-tree, my cousin Sam and I watched our siblings shoot baskets, pieces of the barn flying off in dusty fits of wood chips as the basketball slipped past the backboard. My mom sat down next to us, though my eyebrows raised at the thought of her taking a seat in the filth of these grounds. Solemnly, my mom spoke. The people responsible for this dog had taken up and moved out. I would never see him again. I pictured his tremorous paws, the death I saw in his eyes the day I first saw him. He'd forget what a kind hand felt like.

"All you can do is keep him here," she said, pressing a palm to the left side of her chest.

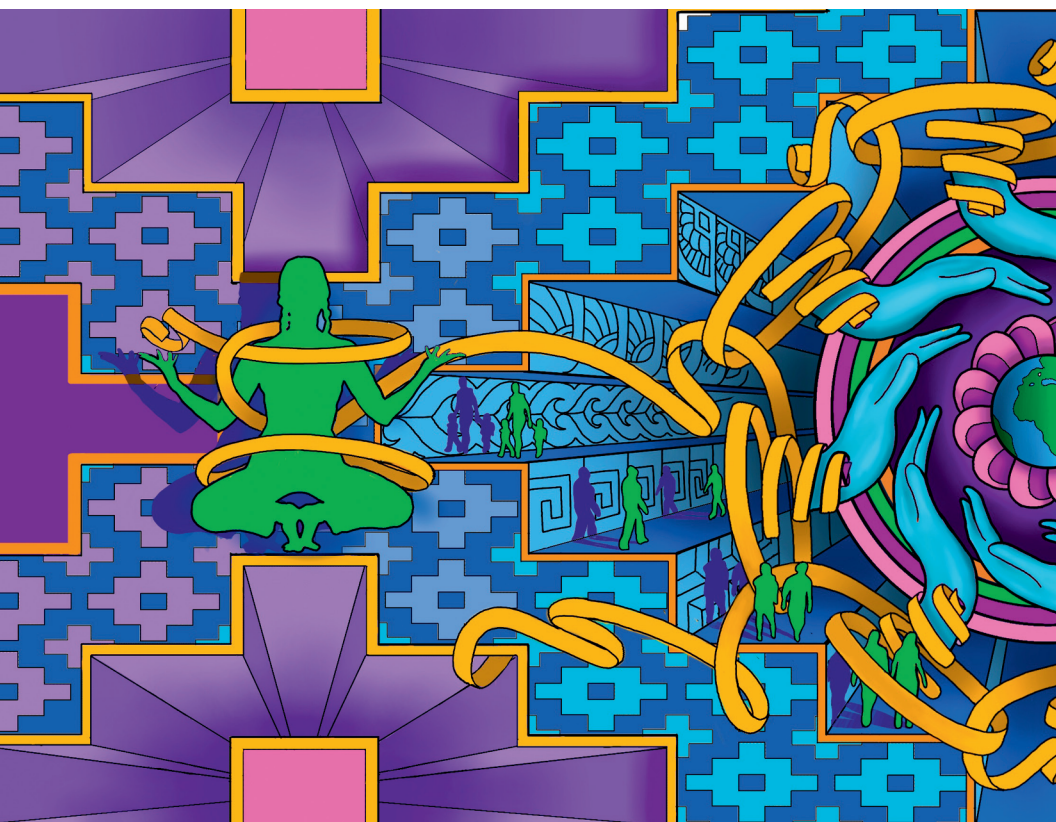
Last night, I spoke with my grandmother on the phone for the first time in too long. She was visiting my grandfather on his side of the nursing home. I imagined her the same way I knew her when I met that dog: nails painted crisp red, legs crossed, curlers freshly taken out, though I fear she also remembers me for who I was then. For Christmas, she sent me a Tinkerbell onesie. Grandma chattered about the hot gossip in the nursing home for several minutes, but I could hear Grandpa muttering something in the background. Something about me. Grandpa wants me to ask you if that dog is doing ok. That dog. Did Grandpa go and see the dog? He must have gone to see him with me once. Barely, in the heat of trying to figure out when or if I took him to see this dog, I catch grandpa's voice saying my name. My name. ■

**Author Information:** I am a dancer, yogi, writer, and farmgirl. I live on what used to be a dairy farm with my family, raising goats and horses. I have found purpose in earning my yoga teaching certificate and sharing the practice of holistic healing. Since childhood, writing has been an outlet for me—a place of candid articulation and artfully strung sentences.

