

The River

Issue One
Winter 2017/18



Welcome to the first issue of **The River Magazine**. Inside, you will see a diversity of artwork, photography, poetry, and prose made by people who share the common experience of living on a low income or living in poverty in Peterborough.

The aim of The River Magazine is to publish and celebrate the people in Peterborough who have limited opportunity to express their opinions, ideas and creativity in this format. While there are many people speaking about poverty and marginalization in our community, there are few places where this community gets to speak for itself. This magazine is a step towards giving people a voice, who are denied that voice because they lack the money or power to access more traditional outlets like newspaper, television or the internet. It is the position of the editorial board that creative expression is integral to what it means to be human, that to express ourselves in art and writing is good for the self and benefits the wider community. Access to tools for this expression should not be limited by poverty. Contributors to the magazine were paid. \$40 per submission.

As a new magazine our purpose was to hold open the door for folks to be published with very minimal interference or self-promotion of our own agencies or philosophies. A call for submissions went out to the greater community in May 2017 for creative work, photography, prose, poetry and writing of all kinds. The only criteria set for this work was that it was to be no larger than one page and contained no hate speech. Where folks' work exceeded maximum length, or multiple submissions were made, we made decisions collectively on how to deal with these issues.

We hope as you look inside, you are moved, get inspired, are curious and encouraged to get involved. Ultimately we invite your full attention towards a community that often does not have the privilege of controlling messages about itself.

This issue is dedicated to Carol Winter who passed away in October of 2017. Her piece "Joe Somebody" is published first in honour of her spirit and her work. Carol was well known as a tireless supporter and friend of people living on the margins. Carol would want you to read this magazine by the amazing people who have shared their experiences feeling marginalized and living in poverty.

The Editorial Team

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We invite submissions for the next issue by email to theriverpeterborough@gmail.com or in person at participating agencies such as Cameron House, CMHA, One Roof Diner, New Canadians Centre, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, PARN, Peterborough Social Planning Council, VON 360 Clinic, and the Community Counselling Resource Centre.



Joe Somebody by Carol Winter

One morning after guests had left the Warming Room a beautiful drawing of
a rose

was found on the table. The caption under it said, “My name
is Joe. One day I would like to be a somebody”

