

# The Kumquat Challenge

This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
**Anna Harris,**  
student of Donna Rushing,  
and a contributor to the *Kumquat Challenge*  
in 2011 and 2012



**48 poems** by current and former WCC  
faculty, staff, and students celebrating  
National Poetry Month

**Spring 2013**

Whatcom Community College Library

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\* = Kumquat Challenge Winner

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place on earth.” She fantasizes about melding her interests in psychology and writing into a career writing meta-analyses. (p. 28)

**DIANA SWAN** is currently ranting and raving in Reyjkavik. (p. 35)

**MARLA TUSKI** began writing poetry ten years ago, the year her mother died and her first grandchild was born. She feels more fully engaged with the world when she writes. This last February she travelled with her daughter and nearly ten-year-old granddaughter to Naples, Pompeii, Amalfi, and Rome. (p. 23)

**CARLA JO TYE** started at WCC in the spring of 2011. She is going for a transfer degree and plans to attend WWU with the goal of getting a Master’s in TESOL. She discovered a love for writing here at WCC and will continue taking writing classes as much as possible. (p. 5)

**JEREMY VOIGT** teaches English, has three kids, writes, edits *Cab Literary Magazine*, and reads as much as possible. Currently his favorite poets to read are Linda Gregg, Robert Wrigley, Chris Dombrowski, Erin Beileu, Emily Dickinson, Stephen Dunn, Jane Kenyon, Sam Green, Spencer Reece, Katie Ford, ok, that’s enough. (p. 27)

**JAHCO WEND** is a WCC international student from China. (p. 31)

**HEATHER C. WILLIAMS** works in the WCC Library. Her favorite Japanese words and phrases are *komorebi* (light shining between tree leaves), *ata-takakunakatta* (“It wasn’t warm”), and *tonari no kyaku wa yoku kaki kuu kyaku da* (“The guest next door is a guest who gobbles down persimmons”). (p. 12)

ing the Burlington area noted the trumpeter swans. There is no better herald to springtime! (p. 10)

**YASSER NAZARI** is an ambitious writer, writing everything from music to poetry. He hails from the East and has lived all over the world: from Pakistan to Germany, to several states in the U. S. His work is often infused with powerful emotions and archaism, which reflects his interest in all things past. (pp. 14, 32)

**CORTNEY NUZUM** is a single mother. She aspires to be one of the next great poets. She enjoys reading and being proactive in her son's life. She loves to write subliminal poems that have more than one meaning. She gets a lot of inspiration from her son and experiences she's had in her life. (p. 42)

**TIMOTHY PILGRIM**, associate professor of journalism at WWU, is a Pacific Northwest poet with more than 160 published poems. He has taken dancing classes at WCC—and can he dance. (p. 37)

**BETTY SCOTT** taught at WCC from 1993 to 2006. In 2012, she was a presenter at the Chuckanut Writers Conference, a judge for the Sue Boynton poetry contest, and an award winner at World Poetry Festival International of Richmond, Canada. Her poetry explores the healing energy in the sounds of words and silence. (p. 3)

**SALLY SHEEDY** is the systems librarian at WCC, collects stuff, plays the fiddle, sings, contra dances, and is the mother of twins, now in college. (p. 34)

**EVAN SONG** is a current WCC student. (p. 24)

**TIFFANY ST. CLAIRE** graduated from Whatcom in 2011 and recently finished her B. A. in English at UW. Deep down she hopes her poetry will be up to par with Louise Erdrich, Diane Million and Sherman Alexie; and to be another voice that helps those who are quiet feel they are not alone. (pp. 15, 25)

**SHELLY STEVENS** is a current student at WCC working on her transfer degree. She moved to Bellingham seven years ago because, as she says, "It's the most beautiful place on earth." She fantasizes about melding her interests in psychology and writing into a career writing meta-analyses. (p. 5)

**JESSY STEWART** is at WCC working on her transfer degree. She moved to Bellingham seven years ago because, as she says, "It's the most beautiful

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**LINDA LAMBERT's** favorite part of her job as WCC Library director is meeting the annual Kumquat Challenge. This year, having taking Laura Kalpakian's 3-quarter "Memory Into Memoir" class through WWU extension, she became intrigued with G. R. Anderson, the great-grandfather whose main reputation was as a cranky patriot. She used the twin techniques of poetic license and library research to make her poem. (p. 39)

**DAVID M. LAWS** is a graduate of WCC and WWU, with a degree in English. His poetry book *Natural History* (2005, West Wind Press) is available at Village Books. He lives in Bellingham with his wife Judith and Possum, the Gorgeous Little Girl Terrier. (p. 36)

**JOHANNES MALEBANA** is a Business Management student from Johannesburg, South Africa. He is the Co-Public Relations Officer of the Ethnic Student Association on campus and has been in the United States for over nine months through the Northwest Community College Initiative Program of the U. S. Department of State. (p. 16)

**KAYLA MANTHA-RENSI** began her writing career in the fourth grade with a short story dedicated to the Tularcitos Elementary janitor. Since then, it has been virtually impossible to keep her from writing anything. She is currently a student at WCC. (p. 20)

**ANDREW SHATTUCK MCBRIDE** has work published or forthcoming in *Platte Valley Review*, *Magnapoets*, *Caesura*, *Perfume River Poetry Review*, *Raven Chronicles*, *American Society: What Poets See*, *Whatcom Writes!*, *The Bellingham Herald*, and *Clover*, *A Literary Rag*. His poem "Forgetfulness" won a merit award in the 2013 Sue C. Boynton Poetry Contest. (p. 9)

**JON MCCONNEL** is a Reference/Instruction Librarian at WCC. He isn't much a fan of poetry, but loves Google Books. Inspired by <http://pentametron.com>, he thought he'd try to submit a poem that he didn't have to write, just assemble. It almost worked. (p. 4)

**WENDY MCLEOD** is a clerk for the Whatcom County Library System and a 1995 WCC graduate. In 2012, she won a Sue C. Boynton Merit Award for her poem Tennant Lake Park Rules. She is an active member of the Friends of the Ferndale Library as coordinator for their Annual Ferndale Poetry Festival. (p. 13)

**JIM MILSTEAD** was employed at UC Berkeley as a staff research associate in the Entomology Dept in his past life. Now he belongs to Independent Writers' Studio, the Senior Center Personal writers and memoir groups, Chuckanut Sandstone Writers Theater and the Village Books Poetry group. On Fridays he demonstrates for peace. (p. 6)

**MARY MUELLER** is a retired special education teacher and an occasional WCC student. She had just driven a friend to Swedish Hospital and in pass-

James enjoys drawing, writing, and skateboarding in his spare time. (p. 31)

**DOUGLAS HAMILTON** is a full-time employee and splits time between the Registration and Financial Aid Office. He graduated from WCC in 2006 with an AAS. After coming back from Iraq, he then graduated from Eastern Washington University with a Bachelors in Geography. (p. 8)

**JOHN HANSEN** is known for his flair for floral arrangements, displayed at many campus events. He has a degree in display design from Spokane Falls Community College, and is on the custodial staff at WCC. (p. 8)

