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Fall 2010
A Note From the Editors

It is with great excitement that we present to you the creative endeavors of the Seton Hall University community as compiled in the Fall 2010 edition of Chavez. As Seton Hall’s students continue to experience literary growth, our own magazine continues to grow. We are impressed by all the submissions that we receive and we are thrilled to give students the opportunity to see their work in print.

We thank our committed staff for their aid in the editing process, as well as the Student Government Association for its continued support. We hope that you enjoy this presentation of the poetry, prose, art, and photography of the students and faculty of Seton Hall University.

Sincerely,
Gesina Phillips and Brittany Biesiada
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Nathalie Almonte
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September
Christin Kielar

Beneath the dogwood—
the cedar swing, a sparrow,
sway in the wind.

The bird bath—
rings of water ripple,
trickle over the rim.

*

A baseball hits the grass—
a fallen pear beneath
a nearby fruit tree.

A squirrel clutches
an acorn, wide-eyed toward
the sleeping Labrador.

*

A Maple tree,
branches overhanging
the curb,
pales from emerald to
yellow.

A pair of leaves
slide down the wind-
shield
of a parked car.

“Bella Bella”
Marie Pietropaolo

Nathalie Almonte
Sitting in a hammock, facing the sky
Looking at the trees and watching birds fly
Wondering what I'm doing here.
But it doesn’t really help to ask why.

Fire in the day and fire at night
Getting drunk while the vervet monkeys fight.
We sit telling stories of old girlfriends
And how we were always right.

Bundled in our sweats, chilled by the cold
On these African nights with their icy hold.
Content and warm, I can’t help but shiver
From memories of old.

Breathing deeply beneath the sea
Moving around with the greatest of ease
Behold this amazing unnatural world
As natural as can be.

She laughs a sweet laugh as I turn around
Calling her name, I follow the sound.
And as my eyes land on the fire
She’s nowhere to be found.

Follow the elephants and the noise they make
As they thunder across the land we take
And when you gaze into their eyes
Your soul will snap awake.

We are just footprints in the sand
Barely an impression to the world at hand.
Where years of toil yield a half-inch of soil
In this unforgiving land.

And since the sand will wash away
There's still an awful lot to say.
Another instant, the world moves on
Into another day.

And as I rest between these trees
Thinking of her, and home, and the seas,
Sputtering, gasping, the fire goes out
So now we all will freeze.
I am an Idea.

Cast in a mold unseen before, I was poured into existence. Forged in the fires of adversity, I was hammered smooth. Quenched in the water of wisdom, I became sharper. Tempered by the fires of my predecessors, I became stronger.

I defend. I attack.
I never cease.
I am Man's eternal will.
Am I a sword?
Am I a shield?
This world has created me, but this world fears me.
Why?

I am an Idea.

And Ideas are bulletproof.
To make a living he left his home,
To fight for the red, white, and blue
not because he wanted to, but because he had to.
College was not an option and the scholarship not
enough so,
he worked, every day and every night,
to clean the baths and even strange sinks
(he loved his child, the others too, but didn’t
know so much what to do)
Still, here he is, after war and all,
The bravest man of all!

She left her country to find a new
life,
She only brought one child.
She didn’t want to leave anyone
behind...
She was struck by lightning on
her way there,
And thunder too upon her arrival
The storm had only begun...
But she was brave and very
strong,
Where there was a kick she would
punch,
No one, or no- thing would keep
her!
Instead, she made a home, made
something new
And there were endless possibilities too...
Very independent, very strong
mind
She’s the bravest of all kind!
But Glitter Fades
Rudy Palma

Like the smoke and mirrors and shards of glass
For a few moments you burst forth ablaze.
But oh, such moments, how they come to pass,
Thieving the images of glory days.
The light in most eyes appears natural,
Yet yours exude an icy fluorescence.
All is façade, is merely factual,
Only incidental luminescence.
Your circus may commandeer cavalcades,
Their loyalty fierce with fervor today,
But their memory, like your glitter, fades –
That which is weightless simply drifts away.
Only the authentic are here to stay.
Today’s kindling is yesterday’s treasure
And the cycle turns measure for measure.

The Disease of Doubt
Caitlin Timmerman

Why does the past define us?
Why not our actions now?
Why must things creep out of the Pandora’s box in each of our hearst?
Things, emotions, kept locked up so tight
but only a sliver of doubt clicks the lock open.
A sliver of doubt whispered by the seductive lips that are beyond this plain of exis-
tance,
It lets out a leak of emotions, of problems, of issues
long thought dead.
It starts to eat away at the solid foundation built at the present.
The past eats the present, infects it, rots it.
So much so that even
Time and Relative Dimensions in Space
cannot fix the crack in reality left behind

Victoria Tolan
Instructions
Caitlin Timmerman

It’s an odd feeling,
having to understand me.
There’s no manual

Superstitions
Caitlin Timmerman

Being told that you
are the mirror of others
cracks a foundation

Seven years bad luck
does not begin to describe
the work to fix it

Maria Lentini

Summer Stargazer
Winston Willis

Certain graces are shrouded
In mysterious rhythms of the wind,
You hear them, you smile and drink them in –

It was just a passing thought,
A canker in the bard’s belly,
Retch in the fury of the lie
So many times repeated it turned true –
A dark halo for our tribe of gypsies.