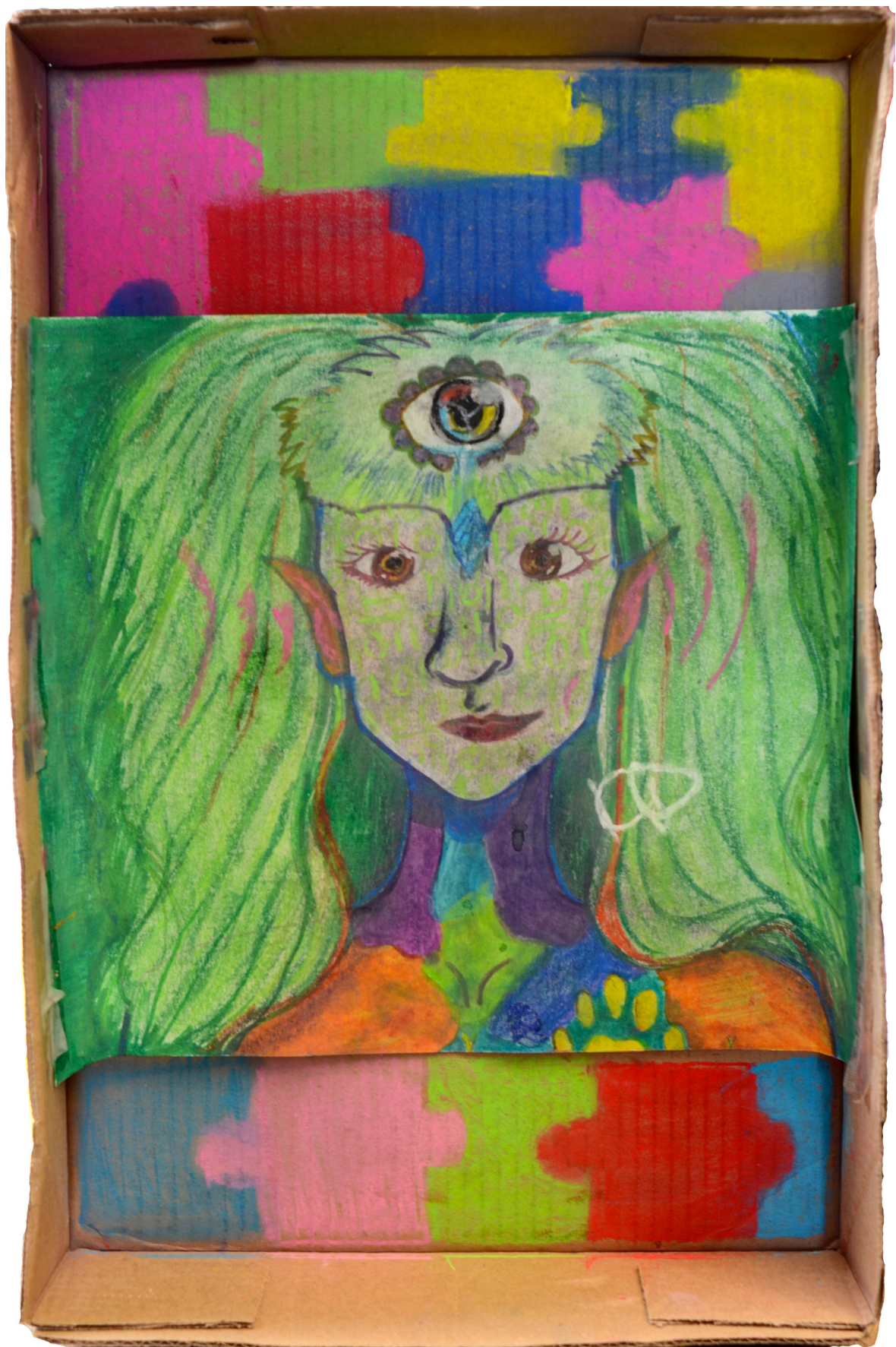
I wanted to say to the artist, “Joe, you already are somebody. You had had the
courage and resilience to survive in the street. You have the talent to create beauty in
bleak places. You are a unique and gifted individual worthy of respect and love.”

Albert Einstein once said that we each have our own genius. If a fish were expected
to climb a tree it would grow up feeling like a useless failure.

With a little encouragement people can discover, nurture and share their gifts. With-
out support their genius will shrivel and the world will become a darker place clut-
tered with unfulfilled dreams and unrealized potential.

-30-

p.s. Joe if you happen to read this we are hoping you will submit one of your draw-
ings for a future issue. You can fill out an entry form at the One Roof diner at St.
John’s Church on Brock Street where lunch is served at 1p.m. weekdays.



"Look For My Tears" by Kate-Lyn Pigeon

"I am a mixed media artist with soulful attempts."

Single Mother vs. The Laundry: The Eternal Struggle

by Marina Wilke

One thing I think we can all agree on is the fact that doing laundry sucks. It doesn't matter whether you're single, coupled, young or old; the burden of maintaining clean clothing is a struggle.

When I was married and child free, I lived in a developing country without a washing machine. Furiously pounding, scrubbing, and wringing out each individual piece of clothing was my reality. Once clean I would then hang them to dry on dusty rooftops, with the very real threat that monsoon rains would soak them off the clothesline and onto the dirt-covered rooftop. It was frustrating, it was labour intensive, but I never felt like

it consumed my life. There were side benefits. My forearms have never been that jacked, and it meant I could stand in the shower under a steady stream of cold water and avoid the 45 degree heat while I worked.

Fast forward 3.5 years and my life looks very different. I live in Canada, now single, and primary caregiver for my two children (3 years old, and 4 months old, respectively). I have access to laundry machines that supposedly do all the hard work for me. Despite this, I feel consumed now more than ever in my battle against dirty clothing.