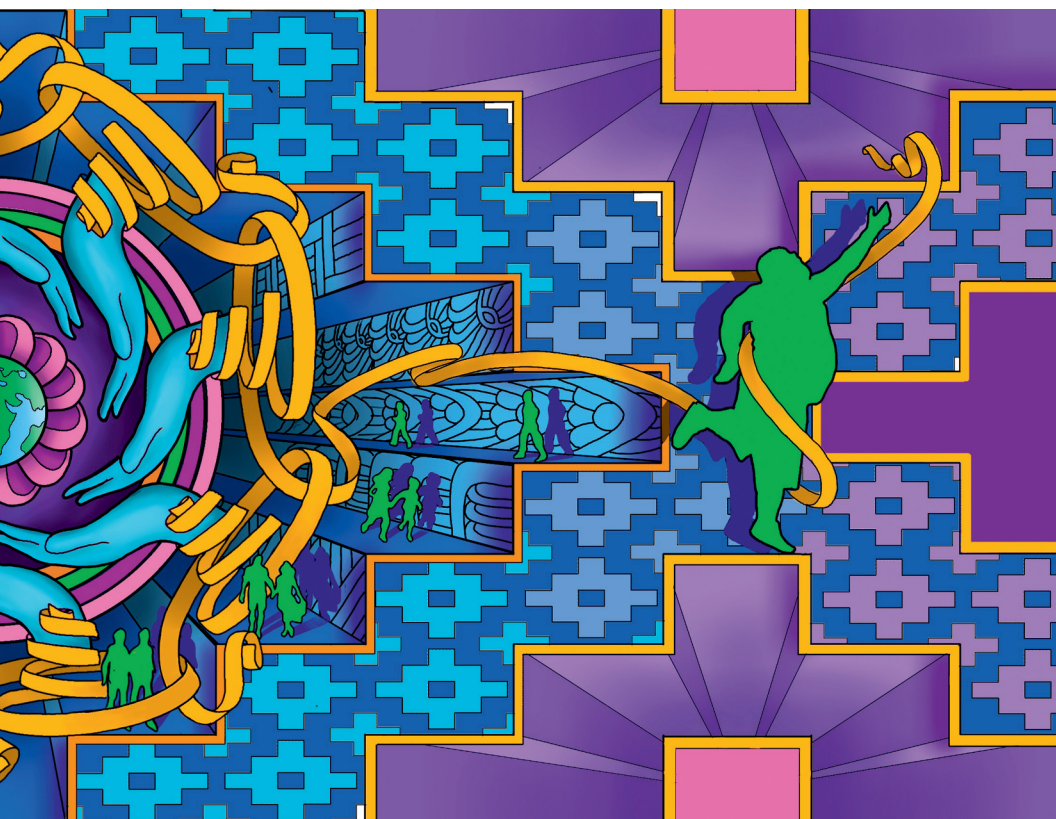


WORD PROJECT, RED **Valeria Morant**

*Acrylic*







MURAL IN THE MOSAIC CENTER **Timothy Cunningham**

*Mixed Media*

The “Make Our Spaces An Inclusive Community” Center, or MOSAIC Center, focuses on creating an environment that allows students of all backgrounds to thrive.





SELF PORTRAIT **Valeria Morant**

*Digital*

# The Deep Calls

CALVIN MANDES

The surface of the shallow ocean already several meters behind him, he swam languidly downwards, his calm but powerful kicks sending him deeper into the clear blue waters—a rarity, as this spot was almost always clouded and obscured.

He descended in a gentle incline, admiring the beautiful, desolate vastness of the ocean, feeling the serene yet powerful currents wrap around him, hearing nothing but the faint thrumming of the surface and the sound of his pulse. There was something entrancing about the ocean: An almost yearning to never leave, to stay and wallow in the drifting sense of distance that pervaded the watery body. It was in the way the world fell away, leaving only mind, body, and the water.

He dove down further, the thrumming ocean surface fading, the water seeming to swallow him in its endless reach. The ocean floor was barely visible from his current depth, but it became sharper as he swam closer; the shroud of shadows and murk grew thicker, but darts of light still shone down, illuminating the vague shape of the water and the sand beneath him.

He was nearing the maximum safe distance for diving, the ocean floor beneath him driving downwards to ever greater depths. The sun had, almost in a singular instance, winked out, and his headlamp took over the job of guiding him through the vast pitch.

The floor of the ocean was covered in rippled sand, rock, and the rare oddity—a can or a chunk of metal. In the distance, he could see the floor drop off, a pit of black in the dark tan sands and the dim green water. He kept going, swimming deeper, and found himself hanging over the drop, staring down a deep abyss. He stopped, resting in place. Hanging suspended in the water, staring into the lightless drop, he felt something on the metaphoric tip of his tongue; a sensation that there was something that he should be doing but wasn't.

His heartbeat seemed to crash through his head, pulsing, deafening. He could almost hear his bones creak, as if the weight of the water was crushing him. Breaking him.

There was no bottom to the fall, no sides. He could tell where the sand gave way, but he couldn't trace the side or observe that the abyss had anything but a beginning—that it ever stopped.

If it never stopped, would the water just keep falling? Would it ever compress and reach pressures strong enough to crumple metal like paper, or would it even out, stuck in slow freefall. Could he just swim down, and keep swimming, endlessly, in the chill deep, and never return? Keep going, and swim deeper?

How long he hung there he didn't know, only that eventually, with a sharp jolt, he glanced away. The pulse faded, the creaking strain rising in intensity—a weight, seeking to pull him down. He focused his gaze instead at the sand below his feet, counting every grain and searching its shape and ebb and flow.

Even if he did want to keep going and swim deeper, he'd run out of air. He'd suffocate, he'd die.

Using the ocean floor for orientation, he turned around, facing the surface, searching for any hint of light. He found none, and made them in his mind instead. He saw them pierce down and illuminate the water around him, showing only more rippled sand, rock, and the rare oddity. There was nothing here. He should swim back up.

Keep going. Swim deeper.