It is only a story, she said,
Motioning with her hands
In gestures old as time
And the magic of the witch’s touch
Conveyed the truth –

That certain look from a minstrel,
Staring out into a crowd of scoundrels,
When you listen, knowing
She sings the song simply for you.
Words have failed
so you just stop speaking.
Life becomes silence,
crystallized inertia,
an ellipsis interrupted.
You stop to consider
the nature of words.
Words hurled into the void.
Words of prayer, sacred words,
secret words, words of faith and devotion.
Friendly words, harsh words, words that cut
like the sharp edges of buried seashells.
Words of warning.
Everyday words, anachronistic words,
words of law and contracts.
Spoken words, words in print,
the uncertain formless words of the mind.
Screamed and unintelligible words,
hardly words at all.
Unnecessary words, words left unsaid.
Words extemporaneous and outpouring,
or carefully chosen and delivered,
a willful and calculated self-revelation.
Words that escape unbidden
like birds from a cage;
Words interior and unspoken
that flutter and peck at the internal ribcage architecture,
seeking an escape.
Why the release,
why the retention?
Go forth, then, in disturbance of sensory repose.
Thoughts become words,
words become sound,
sound gives way again to silence.
Of Running and Life
Heidi Erbsen

I force myself to go,
To put on my shoes,
I do not like running,
It’s not the fun I would choose.

I walk to my path;
Stop with a sigh,
Stare down the road,
Testing my drive.

Tensing muscular legs,
Just to make sure they’re there,
My walk evaporates to a run,
Before my mind can think clear.

Power of my body,
Trying my mind,
Still winds in my face,
Heavy breathing in time.

I run past the houses,
Through the street; in the rain,
Faster and harder,
Testing the pain.

I want to quit,
Stop and breath for a change,
My legs carry me on,
Through a cemetery within range.

My eyes see the headstones.
So many, yet few.
Those baring familiar names
Urge me on through.

The whispers I hear,
Encourage me on,
The wind behind my back,
Won’t let me stay long.

Desires to quit disappear,
My legs quicken pace.
They are dead, yet I am not,
I am able to run this race.

And even though I’ve miles to go,
I’m glad that I’m not done,
Because I’m alive,
And as long as I am,
I will continue to Run.
In Memory of Our Southern Angel {J.A.M.}
Evelina René

Tears hide behind these eyes,
Because you're gone and we don't know when we'll see you again.
Can't say that you left us because you were taken away,
Another cruel act by selfish men.
No matter what happens to him it won't bring you back,
But the sight of justice is comforting
To your family, friends, and all affected.
Throughout this healing process there'll be many dark days,
But one day the light will return...because there's always sunshine in Tennessee
We look at the life of a daughter, a sister, a friend, a classmate
And we see the amazing impact that she had.
Ultimately she brought people together, made us become a united family.
With her bright smile, bubbly personality, angelic voice, contagious laughter and unforgettable dancing
Her memory will live on through all the lives that she touched.
As a Southern sweetheart, she is now our Southern angel.
She is a hero whose dreams and goals will be realized by all those she left behind.
As our guardian angel, we live life for Jess!
One day the tears will go away, the sad faces...we will be able to laugh and smile again
Like we do every once in a while as a fond memory goes through our mind.
We will be restored as we remember that you ARE in a better place,
A place where there is no suffering or pain or hurt, only love and goodness...
This is the place where we all hope to be one day.
But until then you'll be smiling down on us
And when the sun shines we can think of u Tennessee
Because you Jess showed us ‘Moore Love’
Forever in our minds and hearts...we love you...may your soul rest in peace

Melissa Cotreau
Fallen Angel
Gesina A. Phillips

Suppose there comes a day
when an angel actually does
fall to earth.
He crash lands in a field
in the middle of nowhere, Iowa,
his snowy white wings
crushed on impact.
They have to come off,
of course. The doctor steadies
his hand against the shoulder joint
before severing wings from
a form otherwise human.

Suppose the angel awakens
in a brightly-lit and
blindingly white hospital room—
the closest thing to his natural habitat.
The angel’s vocalizations are haunting,
bell-like notes and a sorrowful keening.
When the bandages are finally removed,
the angel’s back is a smooth plane.

Suppose the doctors
hand the angel over to the psych ward.
He is a danger to himself—
he seems not to realize that
his wings are gone.
He stares at illustrations of birds and air-
planes.
The orderlies are under strict instructions
to keep him away from heights and ledges,
just in case.

No one knows how long angels live.
He sleeps on his stomach, spends his days
sitting by the front window.
On cloudy days, he flexes his shoulderblades
over and over.

