

The Blotter

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The South's Unique, FREE, International Literature and Arts Magazine

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The Blotter

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COVER: from the collection
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The Blotter is a production of
MAGAZINE

The Blotter Magazine, Inc.,
Durham, NC. A 501 (c)3 non-profit
ISSN 1549-0351
www.blotterrag.com



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“Rebound Books”

For me it is a given that it's great fun to read a terrific book. And I find it equally a bummer when you finish a great volume. Oh, not right away, but soon and for some time. I don't know if there's a word for this. Something the Bard might have coined, placed in one of the more obscure plays (Coriolanus?) and then to be made famous through repetition by Mark Twain. The definition something like postpartum depression, only not having to do with childbirth.

I assume (because you picked this up or logged into our site) that I'm talking to readers. I don't understand people who don't read.

The feeling I personally experience is an idle wish that a book could just keep going on, although I obviously have no idea how that could be, now that the denouement has happened and everything was (hopefully) wrapped up with a metaphorical bow. Still, it is what I wish. And I don't give up on it – Mr. George RR Martin is that sort of fellow who might take up such a challenge and keep expanding a volume until it cannot be held with folded folios and waxed thread and glue. For the most part, however, I'm stymied. So I rummage around in search of something else. What is in my bedside table pile? (Why don't I already know what is in that stack? my wife wants to know. You have too many books. I shriek and go into paroxysms of resentment. These are my precious!) What is hiding on the shelves behind my desk, stacked every-which-way so that my wife thinks I need to cull the herd, to which I argue that this is my system, and therefore beyond reproach? Except perhaps consuming French fries, there is nothing like the urge I feel in my core to keep reading. When I'm engaged, really locked in, I can find that I've been turning pages like a madman, for hours, days. It's a very good thing. A habit. And then the story ends. Aargh! So now what? Go outside and take a walk? Are you kidding me? It's hot!

When we leave someone we like-like (or more likely, in my case, they leave us), we often struggle with what to do next. Yes, this is a weak analogy, but stay with me, because similar questions arise. How can we survive this...break-up? How will we get through this coming day? How can we while, suffer, muddle the hours away in some fashion other than intolerably, arduously?

It is my assertion, therefore, that we should never read one book at a time. It is a recipe for such disasters. If our lone source of entertainment is good – very good – it carries such a burden as should never be placed on a story. That personal burden of

story-love should always be shared between authors, between genres and styles and plot-structures. Finally, never assume that your book is so...titanic that it is unsinkable. The seemingly endless pages of *In Search of Lost Time* do in fact peter out. (sorry, Monsieur Henri, that wasn't nice of me at all.)

That act of sharing the responsibility of absorbing the written word I now give the term "rebound book." I realize the dad-joke inherent in this title. (I similarly acknowledge the dad-joke in that last sentence.) I have spoken before in these pages about the five books I have cracked open at the same time, and what categories they must fill – New, Education, Dense, Repeat and Candy. Something I've never read before, something with which I intend to expand my knowledge, A tome commonly considered a particularly "difficult read", something I've read before that deserves a second go, and an easy piece – a summer blockbuster with pages. The only variation I include in this list of five is to occasionally include a book I should have read many years ago, perhaps during school (when I was not a good student, not good at all.)

Any one of these five open volumes might end up being the next one you can't put down. Any one could leave you wondering what to do now. And that is why you need to rely on the other four to help you out, and to have a book or two or seven in the wings to step up to the plate. Check out your own TBR stacks. Blow off the dust and get them in the game. Manage your reading like a baseball skipper manages the team, with internal, personal algorithms and heart. Who's on second? I don't know. Third...

Garry - (mermaidblotter@gmail.com)



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in the Great State of Georgia!



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Subscriptions are offered as a premium for a donation of \$25 or more.

Send check or money order, name and address to

The Blotter Magazine Subscriptions, 1010 Hale Street, Durham, NC 27705.

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CAUTION

can't you tell that the tires

"The Most Beautiful Girl in the World"

by Chris Jansen

The first time I saw her was the first day of 8th grade. I was sitting at the back of the bus with my best friend Ralph, likely reviewing the momentous events that had transpired on last night's Battlestar Galactica. The bus stopped. The door opened, and there she was. She climbed the steps, bobbing upward, this golden girl, sent from blonde-heaven, and I was struck like never before or since. I don't know what came over me. I had just never seen someone so beautiful. She was Marcia Brady. Blair from Facts of Life. But live, here, in the flesh, and on my bus!

