

# The Stone Circle

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VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2022



Blake Carlisle

Endless Garage

McLennan Community College  
Journal of Literary and Visual Art

*The Stone Circle* is a semiannual literary and visual art journal published every fall and spring by McLennan Community College (MCC) in Waco, Texas. Students interested in creative writing, journalism, and publishing are encouraged to join the editorial committee. Visit [www.mclennan.edu/stone-circle/](http://www.mclennan.edu/stone-circle/) to read previous issues of our magazine, contact an editor, and find information about submission guidelines, writing contests, and events.

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Print versions of the magazine are published by OneTouchPoint.

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Cover Art: Blake Carlisle, "Endless Garage," First Prize (Visual Art)

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ISSN: 1931-3381

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# The Superhero

by Azariah Bates

First Prize - Prose

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She who can lift mountains, who can move seas and burn cities to the ground. She who survives because it is all she knows how to do. But she watches. She waits. She sits and observes for years, preparing. Then she acts. She doesn't have much, but she uses what she has. She has love. She has trust. She has a steel backbone, wrung by the strongest of hands, but still unbroken. She has determination. She's no superhero, but she does what she can, does what's right. She goes unseen, unnoticed, unthanked, untouched. She's fine. It was never about that, anyway. It's just who she is.

Then she finds someone who sees her, or says he sees her. He sees how her hips swing when she walks, how her lips move when she talks. He sees how her eyes shine from being seen. She likes being seen by him. It makes her feel powerful, wanted. She wants him to see her this way, always. She shrinks herself into a tiny bubble to fit his image of her. She shaves off the pieces of herself that he doesn't like. Still, he grows disinterested, drawn by another pretty face. She wonders what she did, but she's okay. She reclaims most of the pieces she lost, most of who she was. She lifts mountains again, goes unnoticed again. But she's fine. She doesn't lie awake at night, yearning to be seen. She can move mountains; why would she need to be seen?

Here comes another, making her promises as long as she conforms to his will. She bares her soul, changes for his liking. But he leaves, too, and she's sure it's her. She's not good enough. She stops lifting mountains. Doesn't move seas or burn cities. She tries to be noticed, pours everything into being enough for someone. It doesn't work. Try, after try, after try, she is not enough, and, oddly, too much. She sheds every part of herself and is left a blank slate. So she watches again; she waits.

She studies the world as it is, then imagines how it should be. As she watches, a new person begins to form. A girl who can lift mountains, who can move seas and burn cities. But she can do so much more. She can love herself, and those around her, fiercely as a lion. She can protect those who matter with the strength of a raging bull. She can go unnoticed or unseen according to her will. She can be the superhero who sacrifices everything. And everyone else? They can watch her lift mountains. They can watch her move seas, and burn cities, and love, and protect, and be great. Because she already sees herself, and that's enough.

Writing is hard. Matthew knew that. With his parent's money, Matthew had the opportunity to do anything with his life.

He chose to be a writer. He had his reasons, he supposed. When he was young, he was the best at telling stories. Entertaining seven younger siblings was a job in and of itself. Even as an adult, he told stories to his children. Nevermind that he only had a few years to do it before his family broke apart after the accident. Matthew was a good storyteller; why was actually writing so hard?

The lamp on Matthew's desk switched off. Matthew turned to the figure by his desk. He was in trouble.

"It's almost three AM."

"I was almost finished with this chapter—," Matthew began.

"I watched you stare at the screen for nearly ten minutes. You should get some sleep, dad," she said.

Rune. Her name was Rebecca, but her "cool edgy" name had been Rune for a time, and it stuck. She was his oldest, his only daughter.

Matthew sighed and ran his fingers through his hair.

"Yeah I know. You know you don't have to take care of me, Rune," he said.

Rune shrugged, "Old habits die hard. You should tell Henry about your sleeping habits."

Matthew flinched, then hummed as if he was considering it (he wasn't). If Henry knew, Matthew would never hear the end of it.

"I'll think about it," he said.

Rune narrowed her eyes and folded her arms across her chest.

"Bed," she said.

Matthew chuckled and stood up.