Melissa Cotreau
Scars
Anonymous

I have been beaten with words
Lied to and betrayed
Taken down so low I have fallen
My morals beginning to fade

I have loved too deep to express
And been left broken to pieces
Often in despair and heartache
Letting it always go untreated

But I have also seen beauty
And a child laugh in their innocence
The most breathtaking sunrises and sunsets
All while learning the virtue of patience

Some marks can be seen to the eye
Some invisible to everyone but yourself
Regardless of where they are hidden
It is beautiful when they can be seen by someone else

It is a rare occurrence to see theirs as well
For looking inside can take courage
But it is worth its weight in gold
When you find them they need to be cherished

His are so buried
And located concealed in his soul
You would think due to his impression
That they could have never taken a toll

But in all honesty, it makes one more beautiful
When they show where they have been hurt
It is on his arm, neck, and his leg
Yet the ones in his heart are much worse
Continued...

“Just Keep Walking”
Michella Tiscornia
Then you find it all comes clear
When you realize just one thing
They too have loved too deep
And have fears not worth having

The greatest gift I have learned
Is never be satisfied with what you see
Always take another look
For love is what it can turn out to be

Mouth
Dana Amato

rose-red womb
deception's own mother
pink petal doors open
revealing ivory
and writhing red (the brush!)
of a painter's pallet solely in shadow hues

wet loom, spider-inspired
spinning tangles invisibly
both cradle and coffin
to its children of infinity
(and how can it be stopped?)

in silent meetings
the echoless caverns
produce truth in twain
an expression of
interpersonal purity
double-pursed
the four leaf clover, luck-forsaken
hiding behind the sounds

when such two are one
(if for a moment)
the origin of evil
times two becomes
an unspoken contract
stamp-sealed
rinse
repeat

Rebecca Thompson
A Dakota
Rudy Palma

Boots dampened in the snow,
The sun's departing glow,
A vile sandwich from a vending machine
And a dangling pay phone complimenting the scene
Set the stage for Picasso circa 1902,
A circumstance bleak and chilled, cyanotic blue.
Such is the background envisioned for you
Though the fine points I surely misconstrue.
I see icicles, I see a Dakota,
Parents a barren plane in Minnesota.
But perhaps, of course. Perhaps, perhaps.
For locating you they sell no maps.

Out on the snow hillocks
Dusted with moon, a copse of maple
punctuated by a bent willow, all
glimmering through the window. Streetlamps
burn
With pique, like great torches cor-
doning off a labyrinth or cave. And I reflect
on the bent willow. How it genu-
fects with its serpentine limbs,
shushing like a Gorgon’s crown.

A boney wind brushes Medusa’s
hair along the unmarred snow, penning
ideograms that sway and cross like tides.
That frozen trunk wrenched perma-
nently
to one side, as if by some titanic fist.
The cold world out there, fixed in stone,
with quiet, somber flakes trying in vain
to move.

I feel my hands clenched in the

“Encased”
Rebecca Thompson
Formations
Christin Kielar

Whistle. Marking, and timing, and marching. Faster.
Remember, eyes above the horizon.
And tuck your elbows tight against your ribs.
Again! Do you hear the music? Listen.

The yard lines are crisp with white spray-paint and acorns,
which catch the rubber treads of my sneakers.
I fall out of step; and the bystander squirrel watches, crouching, and eyeing, and hunting. Slower. Whistle.

Mark time. Then march. The drum major’s mimery slows the cadence of our heels. Then the whistle,
Formations: the circles, the lines, the grid and lattice, and then you sway. The wings, the Firebird.

The Maple leaves float, adrift the wings of the Firebird,
between our strides. The oranges and yellows embellish the clippings of grass, which glisten with dew,
and the flags of the guard, they signal the season.

Matthew DiCarlo

Creeping footfalls slowly fading
In a dark tunnel,
The hallway to a hall of mirrors
In an ancient castle,
Candles flickering
As an icy wind ripples through
Cold stone walls
And you tremble,
Struggling to remember
The silver glow of her hair,
The reverberations of her laughter,
Even the promise you once made
Never to forget.

Yesterday
Winston Willis
Jack Yeats is my neighbour
Meghan Dixon

I got here just 50 odd years too late
To stand on your stoop with a cup of milk
And a backpack full of finger paint.

You probably wouldn’t answer the door,
My frizzy hair and bookish looks pegging me
As a W.B. groupie, late nights at the Abbey stage
Door with a Sharpie gripped earnestly.

Though I’ve never been much for rabble-rousers.
I’ve never been much outside my own backyard.

If you did open the door you’d be disappointed
I wasn’t a prized pony, a blue-faced man,
A pompous priest.
Instead, just an oatmeal complexioned Midwesterner.

I’d bring homemade guacamole, trying to win you over
With the magic of Tex Mex and cowboy and Indian romance,
Watercolour narratives of the natives.

I’d get a game of charades going,
Unwrapping each paper with Christmas morning
Anticipation to find you’ve written Beckett or
“Nobody” on every last one. “Papa preached
That you were a great poet, Jackie”
I whisper in your ear, hoping to coax
Out a verse I can call my very own.