The logistical, physical, financial and mental burden of keeping a family clean has taken on the persona of a stalking beast. My life has become an epic clash between myself, The Single Mother, vs The Laundry. The Laundry is like a many headed Hydra. As I cleave one head from the beast's shoulders two more spring from the stump, ready to strike.

Bam! The infant projectile vomits on the couch cushions.

Zing! The toddler responds swiftly, splashing through the mud puddles in ecstasy, covered head to foot in putrid muck.

It is next to impossible to feel sexy or confident in dirty clothing. Trying to wheel when you smell like sour breastmilk is never particularly successful, and let's face it; would you really want to sleep with someone who is attracted to that? If, by some miracle, I manage to stay clean long enough to meet someone to do the horizontal rumba with, the reprieve is only temporary. The Hydra is back with a vengeance, this deadly head coming in the form of post-sex bedsheets. Trust me, if you've done it right, the sheets will need to be changed!

It is currently only midweek and

already the vile beast has overtaken my room, single socks and spit-up cloths cover every surface. My resolve is faltering, but I refuse to be defeated. Rallying my strength I prepare myself for battle. Pockets overflowing with loonies and quarters, I gather my weapons. Detergent, scrub brushes, and baking soda make up my arsenal. At \$2.50 a load it takes me a while to gather my ammunition. Scrounging and begging for specific change from sympathetic cashiers is a daily ritual. Ensuring I have enough money to slay the laundry beast is yet another financial stress faced in my epic struggle for supremacy. The pile seems to have doubled in size in the time I've spent preparing for battle. Using all of my strength, I drag the insidious laundry creature from my home; through 3 doorways, and down 18 steps, into the communal laundry dungeon. My back aches from the physical weight of my burden.

The final battle sequence drains me of my resources. Sacrificing my loonies and quarters is the only way to defeat my foe. Dismantled and clean, still warm from the dryer, I drag the innumerable pieces back home; up 18 steps, and through 3 doorways, where I bundle the still-warm body of the beast onto my bed. Exhausted from the battle, I too collapse. Curled onto clean sheets, I am unable to face folding and putting away my vanquished foe. I resign myself to sleeping with the enemy. Tangled up with the warm, sweet smelling pile, I finally rest. For I know that dawn will break, tomorrow is coming, and with it a new beast will arise. I must be rested and ready to take up my weapons once again in the eternal struggle of the Single Mother vs. The Laundry!

Rain with no head

As the rain washes over my head, I become the rain with no head
And I see the drops of my headless head descend
Trickling down my frail limbs, falling to puddles at my feet
That mix and melt with my tears, until:
My tears are my feet
My feet are the rain
Rains are my tears.
Reflected in the grim puddles there beams a sodden glow
Projected, perhaps, by some lamplight or some glimmer of hope
I see in the eyes of the children that play in the puddles at my feet
The puddles that are my feet
The children of tears that dance
Holding hands they frolic, in their dabbling they ascend
Circuitously towards my head.
This, I move, attempting to deflect their vertical, horizontal, diagonal, unfaltering, discontinuous climb
Until I realize that I have no head
Although surely it is in those children that rise, snailishly, towards the level at which my eyes were.
To my surprise, the children of the rain do not stop to greet me
But continue mounting towards the clouds thundering overhead
And I cannot help but note the irony that I am dancing with them
To the rhythm of heads and tears and feet
My extremities and theirs intermingled, indistinguishable and, together, we dance the cosmic dance
As I move, my amorphous body, too, begins to rise, towards the clouds and towards the children.

- *s.b.l.*

(*Sara Bernárdez*)

“I aim to capture the melancholy of the human condition, punctuated by humour and irony.”

by Zoe

Dear Cal,

The night of December 20th, 2016 was the scariest night of my life.

I finally decided to give myself a true chance to recover from the traumas I had faced in my past. I can tell you right now that if I knew just how painful it would be, I would have ran the other way.