"Okay," he said, "But that goes for you, too. If you miss first period again, you get detention."

"Wow. And after I tried to help you!" Rune said.

"Oh hush. Go back to bed," Matthew said, and shut down his computer. He shuffled and stacked a few papers on his desk.

"Yeah, alright. Goodnight dad," she said.

"Goodnight, Rune."

Her footsteps as they retreated down the hall. A door closed softly. He pushed in his chair. The house sat silent around him.

Matthew made his rounds quietly, poking into each room. Cypher, his second oldest, was sound asleep. Good. He often had trouble sleeping. Matthew pulled the blanket up to his son's neck, and Cypher's face scrunched. Matthew stroked his hair and left the room.

Matthew smiled. For nine years, he missed them every day.

He opened the door to the bedroom and paused. The form in the bed opened an aching hole where he felt warmth a moment ago. They made up months ago. Matthew knew that, yet he avoided her. He loved her, never stopped loving her, really. They had known each other since they were children. The accident was just that, an accident. Matthew had been fighting with his brother, about money, though the details were fuzzy to him now. Matthew hit something, someone. Cypher was four. He was small. Matthew hadn't known he was awake. By morning, Cypher and his spouse were gone. The divorce was finalized in two months. Matthew's relationship with his brother never recovered.

When Matthew and Rune moved to Omnivale, he hadn't expected much. But he was wrong. It was a steep slope, but the two reconnected.

Why was Matthew still avoiding it?

Matthew sighed and slipped out of the room. The house was so quiet. He liked the quiet. Matthew returned to the computer and stared at the dark screen. His head fell to the desk.

Why was writing so hard?

# A Sequence of Unsatisfying Endings

by Zoe Westbrook

Third Prize - Prose

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i. the driveway is a cold thing, but you are colder and have something to prove. you lay down and you look up at the sky and you pray that someone who can't see you parks over your body. your breath passes, a fog that never leaves you. you mope for ten minutes before realizing you're fighting a battle against no one and go inside. you are still not satisfied.

ii. your best friend drives you home, and you both don't want to arrive, so you take back roads. you have the volume all the way up, singing loudly, and you hope the whole town hears you. they can't, but you sing anyway. you get home, and she hasn't left the driveway, but you miss her fiercely already. you will see each other tomorrow at school, and it will ease then. you are still not satisfied.

iii. you move out of state to attend a private university. it hasn't caught up to you yet, and it won't until you've already left. what a long way from home, what a long way from everything you've known. your mom helps you move. she flies on the plane with you and then leaves the same day. you miss her as soon as she steps into the taxi. you're exactly where you wanted to be, and you're alone. you are still not satisfied.

iv. the garage is a cold thing, but you are sick of being cold and tired. you want to be warm, surrounded by the people you left behind. your parents are so sweet to you, and your relationship with them is so different. you are less angry now. you wish you were still angry. progress is a slow, uphill battle, but you are making it. that's something you can brag about. you realize transition is a place where you can stay, sometimes. you are still not satisfied.

v. apartments are too big for one person, so you get a roommate. she is different, not someone you'd have as your first choice, but you live together. you get along better than you thought. your friends are miles away, and you feel alone sometimes. you learn being alone is an opportunity, too. the coffee shop has friendly faces and warm drinks on cold days. you are still not satisfied.

vi. you are still not satisfied. you are learning, this too, is something you can live with.

# I KNOW

by Emily Smith

First Prize - Poetry

---

I know that my body is beautiful  
Because the grass touches my skin  
And the wind kisses my face.

I know that my heart is soft  
Because babies smile at me  
And dogs curl in my lap.

I know that I am a work of art.  
I am living poetry.

But it's funny  
Because scrolling and scores and status,  
Like poison to the beauties of my brain,  
Will tell me that I am nothing of the sort.

They cake and harden the softness  
Of your cheeks and heart,  
And create a filtered, cheap version of your sunlit soul.

But do you realize?  
There is nothing wrong with you, and there is nothing wrong with me.  
Escape comparison's grip; embrace authenticity.