As she took her seat my friend said hi, talked to her. He knew her from somewhere, probably youth group at Sherwood Baptist. I was jealous. I couldn't even look directly at her. She was too beautiful. It hurt, like staring at the sun. There's a Christian tradition that no one has ever seen God, because he's too holy. If you see him, you just die right there. I felt like that seeing her.

I went around high the rest of the day, mind and body still reeling from this strange encounter. I never paid that much attention to school, but I was pretty much ruined after that. How can you expect me to diagram sentences when I've seen God?

As the year went on I hardly saw her at school, just the bus. We had different classes. I wouldn't say she was Special Ed, but... we had different classes. There were other girls at school, prettier even, but none like her. Every time I saw her it came over me again. The world that seemed so gray and

loveless was transformed into a wonderful, vivid place, full of possibility and promise for the future. It's not all bad and boring! There's something wonderful too!

I came to know the guy who went with her. His name was Stan (not Stan Whatley). He wore yellow socks with tan loafers and a different Izod every day, and despite being all of 13, looked like he was 35, the definition of middle-school cool. I guess it made sense. I mean the guy had whiskers already.

Still, this was a matter for contemplation. He had something. I didn't. Whatever he had was good enough. Whatever I had was not. It was like a word-problem in math. "Two trains leave a station going in opposite directions..." I could solve any word-problem.

I thought maybe if I got myself some tan loafers and yellow socks. Maybe some Izods. That could do the trick. Or maybe if I had name like "Stan" which seemed like a cool name, rather than the milquetoast "Chris."

This was going to take some effort. I couldn't change my name, so I begged my parents for a wardrobe upgrade. "It's for school."

It paid off. One day I was on the bus home, sitting behind her. Maybe I'd watched too many triumphant nerd movies, I don't know, but by the power of my new Izod I got a crazy idea. With the courage of all true idiots I leaned over her shoulder, and said, "Hey [], I've been meaning to ask you, will you go with me?" She looked at me like I'd just vomited in her lap. Then she smiled the

most gorgeous smile I've ever seen, and said, "Yes." The Izod worked.

I sat back, euphoric and excited, relishing my good fortune and all that lay ahead. It was then that I knew the world was a good place and I had a home in it, a seat at life's table.

After about 30 seconds, she turned around to me. "Chris. I want to break up." Haha. The other kids on the bus laughed too. And so did I. Obviously I was in on the joke. Obviously.

I still loved her though. I still got that feeling when I saw her. But now it was admixed with pain. Shame. It's a strange thing to feel so tenderly toward something that is also the source of your deepest pain. The message was clear though. Whatever you are isn't good enough and never will be. Deal with it.

The middle school year ended. I saw her occasionally in high school, but not much. I was stuck in trigonometry with the other college-bound twats. Different classes, you know.

I didn't think much of her after high school. A few years later somebody said they heard she was stripping at the Cheetah in Atlanta. Said she was a coked-out alcoholic. Did things for money. When social media became a thing I tried to find her every so often, just to see. Doing my due diligence. But either I couldn't find her or she just wasn't there. The feeling was though. I could never forget that feeling of being love-struck. The 30 seconds on the bus when I was happy and at peace with the world. Every time I emptied a bottle of Canadian whiskey or snorted a line of Oxycontin, there was something of her there. Not her exactly, but that feeling. Every addict is searching for God.

I got older. I read Jung and Bly and mythology. I realized that it really wasn't her I was so in love with. She was a goddess but of the Greek variety, an avatar of perfection briefly inhabiting a human body, sent by the gods to curse and confuse middle-school dolts like myself. It wasn't personal.

I moved on. There were other goddesses to be pursued. Most were ones-that-got-away, but some didn't. One I married.

I didn't think I'd ever see her again, but I did. It was at my 25th high school reunion. There she was, live, in the flesh, just like on the bus.

She was drunk and coked-up. She drank like I did—insatiable, trying to fill that hole with so much pleasure that there was no room for pain of any kind. It takes one to know one. Meanwhile, the music played, people danced. I danced. Drunk and drugged-up.

Then it was the end of the night. Most of the reunioners had gone home or back to their rooms at the hotel. Can't hang, huh? She was deserted by friends, if she had any, and too plastered to walk.