Honestly the moment I saw you walk into my living room the first thought that raced across my mind was "Oh shit". My stomach dropped and I could feel myself break. I thought that you would be annoyed that you had to respond to my house for a third time. I assumed everyone saw me as nothing more than an aggravation.

Looking back on it I can completely understand how frustrating it must have been to talk to someone who you want to help yet they fight you every step of the way. I really don't know what made me feel the urge to open up to you. When you didn't interrupt me or stop me I just couldn't keep everything locked up inside of me anymore.

I went to the crisis unit thinking that they would do nothing for me just like every other time I saw them. I sat across from a nurse I had seen too many times to count and I put all the control I held into this nurse's hands and told her the truth. I was admitted that night and a sense of hollowness filled me as I realized that I cannot run from my past forever.

The next day my grandma came to visit me and she told me that you seemed affected by what I told you and the other officer. I brushed what she said aside because of the circumstances and rationalized that you had a job to do and that was it.

Well, you proved me wrong, when you took the time to stop by and have a short visit with me. I was completely shocked. I have never seen myself as someone with a horrid past. I lived through it all, I have the scars to prove it, but at least I am still breathing. Not everyone gets the chance to face their nightmare and make it out alive.

I will never forget how happy your wife's baking made me. It seemed like such a small gesture, yet it kept me going for one more day. Each day got harder and harder to stay and accept the help offered. You and your family remains one of my biggest inspirations to this day.

That Christmas was one of the hardest me and my family have ever experienced. My mother spent all her money on my brother and gave me an endless amount of stupid excuses. She said I was being selfish for wanting something. My grandma did her best.

I really never expected anything from someone who wasn't my family. I suppose I got used to living on a budget. Some months we had to choose between paying the bills and putting food on the table. After a while material items decreased in value to me. I still find it ridiculous to check the labels on clothing. I suppose it's just one of my many quirks. All through that visit on Christmas I was on the verge of tears the whole time. I couldn't figure out why someone who hardly knew me took the time to see through the girl who was stuck in her own mind. I appreciated it all, the gifts and the plate of Christmas foods and goodies (even though I'm a vegetarian). Grandma enjoyed it all except the goodies which I enjoyed.

When we first met I had no will to live. Each day consisted of sleeping, eating and self-harming. I was putting on mask after mask and eventually all the anguish disappeared leaving me numb. One of my biggest regrets was how I ruined my body. I put on pound after pound. A huge part of that is driven by the fact that it's easier to hate yourself when you're deemed "flawed" on the outside. I hid behind the number on the scale and that pushed me deeper on my path of destruction.