It's like this—  
Beauty is not skin deep,  
But my skin means the world to me.  
Every stretch mark, every bruise  
Holds me like a cocoon,  
And my voice is a monsoon  
Of deep sighs and precious tunes.

So tell me, is this vanity?  
To know my creation was birthed from love and humanity?  
It is not vain to celebrate the honey that flows in your veins  
And spills from your mouth in kindness and rarity.

So the next time  
Someone calls you beautiful,  
You tell them, "I know."

# Create Yourself

by Aubrey Jewell

Second Prize - Poetry

---

Create Yourself.

Find yourself.

It's the goal we are to reach,  
A destination we seek our whole lives.

Find yourself.

Because if you do not know who you are, you are lost  
To a social standard forced to make you conform.

Find yourself.

Because who are you really if you feel different from the next?  
Different is good, until you stray too far.

Find yourself.

It's a box under pressure where we suffocate;  
Because if you cannot escape, you have failed.

If you conform, you are basic, no different than others.  
If you stand out, you are an outcast, too difficult and strange.  
If you stand for what you believe, you are strong and steadfast.  
If you follow what you love, you find the bliss so many chase.

Create yourself.

Find what sets your soul ablaze and pursue it  
Because passion separates you from the rest.

Create yourself.

You are ever-changing and evolving,  
Who you were last year is not yourself today.

Create yourself.

Find what you love and what brings you happiness  
Because life is short, and you deserve joy.

Create yourself.

Be you, a collage of all that sets you apart  
Because you are so fearlessly you, the most beautiful you one can be.

## Eclipse

by Grace Millican

Third Prize - Poetry

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The moon loves the sun  
As long as it gives its light to her.  
She cannot exist without sacrifice,  
And yet she blocks his light  
If only for a moment  
Before she returns to her place.

## No ser

by Mariona García Mazano

First Prize - Poetry in Spanish

---

No soy yo sin tus caricias,  
no soy yo sin tus ganas,  
no soy yo sin tus "te quiero."  
Yo misma he destruido lo nuestro,  
sin darme cuenta, te pierdo.  
Como consecuencia de tu pérdida, la mía.  
Porque ahora me doy cuenta:  
No soy yo sin tus caricias,  
no soy yo sin tus ganas,  
no soy yo sin tus "te quiero."

# La vida

by Yuli Lopez

Second Prize - Poetry in Spanish

---

La vida es desordenada  
La vida es agitada  
La vida no es fácil ni nunca lo será  
Pero no eres débil  
No eres desertor  
Lo que eres es una persona intelectual  
con la capacidad de hacer lo que te esfuerzas.  
Lo que eres es un solucionador de problemas  
con estrategias para definir las probabilidades.  
Lo que eres es mi increíble hermana  
con la fuerza para llevar todas y cada una de las cargas que se te presenten.  
La vida no está destinada a ser perfecta hermanita  
Estás destinada a cometer errores  
Caerte de vez en cuando  
Llorar  
Gritar  
Tocar fondo.  
La clave es  
Volver a subir  
Encuentra soluciones a esos errores  
Domina el juego de la vida  
Ámate ti misma  
Estás haciendo un trabajo increíble  
y eres mucho más fuerte de lo que nunca seré.  
Pero eso está bien.  
Serás quien quieras ser.  
Serás una inspiración para tus hermanos menores.  
Diablos ¡ya lo eres!  
Y nos has hecho sentir orgullosos de lo que  
te has convertido y de lo que serás.  
Cualesquiera que sean las elecciones que hagas,  
solo sé que tenemos tu espalda.

# The Yearning, Voiceless Cry

by Abigail Guel

A single soul,  
Some wanderer,  
Once suffered this fright:  
Alone was he, in the black of midnight.  
Lost deep in its darkness  
No way home  
Fearing that which might 'round him roam.  
(His being here,  
I know not why.)

Paralyzed with fear  
He nearly surrendered that which he held dear  
And succumbed to the ghastly fate  
Of wandering souls which people hate.  
But behold!  
What is this which he sees?  
A light! Heavenly illuminator of the trees!  
Hope before his eyes!