Against all of his instincts, a pervasive wrongness overcoming his actions, he swam up, following the imaginary rays until they were joined by the light of the true sun. The light pierced through the water as he surfaced and left it behind, shining fiercely enough to display the ocean's shallow, unbroken floor. ■

**Author Information:** Not provided.



UNTAPPED POTENTIAL **Eduardo Miranda**

*Charcoal*





EMBRACE **Daphne Scimone**

*Charcoal*



# The Dungeon

J. PATRICK GALLETTI

There is flesh peeling off the walls: bleeding, sogging, sloughing down the wet stonework and splattering into blobs. I smell something terrible in the humid air, like musty rot and wet dog. I try to struggle against the cold manacles around my ankles and wrists, but when I do, they bite me. They bite me so bad that hot blood trickles out in rivulets and stains my threadbare pants. It's too dark to see anything very well. I can only smell soggy meat and stale urine.

Something is breathing in the corner. Something ugly and malformed. I can barely see it. All twisted heaps of fur and twitching muscles. I'm in Hell; this has to be Hell. I struggle against my bonds again and they bite me even harder. The rattling chains wake the ugly thing up and it twitches harder. It starts to contort and stand up, but it's so fucked up that it stands up wrong. It's hunched and distorted, on four knobby legs, and shaking. It's some animal, some horrible animal. It shambles at me, uneven, like the three steps it takes are almost enough to break its feeble legs.

Then it lunges. I recoil, but the manacles around the thing screech and jerk it to the floor and it screams. It howls a harrowing gurgle, like a choking beast drowning in blood, and writhes on the water-logged floor. Chains rattle in the dark, and the thing keeps screaming. It won't stop. It won't stop. It won't stop. Putrid flesh and stale urine splash on me; it splashes in my eyes, on my face, in my mouth. Then I scream too. I scream at the mirror in front of me. I scream until blood comes out of my throat, and I can't scream anymore. ■

**Author Information:** I wrote this piece for my college creative writing course. Because of the encouragement of my professor, I was able to write this piece and give it the love and detail I felt it deserved. I'm very proud of what I wrote, and would love to share it.

# This Way

BABY CORNISH

The route is long, and I take it often. Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 10 a.m. The city bus whines as it comes to a stop, opening its doors just long enough for me to get on before it takes off again. It's a green-painted steel atrocity that shudders at every speed, but it gets me to school and the diner where I work. If I ever wanted to go anywhere else it could probably take me there too, but I stick to my route.

10:05

Creekside Apartments:

Yolanda gets on board with an empty wire cart on wheels dragging behind her. I know her name because she wears it everywhere. "Yolanda", in scraggly pink thread on the right hand corner of her



SPACE PLAYGROUND **Emma Ray**

*Color Pencil*

polo shirt. “Yolanda” in chipped rhinestones on the back of her phone case. A wispy cursive “Y” tattooed in faded red ink on the inside of her wrist. She’s old, beige, and sagging everywhere, but she winks at me when she sees me and I love her for it.

10:08

We pass by the senior center without stopping. Some days we’ll pick up a passenger from there, but it’s been drizzly today and old people don’t usually like to stand out in the rain.

10:10

Roy Rogers:

A group of seven guys I’ve never seen before gets on. They’re different ages, sizes, and colors, and all are wearing work clothes: tan Carhartt coveralls dirty at the cuffs, quilted jackets, steel-toed boots with frayed laces. I can’t help but notice the hands of the man who sits across from me; they’re yellowish purple and calloused everywhere. I can feel his gaze on me and I don’t dare look up. I know this man, though I’ve never met him before. Both his eyes and mine stare at my hands—pale and fidgeting, clasped between my knees—until Vinny, the driver, calls out the next stop.

10:22

Northside Shopping Center:

Yolanda blows a kiss goodbye to everyone on the bus and climbs down the steps in her pink fuzzy slippers. Her metal cart rattles behind her on the pavement, its wheels bouncing unevenly. It’s just me, Vinny, and the seven men in overalls now. I feel small, and nauseatingly feminine. Just as the doors are about to close, a woman with coily blonde hair runs up and gets on. She has a sling wrapped snugly around her torso, and the bean-shaped outline of an infant is barely visible. The men are watching her now, and I move closer to the door.

10:30

I see my school as a speck at the end of the road. This is my stop. It’s a 12-minute walk from here to my classroom, so I’ll be on time today. A girl on a bike flies past me toward the buildings ahead, and I’m envious but only for a second. ■

**Author Information:** I grew up in Frederick City and have attended Frederick Community College since 2021. I plan to major in Political Science, and aspire to one day write a novel.

# 2500 Miles

KATY PENNINGTON

Stacks of brown cardboard boxes filled the back seats of the cream colored station wagon that sat in the Ross family's driveway. Wendy's eyes watered when she saw Julie hop out of the passenger side of the station wagon. Julie's perm was still intact and thriving from the sleepover they had only a week prior, where they spent the entire night watching MTV while doing each other's hair. Her hair would have stuck out in strange ways had it not been weaved tightly into two thick French braids that rested on her shoulders.

Julie wrapped Wendy into her arms, not taking notice of the tears threatening to fall from her best friend's eyes. Wendy melted into the embrace, she didn't allow for the tears to fall because if she did she wouldn't be able to stop crying. Behind them, their fathers engaged in their typical talk about Ronald Reagan and politics. Wendy didn't know exactly what they were talking about now, instead she kept her face firmly pressed against Julie's shoulder.