**BEN HILL** is a student at WCC. He was a paratrooper, then an exterminator before deciding to go to school. He likes to workout, eat healthy, skateboard, play guitar, and listen to dreams. He has no time for nonsense, but you shouldn't be scared of him. He's a nice guy. (p. 5)

**LEAH HILL** is a 21-year-old hopeful math major from the east coast who now calls Bellingham home. She enjoys spending time with her fat cat Thorin, collecting cool rocks, and playing guitar loudly at odd hours. (p. 37)

**SARAH LORELLE HODGE** believes that "everybody is inspired in some way or another. ... Inspiration does not always come immediately, sometimes it takes time, or shows up when it is least expected. Either the writer has experienced it, or someone else has. Someone can relate to the subject. That is the beauty of creative writing." (p. 30)

**KAREN HOLLINGSWORTH** currently works at Bellingham Cold Storage as the Education and Safety Trainer coordinator. Karen completed her bachelor's degree at WWU and continues to be a lifelong learner at WCC. She lives in Bellingham with a wonderful husband and family, who are all tried and true loves. (p. 13)

**JULIE HORST** moved from Bellingham to San Francisco which has approximately 10 times the number of residents, and, to the best of her knowledge, zero cows. While she is thrilled to be employed in the library of the U. S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, she occasionally misses the cow smell she was accustomed to whiffing when in the vicinity of WCC. (p. 33)

**DANIEL JACOX** is a recent graduate of WCC with an Associate Transfer degree. Born and raised in Nanaimo, BC he first moved to Whatcom County on 03/03/2003 joining his mother, brother, and two sisters. He currently works as a custodian and is a member of the equipment maintenance personnel for Academic Custodial Services at WWU. (p. 26)

**SAM JAMES** is a current WCC student. (p. 18)

**KATRINA KAPPELE** graduated from Whatcom in 2012 after a highly enjoyable educational experience in which her jobs as Horizon Editor and Parking monitor allowed and encouraged learning outside the classroom. The harp-sichord is her favorite instrument. (p. 36)



## Introduction

In this seventh consecutive year of the Kumquat Challenge in celebration of National Poetry Month, the library marketing committee continues to be amazed at the many ways our current and former faculty, staff, and students draw poetic inspiration from ten words. This year, we are proud to present a boisterous blend of new names and previous participants.

Once again, library staff members offered words to the marketing committee (Linda Lambert, Sally Sheedy, Ara Taylor, and myself), who chose the final list:

**burn chime cotton drift flight  
kind moment offer signal volume**

The varied use of *chime* particularly speaks volumes of our contributors' creativity. Not only are these pages filled with an assortment of bells, cell phones, and chimes of the wind variety, but we also find that fire chimes as it burns, sunlight chimes on the water, and even cacti and ladles can sound those scintillating signals.

Before you dive in, let's take a moment to acknowledge the kind folk who make Kumquat possible:

Our very own marketing committee, those organizing, book-making, free-photo-finding, cookie-baking gals of great gumption;

Our judges, upon whom lies the burden of choosing a winner from among these very different poems: Mary Hammerbeck, English Faculty; Johnny Hu, Math Faculty; Mike Singletary, Registrar; and Dr. Ron Leatherbarrow, Vice-President for Instruction, who also stepped up to speak at our event;

Musical sensations Earl Bower and Molly Crocker; and Rosemary Sterling and the WCC copy center staff, who faithfully print dozens of copies of our book every year.

Now, it's time to start our journey, and drift through cottony clouds in a poetic flight of fancy...

*Heather C. Williams*

## Untitled

by Patric Ethier

I offer you a picture of this moment  
In black and white symbols,  
A comforting combination of words in flight,  
To burn an image in your brain,  
Sweet and soft as cotton candy.  
Take a slow, deep breath, and clear your mind.  
Listen to the silence, the absence of volume, in quiet reflection.  
Effortlessly drift without feelings or beliefs, judgment or control.  
Feel the rhythmic pulse of your heart.  
Hear the distinctive tone and timber of your spirit,  
A flawless, pitch-perfect chime in harmony with the world.  
Your peaceful, kind essence is a beacon,  
A signal to the universe that you exist.  
Let your diamond shine.



## Contributors

**DENNIS BARNES**, a graduate of WWU, “discovered the joy of writing poetry and prose while studying at WCC and later getting a degree in writing from Fairhaven College.” (p. 7)

**SCOTT BLUME** is a reference librarian and teaches English as a Second Language. Tambien, está estudiando el español en educación comunidad. (p. 38)

**COURTENAY CHADWELL-GATZ** wrote “Embar Glowing, Fading” about her 99-year-old mother. She is currently ESLA professor and chair of the World Languages Department at WCC. Before coming here, she lived and taught in Bavaria, Micronesia, and California. Her mother has instilled in her a deep commitment to social justice. (p. 35)

**BENJAMIN Z. CHAPMAN** was born in Port Angeles. After completing high school he moved to Bellingham. He has been a writer ever since the second grade when he was part of the young writers’ conference. He is enrolled in the Computer Information Systems program but still finds time to write. (p. 38)

**LINDA COMPTON-SMITH** loves her job serving students at the WCC Library. She has been influenced by them in so many positive ways, and dedicates this poem to all the students she has been fortunate to befriend throughout the years. (p. 19)

**LINDA CONROY** is a community education student and an observer of people and things. (p. 29)

**DOUG DIENER** is a former WCC student who has lived in Bellingham since 1971. A retired letter carrier, he is a veteran both of Vietnam and 40 years of marriage. Doug enjoys walking, hiking, biking, kayaking, happy hours and playing around with words—all in moderation, of course. (p. 11)

**DARCIE DONAGAN**, adjunct faculty in Early Childhood Ed & Parent Ed since 1995, loves to write professionally and for fun and has been writing poems since a teen. (p. 7)

**PATRIC ETHIER** is a current WCC student. (p. 2)

**SHARON EVANS** is a volunteer tutor with Whatcom Literacy Council. She enjoys time spent with students in Donna Collier’s WCC ABE Math classes. Volunteering provides challenging opportunity to put into practice lessons Sharon has learned from her mother as reflected in her poem...kindness, charity, do your best, and keep dear ones close. (p. 30)

**JAMES GRIFFIN** was born and raised in Portland. He now lives in Bellingham, WA and attends WCC, also teaching in the ESL department there. James is pursuing his degree in English, with a focus on creative writing.

### The Last Moments

by Cortney Nuzum

Have you ever taken a moment to watch the  
ebb of the tide first thing in the morning?

In the fall you can see the  
cotton drifting and gliding into a  
near distant past time.

People are like this.

They offer you a kind of hope that makes you  
burn with passion, show you a sense of being, then  
they leave

and take flight; whether it be a good or bad  
reason, they leave.

The signal changes from green to red, the volume  
on the radio is up; when suddenly you hear  
the chime of bells and sirens  
then you realize that

all is still

and for just a second you breath and take it all  
in to realize that you were never  
there to begin with.