Arm outstretched, he almost grasps it,  
Holds it in his fingertips,  
But then, it vanishes.  
And I say: A sudden noise.  
Yet this is no earthly prey nor wind,  
Softly swishing through the grass.  
He hoped and prayed that it would pass.  
This yearning,  
Voiceless  
Cry.

And then:  
This presence turns utterly queer,  
Calls his name, the sound foreign to his ear.  
Coming much sharper!  
(Deepening low...)  
This eerie scream he does know.  
This yearning,  
Voiceless  
Cry.

This moan, of essence unknown  
And with no creator shown  
Will be to nothing ears perceive  
On All Hallow's Eve.

How could one describe it?

His best try:

"Some yearning,

Voiceless

Cry."

He calls to it, but only in vain.

That voice will not come back

Ever

Again.

If this wanderer still lives, we'll not know why

He heard that yearning,

Voiceless

Cry.

/

# The Girl You Used to Know

by Michal Knutson

That was me,  
The girl you used to know.  
She never dressed up or flowered her hair;  
That was for other girls,  
Girls who cared.  
She was too good,  
Much better than the rest.  
She never had a boyfriend,  
And always passed her tests.  
But that girl  
Went through Hell.  
She almost didn't make it.  
She woke up a shell,  
And couldn't even fake it.  
She found her people soon enough  
And dug in her heels.  
She kicked and screamed and thrashed,  
And Hell,  
It spat her out.  
She was never the same,  
That girl you knew.  
She doesn't exist anymore,  
And I should know.  
Now, she's not a girl.  
They found Themselves at last.  
Now, she doesn't belong to you.  
You lost her in the fire;  
'Cause as you watched her slowly burn,  
They rose from the ashes.  
They write their own destiny now.  
They do what's best for Them,  
And you can no longer snuff Them out;  
You can try, but They will win.

## Love Always

by Grace Millican

I sign my letters "love always,"  
But I am starting to not believe in always.  
I will change, I will grow,  
But the recipient of that love will also,  
And we may grow out of our always.