I carried her, stumbling, back to her hotel room. I put her to bed and pulled the covers up. In the darkness, finally able to look at her, finally able to see her, there was no trace of that feeling of infatuation, only something like kinship. Camaraderie. Apparently I wasn't the only one cursed and confused by beauty and riven with the pain of its discontents.

I closed the door and left, and that was it—the last time I saw the most beautiful girl in the world. ❖

Two Flashes

by Judge Santiago Burdon

Wake Me Up When I'm Famous"

"Who the hell are all these people and what are they doing in our house?" I say trying to sound upset.

"All these people? It's only three people in 'my' house. They've read all your books and wanted to meet the famous Santiago. I met them at the Bookstore when I was going over the details for your reading on Saturday of your new book; 'Overdose of Destiny Impulse Fiction' with the manager. You were supposed to have been there. What the hell happened to you? I left a message on the Fridge and one on the front door. And do you remember what I told you last night before we fell asleep?"

"Santiago, you are an incredible lover? Or something in that general subject area?"

"No! You know I wouldn't ever say that because you'd get all full of yourself and act cocky. I said, Santiago can you promise me that you'll be at the bookstore at 4:00 for the meeting with the store supervisor. But of course you choose to sabotage my every attempt at publicizing your career. Like this reading on Saturday."

"I'm sorry, my memory got drunk. Wait! What reading? When? Where? First, tell me again why this mob of strangers are here."

"They saw me putting up one of your posters advertising the reading and asked if I knew you. I said not only do I know you but we live together." Chloe continued.

"They asked if I would introduce them to you. I told them of course, come on over now, follow me."

"You invite a bunch of strangers here? You don't know who these people are. They could be a gang of Psychopaths. Maybe they're Republicans or Christians out to kill me for my writing for all you know. Like the Sandman Muskey incident with the Iranian Muslims."

"You mean Salman Rushdie?"

"Yes and him too."

"That imagination of yours always running wild. You're so dramatic. Why do you hide from the world? You know fame isn't like a tattoo, it doesn't stick around for long."

"So now you want me to get a tattoo of the word 'Fame'?"

"What? No! You know what I mean. Don't start with that shit. Come in the living room and meet them. They work at the Bookstore. It could be good for book sales." She commands.

"Now put on some classy clothes. They brought a bottle of Johnny Black and they have some Cocaine. Hurry up and take a quick shower baby. And don't take all god-damn day please."

"I'll hurry up, promise".

"Ya know, it wouldn't hurt to give each of them a signed copy of your new book. You cheap bastard."

"It's not that I'm cheap, I feel it may be interpreted as a pretentious act. Then people will go around saying.; " Santiago is so conceited. He made us take one of his books and signed it. As though he's a big time Author."

"I'll suggest you gift them with a book



and you can react as though it's a marvelous idea."

"I like it."

"Good boy. Quit stalling, get going baby."

Damn it! My life has taken a turn down the wrong street. There was a time when people did all they could to ignore me. Now I'm some writer slob, author asshole, doing public readings to sell some books. I don't enjoy reading my own work, especially in public out loud. It scares the shit out of me. There's times when I've read something I don't remember writing. It isn't familiar to me at all. It's a creepy feeling as though someone is channeling their thoughts through me. And then I have to autograph the damn books as well.

"Can you sign it to my best friend Cecil?"

"Sure, my new friend Cecil. It must be a family name. There was a cartoon long ago called Beany and Cecil. Is that where your

parents got the name? What do you think?"

"Hey Santiago, I've got to get to work, I don't have time for bullshit conversation. I have no idea where they got the name."

"Okay, I just thought with such an unusual name, you'd know its origin and how you got stuck with it. I bet you got picked on in school because of your name, Cecil."

"Just give me the fucking book! I need to go."

"Okay Cecil, my new best friend. Do you think that kind of language is appropriate to address your best friend? Thanks for coming."

"Hi Santiago, I just love your writing. Could you sign it: My Desdemona you've ruined me for any other woman?"

"Sure whatever you want Desdemona. Did you know Othello's wife was named Desdemona?" I mentioned.

"Who is Othello? Wait, you spelled my name wrong."

"Shit! I'm sorry. Grab another book. I'll

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spell your name correctly this time.”