### Roots and Seeds

by Betty Scott

I have come to learn of moments that return  
just as:

after a fight	reason	returns	to roost
after fires burn	ashes	drift	to earth
after bells chime	silence	vibrates	in kind
after flight	geese	nest	with their young
after cotton's picked	yarn	blankets	us with warmth
after harvest	pages from trees	rustle	in volumes on shelves

just as:  
offerings from blossoms to kumquats to us become sweet marmalade

I have come to learn the signals:

how	cell roots	and seeds grow	to connect	and	interweave
how	cellular	impulses	inward and out	pulse	and repeat

how the micro and infinite intertwine and center for nourishment

I have come to learn of eventualities:

of death as a becoming and yet

I have come to pray:

you and I—surviving beings—will resolve the us of us.

## THEFT; or, The Bard and I

by Jon McConnel

1. If by strong hand you offer to break in,
2. Would make a volume of enticing lines.
3. Attending but the signal to begin--
4. Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime.
  
5. *Such things to find! And guesses at their worth:*
6. Fine *cotton*, Turkey cushions, boss'd with pearl.
7. Then, in a moment, fortune shall cull forth
8. *The dearest treasures hidden 'midst the swirl.*
  
9. The lights burn blue.--It is now dead midnight
10. *And time to bolt; the watcher looks askance.*
11. With all the cunning manner of our flight
12. *We'll not be seen; this is our only chance.*
  
13. *And fortune's smile as quick to turn to frown*
14. As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift.
15. *Escape and flight? Ends crashing to the ground*
16. With heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's mirth.
  
17. Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
18. Are naught but traps to snare a laggard mind.

### Sources

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1. *The Comedy of Errors*. Act III, Scene 1.
2. *Henry VI, Part 1*. Act V, Scene 5.
3. *King Richard II*. Act I, Scene 3.
4. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*. Act I, Scene 1.
5. author
6. *The Taming of the Shrew*. Act II, Scene 1. Edited by author ('linen' replaced with 'cotton')
7. *The Life and Death of King John*. Act II, Scene 1.
8. author
9. *King Richard III*. Act V, Scene 3.
10. author
11. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Act II, Scene 4.
12. author
13. author
14. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Act II, Scene 6.
15. author
16. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Act I, Scene 1.
17. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Act III, Scene 1.
18. author

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strong, tough and responsible.  
Over time the demands of my trade and the tools that I used—knives, anvils and fire—had hardened me. My ways of fathering proved to be implements of harshness, obscuring the love I had as a parent.

Reuben Wayne, wanting flight from the family, but reluctant to serve as a soldier, was assigned to chauffeur in World War I. He did not equal the stature of his noble namesake, save only in his version of madness: pouring whisky down his throat. William/Bill/my Willy drifted south to Los Angeles, coming back only once for his mother's funeral. My sons were lost to me, my wife was dead. How could I face forward?

Blind now in my old age,  
diminished in limb,  
I send my new son-in-law\*  
to walk the streets on all holidays.  
Are the flags flying over every business?  
Is the courthouse closed in recognition?  
Are my countrymen remembering their fallen?  
I am perceived as demanding,  
I am perceived as irascible.  
but certain qualities are  
stamped on my soul, love  
embedded in my stride, patriotism  
marked on my twice-wounded body, sacrifice  
etched on my being, persistence.

I give these words to you: face forward.

\* the author's father, Les Quinby

Source Material: *Memorial and Biographical History of the Counties of Fresno Tulare and Kern, California*: Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1892, p. 799 transcribed by Beverly Green

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*(Continued from page 39)*

in the only Illinois town named after Lincoln.  
This was the way I'd honor my father  
the way I'd honor my president,  
the way I'd face forward.

Taking what I learned of business,  
I moved to Topeka, worked with my father  
as tanner/harness maker/seller of leather goods.  
A charter member of the Lincoln Post of the  
Grand Army of the Republic,  
I held all the offices.

Then, Libby, the grand niece  
of the famous Revolutionary general,  
Mad Anthony Wayne,  
came into my life and we married.  
She brought me joy,  
she and the eight children  
who called me "Papa" and  
the two who died,  
left behind in Kansas before  
they were able to offer up  
those soft syllables.  
Their deaths, the death of my father,  
the beckoning of my brother,  
making harnesses, in Central California,  
urged us to keep going and face forward.

On the strength of my successful businesses  
—harness making, a blacksmith shop, a farm—  
and work with the Grand Army,  
the Republicans made me  
their candidate for County Clerk,  
but the volume of votes went to my opponent.  
We could not overcome the Democrats.  
I lost the election, our farmhouse burned down,  
and still we faced forward.

I relied on Libby—wise, kind, and patient—  
to teach our daughters.  
They grew up strong, independent, educated.  
Annie, a nurse on the front lines in World War I,  
Louie, a public school nurse and hospital administrator,  
Jessie, a physical education and health teacher,  
Ria, an interior decorator, and Cre and Paralee mothers.

I wanted my sons to be

## **No Time** *by Ben Hill*

You should turn up the volume when you chime in  
and signal the burn you offer in kind  
because if you think for a moment  
I'm going to take flight to the cotton  
and drift back into nothing  
you're wrong.

## **Call Him "K"** *by Shelly Stevens*

Your love covered over me  
like cotton carelessly  
drifting from the cottonwood in May,  
  
momentarily comforting and kind of beautiful,  
not burning  
but lightly and without warning or signal  
  
you take flight.  
I try not to listen  
for your chime on my phone.  
  
I offer your Stieg Larsson volume  
in the free box on my corner.  
I think it was hers anyway.

## **Hope's Beginning** *by Carla Jo Tye*

The airy white cotton dress, a kind wedding offering,  
she burned in the moment of irrepressible rage.  
Ashy flakes took flight drifting upward,  
resentment attached to each one.

The tinkling sound of porch chimes grew in volume  
as breezes fanned the fire's flames.  
Those emancipating flames burned all of what had been,  
those sweet chimes signaled Hope's fresh beginning.

*(Continued on page 41)*

## **Captive Audience**

*by Jim Milstead*

Clutching a plastic bag of treasures, he now stands  
in place, bearing a rictus grin upon his face.

He waits for signal lights to change, the heavy  
traffic to subside. His thoughts begin to  
rearrange themselves. He planned to cross  
the busy thoroughfare in search of rest.

He hesitates.

An inner voice enters the dark hall, ascends the  
brightly lighted podium, rises to fever pitch,  
its volume too persistent to ignore. Perhaps  
it has convinced him to turn back, to face

the past, searching for some moment  
long forgotten, offering a final chance that

burning issues will resolve themselves,  
that unkind words may soon take flight,  
drifting away on cottony clouds of light.

Turning, he retraces steps that brought him  
here. He hears the chimes of hope ring in  
their brave new year.

He pauses once  
again. Old indecision settles in.

His rictus face still smiles  
amid the chaos

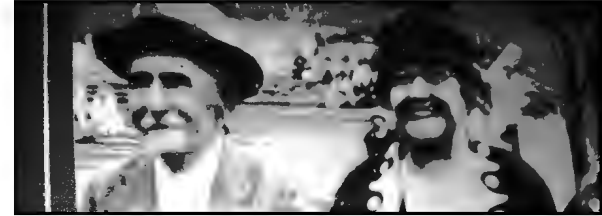
of fat chance,

thin air.