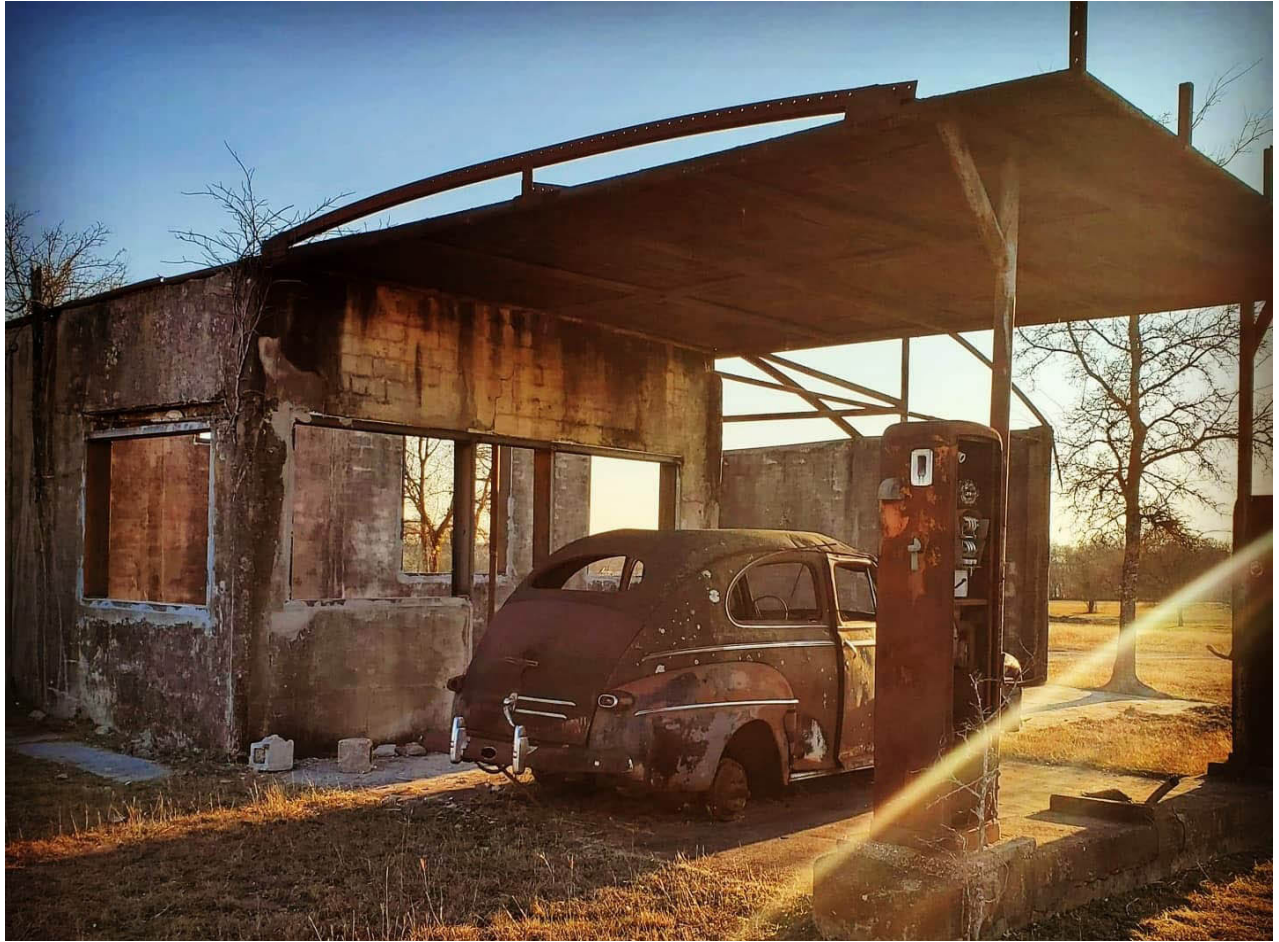
Haden Rhodes

*Sunset Gates*



Hadley Phillips

*Shadow Cat*



Brianna Salyer  
*First Prize - Visual Art (Fall 2021)*

*Frozen in Time*



Hadley Phillips  
Second Prize (Visual Art)

*Latte Hummer*



Blake Carlisle

*Different Walks*

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by Elizabeth Palacios

The room is dark,  
As if he's taken your spark.  
Left behind are the darkened marks.  
All you ask  
Is that we not dwell on the past,  
Or be burdened by the sin  
No longer on your skin.  
Forgiving is all you've ever been.  
You'll say this is a new beginning,  
But it doesn't mean you're winning.  
A single step on the track,  
Going round and round, finding your way back  
To a person who thinks love means attack.

## The Fields

by Victor Martinez-Gil

Steel collides on yellow fields,  
where birds without wings used to play.  
"I'll be back so soon, my dear," you said,  
then turned to the fields, now gray.

Red uniforms dance while blue men pay  
for all the years they lived within a wall,  
for all the years they blindly stayed  
where birds with broken wings had to fall.

White shadows burn for somebody's peace,  
but that somebody will not know today.  
I hear the thumps of the silent fields;  
my dear is gone, too far away...

## Que bonito

by Mariona García Manzano

Qué bonito tener,  
Qué bonito tenerte.

Qué bonito saber que de todas las vidas del mundo,  
coincidí con la tuya.

Qué bonita tu historia,  
que ahora forma parte de la mía.

Qué bonito querer,  
qué bonito quererte.

# Doubt

by Grace Millican

Anxiety and doubt  
Can consume a person.

Orpheus loved his bride so much  
He challenged Hades for her soul.

All he had to do is trust  
That she would walk behind  
And follow him home.

But doubt came in,  
And swallowed his heart.

Her footsteps  
Were silent.

Her voice  
did not echo off the walls.

The torchlight was his only guide  
As he stepped  
Again and again.

The voice echoed in his mind,  
*Why would she follow me?*  
*Why would she return to me?*

His heart betrayed him.  
Doubt swallowed his soul,  
And he turned,  
And she disappeared.