"I'm really going to miss you," Julie whispered. "I'm still pissed you didn't get into USC."

"Yeah ... me too," Wendy whispered.

Truth is, Wendy didn't apply to the University of Southern California. She probably would have gotten in, but her family didn't have the money to send her there like Julie's family did for her, and she didn't get the scholarships that would have allowed her to go. She settled for community college here in Georgia close to her family.

"Are you applying again when you finish the two years here?" Julie asked as she pushed away from the hug, her hands on Wendy's shoulders.

"Oh ...yeah ... of course," Wendy said. "Are you excited for college?"



MOVIE STILL **Michael Quach**

*Digital*

“Beyond excited. I just wish you were going to be there. Remember when we used to plan going to the same college when we were like 12?” Julie said with a laugh.

“Hey ... don’t get caught up on the fact that I won’t be there. I want you to have fun.”

“I know, my dad gave me a whole speech last night about making new friends. We have a very long car ride ahead of us, so I’m probably going to get to hear this speech again.”

Wendy let a tiny smile grace her face. Julie’s father, John had always been so worried about her when he never really had anything to worry about. She made friends so easily in high school. Before high school it was just the two of them. Then Julie joined volleyball and got friends outside of Wendy. Then she joined the track team and got even more friends. She had made sure to include Wendy, always dragging her to Friday night parties, or to movie night with



her volleyball team, or to bowling with the track team. Wendy was nothing but an acquaintance to these people, and the feeling was mutual.

“What about you?” Julie asked. “Are you excited to go to college here?”

“Hmm? Oh, yeah. I can’t wait,” Wendy said.

“What are you studying?”

“General Studies...for now”

“That’s okay, not everyone has it figured out right away.”

But that was the thing, Wendy didn’t have anything figured out. She didn’t know what she was going to study or what she wanted to do with her life. She didn’t see anything when she looked into her future.

“Right ...”

“Julie? It’s time,” John called out to his daughter, his gaze fixed onto his watch.

“I’m going to call you as soon as I get there, and expect a letter from me in a few days,” Julie said as she pulled Wendy into one more tight hug. “I am going to call you so much your dad’s going to get angry about the phone bill going up.”

Julie let go of Wendy so she could make her way to the car where John was waiting. Wendy’s bottom lip trembled as she watched Julie disappear into the car. The air felt a little colder as she watched the station wagon drive away, taking her best and first friend 2500 miles away.

“Hey, it’ll be okay,” Wendy’s father said as he placed his hand onto Wendy’s shoulder.

“We’ll see.” Wendy mumbled as she let a stray tear slide down her cheek, the only tear she would allow while her father was around to see. This wasn’t a goodbye but it really felt like it. ■

**Author Information:** I am an English major, the youngest of three children, and I live at home with my parents and my older sister in Frederick, Maryland. I have always had a love of telling stories, and as I’ve gotten older, I’ve found a love of writing them down for others to discover.

# Savannah

CAS LINTON

The first time you see Savannah, she's a beauty more terrifying than anything far beyond compare. A name fitting for plains with rolling grass and gentle wildlife, one that holds silent predators that stalk prey and unsuspecting victims alike.

Who is she to you? She's a quiet girl with fluffed blonde hair and curled bangs that frame her soft face. She wears large round glasses rimmed with red exuding an air of innocence. Soft words that breathe so hesitantly in her wake, flowing, poofed, unnaturally clean dresses of those soft sparkling colors adorning her figure to give her a childish air.

A snake in the garden, a girl so innocent it could be nothing but a ruse.

You meet her on a beach, where she stands with a quiet pensive look, the sheen of the moon glossing over the lens of those large round glasses to hide her eyes. You ask how she was, if she was okay or needed a ride, and she turns to you all the same in time to see those doe-brown eyes well with tears. You don't think about how clear they are, devoid of red, how her cheeks only flush so cutely and don't bear a speck of snot or spit as a normal creature would produce with tears.

You reach your hand to her, enthralled by this gentle beauty, a longing in your heart to help her all the while.

She takes your hand, and gives you a soft smile that makes your heart flutter.

And for a moment so brief, you'll see underneath. Doe brown eyes turn black and empty, skin drawn taut and gray across bone, a dress regressed to show bare skin and visible ribs, flaring gills on her neck to reveal royal blue flesh underneath, and that soft smile of perfectly lined teeth turned sharp. Your heart skips a beat, rising to your throat as you claw to pull it back down, to shake the visage from your mind.



QUEEN OF THE NIGHT **Sophia Barrasso**

*Pastel*

And as you command, she will be as she was before, a soft innocent girl whose voice is melodic as she speaks to you, with a hum vibrating the air. Enthralled by all means, captured by beauty and grace you have never seen before, you're filled with a fondness your heart can hardly bear.

She asks you to swim with her. You don't have anything to swim in, but she doesn't seem to care, and neither do you. She doesn't take off her dress, or urge you to remove your clothes. She simply kicks off her shoes and waits for you to do the same.

There's nothing else in the world you can do but the same.