Once more  
He listens to the mantra that beguiles...

Is it too late to warn him to

BEWARE?



Family photo of George Reuben Anderson, (1847-1938), civil war veteran,  
and Elizabeth ("Libby") Kent Anderson, (1856-1933), circa 1920

## **Face Forward: A Prose Poem**

*by Linda Lambert*

In 1863, moments before I rode off  
with the Kansas Light Artillery,  
my father, a fierce Presbyterian of Welsh ancestry,  
held on to my arms at the elbows,  
admonishment in his voice and eyes.  
"You will be exhausted. You will be hungry.  
You may be wounded. You may feel hopeless.  
But hang onto your character,  
hang onto your soul,  
and always face forward."

His words gave me direction,  
but it was fear that drove my bravery,  
and soldier brothers who bound my wounds.  
At Johnsonville, with General Thomas,  
the confederates caught us off guard.  
The wharf became a mile-long sheet of flame,  
destroying four gunboats, 20 barges,  
and \$6 million worth of supplies.  
Near Nashville, in the Cotton Belt  
I was one of many boy soldiers,  
in our 50,000-man army,  
swarming over rebel trenches.  
I carried out my duties and I faced forward.

In '65 when the signal corpsmen  
at last waved the last flags of surrender,  
the battling contingents of north and south  
in an uneasy chime, I wept.  
I had been fighting for Lincoln,  
and he had died, unaware that the union,  
his union, our union, lived on.  
Mustered out in July, I went to Illinois  
to the only college named after Lincoln

*(Continued on page 40)*

**Burn**  
by Benjamin Z. Chapman

2nd Place Winner!  
Current Student Category

I sat and stared as my mother's house burned down  
my clothes singed and smelling of smoke.  
A drift in the wind blows the fire into the cotton fields.

I can hear the oven chime, letting my mother know dinner is ready  
in that moment I noticed her crying,  
just as the fire was sending smoke signals, I got the message.

The house was much more than a home  
the volume of memories would forever be lost  
and there was nothing I could offer to stem the pain.

It took two days to stop burning  
we checked to see if anything was left unscathed  
but not even a flightless bird would touch this ground.

We were without a home,  
the one my grandfather built  
the one I shall never inherit.

**Choose One**  
by Scott Blume

Mi maestra dice que eso *retirado* significa "retired."  
It's from *retirar* for "remove" or "withdraw."  
But we can say *jubilado*.

I know we're supposed to live large.  
If you go first, I'll be kind and offer to signal that you did.  
But it may be that some of us will leave a hole of lesser volume

Whether, in that moment, we punch our outline through the pavement,  
Or drift to chimes in flight through cottony clouds,  
Or simply microbially burn away.

**Burns**  
by Dennis Barnes

the coolest burns I never felt  
were the red hot silky cottony thoughts I wore  
while shunning the kindness of silent chimes  
making noisy volumes of forever moments  
invisibly closing the flighty offerings  
of drifting muted signals to the burns.



**Haiku on Fire**  
by Darcie Donegan

Burning cotton drifts  
in flight for just a moment  
Signally brightly

Kindly offering  
Volumes of flames to the night  
That chime with the stars

## **The Temple**

*by John Hansen*

I could hear the familiar signal, like an oriental chime.  
As the flight took off at 4:20 for Bangkok  
the moment seemed like forever.  
Once there, the air drifted with Sandlewood incense.  
A kind monk, with an orange cotton robe  
offered me tea.  
As the monks walked,  
I could smell more incense burning.  
As I followed them to the temple,  
the volume of the chanting became  
increasingly powerful.

## **Light in Darkness**

*by Douglas Hamilton*

The candle burns bright,  
Drifting up, an offer to the spirits.  
Its light is a signal of kind,  
Seeking the extent of its limits.

Cotton curtains sway in the breeze,  
A splash of shadow on this summer's eve.  
Players on the wall, dance to the music.  
The volume is mum, the scone rustic.  
This still moment in time,  
Was shattered with a chime.

The sound resonates through the room,  
The kind lighting dispels the weary gloom.

## **Vow**

*by Timothy Pilgrim*

Now that I cook for you,  
prepare risotto, salad, fish,  
offer this as candles burn,

later wash plates, bowls,  
bide time until you drift in,  
take turn, cotton towel, dry,

remove tearlike streaks, china,  
steamy, dripping, clean, let me  
embrace you—seize one moment

before mantel clock chime  
announces another hour gone—  
signal the kind of bond we share:

busy, dizzy lives, volumes  
of emptiness—finally, flight  
from spinning days, we arrive home,

together, droplets not wiped away—  
we must cling with fierceness  
to the lip of our tenuous dish.

## **dream/memory**

*by Leah Hill*

before the flight attendant can reach my seat to offer me a drink  
i drift off into burning fever dreams,  
the kind that clutch and won't release your frenzied busy brain.  
in that moment i am back in your arms,  
lying awake on our old cotton sheets, two bodies pressed close,  
we lower the volume of the world outside  
to hear the soft beat, soft chime of our hearts in time,  
a signal in the dark that we will never be alone:

t h u m p – t h u m p  
t h u m p – t h u m p

*1st Place Winner!  
Non-Student Category*

*1st Place Winner!  
Current Student Category*

### **Sonata in D Major, K. 119**

*by Katrina Kappeler*

The sultry air burns hot on fevered cheeks  
As slender fingers press down chestnut keys  
To raise erect in flight wood jacks to tease  
From blushing strings a moment's cry—fierce peaks  
Of sweet release! Again the plectrum seeks  
The offer of kind volume from the string,  
To take away his torment and the sting;  
Drifting to a bed of melodic teaks,  
Where nestled in his bed of felt, he dreams.  
A courtly dance, from two to two revolves  
At signals from the harpsichord's resolves,  
Swept up in changes swift and sure, it seems  
The chime of heels 'neath cotton hems absolves  
Through structure all carnal thoughts and schemes.

### **Wedding, Delayed**

*by David M. Laws*

The bride would rather have cotton than chiffon,  
and is obviously suffering from her high heels.  
She takes a moment to offer a few kind words  
to a child long past her nap time. The candles  
burn down to stubs, then die, filling the small chapel  
with sweet smoky hydrocarbons. The groom's parents  
are on a flight that has been delayed leaving Taos.  
Guests drift outside for a furtive smoke or a breath  
of fresh air. The volume of chatter grows and grows  
as friends and family continue to wait the signal  
that the ceremony will still be held. At last,  
the tardy duo appears. The preacher sounds  
a crackling electronic chime, friends and family  
rush back in. The happy couple are finally allowed  
to offer themselves, now and forever, to each other.

### **“No more hurting people. Peace.”**

*for Martin Richard*

*by Andrew Shattuck McBride*

A bomb blast. The moment passes into another bomb blast.  
The volume & incongruity of bomb blasts stuns. These are  
eye-popping: the cotton-flame billow of explosions, the char

& carnage, torn off limbs & bone shards, the blood & burn,  
blown-out store fronts & glass shards. Bodies: three dead, more  
than one hundred forty injured, many requiring amputation.