# My Weather

by Madison Lindell

Clouds of confusion  
Hang daily in the sky above.  
I don't know what I seek  
But I know you found nothing in me.  
My sun is blocked,  
And my mind is overcast  
As you hid yours in a fog.  
Who am I to love you?  
You gave me no forecast at all.  
  
I felt lonely as the rain began to pour.  
I don't know why I crave you more and more.  
You're like a broken umbrella,  
And I'm soaked in regret,  
All the time I waited  
For the ground to dry.  
  
It became what I craved,  
Your constant weather delays,  
Like preparing for a storm  
To find nothing but haze.  
I wondered why I had a cough,  
Never knew it was the sky.  
  
You're the clouds of confusion  
the daily sky I weather.

## The Trouble with Wanting

by Zoe Westbrook

The trouble with wanting  
is that you won't be fulfilled.  
there's a hollow place  
inside my bones  
that has just enough room for guilt,  
for no other reason  
than because I can't imagine  
my feelings to ever be wanted,  
to be something desired.  
I romanticize this beast,  
call it yearning,  
call it tender,  
sell it to the masses  
as something easily pacified.  
it eats at me.  
and I wonder  
how long I can fend it off  
before it consumes me completely.

## Tea Time

by Grace Millican

You put me on the back burner  
You forget me until I scream  
And then you are annoyed by the outburst.  
So why am I on the back burner?  
Why are you forgetting me?  
How else am I meant to be memorable?

## Paralysis

by Elizabeth Palacios

Don't ask the widow.  
All she's thinking about is his body hanging out the window,  
Bloody, his head held back from crushing on the street.  
Empty beers clatter in the back seat.  
Can't blame the air bag,  
Laying out like a used rag.  
The funeral home stitched him together like a doll.  
Are you wondering if you wanted to read this story at all?  
You can go back, and you can stop,  
  
Like his heart did after it fought.  
When does the terror end for me,  
Someone stuck at the scene of a crime she was never meant to see?

## Te espero

by Victor Martinez-Gil

Ella es una distante primavera que nunca llega,  
el amor antes de los ecos y las culpas,  
inalcanzable como flores ante el frío,  
olvidable como ausencia que se lleva todo.  
  
    Cuando sus manos te besan no hay lamentos,  
    y aunque atravesase un dolor tan fuerte como vivo,  
    uno descuida lo futuro sangrando,  
    ya inalcanzable.  
  
Cuando sus ojos te miran todo es noble,  
y aunque no devuelvan aceptas el cansado reflejo,  
de morir lejos del frío humano,  
ya olvidable.  
  
    Y solo quedas tú, sin ella,  
    proclamando al amor como censura  
    para que la ausencia cure lo vivido.  
  
La primavera llega, sin ella,  
y te acurrucas pensándola  
entre las flores y el frío.

# A Zoo to Remember

by Haden Rhodes

First Prize (Fall 2021) - Prose

What time of year and events does the word 'romance' evoke in your mind? A summer eve at a lantern-lit café, an Autumn walk down a lane of love, or spring meadows and bouquets? Or what about a cozy winter night, snuggling your loved one near the fireplace under a heavy layer of blankets, or going about town looking at festive holiday lights? And while you're at it, maybe you want to take that person to the zoo as well. Yes, I said zoo trip. Trust me. It's not as bad as it sounds.

On January 12th, 2021, I would be returning to McLennan Community College for my second year, but I wanted to enjoy one last "good time" before then. Lunch and a visit to the Cameron Park zoo had a pleasant appeal. And then the need for companionship washed over me. Although I hung out with her brother for several years, I admit that Grace and I weren't the closest of friends. Around Valentine's Day 2020, we got each other a little more, talking together either face-to-face on Zoom and texting with Google's instant messaging program. We had shared some special moments like my graduation ceremony, small gatherings with our friends, and a football game last fall. I hoped that the trip to the zoo would begin to bring us even closer.

January 8th, 2021, the day of our zoo excursion, was cold enough to chill a side of beef. The wind didn't help the frigidity either. A seemingly endless mass of light gray blanketed the sky above. Translation, it was your typical Texan January. I wore a collared shirt, blue as the sea at noontide, and a black undershirt (an extra layer to protect against the cold) with jeans matching its tenebrosity.