With your hand in her own, she leads you out to the water, the cold foam of the ocean lapping at your feet. And as you go further, your clothes will stick to you uncomfortably, the chill running bone-deep as your breath escapes in a gasp. But you can't open your mouth. Your gaze is locked onto her, and only her. When she releases your hand, you grasp for it. When she disappears under the cold waves, you nearly go after.

But then she pops up, the water on her skin reflecting the moon like hundreds of diamonds to adorn her. You're helpless, reaching for her still as she returns to your side, her arms moving around your waist.

You find her skin cold, you find that she never really was warm to the touch, and yet you cling to her as if she was the only sense of warmth the world had to offer. She hums to you, and you find your eyes closing in a gentle sway.

Then the cold encases you, the breath from your lungs forced out as your body is submerged against its will. Your eyes open despite the burn, needing to see if she was alright.

Then you see her, and your breath freezes, your heart lodged in that empty throat as she floats before you. Her skin drawn taut, an eldritch horror you couldn't escape, lost in her as her tendrils wrapped around your lifeless form. She smiles as your body finally breathes, unable to pull the air from the water as you drowned.

Sirens are creatures from hell, and she's the to-be queen. Be careful of that woman on the beach, reckless idiot. ■

**Author Information:** The ocean scares me, pretty women scare me, and that's all the inspiration I needed to combine both of them.

# The Stranger

NICHOLAS VLASSOPOULOS

As I ride in the passenger seat of my mother's car, I stare out the window, watching as the first leaves begin to fall off the trees. I haven't been down this road in five years, but the towering oak trees lining the road are exactly as they once were. I'm comforted by the crisp breeze flowing through the window. I hold in my hands a list of items that my mother wants me to bring back with me after I leave.

This is the first time that I am visiting my father in our old family home since the divorce a few years ago. After a lengthy custody battle that included several rulings and re-trials, it had been decided that I will be spending one weekend every month in the place that I used to call home. I had been staying with my mom exclusively until the court finally decided to throw my father a bone. Being thirteen-years-old, I had little say in the matter. It's not as if they took my opinion very seriously. But it's not exactly an arrangement that I'm in favor of. My father isn't a bad person by any means. I just never had much of a relationship with him, as he was always working or on a business trip of some sort. The extent of my memory of our relationship was eating dinner together, and my mom has always been much more of a parent to me.

As we approach, I immediately notice the trademark purple front door that can't be missed, and the sprawling ivy climbing up the siding. I actually begin to feel a bit relieved upon seeing these familiar sights. After all, this used to be my home, right? It isn't like I really had a rough go of it while I was living here. Maybe this won't be so bad. My mom sends me off with a hug, tells me that it'll be over before I know it, and that she'll miss me as I head up the walkway.

My father welcomes me inside with an awkwardly forced hug, and the memories all start flooding back into my mind at once: how I would curl up like a cat and nap under the skylight in the sunroom after lunch, how I used to lie in the hammock under the two giant maple trees with my older sister on gorgeous fall afternoons, just like this, watching as the crimson leaves fell all around us. Everything





KNOW THYSELF **Alexa Hall**

*Charcoal*

about this house is exactly as I remember it, except my parents' old wedding photos have been taken down and boxed away. That and of course the absence of my sister, who as an adult now isn't required to make these forced visits. I feel a little guilty for resenting her a little bit for not being here. I understand that she can't help it with how busy she is, but this would sure be a lot easier if she were here. Being eight years older than me, a lot of times she would act as my other parent much more so than my father.

"How's school been treating you?" My father asks in a poor attempt to make small talk.

"Fine," I respond. Maybe a little too bluntly. "I'm going to go unpack."

I can tell that he's uncomfortable with my coldness, and I can feel his eyes on my back as I head up the stairs to my old room. It's not like I want to tell him about the kids who keep picking on me for my bright orange hair that he passed down to me, or how geometry has been putting me through the wringer. He never made an effort to help me through my issues before. That was always my mom and my sister, so why should he get to care now?

As I lie in my old twin sized bed staring at the hockey posters that my sister got me a long time ago on the pastel yellow walls, I can't help but feel a pit in my stomach. I'm realizing that any positive memories of this place are associated with people who are no longer here, and I find myself all alone with someone who might as well be a stranger to me. This house is no longer a home, but a prison of old memories that I'll never be able to live through again. So I decide to bide my time rereading old novels from my younger days, anxiously awaiting the moment my mother pulls into the driveway to pick me up. But unfortunately, I know that I won't be able to spend my whole weekend alone without having to confront my father at all. I still have to go on a scavenger hunt for my mom. If she and my father weren't on such bad terms, she would have taken all of these things back herself years ago. But I guess she was more comfortable with never seeing her belongings again than she was with stepping foot in this house again. I can't say that I blame her.

I would prefer it if I didn't have to approach my father for help in finding anything, so I decided to do a little stealth work. The first thing I have to find is a box of my mom's old CDs. I tiptoe into my father's room, which of course happens is the only room that leads into the attic. I pull the door down from the hanging string, and the ladder comes slamming down way louder than I intended. I scramble up the ladder in hopes that I can find and grab the box before he notices what I'm up to. But to my dismay, I hear him walking up the steps before I'm even able to get the lights on. Unable to come up with a decent excuse by the time he makes his way up the ladder, I'm forced to come clean.