But, you don’t open the door.

I sit on your stoop, legs too long to wrap
My arms around, and press my back into
Your maroon door. You can paint me Jack,
I’ll sit pretty. My mind turns argyle,
I sleep vigorously.
Nail Polish Remover
Deeps Gera

Scorched red eyes. Unkempt hair. I remember nothing from last night, except for you. Save yourself.
Morphine hallway. I feel nothing and it’s perfect. Wait, I feel something. Blind faith and trust; not my style.
This will just hurt us both. I’m not stable and self-medicating barely works.
I’ll forgive myself later. Letting go of the first real emotion I’ve felt since how many bottles ago?
Maybe I should go for it, go for her, and go for sanity.
This game is old now. I don’t want to play. I just don’t care to feel.
Complacency as a byproduct of apathy.
I made this mess, I let it simmer, I gave it life. I’ll end it.
“I just need to wake up and find myself.” My black tar lungs spew to her feet.
Take another drag of my lies. They always buy it.
I seem like I meant what I said. I’ll confess later to Jim and Jack.
Lingering remorse, yeah, but that’s my life.
I’ll stitch up the wound. A PhD in throwing myself away.

Sleeping Like a Baby
Rudy Palma

Everything has led up to this.
The ache in my bones begins to subside
As day to day woes drift out in the tide.
Crickets chirp back and forth in the grass
Causing lingering concerns to pass.
Fog crawls in like a fox among bulrushes
Rocking me slowly with the gentlest brushes.

Voices of the past collide and fade
Arranging such a sweet serenade.
Seagulls reminisce and children laugh.
A man cracks a coconut in half.

Everything has led up to this.

“Danny”
Ashley Duvall
La luz de La Madrugada
Nathalie Almonte

Me encuentro despierta a las cinco de la mañana
Reclinada a la vera de mi ventana; Mirando adentro del alma de la noche con mucha seriedad,
Y mis ojos de repente llegan a un punto que comienzan a lagrimal- doy culpa a la luz de la calle y las estrellas del cielo que brillan con demasiado iluminación y santidad. Mis pensamientos profundos posiblemente han conmoviendo mis emociones también; ¡mi paciencia y razón se han perdido contra mi consciencia tan frágil que se ha conmovido sin fin!-
Como me llega reflexión a extraño hora- un tiempo cuando todas las casas están calladas y personas acomodadas, haciendo nada menos que dormir.

Mi familia ni está en el comedor como antes con risa, alto volumen, y alcohol- ya se acostaron hace tiempo mucho antes que yo.
Toda vía se puede oler el vino y el ron y se puede oír los brindes a alegría, a la paz, a salud-
Todos gozando el poco tiempo que tenemos aquí en este mundo tan irónico.
Y así es,
Este mundo relleno de una humanidad bien irracional y cruel.
Mucha gente viviendo con las ganas de ignorancia, odio, buscando a vivir sus vidas infieles-
Quieren memorias vacías, ideas hedonísticas, y encargarse de acciones engreídos,
Nuestra sociedad tiene una nueva historia de amor y es con dinero, lujuria, y materialismo.
¿Adónde esta el calor de compasión, la gente humanitario, y la calentura de amor pura que nos hace falta con urgencia?

Esto pongo yo con un mente desesperado para solución, pero nadie me da repuesta-
Solamente soy yo, la madrugada, y sus luminosas estrellas encogidas en inmensa confusión y mi sensible tristeza.
The Light of the Early Dawn (translation)
Nathalie Almonte

I find myself awake at five in the morning,
Reclined beside my window; Looking into the soul of the night with much intensity,
And my eyes all of a sudden reach the brink of tearing- I blame the light of the street
and stars of the night that shine with too much illumination and purity.
My profound thoughts may have stirred my emotions as well; my patience and reason
have become lost against my fragile conscience, which has been stirred without end!
How strange an hour reflection has arrived to me- a time when all houses are in silence
and all persons comforted, doing nothing else but sleep.

My family is not even in the living room as they were before with laughter, high vol-
ume, and alcohol- they already went to sleep much earlier than I.
I can still smell the wine and rum and hear their toasts to happiness, to peace, to health
-  
All enjoying the little time we have here in this very ironic world.
And that’s the way it is,
A world filled with a humanity very irrational and cruel,
Many people living with ignorant, hateful intentions, looking to live unfaithful lives-
They want empty memories, hedonistic ideas, and take it upon themselves to partake in
actions of greed,
Our society has a new love story and it’s with money, luxury and lust, and materialism.
Where is the warmth of our compassion, the humanitarian people, and the affection of
pure love that is urgently lacking on our behalf?

This I ask with a mind, desperate for a solution, but no one gives me an answer-
It’s only me, the early dawn, and her luminous stars trapped in my immense confusion
and true sadness.