After I’m finished with the book signing, my reward is an afternoon at the bar with Chloe. She loves the attention and answers most of the questions people ask. I just sit there, smile and shake my head yes. People buy me drinks and tell me how much they enjoy my writing. Chloe doesn’t say a word about me getting drunk, she’s too busy being my agent. I think I pay her but I’m not sure how much.

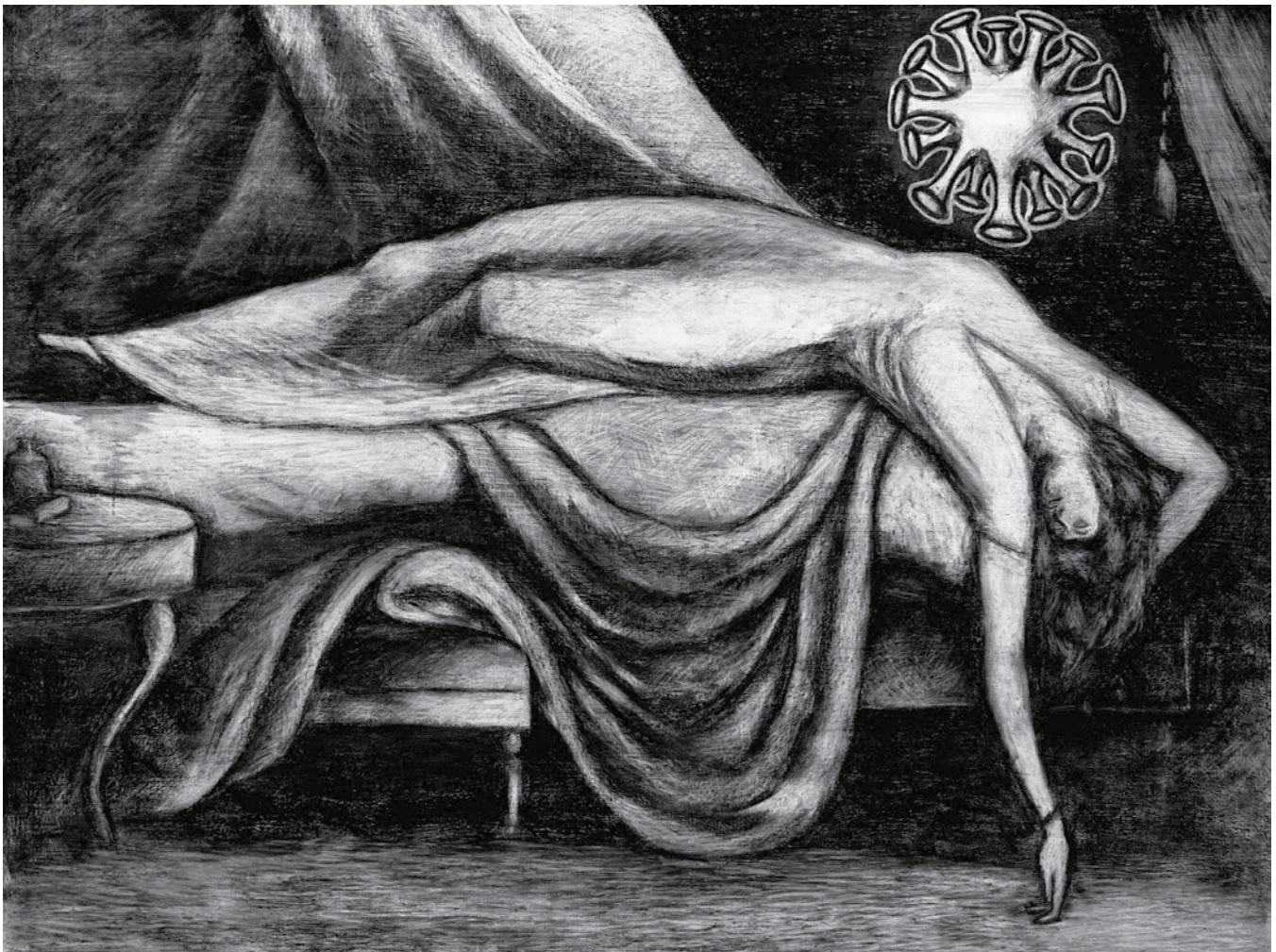
A deafening blast from a Semi’s air horn jolts me awake from my sleep under the Interstate off ramp. It takes a moment but I become relieved after realizing it was all just a nightmare, I was having a bad dream.

I sighed, laid down and tried to go back to sleep.

“Wake me up when I’m famous”. I whispered to the unreliable darkness.

Suburban Scumbag

Darkness had just punched the time clock, showing up to work the night shift. It was time to light a couple of candles in my Studio apartment. The purpose wasn’t to create a romantic or Gothic ambience, but instead to be able to navigate around my four hundred square foot living space with some kind of light. It seems my memory has been on a drunk once again and forgot to



pay the light bill. The Electric and Power guy pointed out I've used that somewhat creative as well as almost humorous excuse far too often. The novelty has worn off with the consequence being orders to confiscate the Electric Meter and return it to the office. It meant he couldn't just pull it out, turn it upside down, and push it back in. The company mid-level suits had become aware of me pulling it out then placing it back into the service restoring my power after the electric guy left. I guess I'll be playing pioneer for a while. Maybe I should stock up on candles or get one of those oil lamps. You know what? My neighbors are leaving on vacation for a month tomorrow. I can jump their Electric and their Cable. I'll try to get my TV. out of hock. This guy will be living like a suburban scumbag in no time at all. I've got it all worked out.

"This has to stop Santiago. There's no future in what you refer to as a recreational activity." I said out loud.

"Ya I know. You're right. I've gotta straighten up." Answering back to myself with a 4:00 a.m. honesty.

I emptied the entire contents of the paper into the small pool of water in the spoon.

"When do you think that will happen?"

"I can't say for sure. It may manifest as a revelation or mysteriously surprise me as an epiphany. Maybe some friends will organize an intervention. Although that seems highly unlikely with friends being scarce these days. However, there is always the never-fail cure; incarceration."

I held the spoon over the candle flame and bubbles appeared on the surface of the water.

"It doesn't matter what method you decide on. You've gotta get clean. You embrace your grief knowing it's a toxic lover. Only because it allows you to believe that

no one's pain is greater than your own. It's an excuse you use to rationalize this self-destructive behavior without culpability. How did it ever come to this?"

"You wanna know something? It's a complete mystery to me how I got to where I am now. I guess I missed an exit or made a wrong turn. Just one of the inconveniences of addiction. You always end up getting lost."

I drew up the warm coffee colored liquid mixture through a cigarette butt I used as a filter. Then I inspected the contents for air bubbles, flicking the syringe with my finger to dislodge them.

"You look at life as though it's a non-stop parade just for your entertainment. You watch it pass by day after day without thinking about it ending. Let me clue you in Mister Dope Fiend, the last float will be showing up soon signaling your demise. Take my word for it. Santa Claus won't be riding on top waving his Christmas Greeting. You've gotta take control of your life. It's got to stop!"

My voice echoed in the near empty apartment as I hollered to myself.

"Ya sure, it'll happen. I promise. I just can't say when." I answered back sincerely. But even I didn't believe myself.

I stabbed the syringe deep into my vein. I didn't even have to pull back on the plunger to register. My dark, thick, rich, red, blood billowed into it offering a crimson preview of the explosion about to erupt inside my body. My finger slowly, ceremoniously pushed down on the plunger.

Boom! ❖

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Two Flashes

by Alaina Hammond

Flight Response

It's extremely inconvenient how attracted I am to my coworker. We were collaborating on a project the other day, when his body accidentally brushed against mine. He was apologetic, and I pretended I didn't care. But I felt as if I'd touched a space heater.

Honestly, it's not even about him. Not entirely. Sure, he's attractive, but we've barely had a conversation that lasted longer than ten minutes. I have to wonder: Am I actually lusting for HIM, or am I just looking for a distraction from the monotony of my daily life?

Also, it's likely that I'm a bit starstruck. He's the most famous of all of us, and has been for quite some time. I read his book when I was in grad school. It was well-written, but I can't say it changed my world. Still, celebrity is a powerful aphrodisiac, and I am not immune.

OK. Let's say something were to happen between us. How would that even work? Where would we go? We have ZERO privacy! Even when our coworkers aren't right across the room from us, the cameras are recording our every flipping move.

I wish they'd let me bring a vibrator to space.

My Cells Remember Strawberry

I'm experiencing the worst pregnancy cravings in human history. A strawberry spinach smoothie would be both fuel and bliss.

Of course, I'm not fully human. As such it seems cruel that My Creator would program me to experience cravings. Crueler still that they should be for foodstuff I can't eat, consisting of plants that are decades extinct.

I am actually pregnant, though.

They tell me that the pain of childbirth has gone the way of strawberries.

But given how intensely my mouth yearns for fruit, I have my doubts. I don't have proper tastebuds, but I have doubts. ❖

"Stairway to Heaven"

by Leslie Lisbona

My dad pulled into the camp parking lot in Lake George. I was thirteen, almost too old for sleepaway camp, I thought as I bit a nail. It was supposed to be an artsy place, and co-ed. I had never been to this camp before, and I didn't know anyone. I had never been away from home for four weeks either.

Wendy was at the peanut-butter-and-jelly table at the end of the food hall. She seemed friendly, making jokes about the food choices.

I approached her. "That's such a cool shirt," I said.

After lunch we walked over to her bunk. "Here," she said, handing me a flannel shirt just like hers. "I brought too many."

I put it on immediately.

A few nights later all the kids gathered to watch "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" on the camp's giant lawn. Wendy and I were sitting side-by-side when a boy walked by. He had a red baseball cap over pecan colored hair. He glanced in our direction and smiled. I nudged Wendy. "That's Adam," she said, nodding approvingly.

The camp had hired a bus to take us to concerts in nearby Saratoga Springs. "Hey, let's go hear Crosby, Stills & Nash together," Wendy said, chewing her gum. I had never heard of them.

"Okay, yeah," I said.

The next day I passed a group of boys get-



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ting a guitar lesson. They were learning the chords to “Stairway to Heaven.” Adam strummed his guitar, and I peeked at him through my sheaf of brown hair. He was looking back, and my face became flush.

I saw him there every morning, playing “Stairway to Heaven” over and over. I couldn’t wait, even though all we did was smile at each other.

The day of the CSN concert, the camp bus dropped us off on the main street in Saratoga Springs, and a counselor handed each of us our tickets. “Make sure you’re back at the bus by 11pm,” he said.

I looked at Wendy and couldn’t believe the freedom we’d been given. “C’mon,” she said.

At dusk, we headed over to an enormous lawn on a circular hill where the concert was to take place and sat on the grass. There were lots of people, maybe hundreds, some milling around, some down. Then it was night, and there was a hush. The band appeared at the bottom of the hill, the crowd wrapping around them. They seemed far away but it didn’t matter. After they played “Our House,” everyone lit a lighter, and the entire expanse was made of little dots of light. “God,” I said, almost to myself. “This is amazing.”

Back on the bus, I took a seat by a window, and before Wendy could join me, Adam slid in next to me. Wendy and I exchanged glances as she searched for a free seat. Another kid squeezed next to Adam, and in an instant Adam’s leg was pressed against mine. I took a breath and don’t remember exhaling. We didn’t say anything to each other, and I turned to look out the window at the night sky, trying to compose myself. It was so dark on the bus and darker outside. I shut my eyes, knowing that the ride back

to camp would take an hour. Soon I realized that Adam’s left hand was close to my leg, brushing my jeans with his outstretched pinky. I peered over at him and saw his eyes were closed. The circles he made got slightly bigger. I didn’t stop him, but that was as far as it went. In my life, I had never felt so alive.

At the end of August, my parents pulled the Volkswagen Bug into the camp with a crunch of tires on gravel. Wendy hugged me. “I think Adam likes you,” she whispered.

I looked over her shoulder and saw him staring at me. I hugged Wendy back harder knowing this and said goodbye.

“I can’t wait to sleep in my own bed,” I said once in the car. But instead of picturing my pink room and seeing my dog again, I imagined Adam, and a secret thrill went through me.

I just wanted to think about him and the way he was staring. The back seat suddenly felt cramped, and I tried to get comfortable. As we drove the four-hour trip home to Queens, I gazed out the window, “Stairway to Heaven” playing in my head, background music to everything. ❖



The Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

Please send excerpts from your own dream journals.

If nothing else, we'd love to read them.

We won't publish your whole name.

September Dream Journal

I must be careful when I sleep alone. I am susceptible to nightmares, those twists in the plot that leave me gasping in the dark and wondering if I've awakened, or merely taken a commercial break and will return to our regularly scheduled programming. I am peculiarly troubled by dreams when I sleep by myself, and when there are no childish nightlights on, either in the bedroom or the hallway or the nearby bathroom. I don't apologize nor do I care that you think me foolish or infantile. There's nothing there in the night that isn't there in the day is a monstrous piece of illogic. Of course there are things that go bump in the night, in our weary skulls. That's the whole point of a subconscious, isn't it, Dr. Freud?