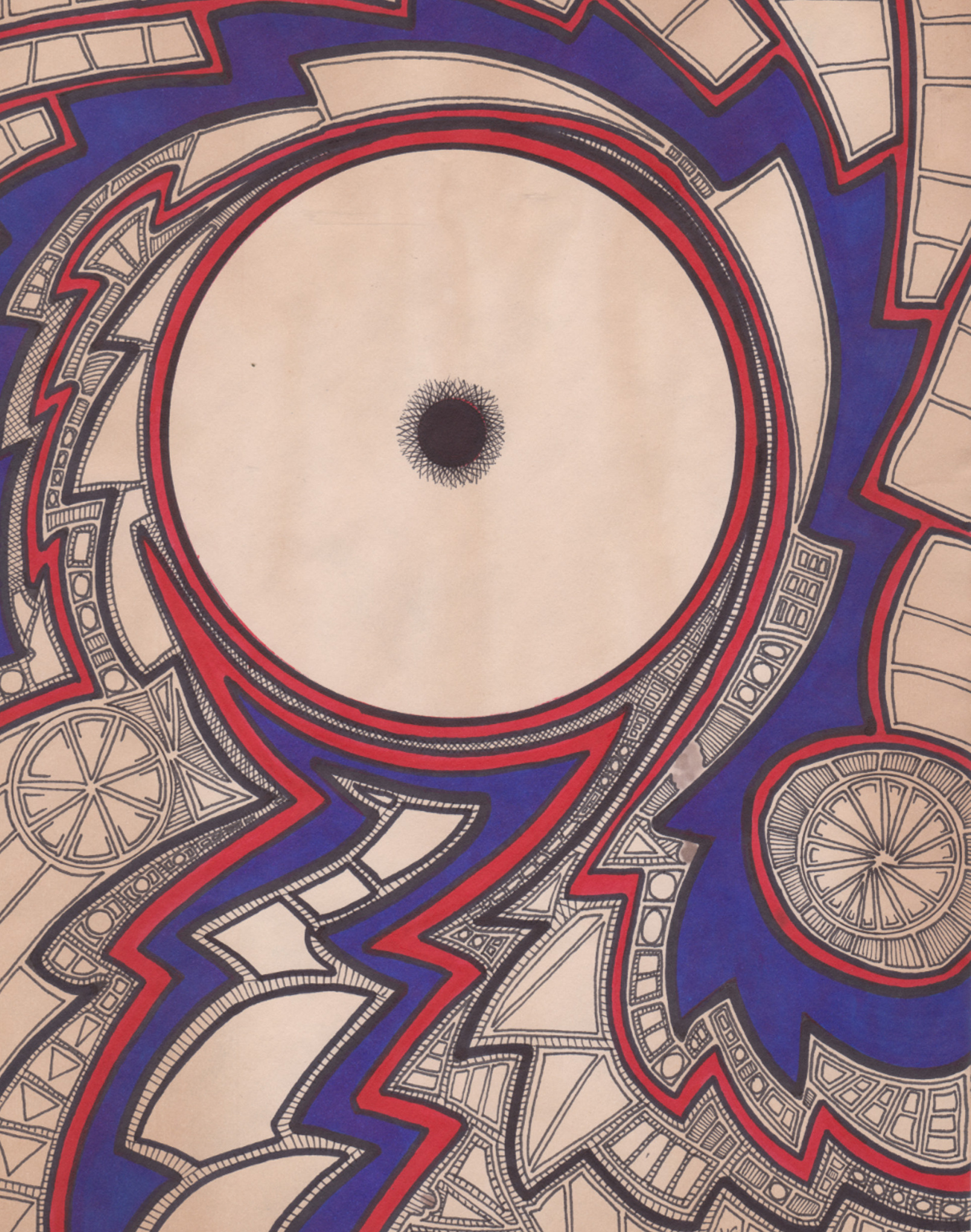
Looking back I still have no idea why you decided to get involved in a stranger's life but I am so thankful that you did. Over time you have made me more accepting of people even though sometimes it's hard to see past their behaviors. Up until December 20th I had no faith in myself or others. I had no goals. I never let myself live because I was so scared of being hurt again.

With you and your family's support I was able to find stuff worth living for. That single act of kindness completely changed me and my family's lives for the better. I am truly blessed to have people such as you in my life. You have made such a difference in my life more than you will ever be able to understand just by taking the time to listen to a girl who felt she was unworthy.

Thank you Cal.

Sincerely,

Zoe



Untitled

By Patricia Baxter

When I graduated with my Master of Arts degree in the summer of 2015 I was well aware that finding a job would not be an easy task. My graduate studies supervisor had provided me with some words of guidance and advice to reassure me that the process of job hunting for recent graduates could be a long task especially, ironically enough, the longer a person has spent pursuing a post-secondary education, the longer the job hunt. Then there was the matter of careers: I had been so focused on pursuing my education and doing my best work in an academic setting that the thought of an actual career path had seldom, if ever, crossed my mind. Still, I was optimistic and had secured a summer position before I officially graduated from University. I was going to be returning home to my family in Peterborough where I could re-plant my roots, so to speak, and re-energize myself in a place that was familiar to me with people who are my support network.

Unfortunately this optimism gradually began to dry up after the summer position ended. Despite my best efforts to find a job in the Peterborough area my efforts were “rewarded” without much success. I eventually contacted a career councillor, who is very supportive and helpful in my job hunting efforts, but even with her assistance it has become clear that there are not many opportunities out there for me, and those few opportunities that do pres-

ent themselves have very high standards for an entry level position.