“Out There”
Melissa Cotreau
In the richness of a few chords on a grand piano
Or the tension between string and bow of a violin
The worries and pains of this human life evaporate
And the full depth of human brilliance is understood

The suffering, loneliness, and disappointments
Of our imperfect condition and fallen world
Is made tolerable because at least one beautiful,
Pure thing occupies the same space as the darkness

My Motocross Racer
Gabrielle Magliano

“Just a bind date,”
Small talk and polite gestures.
“So, do you like motocross?”

I smiled politely as we walked,
Watching, your arm snake around me;
“Your arms feel so safe.”

You laughed and pushed harder on the gas,
The bike curved around the muddy hill; and
You asked “So, do you still like motocross?”

The nurse pointed to your room,
I held your hand for hours, unmoving until
I saw you blink. “Your arms feel so safe.”
I laughed and said “So, do you still like motocross?”

Heart Attack in Vegas
Rudy Palma

Ruby red and terribly indigo,
Unmuteable and ever-unrelenting,
The sights and sounds recklessly overflow
Between buildings and billboards unrepenting.
The scintillation is why you came.
You savor bodies and guzzle cocktails.
Like a fated moth drawn to the flame
You fulfill all of what the scene entails.
At first ignoring the pains in your chest
You ask the dealer for change of a fifty.
It isn’t long before you feel distressed –
You forgot to count, and his eyes are shifty.
Stumbling outside you crumble down, a sharp pain quaking through,
In this world you were meant to drown, neon lights breaking you.
If you could see the bloodshot haze of my eyes
Or the blurring glaze with which I stare
Or you could feel the thick, heavy
Humidity of my insecurities
Clinging to my skin
Would you think less of me?

What if I finally told you I felt it did
That each time my thoughts turned to you,
As they always did and still do,
I felt that I was inferior to you

Could you ever understand the shame I feel
Yet the insatiable appetite that led to this hungry condition
And the inability to escape its grasp
That is, my addiction

So perhaps one evening
I revealed to you the secret
That who I am,
is different than how I appeared
That my entire existence in your mind,
Was a cleverly presented lie I had acted out
With you and everyone else my captive audience

My dear, you must understand that I was once brilliant
With the mind of one who questioned;
And with the fingers of a violinist who created
Rather than destroyed

Who once breathed life into abstract ideas
And understood what it was to love
And to have the heart of a man
Who could fully love a woman

Eventually the answers will no longer matter
As I feel a familiar grasp pulling me by my bare ankles downward
Drowning in the depths of a thick haze
And my thoughts of you
and you and me
and myself
momentarily disappear
At 13 I learned to skin a pig
In 10 minutes flat.
I studied the watercolour anatomical
Masterpieces in the text, entrails like
Seashore taffy on the glossed page.
Grandpa coached me with a steady
hand
And a wavering mind.
“The blood won’t get off you.”
His shirt a proper horror show,
Mine formaldehyde lacquered,
My subjects ivory-tower-pristine.

I cracked their ribs like breaking off
Rock candy, pinned that
Piggy until he was sprawled out
Like a half-unpacked suitcase.
I never touched their heads,
Resting a cheek on the lab table,
Snout parted in death squeal.
I let them keep eyelids, wary of the
Reflection, like a powered-off TV.
“The blood won’t get off you.”
Once I did seven in an hour.

When I left you, or maybe
You let me go
(last I heard, the jury was hung)
I took my scalpel in my checked bag,
Nestled against the unmentionables.
For your birthday I planned on putting
Talents to work, and air mail you
A present.
One chamber, I would keep the other three.
It could serve as: collateral, proxy, plaything, lover
Keepsake, security blanket.
“The blood won’t get off you.”
More than that would be ludicrous
In shipping costs.

Grandpa never learned the word fix.
Pig Skins
Meghan Dixon

There's something beautiful about a butcher,
Tree-trunk forearms and tortoise shout
Grimaces etched into leathered cheeks;
Reaper of a potbelly nation.

Don't fall for his feminine wiles,
Floor-length aprons dipping to brush
Blood mosaic linoleum,
Showing a bit of pale ankle only
To lucky customers.

Red flourishes on the bodice,
Each kill is a different couture.
Stuffing scraps in pockets,
He brings home rosy bouquets
To a quiet lover.
He is always punctual.

Success runs from the shop's door jam in
Dark iron streams, varnishing the Streets drop by drop.
The elixir licks tire treads, his story Written in crimson lifelines on Rush hour highways.

Clouds
Rudy Palma

You have quenched my thirst to be thirsted for
Not only in body but also mind –
A glow I'd not experienced before –
Yet I cannot vow to respond in kind.
Were you lost in the arctic I would search
Scaling mountains with my every last strength.