The steady, familiar whop-whop-whop of the ceiling fan is counterpoint to my heart lub-dubbing and my slow breathing, (punctuated by the occasional (!?) snore.) I miss my partner's corresponding life-noise, when they are away. It fits to mine like the teeth of a gear. When they are gone, my gear whirs without, what? Control? Guidance?

So I am careful. What does that even mean? How can you force your subconscious into behaving? I don't believe that Dickens was right – that it's a bit of underdone potato causing me to be followed in the dark by...something. It's not because of a full moon, or a quarter, new or gibbous, either. It's not that I'm enthralled by a King tome or something new by Stephen Graham Jones (the horror heir apparent? – try saying that five times, fast.) It's how my brain processes the news of the day and creates a corresponding off-road journey so that I come up for air each morning, somehow intact and able to cope. Or so they say.

B. K. - Chapel Hill

CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Jansen lives in Athens, Georgia, where he coaches boxing and cares for a guinea pig named Poozybear. His writing has been published in *Barren Magazine*, *The Blotter*, *Cicatrix*, *Levitate Magazine*, *Poetry Breakfast*, *Talking Soup*, *RKVRV Quarterly*, *Anti-Heroine Chic*, and *The Blue Nib*. His memoir *We Can Be Heroes* was a finalist for the Georgia Author of the Year Award. A selection from this book won first prize for non-fiction from Fairfield University's Causeway Lit.

Judge Santiago Burdon publications include *Stray Dogs and Deuces Wild*; *Cautionary Tales*, *Not Real Poetry*, *Quicksand Highway*, *Fingers in the Fan*, *Tequilas Bad Advice*; *Poetry With the Worm*, *Lords of the Afterglow*; *Renegades and Noblemen*, *Overdose of Destiny*; *Impulse Fiction*, *Architect of Havoc*, *A Charlatan's Aphorisms*; *Junk Drawer Poetry*.

Alaina Hammond is a poet, playwright, fiction writer, and visual artist. Her poems, plays, short stories, philosophical essays, creative nonfiction, paintings, drawings and photographs have been published both online and in print. Publications include *Spinozablue*, *Paddler Press*, *Fowl Feathered Review*, *Synchronized Chaos*, *Well Read Magazine*, *Concision Poetry Journal*, *New World Writing Quarterly*, *Lowlife Lit Press*, *Flash Phantoms*, *New Limestone Review*, *L'Esprit Literary Journal*, and *Rock Salt Journal*. @alainaheidelberger on Instagram.

Leslie Lisbona was featured in the Style section of The New York Times in March 2024. She has been published in *JMWW*, *Smoky Blue Literary & Arts Magazine*, and *Welter*. Her work has been nominated for Sundress Publications' Best of the Net 2024 contest and won the nonfiction prize at *Bar Bar Magazine* (2024 BarBe Award) <https://bebarbar.com/2025-barbes/> Her work will appear in *Gramercy Review*, *The Queens Review*, and *Burningwood Literary Journal*. She is the child of immigrants from Beirut, Lebanon, and grew up in Queens, NY.

Donald Patten is an artist and cartoonist from Belfast, Maine. He creates oil paintings, illustrations, ceramics and graphic novels. His art has been exhibited in galleries throughout Maine. To view his online portfolio, visit @donald.patten on Instagram. He writes, "Almost overnight, COVID-19 had changed the way people interact with each other, and with our own bodies. We lived our lives in vulnerability during that historically significant time of disaster. The initial phases of the pandemic are behind us, but the virus remains and continues to be dangerous. The societal trauma this pandemic has caused will be remembered and felt by those who have lived through it for the foreseeable future. In the past, master painters would depict historically significant disasters that happened to them as a way to cope. Artists of the 19th century depicted hardships and trauma in the wake of the Industrial Revolution which began the formation of our modern world. As an artist learning the techniques of masters, I have the opportunity to create long-lasting visual information that depicts the trauma of this pandemic. Therefore, I have created a series of drawings that represent my experiences in modern COVID life by drawing inspiration from past masterpieces that depict the embodied experience of trauma."

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