The dead include an eight-year-old, Martin Richard.  
A photo surfaces of him: he's holding a hand-lettered sign  
*No more hurting people. Peace.* The picture goes viral.

He is not an offer to the gods; he is not a sacrifice to the gods  
of anger, of rage, of war. His murder is no signal of righteous  
indignation. No simmering pressure cooker of a life, no rage,

no grievance justifies this attack, this killing, or any killing  
of innocents. No good can come from violence. I feared  
that the perpetrators were in full flight, were hiding among us.

Now: what of so much inaction, this national drift in the face  
of indiscriminate use of guns & bombs & continuing violence  
of all kinds? Chimes mark passing of the moments, hours, days,

time. Candles are lighted in memory of those murdered & those  
injured, so many grievously. There are now more names, more  
vigils, more names to be carved in granite, & more empty chairs.

Martin, a thoughtful, kind boy, with all of his life spread out  
before him—stolen in an instant. We owe Martin's memory  
better than this. We owe all children & each other a much better  
future. We can do better than this, must end the violence, *must*.

**Cygnus buccinator***by Mary Mueller*

this dapper drake  
    prefers his kind  
with food, in flight  
    and feather  
although he doesn't  
    rhyme or chime  
he trumpets  
    like no other  
this signal  
    offers welcome  
to the slightly smaller  
    of his breed  
yet if challenged  
    his wing-spread volume  
threats of danger  
    to impede  
his plumage  
    almost cotton-white  
believes his  
    black-billed burning  
he cries  
    she comes  
the way of all  
    cygnets in the yearning  
the moment comes....  
    adrift an autumn gale  
long necks outstretched  
    family in line  
led by  
    this fearless male

**Untitled***by Diana Swan*

The flight signal's volume is  
Drifting and burning.  
Kind of like the moment when  
Cotton is offered to a chime.  
Burn, burn, drift, drift.

**Embar Glowing, Fading***by Courtenay Chadwell-Gatz*

Kindness pulls her forward, onward  
Ever offering to comfort anyone in need  
of love  
Singing out to the world  
remembering all the lyrics to songs like  
The Tennessee Waltz  
Chiming in with sassy, risqué, provocative remarks  
to spark up any conversation  
with laughter  
The desire to help burns deep  
in her heart.  
And oh, does she love to tell stories  
in great volume  
about her grandmother, her father, her sisters,  
all passed, all past.  
Her memory drifts back 90 some years  
to those childhood days  
in the mountains of West Virginia  
And the next moment  
Her thoughts take flight to another time or person or place  
or song.  
Her mind turning steadily to cotton  
soft, like her silky white hair,  
with diminishing form and strength  
A signal of the consuming dementia  
that robs us of her clarity  
but cannot touch her bright soul.

## **The Hardware Store**

*by Sally Sheedy*

Descending a flight of stairs I set off a chime  
Signaling the clerks who appeared in record time  
Then kindly offered help in finding anything  
Did I need fans, nails, or a hammock swing?  
Maybe a paint brush, a wooden dowel or a clothes line

Cotton tablecloths and new burners for the range  
Pickle cutters, cake testers, garlic gizmos strange  
The volume of stuff encompassed everything  
Such as ducts and vents connected by sleeve or ring  
And caulk guns, cup hooks, also cots, and cures for mange

I didn't need augers, awnings, or a sewing awl  
Or a sledgehammer, wedge, a mallet or maul  
Not curtain rods, ladders, or reels of yarn and string  
But I remembered the fond hopes to which I cling  
And spent many long moments surveying it all

Up there in the hanging directional sign  
Was listed something surreally sublime  
That was quite beyond my imagining  
There among all the automotive things  
Displayed just beyond the plumb lines and twine

Indeed right there in the automotive section  
"Appearance chemicals." Yes here's my selection  
Makeup at the drugstore doesn't come close to thrift  
But I need the help -- one look and you'll catch my drift  
All for me, one for whom I have such affection



## **Curtains**

*by Doug Diener*

The sunset chimed upon the waters  
Like metallic gold taking flight,  
The clouds, your dress, crimson cotton  
Drifted close, pulled by the night.  
It seemed so kind at that moment,  
Tears offered me a signal clear,  
Yours not to burn, but instead to  
Mute the volume of my heart's fear.

## **Wasurenai (I Won't Forget)**

by Heather C. Williams

It is eight years ago, and I'm home from Japan.  
The SeaTac security man checks my passport,  
"How long were you there?" A bored tone.  
"A year," I answer.  
Eyes focus, spine straightens, and officially:  
"Welcome back to the United States."  
I eat pizza with no corn on it for the first time in forever.

My luggage is memory, a series of moments:

*Hanabi taikai*—a fireworks festival—colors  
burning in the black sky above Hojo Beach  
where we rescue a wandering French businessman.

Drifting alone in my studio apartment while dragging out  
my dying long-distance relationship. Steve wasn't worried when I climbed  
Mt. Fuji all night in a typhoon—should have let it drown then and there.

A flight in a Japan Ground Self-Defense Force helicopter,  
the thumping of the blades muffled by my ear gear,  
I watch the rooftops of Tateyama turn to tiles below me.

Cranking up the volume with my teacher friends in a karaoke box.  
Sarah sings "Bridge Over Troubled Water," Eric and Erik perform "Yatta!,"  
I attempt Ayumi Hamasaki while Michael mimics Metallica.

The chime from my DoCoMo Winnie the Pooh cell phone when Dad  
writes at 2 a.m. "I heard there was an earthquake in Japan, are you okay?"  
and I roll over, groaning, resuming my rest.

A *suzumebachi* signaling its sinister presence  
with its bulbous body buzzing in through our office window.  
Heart hammering at this hell-wasp, I run across the room.

The worry-lined face of co-worker Matsumoto-sensei, a widower raising  
two daughters who says of me "Hezaa is *kind*," with wonder,  
as though kindness is a new thing in his world.

Two things that I later wear at my wedding: the cotton and silk  
turquoise *kimono*, a gift from Ishii-san, and the *uchikake*, a bridal robe

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 32)

Allow, with love, art kiss you kind,  
With cotton-soft lips and eyes divine!  
Let it chime music and bring the deaf to harmony!—  
And dare not refuse art's offered matrimony.

There comes, in that moment, God's greatest patrimony.  
There comes, in that moment, God's greatest volume of beauty...



## **Suspense**

by Julie Horst

I accepted the kind offer without a moment's hesitation,  
packed clothes of cotton and linen,  
and boarded at the chime of the next departing flight.  
Our love burned volumes back then, but since...we had drifted.

Was  
this  
offer a  
signal?



## **There is No More Shakespeare**

*by Yasser Nazari*

### **I**

Oft have I mused Book's breadth of gold,  
T' find learned musers hoarding mold!—  
Hoarding a single, or a few, or many dusty gems,  
Charitied by a Bard who's long seen his days.

And of hoarders spews praise in deference  
For a single, or a few, or many jewels in chest,  
Charitied by a Bard who's deemed Book's breast,  
Whilst other layéd coins in jest are spoken of.

And of the trove they deny creation—  
Thither the blacksmith's toiling hammer's  
Muffled with obsession, and applause, for a few gems  
Charitied by a Bard who's long seen his days.

Curséd demons, woe to those who  
In unrequited fealty to Book's religion hold.  
Prithee! relinquish, ye, thy obsessive omen  
An' to creation's art behold.

Now comes the time of the blacksmith.  
Let him weld and mold gold  
And to creation's art behold.

### **II**

Signal, with haste, the coming of the creator's age!  
Let every scripture and art drift in flight,  
*Burn* with ardor in the eyes of every page!  
And blind with beauty those with sight!

*(Continued from page 12)*

bought in Tokyo on a double birthday trip with my friend Melissa.

Last, an offer from Martine, my Tunisian friend, who loves diving:

Out of my comfort zone and into a wet suit,  
I snorkel with her in the cold, deep green bay  
and reach out my hand, everything in slow motion  
not quite touching the brown leaf in front of me  
clearer than reality, dappled in sunlight  
and floating  
end over end.

## **Forgiveness**

*by Karen Hollingsworth*

When hurt is felt, do you take flight?  
A new friend offers a kind moment  
Do you except this signal as you might?  
It speaks volumes and is well meant

Instead you feel a burning anger  
You must let go, set your soul adrift,  
But your heart chimes to forget her  
While the dry cotton lips part with a lift

To say "I forgive"

## **So, Mom...**

*by Wendy McLeod*

They always chime in  
at the last moment,  
as though getting the drift  
of their Halloween flight gear  
or Vogue prom dress was an offer  
to signal Nobel of crafty flair.  
Still, it needs more  
volume and less cotton  
as if velvet and satin  
made in-kind payment  
for glue gun burned fingers  
more relieving.

*(Continued on page 33)*

**Law***by Yasser Nazari*

Soft, I pray you, 'fore in thy head festers false lunacy—  
 What wealth hath brought to you knowledge  
 That thou start from thy scope?  
 Need you a saint t' receive what power crafted thine greedy eyes?

Aye, those eyes who've on shore of a thousand ships  
 Offered mart with cotton and ale;  
 Those eyes who've taken kindred souls of frail,  
 Eyéd them beneath secular scale

Of secular philosophy and science,  
 Forsooth, comes thy issue of arrogance.  
 Thence bursts forth immorality, hubris.  
 Learn'd scholars then, mock the Consequence

They cry, "Find ye a God, then converse with me.  
 We've theories sans flaw, scales t' measure awe.  
 Burn we now lest you jest, blind we now should you see.  
 Nay, tragically, believe you in nothing pathetically."

Alas! What contempt! Have they not heard the chime of reason?  
 Wherefore doth the orb turn, tilt t' signal season,  
 Drift along the sun, with kind warmth, appeasement?  
 Tell me wherefore, not the "is" of moment, I beseech you.

Takes the open mind of man to believe  
 In that which he cannot see.  
 Takes the closéd mind of man to decree  
 Of secular's lack of divinity.

Takes the open mind of man to hear  
 That which he cannot perceive.  
 Takes the closéd mind of man to fear  
 That which he may subtly leave.

For the wings of birds came from ancestor, yes,

*(Continued on page 15)***Get Up***by Jahco Wend*

When Chime starts to be noise,  
 This is a signal for getting up.  
 At this moment, the evil offers to stay in bed,  
 But the good burns the evil.  
 I am at sea, standing between laziness and effort.  
 The evil is cotton to me,  
 And it seems to be kind,  
 But the good suddenly raises his volume:  
 "Get up!"  
 I don't drift to the side of the evil,  
 But I get up to catch my dream  
 In flight.

**Dependency***by James Griffin*

A moment before the cotton starts to burn and bite, the volume elevates,  
 providing a signal for the sick to take flight.

Ladles let out intemperate chimes, the rocky waters start to become rougher  
 as if they have something to reveal, but reality says they have nothing  
 left to offer.

Stop to consider what is really leading, whether there is a true destination,  
 and what will be left bleeding. Is this really a reason to desert, or  
 cause for walking all night?

What once was an incredible hype with the most benevolent of intentions is  
 now weakened, and begins to drift. Wagons once united begin to  
 depart, but pay no mind because the ailing ladle was never kind.

## Final Heartbreak

by Sarah Lorelle Hodge

Flames burn slowly and fiercely in this moment  
Take flight my heart somewhere far away and kind  
Offer me a safe haven from my sorrow  
Drift me down the peaceful river where the cotton grows  
Chime bells to signal a new day, with a volume that can be heard around  
the world.  
This must be my final heartbreak.

## Mom's Lessons of Life

by Sharon Evans

Lying quietly, drifting at the edge of consciousness.  
Responding with the slightest twitch of 'brow.  
Holding your hand; warm, soft, calm.  
A warmth hovers; engulfing, kind.

A moment! Eyes wide open!  
Alas. A *brief* moment  
as snowflakes on my tongue.  
A signal?  
Did you hear a chime?  
Did you see the light?  
Are you being called home  
for your gossamer wings?  
Your beautiful soul takes flight.

I watch.  
As heartbeats fade  
my heart burns a searing hole;  
Sob's volume muffled by cotton bedding.  
This just cannot be so!

"Offer kindness and love."  
"Do your best."  
"Keep brother and sisters near in your life."  
These lessons I cherish as  
You live on in my heart.

I will miss you, Mom.

(Continued from page 14)

As did flight.  
But the soul of humanity from volumes did come, yes,  
Volumes of might.

So let them clutch their theories beneath a station'ry sun!  
I will remain,  
Done by law, and by law undone.



## Why We Need Grammar

by Tiffany St. Claire

It is the kind of moment when you realize language needs grammar because without grammar your thoughts do not offer any context or signal it just sends you to drift and no one knows what you might be saying if you are angry tired happy sad whatever it's like a song that never ends which you desperately search for the volume button or the matches to burn the sheet of paper because you regret what you had written when you burned with emotion and took flight like a tiny piece of cotton on the wind waiting for the clock to chime that time has ceased and you can find your way back to solid ground to the rules which apply to everything because it makes us all safe and helps us to communicate effectively that is why we need grammar PERIOD.

## **The Song of Songs**

*by Johannes Malebana*

I beg of the gods to compose and send us a song

A song we can sing in all the languages known to man like a choir singing the redemption song in a monotone, so not to wake the many dreamers out of their sleep because the dreamers are shapers of the future; their hands assured that, they were rough

As rough as the tar road that divided houses and houses that were good enough to be called homes and as old as the trees of life with roots that were kept secret by the ground that did not even flinch when our knees came in contact with it

A song the mute can mumble. The deaf can slightly hear

A song that even Jimi Hendrix's guitars and the chime will forever and always echo in the hearts of the children of the night

The song of hope

Sung by poets and heard by believers in fate

Like the songs of Solomon that speak of the heavenly love that exists between two people, this song is a gun loaded with butterflies aimed at my gut

Even if the moon might drift, shift, or bounce off cliffs escaping from its element

The cotton in the pillow will one day sing you this song and tell you secrets from the night it stayed up and listened to sobs and absorbed tears of our forefathers

In those days, the streets were chambers, chambers of revolutionary hymns and remained foggy from the tear gas that was meant to choke the dream that Martin Luther King had

Like two menorah candelabras that burn on both sides of a door

Burning the midnight oil, awaiting the revolution that was spoken about in the two and a half centuries of slavery, this song will live to tell a tale of the untainted moments, the untraveled road

*(Continued on page 17)*

## **A Little Help from My Friends**

*by Linda Conroy*

Muse, imagination mine,  
bring me words that I might write.  
Words, tools of speaking,  
props for thought. Pearls  
sometimes coming slowly,  
sometimes tripping, singing here,  
come try me, be my vessel, enjoy  
the hidden senses I might bring.

Amid the lazy drift of cotton clouds we hardly notice,  
yet we notice, the light lift of smoky air  
rising from the harbor where we walk  
and stare and pause a moment in our stride,  
where out to sea the otters swim,  
or when they bask ashore  
then offer us their silky underside  
as they slide from log to bay.  
Hear the seagull squawk, response to sounds  
of such low volume we would miss them.  
But let's not miss their messages.  
The kind of dispatch, here now gone,  
which signals something barely felt,  
but means so much to otter and to bird  
that we must borrow from their strength  
as if to say my journey is like yours,  
my flight not so unlike. We're both unfolding,  
trying to soar and anxious to be heard.

This burning for precision leads me on to climb  
and chime that bell, the apex of poetic rhyme;  
to turn a phrase just to explain,  
to dash all doubt from what I mean,  
to hold the silence of the solace  
as words are set and caught to hang  
each on the other's arm to anchor meaning,  
joining now as comrades in this plan.



### **Ode to a Broken Heart**

*by Jessy Stewart*

Cold as a corpse and twice as sad,  
Lost in a sea of cotton sheets. At least nothing hurts once you're dead, there  
are no secrets left to keep.

There's a cold snow drift upon my soul, yet a burn pulsing through my veins.  
I need to turn life's volume low, and remember sun comes after rain.

I'm tired of lying on the ground.  
So I reach my knees to pray.  
The birds chime, but I don't make a sound. I just want to know I'll be okay.

I'm praying for a moment in time, Lord offer me a signal this won't last. An  
honest laugh or a smile that's kind, to prove this pain will pass.

Can broken wings still take flight?  
Can a broken heart still beat?  
Questions I clutch with all my might. Can broken lungs still breathe?

The only way I find I'm able to cope.  
Is talking to God, and finding hope.

*(Continued from page 16)*

So come forth kindly, take what you can get from this poem. This is  
what my pencil can afford to offer at the moment

Take my words and own them, like three three-year-olds in a park with  
four swings

Like a farmer's last born in an open field after a heavy rain with puddles  
scattered all over the place

Like the sound volume of the boom box in your chest, take control of it

Come take my hand and get lost in time with me

Tonight I'm not taking a flight, I am using my wings to take off, so take  
off with me and when the city sheriff comes looking for us,

Let him find us on our feet, toes deep in sand and our backbones  
standing their ground like pyramids

Not for the sake of it but,

For the same reason Malcolm X had his fist clutched high above his  
head and all the hippies raising two of their five fingers, signalling peace  
and shouting at the top of their lungs because they knew

They know that lungs could hold more than just air



**The Rain Set All Adrift**  
*by Sam James*

The rain comes down on the ground that I saw burn the night before  
It soaks through the black ash that covers the trees and coats the ground  
I stand there a long moment at the edge of the forest that for now is no more  
A hawk perched atop the ash-covered remains of what was once a mighty tree  
in this once great forest, takes flight  
I hear the chime of the temple bell telling one and all that for this day, it is time  
to come home  
As I wait yet a moment more, the sound of the chiming temple bells increases  
in volume and begins to ring in my ears  
I walk into the ashen remains of this once great forest and that is where I see it  
at the river edge  
Though a tree has fallen across it and so my ashes into it the river still flows  
fast and true  
At the river's edge under the side of that fallen tree there is a tiny shoot of  
green that survived the blaze  
The rain continues to come down harder still and the wind is picking up to  
push it sideways into the side of the fallen tree  
But that pouring rain that is soaking through the ash that covers the ground  
and my cotton yukata equally, chilling me to the bone is doing something more  
Deep channels are being made in the ash-covered ground by the wind and  
rain, washing it all into the river  
The ash is turning the water gray, and washing away from under the fallen tree  
revealing more shoots of green that survived the blaze  
The ash that covers and coats the remains of the once great forest is set adrift  
revealing the tiny shoots of green that are the signal of hope for the land  
I walk back to the temple where I know everyone will be waiting  
Waiting for me at the start of the path to the temple is a friend with the kind  
offer of an umbrella

*(Continued from page 26)*

in volume; both auditory and scale, it is not louder than a lone  
memory of silent serenity, nor is it larger in the mind than a single  
droplet of sweat from the summer's warm embrace.

**Not Another Elegy**  
*by Jeremy Voigt*

Can I say it again? My Mother's kind face  
is a desert wren in flight among the chime  
of cactus and pressured stone, its nest displaced  
by the wild dogs we heard on atavistic nights.  
She sips her gin and mineral water alone.

I pull the cotton burn of sweatshirt across  
the puncture spot of a recent head wound.  
Cleaning up after my kids I split a small bird  
tongue of flesh on the corner of a cabinet,  
the fontanelle, the crown, bleeding all over

the bathroom floor. Days later, each throb  
a signal from the pain-drift to turn down  
the volume of my life. Even now I want  
to write feather and not Mother—no monument  
or pine box yet nailed—but she is gone from me.

What can I offer such absence? A dead wren  
wrapped in my hands no longer drilling  
Vardaman-holes in what wood is between us.  
Forget me Mother, the cactus, this moment,  
carries no milk, I've no tool to measure this going.

**In the Eye,  
of the Storm**

by Daniel Jacox

This moment, a signal; a brief break from the chaotic haze.  
a distant light on the horizon offers a fiery flickering; a  
crestfallen gaze now feasts on the distant burning flame as if  
starved for days.

Hope ignited from darkness, a head lifts from its weathered beaten daze,  
a glimmer alone stokes the hearth; a kind embrace not felt in  
untold indistinguishable days and nights;  
suddenly the here and now is given distinction, juxtaposed with the  
persistent monotonous chopping of moonlit waves against the bow.

In a helpless melancholy, at the mercy of the deep that shifts from  
calm to ill; seesaw, pitch and yaw in the ebb and  
flow. The rocking babe oscillates blissful in billowed swell, the  
calming Metronomic motions made perpetual by the ever-present hand of  
the mother...the endless refrain of a near silent song lures the tamed  
deeper into the wild.

bobbing on the surface as a drifting  
tree branch, broken off in exile,  
soon too my thoughts become drift...

In times long passed,  
The whistling parry of a blade of grass amid the synchronized swinging  
of her brothers in arms;  
the inharmonic spectra of an aeolian chime rings in the doorway,  
orchestral sounds conducted by a formless maestro;  
a waltz of cotton clothing choreographed by moving air, dancing on a  
line to the symphony of the tempest;  
the cooling breeze served up by invisible fan-waving maidens sends a  
single translucent bead in flight;  
its path without choice, predetermined by greater forces, helplessly  
heading for its end.

Impossibly it slows to a stop, suspended in time, remnant memories of  
a simpler, safer time encapsulated in a salinated spherule....

...engulfed in this past occurrence, the crashing sound of surrounding  
swells from the deafening storm are dampened; though the sea is great

*(Continued on page 27)*

**Peace**

by Lynda Spaulding

I burn  
longing to escape the flight of my own thoughts  
to drift into one kind moment  
when the signal offers solace  
turning down the volume  
floating silently in cotton laced clouds  
listening to the soft chime of God's voice.



**Summer Song**

by Linda Compton-Smith

A song bird lingers for a moment next to the cotton sheets hanging on the line.  
He signals to the world, the end of the cool, summer rain before taking flight again.  
His cheerful announcement is answered by a friend.  
Soon, others of its kind chime in with joyful volume.  
The celebration continues as the clouds drift apart  
And the sun brightly burns through the opening in the sky.  
Nature's sweet offering of thanks for welcomed days from harsher seasons.  
The sheets will soon be dry, softer now that the gentle rain has refreshed us all.

## Untitled

by Kayla Mantha-Rensi

Arms spread wide,  
You looked like a great bird,  
An angel,  
That had died in weary flight.  
No graceful earthward drift,  
Not for you.  
Another hapless victim of gravity,  
You plummeted toward soggy, unforgiving ground.  
I found you twisted and broken  
In the mud,  
Where you lay at my feet  
Fading slowly,  
Shattered,  
Dead.

*In my dream, I lay on my back  
Watching the sinuous movements  
Of grass as it danced in the breeze  
While my wind chimes sang  
From their perch in the rafters.  
This dream is all  
My mind can offer,  
This small comfort of hissing grass  
And the mournful bell-like voices of chimes.  
I lost it so long ago,  
I wonder,  
How far have I come,  
How long has it been,  
Since I last saw this place?*

I almost couldn't bear to touch you,  
Your skin burned me so.  
Yet through my pain,  
I carried you to my home  
Where you lay  
In fitful sleep,  
Calling names half-remembered,  
I could have filled volumes  
Upon volumes with them.  
How long did you toss and turn  
While I nursed my wounds by the hearth?

*(Continued on page 21)*

## This One's for You, Sherman Alexie

by Tiffany St. Claire (Turtle Mtn. Chippewa)

This one's for you, Sherman Alexie,  
Voice among voices for the native communities,  
Let me offer you my thoughts,  
Which scatter like words written on cotton that burns near the fire,  
Conjuring up smoke like a signal,  
Taking flight like an Eagle—YES, I am Native! YES, I am a female!  
YES, I have drifted in and out of my  
native slumber—NOT DRUNK, but weary and uncertain of my native ways.

Hardly holding any memories in my Native mind of what my enrollment card  
claims I should have, claiming I'm a native of both America and Canada  
(yeah, right).

ONLY, can I chime in the stories of my brothers, my father and my  
grandparents.  
Does this mean I am not kind?  
At what moment does telling a story be deemed selling out on your  
nativeness?

I guess I have my own stories of the Rez. Getting drunk at 14 near St. John.  
Hearing the remarks, "Another St. Claire?" Being another number, statistic,  
along with other "native" women and another excuse hidden in the mind  
frame that "we asked for it," although English, French, Ojibwe no matter  
which language is NO.

I am not the stereotype native...I think?  
I do not look the part or speak in volumes of nativeness, I think? Or do I?  
But, I am Native.

Yet, I am, standing here in my Ugg boots, wearing European perfume and  
I am asking you, "I'm native, init?"\*

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\* "init" is slang that is frequently heard on Indigenous reservations, which means  
*right?* At least on the Turtle Mtn. Indian Reservation.



**Distant Place**

by Evan Song

The sky is chiming

The corner of the crowd

There are numerous high buildings

However, everywhere is burning

The distance of the smoke is like pieces of cotton

There was a time

We just hope we can escape from here

Looking for quiet and peaceful

The flight was postponed on account of confusing situation

I want to go drifting

I hold my offer

However the world has become complicated

Different kinds of people

At this moment

We send the same signal

People are volume in the street

Wished to all going well

Wishes for sunset still rise up

*(Continued from page 20)*

The yearning seemed a kind of fever,  
What do you remember  
Of the elusive dream world you roamed?

*I remember the feel of cold mud  
Sucking greedily  
At my spread eagled limbs  
Before my world went dark.  
But listen! The familiar sound of chimes,  
Calling me,  
Signaling me,  
Awake.  
Their voices swell in harmony  
To the tempo set  
By the fretting little clock.  
Have you ever known  
The wave of euphoria  
That recognition can bring?*

Above the world I drifted,  
Nebulous  
Part of every tree, every rock,  
Every molecule of air.  
No longer was I deaf and blind,  
All worldly buffers had been stripped away.  
Now I realize,  
I know you.  
Now I realize that, delirious,  
You were calling my name too  
In those days that you lay asleep.  
Why couldn't I hear you,  
Why is it only in this dream,  
That I can answer?

*The sound of my beloved chimes wrapped around me  
Like a soft cotton blanket,  
Muffling the harsh noises  
Of the outside world.*

*(Continued on page 22)*

*(Continued from page 21)*

*As I neared the door,  
I could feel the welcoming caress of the breeze.  
Now, I am certain, I have found it.  
But the world twists before your eyes,  
In panic, you cried out to me,  
I'm falling! Help me!  
Yet it is my own voice that I hear.  
The sound of it lingers for a moment after I wake,  
Mingling with the sound of hissing grass,  
And the murmuring of my chimes in the night wind.*



*2nd Place Winner!  
Non-Student Category*

### **Napoli Church**

*by Marla Tuski*

*(from a visit to Italy in February 2013)*

In the jewelry box church,  
marble coffins cradle holy bones,  
sculpted skulls whisper that you swim  
in the volume of lives come and gone,  
souls drift in the space opened by Gothic arches.

In gilded side chapels women in black,  
cotton scarves pulled over bent heads,  
kneel and pray their beads,  
ringed with stone angels and burning candles  
while the Virgin watches with kind eyes,

and Mary's son stretches arms along the crossbeam,  
blood streaming from pale brow,  
wounded side signaling divine solidarity,  
impaled hands offering  
comfort from the shudder of tolling bells.

Outside, graffiti scrambles across alley walls,  
stone paths rutted by Roman wheels stretch to the future  
below underclothes fluttering from balconies.  
Sometimes in the piazza, a chime rings out,  
pigeons take flight, an infant is named.

Still, inside, the battered Christ  
nailed to the wooden cross  
waits in His unmoving moment,  
eyes closed, head bowed,  
motionless blood in a continual flow.