Only malicious hands in the research Could create reason to doubt such a length.
All I can tell you is that this is love. Its beginnings and endings confound me.
I seek out answers for and reasons of And find only more questions abounding.
I wish I could make the clouds roll away In order to give you a summer's day.
High School Dreaming
Jesse Igbooke

3 minutes. 2 minutes. 1 minute.
It’s amazing how the three minutes
To the bell can seem like three years;

The bell finally rings and, like liberation from war,
I escape from the world of Spanish still only knowing
How to say, Yo quiero Taco Bell;

As the whirlwind of kids file into the hallway;
My heart begins to race. Like the rookie sprinter
Before the gunshot, my hands begin sweating;

The sprinter surveys the Olympic competition of the
hormone infested hallway; He (I) look(s) left, couple.
He (I) look(s) Right, couple. With each step forward,

My heart begins beating faster and faster, anticipating that moment. Step, Beat.
Step, Beat. Step, Beat, Beat, Beat, Pow!
I take in a long swig of oxygenated relaxation and calm down;

I walk to your locker, I wait for you; “Where is she?”
I begin to wonder, like the father of a lost child in the mall.
“She should be here by now. She’s done with me. I knew it!

It was all a joke. She realized she was stupid and
Now she’s done with...” Darkness- “Guess who?”
I feel your other side of the pillow hands on my eyelids

And, realizing what has just happened, I smile and
Say, “Ummm, the love of my life?” “Good answer,”
You say as you take your hands off of my face,

Flooding my eyes with light once again. You turn me
Around and before I can find the words to say, your lips
Meet mine; A kiss.

That four-letter word that I’ve heard so much about
But until now, never known what it meant...
Snow in July-No. Twenty dollar bill in my pocket-No.
Continued...
Hundred-dollar bill in my pocket! Yes, that's it, I've won the lip lottery.... I feel the warm air from Your nose blowing lightly on my upper lip, and

As your lips continue to dance with mine, my mind Goes blank and all I can think is, “slimy yet satisfying.” “How was Spanish?” you ask me, waking me up from

The Hakuna Matata trance I’m in. In a daze, I answer, “Muy terrible.” Making sure to seductively roll my “rrs.” You smile at my stupid comment, my heart melts;

You put your hands in mine and we walk to our next Class; as we walk, you start talking about your day, but All I can think about is how good your hand feels in mine;

How each one of your fingers fit perfectly into the small U-turns of my hand; And in that moment, in that pea-sized Moment, I realize that I am truly happy now. We arrive at

Your class as the bell starts to ring; you tell me you love me and kiss me goodbye; you start walking towards your class As I stand amazed at how something so incredibly beautiful,

Could want something like me; you turn and walk into your Classroom as I turn and walk into a wall... Yeah, I'm happy now.
Peaceful Invasion: Love
By R. Schaffner

Many people speak of love, sometimes even every day. But the kind of love I’m speaking of at this moment is not “puppy love” or “brother, sister love.” It is the kind of love you find yourself taken by another person who once was a stranger to you. Someone who you meet, spent time with because you like them, are attracted to them because you find them, well cute, and eventually learn to love despite of your differences or what they have. Here, I’m speaking of the kind of love that takes you by the hour, no, every second of the day, strikes you, oh peacefully invades you.

“Love is a beautiful thing, cherish it,” says Oma. “You are way to young,” mentions Mama. Papa asks “Are you taking care of Beccy?” while Brother ensures that a real man or woman will show results in their words. Great wisdom, nice words, true enough, they have “been there, done that.” But what do you do when at the most random time, most unexpected moment this feeling of joy and happiness suddenly “invades” your body without any invitation?

The flesh is weak! So become those who suddenly let their heart decide over their mind. “Smart was the girl until she fell in love,” isn’t that how the saying goes? This feeling of joy and happiness that so suddenly creeps up on you does not necessarily mean what it feels, nor does it necessarily act what it speaks. What I mean by that, is that although these great feelings may leave someone floating in heaven, the person becomes invaded not only by the good, but may also lose touch with reality. It invades not only your heart in the most remarkable way but also in the most disgusting way.

It first, peacefully, without any pain or sorrow makes its way into you. Then, without noticing, you, the victim, have been invaded. Invaded by Love. Your emotions take over. The chemicals in your brain don’t work as they used to; instead your person becomes like another. You smile more often, always talk about your significant other, show yourself from the most positive side, until eventually you sacrifice the things you love for the one you “love.”


Love, it does not have to be peaceful. It does not have to be an invasion either, neither does it have to be a peaceful invasion. It can be good, but so many have lost sight of the beauty of it and the true meaning. Gradually, without their consent, their blood turns thick, their heart beats faster, their cheeks more rosy all while hiding the wet sweat spots under their arms; invasion took place. He or she entered the room, and without realizing your mind turns blank. Now all you can do, is move and act and talk, but with venom inside of you. You don’t know, because it was peaceful, a peaceful invasion by love... R.S 8.05.2010
Advantages
Rebecca J. Thompson

“Could someone please give me a hand?” Alexa stamped her foot in exasperation. Almost immediately a hand dropped in front of her nose, dangling by tendons from Toby’s wrist.

“Haha, very funny,” she said, batting it away. Toby let it swing up and then snapped his arm out so his hand reattached.

“What do you need?” he asked.