Adding to this general feeling of frustration is the reality that as an autistic woman the process of job hunting is inherently more challenging to me than the allistic (non-autistic) or neurotypical job hunter. Being an autistic person means that non-verbal communication, i.e. maintaining eye contact and other forms of active listening, do not come naturally for me and as such I have to consciously maintain these social cues while engaging in conversation with another person. Add the fact that the environment that I am placed in is that of a job interview, a highly stressful scenario for any person regardless of neurotype, and you essentially have a recipe for anxiety. Thankfully, I have been able to develop methods to cope with interview processes, both pre and post interview, but the exhaustion I feel once all is said and done is still immense.

Now it's the summer of 2017 and I have only been able to maintain two other job positions since my initial job opportunity in 2015. While they were both extremely rewarding and enriching experiences they were also short-term and had huge gaps between employments. This inability to find and maintain stable employment has been damaging to my self-esteem and overall feeling of self-worth, which I am currently working towards regaining.

However, as I step back and examine the metaphorical landscape of employment opportunities in Peterborough I find

that my experience is not an individual one; rather it is an experience that many young professionals are facing not just in our city, but also across the province and country. The underemployment young adults face when entering the workforce is a severe issue that has been noted for years, but very few employers have done much to mitigate, or even address, the problem. Researching these statistics was self-affirming, because it proved that my struggle is not as individual as I assumed, but also disheartening as I can empathize with the frustration and anxiety that many twenty-something adults must be feeling right now.

While I realize these problems cannot be solved instantaneously, it is still important to address these issues for what they are and how they affect people on a personal level. There needs to be more done to address the needs of young adults entering the work force so that we can feel personally accomplished and emotionally satisfied with our lives. Right now we are facing far too many invisible barriers in our lives even before we have taken our first step down our life paths, and it is not going to get better until something is done to remove those obstacles.

Opposite:

Broken Peacock by spypoet

“Chaser of dreams,
survivor of nightmares”



The Healing Tree by Darren English
 “Life is hecticly beautiful”

"Now, what call would a woman with that strength in her have to die of influenza?" asks Eliza Dolittle in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. Some may equate my departure from everyday life with the pinching of a new straw hat meant to become a family heirloom. My complete and utter breakdown happened as my husband and I put my childhood dog to sleep; losing my beloved Kasia was what "done her in" to borrow slang from Eliza.

I prefer to say that I was housed (as opposed to raised) with an alcoholic father who was physically, emotionally, and sexually abusive; my mother appeared to deliberately fail in protecting me from both his wrath and desire. My family's one indulgence was to allow me to have pets. Although I grew up with a menagerie I truly cherished my dogs. My father used my pets as 'whipping boys' when he wanted to emotionally torture me and avoid leaving any marks on my person. I believe I was not allowed to socialize as I grew up as I refused to stop seeking help from authority figures or trying to end my life to escape the abuse. My isolation led to forming stronger bonds with animals than with people.

School quickly became my sanctuary as I was offered praise and positive attention from my teachers. It was here that I obtained a singular area of success in my life. At various intervals I pursued and received accreditation in post-secondary education both to self-soothe and increase my marketability as a potential employee. I possess a certificate in TESOL to teach English as a second language, a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Trent University, a certificate in Animal Sciences through ICS Canada, and an Advanced Diploma in Legal Administration from Durham College.

My parents had me repeatedly committed and insisted that I was crazy as they tried to distract authorities and medical professionals from the truth. Now that I have disappeared, they can publicly fob off my adult diagnoses to everyone: everything I claimed to have happened during my childhood was due to my being 'not right in the head' all along. When I was still in contact with them they appeared to ignore those diagnoses that have consistently been attributed to how I responded to incidences of trauma.

In addition to my less than ideal childhood I was raped by a boyfriend at Trent University at 18. One month prior to the ten-year anniversary of my rape I was sexually assaulted by a stranger on a GO Bus on my way to work. So now you might ask, how could a woman known for being so strong as to survive so many other emotional attempts on her life finally succumb to losing her ability to function over the death of a dog? Dear Reader, we do not get to choose what breaks us. According to my husband I was in a near-catatonic state for about three years beginning March 9th, 2012, the day I found out Kasia would need to cross the rainbow bridge without me. My long-standing relationship with another canine, my 'black dog', resulted in my last Record of Employment stating directly under the comment section that I was "[u]nder Doctor's care for PTSD (and attempted suicide)". My most serious suicide attempt was in June of 2015; my wrist still gives me complaints from the restraints used on me in my throes of psychosis helped along with an apparently non-lethal dose of prescribed medication meant to assuage my mental distress.

There have been many days when I simply could not get out of bed to go to work as my emotional and physical pain wrestled with each other to dominate my existence. As I "called in sick too

often" sometimes mutual decisions were made to discontinue employment. One co-worker suggested that I seek more specialised medical advice as even he felt my sick days could not be attributed to mental illness alone. Shortly thereafter I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia.

My loving and doting husband who helped me escape my family has also assisted me in navigate the confusing, often agonizingly slow and inadequate mental health care system. With his support I changed my name legally and moved physically away from my family. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder has me fighting a daily, sometimes hourly, struggle to convince myself that I am safe. Through a previous psychiatrist I obtained ODSP as a means of financial support. Life continues to be a struggle (62.3% of my 'income' goes to rent alone) but I one day hope to achieve Eliza's dream:

"All I want is a room somewhere far away [...] / With one enormous chair / Oh, wouldn't it be lovely! / Lots of chocolate for me to eat / Lots of coal makin' lots of heat / Warm face, warm hands, warm feet / Oh, wouldn't it be lovely?"

By Rose Scotland

1 Loewe, Frederick, 1901-1988. (1964). *My fair lady*. [New York]: Columbia

For Levi Shaeffer

August 12, 2010

Levi-
spoke out
of the thorn
of his roots
I am working for -
my peace
I am needing -
only -
my earth
my water
my sky
my right
to live my life
as I choose
I ask not -
to be strapped down -
and trapped -
by somebody else's
code of ethics
somebody else's
lofty demands
he spoke -
his song -
the song
of the purely pierced -
with his cry
that has reached the ears
of the reasonable
Levi -
spoke out -
of the resonance
of his verdant nature
I want
what's my own
so my heart -
my small piece of forest
can shroud me -

make me a fortress -
in the depth of love
a shield -
from the condemnation
of others -
they - who
would desecrate
my sacred ground
and pervert my intentions
they -
my assailants
twist
barbed petals of falsehood
onto the path
of my forsaken feet
Levi's voice -
lives -
reverberates -
throughout my years -
echoes
of many
who dare
speak out -
of their anguish
those who acknowledge
his death
know the sacrifice
of his commitment -
Levi's gift
grounds our humanity.

- Maureen McGarrity

*"This poem was written in honour
of Levi Shaeffer, who died at the
hands of the police in a confronta-
tion up North."*

Becky Hone

(Photograph and writing by Jerm IX)

When Becky Hone moved to Peterborough at 5 years of age, mental health issues were already affecting her life drastically. Not only were they prevalent in her family, so too was the thick cloud of stigma and distrust for doctors, therapists and medication. So when time came as an adult for Becky to seek treatment for her own issues, there were some walls she had to break down.

I met Becky last year while attending one of the programs offered at PRHC's Mental Health Adult Outpatient Unit. I grew to admire her for respectfully and confidently speaking her mind for what she believes. When she speaks, I listen. So when given this opportunity she was the first person I contacted.

Now 39 years of age, Becky sat down with me to chat about her experiences with her own with mental health issues and the system in Peterborough, through her lens.

She described life long symptoms of the utter despair of depression and overwhelming anxiety. Feelings that went undiagnosed until her early twenties, when she experienced what she called "a complete mental breakdown", at which time she attended PRHC voluntarily and was sent to the Crisis Unit. She found her experience there to be uncomfortably cold and clinical, adding that she felt ignored for hours only to be sent on her way with a few prescriptions, without even seeing a doctor.

When asked if she still feels that engrained distrust today, she replied, "It's not just a matter of trust. In my expe-

rience, there's a lot of overworked and burnt out therapists, nurses and doctors working in a broken system. I'd like to think that all of them are doing the best they can, but when the system is broken, people break, service suffers."

Her body language shifted with the tone and volume of her voice, with an unmistakable leftover hint of frustration, as she continued, "You just feel like a number in the waiting room. Like the deli. You get a ticket and when you're called to the front, it's like "What do you want, lets go, I got a line out the door here."

This would be the first of 4 visits to the PRHC Crisis Unit over the course of the following decade and a half and not much has changed for Becky in this regard. The clinical environment still magnifies her anxieties, and minor medication changes followed by a metaphorical foot to the rear does little to quell her symptoms or her frustrations. Without being suicidal, she was never admitted to the Inpatient Unit, and therefore wasn't given a psychiatrist or any form of follow up.

On the fourth of these visits, Becky was finally given something positive and was referred to one of the groups offered in the Adult Outpatient Unit.

Becky has found hope and positivity in a familiar place, right where we met, in those groups offered in the Adult Outpatient Unit. We met in the DBT Skills Group (Dialectical Behavioural Therapy), which I found remarkably helpful, as did Becky. We agreed on more than that



though. While the therapists and psychologists more than adequately lead the way, it is the group that ends up being the great teacher, for all of us. Each individual member of the whole offering up their truths. Becky said it best, "Who better to talk to for a sick person than of group of fucking sick people." We both found the group setting profoundly more effective than any one on one therapy we've ever received.

Becky has completed the Depression/Anxiety and DBT Skills groups and is currently participating in the Meditation and Mindfulness group. She is already proactively attempting to get into the Anxiety group in January.

But there's more to Becky than an invisible illness. There is more to all of us than our invisible illnesses. Becky is a daughter and an Aunt. She is a loyal friend and a hard working employee. She enjoys photography, nature, and watching Toronto Blue Jays games and documentary films. She is a strong independent woman that stands for equality. One day last year, her smile was the only light I saw in a tunnel of depression for weeks.

Becky is so very much more than a woman with mental health issues that I wrote an article about. Becky is my friend.

JERM IX is a "Graffiti writer, street artist, photographer, rap musician, urban explorer and activist."

Affordability, Availability, and Accessibility: Concerns Improving Our City

By: Sarah Cockins

Our city of Peterborough has a lot to be proud of: the Otonabee River, Peterborough Pulse, our upcoming Pride parade, Fleming College celebrating its 50th anniversary, Trent University ranked as the number one undergraduate university in Ontario in 2016, the Lift Lock recognized as the largest hydraulic lock in the world, new free Wi-Fi downtown ... and the list goes on. However, there are a few things that require attention and need to be improved.

First and foremost, the lack of walk-in clinics is astonishing, especially considering the city's population of approximately 81,000. Although there are clinics scattered throughout the city, most require the patient to have a family doctor, or at the very least, a referral. The Peterborough Hospital appears to be a last resort for many residents, who, like myself, are without a family doctor. Hospitals should not be one of the only options, especially if a patient is made to wait hours for a flu, or a migraine; symptoms that can be easily and efficiently treated at a walk-in clinic.

Peterborough's demographics stress the importance and the need for accessible walk-in clinics. It is no secret that many who live here, including students, are living on low-income. The median income here falls several dollars short of the living wage, and the cost of living is becoming a crisis, if it is not already one. Peterborough also resides more people over the age of sixty-five than the national average, and during the academic year its population increases dramatically due to the arrival and return of post-secondary students. Some students find they lack the accessibility or availability to travel off campus to the other end of Peterborough, making an appointment to a walk-in clinic difficult. It is also important to note, while walk-in clinics may be free of charge, prescription medicines are not. