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submit

Wooden Teeth is published twice each year and is open to all members of The George Washington University community. Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, alumni, and staff are encouraged to submit their poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and art. For additional information, please refer questions to:

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Submissions can be sent electronically to gwwoodenteeth@gmail.com. All submissions should be typed, with name, phone number, and email address. You may submit three literary works and three pieces of artwork each semester. No literary work will be returned, but art will be returned at the request of the artist. If art is not claimed after four semesters, it becomes the property of Wooden Teeth. For more information, including deadlines and selected pieces from this issue and others, please visit our website listed below:

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m.w. davis

W'ha'll Be King but Hugo?

The orphans of South Africa
Cried out for our SA race
And begged God for a Savior
To judly rule on student space.

Four textile museums... Or five!
Never can we have enough!
Not Prez of university,
Nor King could give a flying P'ck.

You asked but for a billion pounds
And, glad, we'll give a billion more
If you'll not take your satire back,
Back to England's lineup shore!

For whom will we bemoan the law
Or hated foreign anthems sing?
Our Exodus to West Virginia
Is naught without our well-loved King!

Even Morgan triumphed o'er
Our Prince, and his jokes weren't even funny,
And still the liberals and the gays
Flocked to what's-hers-name Susuni.

But we'll still build that golden statue—
Though far away from the hippo bronze
(That's more a legal precaution now...)
And stifle every student yawn

With obnoxious chanting of,
"O Lord, save our gracious King!"
And we'll still pledge our sort-of love
And kiss your cheezy high school rings!

Come through the Plaza, around him gather,
... And nothing rhymes with Hugo...
Come tanz and file with crown and textile,
For wha'll be King but Hugo?

Come through the Plaza, around him gather
Come Knappy, Konworski, yer welcome early
And crown... Shit, nothing rhymes with Hugo...
For wha'll be King but Hugo?

And we'll not serve this chick Susuni
And we'll not find a rhyme for Hugo;
Come Knappy, Konworski, you're welcome early
For wha'll be King but Hugo!
Pulp Fiction Love
I want to feel you like a paper cut
A sting I can't escape
Wince-worthy and omnipresent

I want bruises on my skin as proof
Handprints spelling out: I was here
Like smudged graphite on virgin pages

I want to be gasping for air
Drowning in waves of your scent
Praying that you'll hold me under

I want to taste your awful tastes
Your bitterness etched into my tongue
You can satisfy all of my midnight cravings

I want your hot digits branding me
Scratches down my sides—nail marks in my palms
Crucify me, baby

I want to wake up next to you
With a collar of red blossoms on my neck
Wildest of wildflowers

I want all the gory details
A love that could've been directed by Tarantino
Body count: two
I chipped your cup—
robbed the creamy edge
of a thin-stemmed cornflower
while you blended powder with milk and yolk.

Last night's fumbled stillness smoothes
our throats. You twist your hands in a way that reminds me
of the fragility of bone.

Now you flip me whiskey-colored
pancakes I'll smash with my fork.
You'll ask, Are you done?
I'll nod: thickened quiet silvers and folds.

eye kenneally Anbade #2

Your frown splits:
I could sew a life there.

I count the shells we collected last summer—
the mussels gape, open-jawed,
inked and pearling at the edges.

The way you curve
the small bittersweet clam to your cheek
reminds me of how I kiss your glasses to leave
you for morning.
Among the Horses

"So everything lets us down, including curiosity and honesty and what we love best. You, said the voice, but cheer up, it's fun in the end."
-Roberto Bolano, 2666

He just looked at me, she says. A dog who had just rolled in a flowerbed, with broken daisies and morning glory hanging out of his matted fur, as if he were a fucking delusional garden. I felt even uglier than him.

She will come to live with the groom soon, but for now the groom works at a riding school for room and board, a small stipend, and time to read. They lie now in the loft of the stable. The whinnying and the scuffle of restless hooves on the wood beneath the hay mask their voices. The horses haven't been turned to pasture.

She continues: I thought it was the flowers, because I had none. I knew I was more beautiful than a dirty dog, but I didn't feel like it.

(A horse kicks once with the onset of a stable-vice.)

So I stole seeds from a greenhouse and planted them in my mouth and nose and I lay with my eyes closed in the sun. I could feel the roots growing down my throat.

Did you feel beautiful?

No, she says, not every ugly girl blooms. The feeling was just suffocation.

(The stable door creaks open and the stablemaster is heard clicking his tongue below and banging tools, looking for a can of oil.)

I have to go, she says.

We'll be caught. The stablemaster is oiling the hinges.

I'll miss the bus if I stay any longer.

With a gesture that says he'll return shortly, he lifts a pitchfork and tosses hay down from the mow. The stablemaster looks up as hay falls about him and calls for the groom to come down. As the two men speak the girl leaves the loft by another ladder and makes her way back to California.

The groom spends the following weeks working to cure a Clydesdale of the stereotypies and kicking tic she developed from his neglect. His stipend has been docked and he gives most of what's left to the stable bar, saving only a little in a box buried in the hay for a place for himself and the girl from California. She calls to tell him of jobs she finds from the Internet and wild Oregon magazines. She dreams of waitressing at a sidewalk café in Portland or stocking shelves at a bookstore. He has difficulty explaining the distance he is from the city but promises to meet her in California and move to Portland.

The evenings find the groom reading in the bar while the horses are at pasture. After, he moves to a table
outside and tries to write. The stablemaster is often still there, for his pay includes meals after the kitchen is closed. The stablemaster tells him stories from Mexico. They talk even long after the restaurant closes and rather than thinking the stablemaster a distraction, the groom fills pages of notes. They often sleep in their chairs and wake with the horses.

I dreamt of a woman with no face, says the stablemaster early one morning.
The groom can't help smiling.
Look, the stablemaster tells him, I know a story that's just as sad. It's about an ex-priest living in Mexico.
So tell me.
He was working for the people of his village, trying to keep them off drugs and that sort of thing, you know? Telling them that God loves everyone equally.

Did the Church remove him?
Was he defrocked? No. Disillusioned, the stablemaster says with a pause long enough to roll a cigarette.
He met God.
And God was nothing special?

No, just listen, the stablemaster says. See, the priest was shot dead by a narco or something. You know how Peter's supposed to meet you at the gates? Well, that's the first sign something's wrong; the priest had a speech prepared and everything. But, one second he's pissing himself in front of the hopped-up narco, and the next he's standing in front of the pearly gates, wide open like anyone could walk right in, you know. So he goes in, and it's empty. No one's there. But he hears this voice.

The stablemaster rolls another cigarette.
He says: I don't remember the particulars of what the voice said. Friend of a friend and that sort of thing. Something about Hell being a made-up story to keep us from killing each other and fucking other people's wives. But we do that stuff anyway—like the priest especially needs to be told that—so God thinks the human experiment has failed. It doesn't really matter though, because he rewards our patience at life's suffering with solitary bliss in Heaven.

So Heaven is empty, the groom says.
It's filled with everyone who's ever lived.
But you're horribly alone.
The stablemaster smokes his cigarette. If I thought that in death I'd see the people I've met in life... Well, Hell is other people, you know?

As the sun begins to come over the horizon the stablemaster and the groom gaze together toward the pasture where dew had formed on the conifers overnight and turns now to mist, reflecting blood-red with the sunrise across the field to the east and the horses, formerly mounds laying amidst the red, rise like half-rage
golems from where they'd been left the night before and begin to neigh, muffled by the distance and damp air.

But anyway, the stablemaster says. Meanwhile the priest is dead in the hospital and by some medical miracle they revive him after several hours. The first thing he does is tell his mother what he heard, and you know what she does?

The stable master puts stress on mother. Tell his mother. The groom makes a noise.

She goes home and she hangs herself.

As the groom and the stable master make their way among the horses to the stable he tells the groom of a journal that pays local writers for stories. The groom calculates that four stories would pay for a bus ticket to visit the girl from California and maybe a few days at a cheap motel. That night he calls from the barn phone to tell her he's coming soon and sits in his small cabin by the pasture, avoiding the stablemaster, thinking for the first time that he might be a distraction.

Some time in the early morning the Clydesdale, as a result of its stable-vice, kicks open the door of its stall and that of another horse and they flee together from the stable. The groom has yet to write a word and goes out to find the mare at pasture with the Lipizzan colt, standing near a bed of tropaeolum by the wooden fence. The mare is cribbing. The groom hears her wheeze and sees her teeth gripped to the fence rail. He goes to her and tells her the story of the Mexican priest while tying tropaeolum to her mane. Gradually the mare stops sucking the wood and just as the groom finishes the tale of the expriest she lies in the grass. The groom turns away and goes to bed, having already forgotten in his sleepy haze every word he spoke to the Clydesdale.

As the sun rises the Lipizzan eats the flowers in the Clydesdale's mane, and when the sun is well over the horizon he kicks through the fence. When he wakes, the groom finds the Lipizzan gone from the pasture. The naked Clydesdale is lying by the break in the fence. She rises as the groom comes near and turns and gallops out of the pasture. The groom tells the stablemaster about the two escaped horses.

After some short time the girl from California stops answering calls from the stable bar. The box buried in the hay holds little more than it did when she left Oregon, even though the groom has finally begun writing. (It's been more difficult to save since the groom's pay was docked again for the missing horses.) But he can't finish a story, he tells the stablemaster. They begin to sit again at night and the groom listlessly takes notes, and sleeps only for a couple hours before dawn.

One night he dreams of the girl from California: Dawn is coming, she says. He rides the Clydesdale up the country's last dark hill and can see the coast below. It beats the girl from California as if she were a dog, and barks as though it were too. In the morning he tells the stablemaster the dream, but in his telling it is the mare who speaks.
Jimmy Shoes
played the blues
and all the birds fell down.

Then he took them,
one by one,
all throughout the town.

The people laughed
and cheered and cried
for all the things he'd done,

but Jimmy Shoes
just plays the blues,
and killing birds ain't fun.
Every time we went to buy a bottle
the clerk never said anything.
But that day I went
alone, she asked
How was your holiday
(hers was quiet because
all her regulars were
out of town)
but I assured the clerk I
was back. Then, I forgot
the tonic, and locked myself
out of the house, where I sat
on the porch drinking my gin
straight, waiting for you
but you had come home
while I was at the store
and wouldn't let me back in
I knew it was the wrong
time to be thinking of
myself but I was cold
and that was a year ago.
I had honestly
forgotten until
the moment I
tried the door handle,
I hit my head on the jamb and,
for some reason, you
were the first thing
that came to mind.
kendra poole

Talking about Herpes in the Supermarket

I call Ellen to panic. We whisper risk factors, transmissible, outbreak, open sore. (I am searching for an empty aisle, some privacy. Also, shopping for tonight’s dinner.)

He will cook me tilapia in a scallion butter sauce.

I will drink Riesling from a mason jar. I don’t want you to be worried, he’ll say. I will kiss between his shoulder blades. I will carry onion peels to the trash. I will crack open the kitchen window.

I am not mad at him. I am mad at this salad dressing, I am mad at everything in Aisle 5: fifteen types of Tabasco sauce, three kinds of Grey Poupon, cheap mayo, fancy mayo, mayo with olive oil, olive oil with vinegar, vinegar with red wine, everything mixed, bottled together, dirty with too many flavors. Bitter, bitter choices. How can I savor any if they tumble, vinaigrette after vinaigrette, vying to taste better than the last? How I wish to have been there for the first marriage of honey and mustard. Imagine: nothing would ever taste better. Imagine: I have discovered sweetness. Imagine: enough, this is enough.
[Brother]
The character he seeks acts a part and has a speech. The script stands illuminated over the stage and the actors heads glow from the light it bestows. As they hold hands I realize that the light doesn’t quite reach me and my costume soon blends into the scenery. Unsurprised, I leave.

[Ghost]
Every day drifting into the corners of my mind, reminding me why I never should have gotten high. You float away, frigid air takes the place you made. Shaking I find myself thinking “This is love” and I even hunger for your silence.

[Hardwired to Inspire]
Any role that he could play would fill my soul with a façade of glee and takes me to ecstasy. But then his soul slipped through the crack the last he made after his role sneaked out the door. The door slams and locks, I am left standing alone.

[Recycle]
Reuse and reduce so “Yes We Can” promise and prepare for a future that is brighter than today. But feelings of apathy rise and we forget about tomorrow. We sit holding ourselves, repeating words with blank eyes.

[Internship]
I partake in systems of control that configure my placement onto sheets of black-lined, white boxes on an LED screen. But the blinking white pointer doesn’t lead home. My heart rate quickens and blood rushes through my body to my hands. My hands swell and the keyboard drifts further away.

[What Happens To Me?]
The news reported that the youth of today is troubled by unlovedness. They said to look for it inside screens, malls, and hot-tubs. I grabbed a spell book and sought for a spell to bring the love back. I found a spell for sex and settled for that.

[Virginity]
Girly giggles fill the dorm beds as everyone hungers to be the same girl, to own her role. She stands in the center of the room perfect and nonexistent. As we crawl over one another to her, she vanishes, and we hit each other.

[One-Night Stand]
Our words seemed to fall from the sky onto our lips and fingertips, we chuckled softly as we lost track of where the words wrapped from. The sky lightened, words stopped, and we slept in a fake peace.

[Love Cake]
“Patty cake patty cake baker’s man, bake me a cake as fast as you can. Roll it, pat it, and mark it with a L. and bake it in the oven until you fall in love with me again.” The clapping dies and you stare at me.

[Down-Dog]
Relax your shoulders, stretch out your legs, grab onto your stomach. Hands placed in front of my heart, “Namaste” comes too quick. My eyes remain closed as the sound of feet scurrying hurts me. Then my heart beats calm, and I go on.
kendra poole   *Sirens at a Distance*

They are urbanized crickets chirping the city home. At night: the sidewalk is bleak orange. A smoker litters, stamps little wildfires underfoot.

A baby's stroller has a rogue wheel, sticky after so many rotations; the mother is impatient to move, and the baby wakes to answer the sirens:

"I exist, I exist, I exist."

tyler greeno   *The Fountain*

Observe, this fountain:

In this concrete desert its waters don't belong. But if this fountain were ever to run dry Passersby would look at it like Some kind of broken thing.
Hiding in broad daylight: the mantra of the misunderstood. This is a meta-life; the soul observes the body, the body interacts with the world, the world interacts with the body, but the body is misleading, the soul remains silent—until it must show itself, until it becomes so subverted that it has no other choice, lest it disappear. The soul cries out, "You're seeing me wrong, I am not this body." This is the violent collision between the physical and the spiritual. This is the painful acknowledgment that there is no obvious linear connection between the body and the soul, that there is often a discrepancy that neither the right, nor the law, nor compassion of the world will observe; the world observes and makes laws upon the empirical—a boy is born a boy, a girl is born a girl—thus subverting the invisible. But the invisible is crying out, "I'm here. I'm real." This is the plight of the soul: invisible, "unreal." This is the pain of the soul, how it is discredited because of a misleading body. This is not hiding in a closet, this is hiding before the world. This is to be invisible, Ellison's Invisible Man (the blackness lies within). This is how the world chooses not to see the real person, how they un-know the presence of the soul and its desires, how they hold contradiction impossible. This is how they alienate the contradiction, the man's love of man, the woman with the balls. This is how you disappear. Hiding in broad daylight: the mantra of the misunderstood, the burdened cry of nonexistence, of being truly unacknowledged, because the world chooses not to see. They who bear the weight of the world's discomposure, the misunderstood. Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem.

They are Sullivan Monk, the quiet soft-faced boy from an island by Annapolis, weirdo of his grade at St. Judas Catholic Boy's School. The one who played Radiohead during lessons in ear buds concealed by unruly long hair. The one who was threatened with expulsion if he did not cut his hair. The one who was heartbroken when his father held him down with one hand, wielded clippers in the other, and screamed, "This is for your own good." The one who wore a slip under his uniform. The one who refused to stand in the line for boys, who was thus beaten before an inch of his life by the nuns, sent to the altar for repentance, and who couldn't sit down properly for months thereafter. The boys in his grade laughed amongst themselves that he couldn't sit down for another reason.

After school he had to walk through downtown Annapolis to get to his home on the island. This was after his butt became less sore; he was walking one day and saw a theater company. He was prepared to walk right by it before a man in drag came hopping out of the front door laughing with a skinny male companion. Sullivan Monk stopped in his tracks and beheld the large woman before him. She was dressed in extravagant cloths of polka dotted pinks, red leathers, and striped linens all ripped and sewn together like a fashion collaboration between the homeless and chic. The woman stopped and smiled slyly at Sullivan, who struggled to ask through his amazement: "Who are you?" The woman responded: "Jaquenetta," he said, and pointed to the marquee. Love's Labor's Lost. From that point until graduation, Sullivan Monk went back to the theater and worked as an apprentice in the costume department. He fell in love with the disguises, he loved getting lost in the sea of fabric. And when Love was finally staged, he fell in love with the performance, less because of the deceit of the plot, the seeming straightforward, yet unsure heteronormity, but purely for the masquerade of it all.

Sullivan Monk, who left the island of his birth at age eighteen for DC, where he interned at the Shakespeare Theater.
Company and worked in a coffee shop in Adams Morgan. Who, during the Company's Fall 2008 season, auditioned to play Portia in The Merchant of Venice, and who was told thereafter by the casting board that he should stick to the costume department. "Sylvian Monk, who thought to himself as he left the audition room, "But this body is my costume. Let me use it."

Sylvian Monk, who, while wandering the Adams Morgan nightlife, bushopping and partying at houses whose owner was often unknown, met a man. His name was Haggard, and like Jaquenetta, he showed Sylvian a part of himself—a part of his identity which had been un-known through social conditioning—simply by looking at him, by facing him as a contradiction in the flesh. Haggard was a large man, tattoos, muscles, bald, and yet gentle, yet soft. When he got close enough to Sylvian's car, his voice hit the pit of his stomach like a smooth rock skipping across a pond. Sylvian could admit then: he wanted this big man to fuck him. He wanted to be underneath.

Sylvian Monk, whose heart was broken in DC, who realized that queer love comes with all the grief of the conventional, and more.

Sylvian Monk, who drove back to the isle of his birth and jumped from the cliff of his childhood, not to end it all, but to find something, in the cold, thrashing waves.

His father dragged him from the body of water panicking that his son had returned home only to die. But Sylvian awoke. "Sully," his father cried, taking Sylvian in sandy arms. "my son."

Sylvian was left in the house to recover. In his childhood bed he remembered thinking to himself when he jumped, "I always wanted to return to the body where I was born." While his parents were away, Sylvian went to their room. "Return to the body..." he said to himself as he ran his hand over his mother's makeup arrangement, not touching anything. He then took lipstick, applied it, went to the mirror and puckered his lips. He went back to the dresser, took mascara, went back to the mirror, went back to the dresser, earrings, mirror, he slowly felt as if he were coming into focus, he puckered and smiled, the blues accenting his eyes, his full red lips, his dark eyelashes, his flushed cheeks. Then he was. He knew not where it all came from, the slip in high school, the desire, the makeup, but it felt right, as if now he was all there. Funny, strange, sad even, that he had to dawn a mask to see himself clearly.

He wished to present himself to his family, a family who had never really set eyes on him. He waited on the living room couch as the real Sylvian Monk. When his parents finally came in, his mother broke down in tears. His father slapped his face, perhaps hoping that in the process, that deranged rubber mask of his would come flying off. "Get out," his father said, "You're no son of mine."

This is how the mind reasons against the contradiction, even when it is ignoring it—totally manifest—in the face.

Sylvian Monk, who wandered the winding Maryland roads thereafter, lost in place, lost in body. Who exchanged rides for favors in gas station bathrooms. Who lay in puddles of his own blood and semen behind locked gas station bathroom stalls smiling, wielding a razor, mouthing, "I don't care if it hurts, I want to have control, I want a perfect body, I want a perfect soul," who thought of his parents as he slid the razor across, "I want you to notice, when I'm not around, You're so fucking special," blood spurt, "So very special," blood spurt. Sylvian Monk, a creep. A weirdo.

"What the hell am I doing here, I don't belong here."

Sylvian Monk, who found his way back to DC, sat in a Burger King and penned a four page letter to his parents, sealed it in an envelope, and went into the Metro station. Who stood on the platform awaiting a train. Who was prepared to get rid of his body. Yet who was stopped in his attempt. An older man passed by him and stared at as he walked down the platform. The man wore a gray suit and white beard. Their eyes met. The man did not stop staring as he passed the boy. Sylvian did not know why the man was staring, but in that moment, as the train approached, he stepped back from the platform.

He walked about DC, searching for a mirror. There was something that he saw in Jaquenetta and Haggard, something that was feeding him, something that he didn't see in the reflection of a dark window. He wandered for days by himself, right by himself. He looked for himself in Prada-clad freshmen on GW's campus, he looked for himself in delirious hags with caked on makeup sleeping on cardboard in the middle of the day, he looked for himself in crowds, and he didn't look into mirrors when he washed his hands.

One night, he saw something uncanny. He was walking along Fourth Street at three in the morning by a chop shop and saw a large woman leaning over the tinted window of a BMW. The woman spoke something inaudible, but the car drove away and she stood back up smiling. She wore extravagant, frilly pink burlesque underwear with a corset. Sylvian saw her from across the street. She was more woman than woman could bear. She looked over at Sylvian and smiled at him. And a queer feeling of honor overcame him. It was the first time he felt acknowledged as anything more than his body. She could see right through him. She looked at him like a lost companion in love. He smiled back. She was a woman like him.

Sylvian Monk walked over to this person with more of a purpose than anyone she might have encountered that night, save an MPD officer. She asked him as he approached, "Looking for something, honey?" She asked this as if the answer were not obvious, to the boy at least.

"Yes," said Sylvian Monk.

The woman looked at him through the veil of night with heavy, knowledgeable eyes, masked by mascara and shadow to look naive and shallow.

"I'm, I'm looking for something I don't quite have."

"I can give you that."

"You can give me what I need?"

"And what do you need?"

"To be like you."

"Maybe you're more like me than you think."

"In spirit, maybe, but in body?"

"I can show you the way. If you know it's what you desire."

"I do desire."

"You know you can't turn back."

"I don't want to."

The woman smiled and led him by the hand to a small house three blocks away. This was a longer route than she used for customers. But both she and he knew that Sylvian was not a customer, but an applicant. She took
him to the living room of a woman who had aged gracefully into her sex. Sullivan thought, "This is the woman who can turn me into who I am."

Was this the world for the misunderstood? The underworld? The world of the night, not to be seen save for other souls in need of special care? It seemed to be the only accessible medium, and yet when Sullivan Monk thought about it, he realized it must be. If the government were to call him "male" and see him for only his body, then he would have to forsake the government, forsake society. He cut up his identification cards. He was not his father's son. He was not his government name. He was himself. And he called himself Sundra. This was her rebirth. The underworld, prostitution, so be it, it was his world.

Sullivan Monk, who went by Sundra, who was sent to a house of other Sundras who worked in an abandoned motel along MD-70 East in the deepest part of the night. It was a company where her desire wasn't stigmatized, where she was valued. Payments came in both dollars and black eyes, from her customers and her pimp, but she was still Sundra, and this made it all good.