Why, out of all the zombies in the room did he have to be the one to offer assistance? Alexa focused on tying the black balloons to the chair. Anything to keep from looking into his freakishly lively green eyes. Or at his perfectly disheveled brown curls. Or at his muscular shoulders. How on earth did a zombie keep in such good shape? Not that she cared.

“Can you please get the steaks? They’re in the fridge in the garage.”

“Steaks?” Toby said, disdain in his voice.

Alexa frowned. “You know Nita is on this vegetarian kick. No live people allowed tonight.”

“Fine, but you should have put that on the invitation, you know?”

“I did.” This time Alexa risked a glance up. He was smiling at her, way too close for comfort. “The garage,” she said again.

He reached out and touched her face.

Alexa stumbled back. “What are you doing?”

“Your cheek was falling. Sorry for trying to help.” His eyes snapped with a glimmer of some unreadable emotion as he turned for the door.

Reaching up, she realized he was right. The skin under her eye was nearly to her chin. With a sigh she pushed it back into place.

The two of them always seemed to end up at odds with each other. Shaking her head she grabbed the rolls of black and pink crepe paper. This was her best friend’s deathday party and nothing was going to distract her.

She snagged Hana to help her and climbed onto a chair to tape the streamers to the ceiling. Hana wasn’t used to doing much, so her fingers kept falling off as she unrolled the paper.

After attaching the first end, Alexa moved the chair across the room and clambered back up, but as Hana followed her she walked out of her feet and fell over.

“I’ve got it,” Hana said sheepishly, waving Alexa and the other zombies away. Alexa blew a strand of brown hair out of her eyes, grimacing as flesh fluttered away with it.

Toby came back with the cooler. Alexa could smell the flesh even through the styrofoam and plastic wrapping. Her stomach gurgled and a few drops of acid dripped to the floor.

Continued...
There were definitely disadvantages to being undead.

Hefting the cooler onto the table with ease, Toby winked at Vera, a pretty, blonde newlydead. The girl was a shameless flirt, giggling and teasing him. Toby made a pun and Vera rolled her eyes at him. He caught them handily, juggled them and then tossed them back. Vera popped them back into her sockets and shook her head to make them settle. Toby grinned and Alexa felt like smacking him. What an immature little...

"Are you ready?” Hana asked.

Alexa blinked and looked down. How long had she been standing there staring at him? “Sorry,” she said, taking the rolls of paper, careful to keep Hana’s hands intact.

As they finished decorating, Alexa noticed that everyone was pretty much standing around the cooler of meat. Nita had better get there soon or there wouldn’t be any food left.

A whiff of bacon reached Alexa’s nose. “Here she comes,” she hissed. Toby reached out a tan (seriously, how was a zombie tan?) arm and flicked off the light just in time.

“Alexa?” Nita called, opening the door.

The shouts of “surprise!” combined with the sudden brightness of the room as Toby turned the lights back on made Nita jump and her arm dropped to the floor.

“Happy deathday,” Alexa said, hugging the plump redhead and pushing her arm back into place.

“Ohmygoodness! You scared me halfwaybacktolife!” Nita squeezed Alexa in return.

Alexa had to laugh at Nita’s trademark rapid-fire exclamations. They’d been reanimated within a week of each other and had been inseparable ever since.

“Hey there, Toby! Ohmygoodness! That was the craziestthingever! I can’t believeyouguys did this!” Nita reached out a hand and Toby pulled her forward, his eyes sparkling.

“Nothing’s too good for our girl. Right, Alexa?” He lifted his eyebrows at her and Alexa scowled.

Our girl? If Nita was “their girl” then that meant there was an “us.” But there wasn’t, was there? Alexa wished she hadn’t invited him. He was just making things difficult.

But now Nita was looking at her strangely and Alexa realized she hadn’t responded. Instead, she’d stood there glowering. “Right!” she said, a little too brightly, adding a big grin. Yeah, now Nita was looking at her knowingly. Great. “I’m just going to get the food out.”

“Why don’t you go greet the rest of your guests while I help Alexa,” Toby said, pushing Nita gently toward the other zombies.

Continued...
“I don’t need help,” Alexa said, marching toward the table. She moved too quickly and her ankle popped backwards. Toby caught her as she stumbled and she was so startled she grabbed his shirt. At least that’s what she told herself.

But she was suddenly staring right into his eyes and his mouth was right next to hers and his arms; those strangely muscular, solid arms; were wrapped around her waist. If she’d been breathing, she would have stopped.

“You were saying?” he said, his lips brushing her cheek.

“Need to steak table,” Alexa said. Perfect. Now she was acting like a babbling love-struck fool.

Her eyes widened. “I’m in love with you,” she gasped.

Toby chuckled. “You’re just figuring this out? I’ve known it for ages.”

“You love me.” The revelations just kept coming. Alexa felt like she was being repeatedly clubbed.

“Duh.” And then he kissed her and Alexa wondered if there weren’t some advantages to being undead after all.
Her Heart
Brittany Biesiada

She sat up in bed. The room was dark. She glanced over at him, sleeping. His back was turned to her, curled up in ball to the side. He seemed so far away. He didn’t hold her anymore the way he used to.

She put her head in her hands and allowed her dark hair to cover her face. She shook herself up and walked to the bathroom. She flicked on the light, illuminating the pale yellow room. She stared at herself in the mirror. The lines around her eyes were faint, but she looked exhausted from the bloodshot eyes. She hadn’t been sleeping well for weeks. She didn’t know what had caused it to start or how to make it stop.

At work, she was focused and in control. She came home, made dinner, and prepared for the next day. In every aspect of her life, she was on top, work, house, money...

She wondered if there would be any more good times for them. She wondered why they were still together. She used to love him. She really did. It used to be so different.

When had it happened? When had it changed?

She remembered when she would actually take an hour to get ready to go out with him, when not putting on a fresh shirt and lipstick was sufficient. She remembered when he would suggest places for them to go, wine tastings, weird museums, vacations. She remembered when they could sit together after work and just prop their feet on the coffee table and talk for hours, and forget to make dinner, so they’d order in and argue about what to get. Now he just came home with a pizza and thrust it on the table, sometimes she would have already made something else, but she smiled and ate it anyway.

She wondered how she faked it constantly, everyday. Every single day was a lie. And she felt powerless to stop it.

They still went to the movie once a week for date night, a ritual she had put together when she had begun to notice the small changes, less time together at home, more distractions…. But she had missed the big changes. She hadn’t noticed when he stopped wearing that cologne she bought him every year. She hadn’t noticed that he stopped telling her how pretty she was and touching her hair. She hadn’t noticed when he pulled away when she wanted a kiss…or when she felt like everything was going wrong at work, she stopped calling him.

She just didn’t have the heart anymore.

Continued...
She had thought about quitting, leaving. She would just stay in bed and wait until he left one morning, and then she would pack silently, throwing her clothes in one of the big black suitcases they had bought for their honeymoon. They had talked about using them when they went to Italy or France or Turkey, or even on that cruise her friend at work talked about. She brought up the cruise and he had said that work was too busy, he couldn't get away. Maybe next year. Then maybe the year after that. The year after that. She had stopped asking.

But she kept staring at those suitcases in the back of the closet, and she wondered how long it would take her to pack away all those memories. She wondered how long it would take him to realize that her things were gone, that the picture of them from the wedding was missing in the hall, that her makeup bag wasn't on the bathroom sink, and that the room didn't smell of her perfume any longer. She wondered if he would simply go to sleep, not caring whether or not she ever came home.

He had changed, hadn't he? Or had she?

She remembered what it was like when she was alone so long ago. Late nights in her apartment when she was in her twenties…. Her friends would call and ask her to come out with them. But going out felt so meaningless. She was tired of drinking herself into an oblivion like the others, it held no appeal for her.

Instead, she would sit alone in her room. Her roommate was gone and everything in the room was still. She would lie in bed with the television on mute, watching the pictures change. Her music would play faintly. The hallways were quiet for a change, no banging, no music, no people. The quiet silence soothed her and made her afraid. She was alone.

She was alone in so many ways. She had gone to another place. Her heart had retreated into another world that no amount of alcohol could soothe. She felt something heavier weighing on her, that going out wouldn't solve. She was alone. It terrified her to think that maybe this all was there was, late nights alone in her room.

She wanted someone to lie down next to her and hold her and stay with her in the silence, against the madness outside her window.

She tried so many times, so many people. There had been so many false hopes. She looked deeply in every smile, every hello… anything to have something for her to hold onto late at night while everyone was away. If only it could have sustained her forever.

Continued...
Then he walked into her life. She remembered seeing him for the first time, so young and exuberant. She had clung to him, and made all her hopes depend upon whether or not he was happy, he was satisfied with her.

Maybe that was why she resented him, or why she had begun to pull away too. She had stopped dressing up, stopping asking what he thought, stopped making sure if what she did was alright. If she thought it was, why did he need to approve her decision? She had given him control, and then she wanted it back, so she pulled far away, deep into that space she had known in that small apartment, when being alone scared her and exhilarated her.

Oh, she had embraced the fear then and pushed her other desires down, and said “This is what it takes to be with someone, to never be alone.” Until she grew angry. But was she still afraid? Was the fear still there?

She walked out of the bathroom and into the dark room. She found her way through the darkness back to the bed. She laid back down. He was still asleep. He hadn’t missed her absence.

She remembered the last time he had woken up at the mere inclination of her leaving the bed. She would turn over too far and he would reach out and pull her back in. It had been when they were first married.

Her eyes wandered over to the door. She considered getting up and walking out. She sat down next to him, and touched his shoulder lightly, hoping he would stir, wake and ask her why she hadn’t been sleeping. He had never even noticed, not once in the past five weeks, that she got up every night and went away.

What if she never came back to bed? What if she packed those suitcases now... what if she went alone to those places... Italy... Rome... maybe Paris...alone.

But she just didn’t have the strength. Her heart just wasn’t in it anymore.