"What are you doing up here? And what is that?" My father asks while staring at the list in my hand.

"Mom wants me to bring some things home for her," I reply. "I thought her CDs might have been up here."

I can tell by the look on his face that this bothered my father, he seemed more annoyed than anything.

“Alright. Let me help you out with that.” he replies after letting out a sigh. “The CDs are over in the corner.”

As we go around the house looking for my mom’s belongings one by one, we don’t talk at all other than about the task at hand for a while. I’m surprised that he’s so willing to help me out with this, considering that I was so cold to him earlier and how poor his relationship is with my mom. After a few hours, everything on the list is checked off. My father didn’t so much as complain at all about any of the items the entire time, contrary to how my mom thought that this would go. I appreciated that, as I was worried that he’d get upset and make this whole experience even more uncomfortable than it already is.

My father, noticing how late it’s gotten, heads to the kitchen and offers to make me some dinner. I honestly didn’t even know that he was able to cook. I had been too anxious to eat lunch earlier, so I accepted. While we sit at the table eating, my father finally decides to break the silence. He starts going on this long winded rant about how he hadn’t been a good father or husband, and how he regrets not being there for me or my sister. This exact talk was what I had been trying to avoid most. I don’t resent him for his absence in my life, and I don’t want an apology, I just don’t have any urge to form a relationship with him now. So I tell him exactly that, to which he seems to understand. After dinner is over, I go back upstairs to my room, where I read some more until I eventually fall asleep.

The next day, I wake up feeling a little bit less anxious at the very least, and it feels as though my father and I have come to some sort of understanding. He leaves me alone throughout most of the day, and I feel a lot less uncomfortable about approaching him whenever I need to. I was even able to ask for some help on my Geometry homework, which he was surprisingly good at. The rest of the weekend passes and before I know it, my mom’s car pulls into the driveway to pick me up. My father helps me bring out her belongings to place in the trunk, and his mere appearance earns him an icy stare from my mom. As I ride home back to my normal life, I can’t help but to feel at least a little relieved as to how the weekend went. I still have little to no feelings towards my father, but I’m glad that we were able to at least have a civil conversation by the end of the weekend. I have a feeling that I won’t be dreading next month’s visit quite as much as I was this one. ■

**Author Information:** I was inspired (with permission, of course) to write this piece from a friend’s unfortunate situation with divorced parents. It is only very loosely based on their arrangement.

## INTERVIEW WITH

# Dr. Andrea Dardello

**D**r. Andrea Dardello is retiring from FCC on Aug. 1, 2023, after thirty years of serving community college students. She came to FCC in 2014 as an assistant professor of English, and currently serves as Interim Senior Diversity Officer. Hannah Goss-Harris sat down with Dr. Dardello to discuss her community college teaching career, her efforts to increase racial equity at FCC, and her hopes for the future, among other topics. The Editorial Board of *Tuscarora Review* thanks Dr. Dardello for her service and wishes her well in her retirement.



**Goss-Harris:** We really appreciate your voice and the work you're doing here on campus. To get started, how is your day going today?

**Dr. Dardello:** Thank you so much for thinking enough of me to speak with you today. Today is going like most of my days—busy—but it's work that I absolutely love, work that I am passionate about. So it's a good day.

**Goss-Harris:** Good, I'm glad to hear that. And how long have you been at FCC and what led you to seek out FCC as a place to work?

**Dr. Dardello:** So I've been at FCC for nine years. And you know, the easy answer, the honest answer is that I chose FCC because it's closer to my home. I was also at a point in my career in my previous job where I felt like I had outgrown it—I was being very honest about work that was important to me, that didn't necessarily align with the work that the institution or my department was doing at the time. And that's what led me here. The first sign that I was in a place that could serve me and help me grow was when I showed up to the interview with a really obnoxious Afro—it was big, and it was how I was

feeling on the inside. And I got hired. They were willing to accept me for who I was and for what it is that I aspired to be. Since I've been here, I've fallen in love with the place. One of the reasons is because it's allowed me to do work that I love. That work started with conversations about race that began with the death of Freddie Gray, in Baltimore. There were riots, and it was really close to home. We had campus book discussions that allowed me to enter and facilitate several of those conversations. We read Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*, Michelle Alexander's, *The New Jim Crow*. Now we're reading Tommy Orange's book, *There There*. FCC has given me the space to talk about issues that are important to me. They're not always easy, but it's easier when you know that the institution supports them.

**Goss-Harris:** We understand that you've spent a major part of your career serving community colleges—what made you want to work at community colleges?

**Dr. Dardello:** This is going to be another space where I'm just real. I didn't have a clear vision for working at community colleges. I was a first generation student, I had graduated college, and I needed a job. And my major was English—there wasn't a lot I could do besides teach. It made sense that I would be a community college educator. I wanted a job in a part of the country that allowed me to explore my identity as an African American woman. So, since that time, I've become a champion of community college students because many of them are like me. Many of them have experienced poverty, they are first generation students, they're marginalized—many of them feel as if they're searching for their place in their identity. And that's who I was as a college student. I want to see community college students become successful, and I want to help instructors know how to help community college college students be successful in their classes.

**Goss-Harris:** Are there any pivotal experiences that made you want to work in diversity, equity and inclusion?

**Dr. Dardello:** I developed a professional development course for faculty called *Teaching with Dignity*, which is a way to help students to be seen, heard, valued, and safe in the classroom. It helps students bridge what they know to where we want them to Grow and Glow. I think that was really pivotal. My work with culturally responsive teaching, conflict resolution through restorative practices—learning how to talk across differences and lean into challenging conversations—prepared me for this work, and makes sense when you think about it in terms of my fulfilling this interim role.



**Goss-Harris:** You've talked about who you want to inspire and who you're working with—is there anyone that inspired you?

**Dr. Dardello:** I was raised by my grandparents. My grandmother had a fifth grade education and my grandfather had an eleventh grade education. My mom was ill and didn't have the resources—I think she might have done the equivalent of community college, back in our hometown, but because of her illness she did not always have the resources or courage to advocate for herself. They are the inspiration for my work. For that reason, I want to inspire all students, especially those who have the odds stacked against them. I want them to know that with the right resources, people, and conditions, they can succeed. And I want to inspire educators to provide the right resources and conditions. I think it is our moral imperative, our duty, and our responsibility.

**Goss-Harris:** We like to focus on the positive, but sometimes by looking at the negatives we can learn about what to correct for the future in order to improve our experiences. We're wondering if you would like to speak to a negative issue related to DEI facing the FCC community, and one suggestion you may have for a potential correction.

**Dr. Dardello:** When I grade student papers I have glow comments, and I have grow comments. So that is how I'd like to frame this question—FCC's glowing, and has opportunities for growth. I'm proud of us as an institution—you have the support from the administration, the President, the Vice President, the Associate Vice President, and the Board of Trustees. They have all made a conscious decision to move in an intentional way that we have been in terms of equity for our students. I think we're moving in the right direction. Faculty are transforming their syllabi, following up with actions that serve the community as a whole. My hope is that we will continue with the work, that we will continue to show up for the hard conversations, especially conversations that the Student Climate Survey invites us to have now, that have to do with race.

**Goss-Harris:** Could you talk a little about the Student Climate Survey?

**Dr. Dardello:** Sure. So the Student Climate Survey was issued almost a year ago. It is designed to get student's perspectives on how they feel while being on campus—what is their sense of belonging here? How does the campus respond to race? Without having the survey on hand, I would say that my key takeaway from the survey is that

we need support with not only having conversations about race, but being given the tools to have them. That means financial support, workshops, retreats—spaces where we're able to talk about what we need. So I think, in large part, there are some things that we are doing well, as it relates to race on campus, at least in students' perception, but there is an awful lot of work that we all need to do.

**Goss-Harris:** We've been seeing that nationally as well. Do you have any opinions about state laws that seek to limit DEI education of public colleges and universities?

**Dr. Dardello:** When you have educators or policymakers who are looking to limit the conversation by discouraging students to ask questions about systems, laws, and policies that create inequities in our nation and our world, when you don't invite other perspectives, such as women, poor folk, people of color to give their opinion and perspective about how we got here as a nation, it creates a false narrative. And it further divides us. I think that's why it's important to continue to have those who are diligent and intentional about carrying on this work called diversity, equity and inclusion so that we can see growth in our society and not go backwards.



**Goss-Harris:** What can we do as individuals to continue your work?

**Dr. Dardello:** I think that the work is all of ours together. I tell people all the time: just start where you are. Be self-reflective. Carry on the work of asking questions about our own belief systems, our own values and traditions—where do they come from? Who is it that they serve? And in what ways do they harm us? What ways do they silence us? How might I change my perspective or my actions so that I'm doing more good than harm?

**Goss-Harris:** We learned that you contributed to a book about bullying. Could you talk a little bit about bullying in academia?

**Dr. Dardello:** I was inspired to write this book based on my experiences at a previous institution. In my article I talked about the relationship between racism and bullying, how one fosters the other and how one contributes to the other. At the heart of it, bullying happens when we run away with our own assumptions and stories. When we don't take the time to get to know someone else—their stories and where they come from. We create our narratives and begin to spread them. When that happens, people justify their mistreatment of you. That's why I think community and community-building and connection are so important at every level of this institution, because it's so much more difficult for me to harm you if I see that you are like me. And so there has to be some sort of prevention. Sharing is important. Community is important. Storytelling is important. Vulnerability is important. All of those things that humanize us become larger than those that separate us.

**Goss-Harris:** What would you consider your greatest success? Professional or personal?

**Dr. Dardello:** I think being here in this moment right now is my greatest success. Because being in the position that I am, as Interim Senior Diversity Officer, has placed me at tables where I get to voice my opinions; I have the ears of policymakers and people in power—who are listening. I get to impact what happens to students and employees here. More importantly, I get to advocate for them—and sometimes loudly. But I'm positioned to make those changes happen. For that reason, I would say that this has been the most impactful time in my career. It has fueled my purpose and it has empowered me to do a whole lot more.

**Goss-Harris:** What will you miss most about FCC?

**Dr. Dardello:** The faculty. I will miss the love, the camaraderie, the compassion. There are just beautiful people here. People who have taught me how to be. And that has been such a great gift. I have often referred to FCC as my family because it is here where I have felt accepted. And it is here where I have felt like I belonged and where people have inspired and motivated me to be the best that I can be.

**Goss-Harris:** Is there a lesson you've learned here that you hope to continue in your work?

**Dr. Dardello:** Wow. There are so many lessons. But when I think about the biggest lesson ... It's the act of listening. I would say that it is the act of being still and using wait time. Every action doesn't necessarily require a reaction at that moment. I'm spending some time to reflect and to understand what the true issues are. Getting feedback from others and moving in a very deliberate and thoughtful way is the way to consistently create change. I've also learned to lean into my fears since I've been here, in this role. Sharing what I found with allies who wanted to help me succeed, getting their feedback, making changes, revising. And being encouraged by them has helped me become fearless. I feel like I'm unstoppable. There is absolutely nothing I can't do without a good plan and people that support me and tell me the truth about those plans.

**Goss-Harris:** What books and authors do you like to read?

**Dr. Dardello:** I love Brené Brown. I love her work. She talks about shame and vulnerability. She talks about making mistakes and recovering from those mistakes. She talks about trust. We throw this word around a lot. But she talks about what it means to create environments that are psychologically safe. So our values align. In her book *Dare to Lead*, Brown represents the type of leader that I want to be—one who is true to herself and is true to the values of whatever cause or whatever institution that she's leading. And who seeks to create change in healthy and meaningful ways. She's a favorite.



**Goss-Harris:** What do you like to write? And what is your advice to writers telling personal stories?

**Dr. Dardello:** I'm a storyteller, so I love personal narratives that inform us of lessons that we've learned in life or narratives that allow us to ask questions. Narratives that don't have any easy answers, that complicate things, that looks at things from multiple perspectives and doesn't assume it's own voice is right. So I think that that is the advice that I would have for writers who want to share their stories—to tell the truth, just as I've done with you when you asked "What led you to become a community college educator." It seems altruistic to say, "Oh, I wanted to help students." No, I was poor, and I needed a job. That's the truth.

**Goss-Harris:** What would people be surprised to know about you?

**Dr. Dardello:** You know, I come from the Deep South, born and raised in Mississippi. And I guess people will be surprised to know that I never mastered the art of frying chicken. Oh, no. I didn't pass that southern girl test. I can air fry a good chicken wing, but I never, I never mastered that. But I can make a mean pound cake. Yeah, I like to bake. And I like to cook. But fried chicken was just one of the quintessential southern meals I never learned to master.

**Goss-Harris:** If one song could play over a montage of your career, what would it be?

**Dr. Dardello:** I grew up listening to gospel—you're probably too young to remember André Crouch. He sang a song called *Through it All*. And oh, I'm trying not to get emotional thinking about it. But in the song, he says, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus, I've learned to trust in God, through it all I've learned to depend upon His Word. And that's true for me. I've experienced quite a bit, but I always returned to my faith. That's something that, as I mentioned before, my grandparents instilled in me. I returned to it again and again because it has not failed me. My faith in something that's bigger than me has carried me through some very difficult and trying situations. So that would be the song. ■



# 2023 Editorial Board

**Alexandra Alward** is a leader, learner, and lover of vampire movies. She plans to graduate FCC in 2023, and go on to pursue a degree in gender studies. Her dream is to become a civil rights lawyer, with a focus in sexual harassment. In her free time, Alex loves to write creative non-fiction stories. One day, she hopes to start a blog, where she can showcase her work.

**Sophie Fellows** is an avid horror film and romance novel lover. She is attending her third semester at FCC and is majoring in Biotechnology. She's planning on being a medical examiner and wants to do film on the side.

**Jess Flores** loves art, music, reading and writing. She's planning on pursuing art, writing, or video game design as a future career or hobby. They love horror, mystery and sci-fi. She is planning on graduating in 2023 and is still figuring out exactly what she wants to do.

**Hannah Goss-Harris** is an English major & a massage therapist. They adore reading, writing, baking, folklore, and anthropology. Their biggest dreams are to own a massage studio and publish a Gaelic-inspired fantasy novel.

**Emily McNally** has always enjoyed art. From expressing herself through creative writing, to painting and drawing in her free time. A dream of hers would be to publish her novel she's currently developing. She also loves reading and playing with flowers. She hopes to study and pursue her passion in flower arrangements and maybe even one day open up her own flower shop.

**Katy Pennington** enjoys writing, listening to music, and reading Stephen King. She has been at FCC for four semesters and is going to be heading into her final semester here in the fall. She is currently an English major at FCC and hopes to transfer to Frostburg State University where she will continue majoring in English. Her dream is to one day write a novel of her own.

**Catherine Vizas** is a sociology student attending her last semester at FCC. She loves expressing herself through creative arts and language. She currently plans on pursuing a linguistics career with a focus on teaching English as a foreign language and/or analyzing the language of law. In the future she'd like to publish a poetry collection of her own.

**Magin LaSov Gregg** loves encouraging FCC students' self-expression through the written word. Her writing has appeared in literary journals, anthologies, and major news outlets, such as National Public Radio, the *Gettysburg Review*, *Bellingham Review*, and the *Washington Post*. She's looking for a publisher for her first book, *An Altar in My Heart* about grief as a spiritual crisis and a path to awakening.



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