Grace's mother dropped her off at my house at 11:00 AM, and despite the cold wind and overcast sky, her simple presence warmed me just like the sun in the summertime. Grace wore her wavy light brown hair in a beautiful loose ponytail. She wore a fur-lined yellow plaid jacket, the dark of the fur complementing her lighter hair. Her light blue jeans completed a "rebel Eskimo" look of sorts, although I can completely assure you that she is absolutely nothing of the sort. Indeed, she is one of the sweetest people I know, with a cheerful, upbeat personality that animates her voice and actions. She is also a serious extrovert, and the better conversationalist between the two of us.

My older sister's boyfriend planned to drive us that day in his Nissan Altima, so the two of us rode in the backseat while my sister rode in the front. We first stopped at Raising Cane's for lunch, but I was honestly too excited to eat very much. Though I've been to Cameron Park Zoo many times in the past, neither Grace nor I have paid a visit in a long time. With my sister and her guy going their way, Grace and I stuck by each other like Velcro and started our safari at the gibbon pen, but their very muddy enclosure was being repaired, so we moved on to the Asian pens. The lone tiger didn't notice us, as it was pacing a groove up and down its pen. It was probably waiting on its keeper, who was no doubt run-

ning terribly late bringing lunch. Only Daddy and Baby orangutan were outside in their enclosure, both moving more sluggishly than usual due to the cold. The latter was hiding from Old Man Winter beneath a worn purple blanket.

I guess it's a good thing that you talk to the other person so much that both of you walk by the exit path, because that is what we did. From the Asian pens, we jumped continents so to speak, and proceeded down the African trail. On a normal day, the lions would be in the farthest corner of their pen, completely ignoring and hiding as best they can from onlookers. But today they were almost up against the fence closest to us, still yawning of course, and taking no interest whatsoever in the couple keenly watching them.

I admit that I am terrible at remembering what people say, even if they are talking directly to me. Even so, there was one scene and exchange of dialogue that seemed to stick with me. We were leaving the lion pens when Grace asked me, "So, where do we go now?" I may have let my heart run a block with my head when I replied, "I don't care. Tell me what to do, and I'll do it."

Grace seized the moment, took a second of reasonable thought, and instructed, "Okay. Climb a tree."

To which I responded, "Okay."

I took a look around. A tree was about five feet from me on my northern starboard. I studied it, planning my ascent. But before I began to climb, she said, "No, don't actually do it. You may get in trouble."

I am not known to be a very funny person, but I like to think this was one of our first goofy moments in the relationship. From the lions, we visited a shivering bachelor meerkat who posed for my camera. And I didn't just take pictures of the animals; several times we stopped in front of various animal enclosures to take a selfie or two or ten. I took over a hundred pictures that day, but out of all of the things that I saw, I believe that Grace was the most fascinating and prepossessing thing in the entire zoo. I might be a little partial in that regard.

It seemed like an honest-to-goodness perfect day. The banter was jovial and interesting, the wildlife was entertaining despite the frigid conditions, and for long periods Grace and I were free to talk without distraction. And when we passed out of the zoo's gates, the sun appeared! We came straight back to my house and spent an hour there before Mom and Dad drove Grace home in their 2012 Suburban, with me riding along. The parents rode up in the front, and Grace and I enjoyed the other's company in the middle seat, chatting about school, her promotion to 4-H County Council President, and my favorite doughnut flavor, cherry iced.

At her house, I reunited with three of my friends who were visiting her brother while I was on my date. Heading out the door to return home, I cringe to think of my awkward performance, I put my right hand out to shake hers, that being our typical farewell, but then drew it back halfway. She then uttered the

famous last words, "Well, why not?" So beneath a full moon, on a low-lit deck porch, crickets chirping a sweet goodnight melody, we hugged one another for the first time. That single moment...the one embrace...Indescribable.

Looking back from the mists of memory, The zoo trip accomplished its goal and granted passage to a lot more opportunities for us. Grace would later accept my invitations to some college/young professional events, some of which were hosted at my house and I even went to my first Historical Conquest (a history-based card game) tournament with her. But alas, today Grace and I are no longer a thing. She ultimately rejected me five months after our date. Even to this day, it amazes me that after all of the good times we shared, including that zoo trip, she so quickly tossed me away. I, on the other hand, kept a careful journal of the days we spent together. I don't read those entries much now, lest a flood of regret should wash over me. Nevertheless, they are there just the same. Waiting for someday, for somebody to open them up, to pour over every word, to treasure their text once more. Waiting to be relived in happy, glorious memory. Waiting...to be remembered.

# The Apple Doesn't Fall Far

by Zoe Westbrook

hey mama,  
sorry you disappeared,  
I was trying to find a way  
to be happy,  
but somehow, you're still a martyr, and  
I'm still alive.  
funny how that works, isn't it?  
hey mama,  
remember when i said  
I hate you?  
you left the room and started crying  
and a cherry pit  
cracked in my chest.  
I don't think  
there's any room for growth, mama.  
daddy says we're dealt a bad hand,  
but I think we're just a bad batch.  
We spoiled the bunch.  
hey mama,  
sometimes I think i'm gonna die  
just like the way you wanted to,  
fire blazing  
car on fire  
gasoline in the backseat.  
our family just likes the heat,  
don't they?  
see that campfire glow  
wanna catch the smoke  
wanna be burned whole  
wanna die in a blaze of glory  
wanna be turned holy  
wanna cry  
wanna cry  
wanna cry cry cry cry—

# Sweet Nothing

by Elizabeth Palacios

I could say I was a child, but what does that mean?  
That you were an expert while I struggled with the seams?

I wanted everything because nothing felt extreme.  
Being with you was an illusion of trust.  
Looking back now, it's all turned to dust.  
What never lived is impossible to mourn.

But I remember how behind closed doors  
You said you wanted me more.  
Hard to hate you when I felt adored,  
But I swore  
You'd remember the night  
I put up a fight.

I thought I was dying; you took all the light,  
left the breath in my lungs cold,  
Like you wanted to see how easily I'd fold.  
The crush of your weight,  
Your pull at my nape,  
And when you were done  
I thought I'd never see the sun.  
Whispered your apologies  
As I said my goodbyes  
To an idea that would never be, of you and I.  
When I felt your arms around me, I cried.

Since then I've known  
That a man  
And his hands  
Mean danger.



Blake Carlisle

*The Handoff*

Many, many thanks to Dr. Johnette McKown & the Board of Trustees, and Drs. Fred Hills, Bradley Christian, and Bill Matta for their support and encouragement. Additional thanks to Prof. Beth Grassman, Prof. Amber Bracken, and Librarian Rachel Kramer for their generous assistance editing submissions in Spanish.

Thanks to all of our student artists and writers for their contributions to this issue! It is an honor to publish your work.

Thank you to all the faculty and staff whose donations to the MCC Foundation make this magazine possible. Without your support, we would not be able to fund our prizes and recognize our students' exceptional talents.

# All in My Brain

by Madison Lindell

I'll love you past tomorrow,  
But you won't last the night.  
I'll mourn the loss of you,  
Stay strong with all my might.  
I'll fight with myself  
Cause she's the one to blame,  
Developing a loveless love,  
All in her brain.

I imagined us like two birds on a wire,  
Pretending that our lives were for hire.  
Watching the stars  
Form constellations in our minds,  
Desperately I hoped to catch a glimpse  
Of the soul behind your eyes.  
The bricks of your wall fall down,  
Giving way to a love  
All in our brains.

I'll purify the thought of you  
Now that I'm mourning my loss.  
Like a game I played,  
Easier than a coin toss.  
A shame that I can't change  
That I'll love you past tomorrow,  
Though you'll never feel the same,  
The loveless love in my mind,  
All in my brain.

Submission deadline  
for Volume 22, Issue 1 of  
*The Stone Circle*:  
Oct. 17th, 2022



Hadley Phillips

*Yellow Evidence*