She was Sullivan Monk, who went by Sundra, who one night met a pitiful woman named Joan, who welcomed this fragile woman into her world, and who was then caught off guard by just how distraught this woman was. The woman was a contradiction. She wanted a man, but she accepted a woman, and she broke down and cried for both reasons. Sundra comforted the fragile woman in the night until she fell asleep. When the woman was unconscious, Sundra went to the mirror and took a good, long look at herself. Then she left the room and the woman all alone. It was the first time Sundra had looked at a woman, a woman, and seen in her so much of the same personal grief, the grief of someone grappling with themselves. It was the first time as Sundra that she doubted Sundra. She looked in that mirror and wasn't sure what she saw.

Sullivan Monk, who was first a man, later a woman, or maybe she was always a woman, or maybe she had never really achieved that. Who first liked men, then lay with a woman, and then maybe she began to love the pitiful woman, Joan, the one beside her that night, and the one inside of her that night. A man-turned-woman who likes men—gay or straight? A woman-turned-who who likes men—straight? A man-turned-who who loved Joan? What is that? Who's to say? Who's to pin it down? Who is to grip that slippery slug called self-identity? Maybe she's just Sullivan Monk. Maybe she's just Sundra, no more, no less. It's the Sullivan Monks who take the plunge, who dare to grapple with it at all. It's the Sullivan Monks who are brave enough to. It's the Sullivan Monks who grieve because of it.

The misunderstood, misunderstood to themselves, misunderstood to the world. They are all Sullivan Monk. They are the Lamb of God, sacrificed for the species' misunderstanding.

_Agnus dei_
_Qui tollis peccata mundi_
_Dona eis requiem_
_Sanctuarum._
April

I carry his February flowers to the trash chute.
The drooping blossoms, dead ballerinas,
shed petals in my wake. I am now the wicked,
belated flower girl for each neighbor's private
processional. I watched them brown and now
I watch them trampled. I long to take to my knees
and gather each fallen, once-hopeful little promise,
but where could I put them without their stems?

I leave my apartment to claim the April morning.
Across the river grow all the green things, young
children shredding blades of grass, desecrating
all the little roots, plucking the fluffed dandelions
and scattering their seeds with a puff of breath, our
they go: little ghosts on the wind, bound to root
in a year's time. I sit with the late-bloomers,
green buds hugging yellow possibilities, hidden.
They are surprisingly friendly. Until next spring,
the dandelions of the shade have yet to sprout their wish.
contributor biographies

danielle blackmon tells you what she wants, what she really really wants.

ashley brooke's artwork can be found on page 36.

andesha crawley, having first sprung forth from his mother's womb, was prophesized to be a great man of letters, and he did not let down those illustrious figures who held such high opinion of him, even from before his conception.

m.w. davis swears and vows by moon and stars/all weeping with the willow/if he had twenty thousand lives,/ he'd die as af for hugo!

will ferntarramale is a senior studying english and creative writing.

hannah freedman has traveled the world over and decided that there is no place like her bed.

after having lead a fulfilled life as sergeant twerk and personal assistant to vigilante black dynamite, erin frith decided to time travel and redo her college years while gracing magazines such as this one with her magnificent work.

tyler greene's poem "the fountain" can be found on page 27.

tyler greene's poem "the fountain" can be found on page 27.

emily hirsch could survive with merely birkenstocks and chai.

contributor biographies

h.k. is a fan of reading, eating, and pretty much anything else that involves little to no physical effort.

jueh's drawings can be found on pages 18 and 22.

eve kenneally needs a job.

kevin maury is a senior in 2013, but not graduating until 2014. oops.

sarah perillo thinks washington, d.c. is a swell place and will miss it next year. her cat phoebe is totally indifferent.

kendra poole would like to go back in time and date billy the kid.

justin rory richie would like to thank the academy.

maxine soskas окончила университет и готова исследовать вселенную.

agata stish is a sophomore in the elliott school. one day, she will have many stories to tell—but for now, she has none. in the meantime, you can check out her artwork on the cover, and on page 29.

amaya stewart is looking forward to life as a post-grad.

katherine wzkreh is a senior working on photography project about the meat industry.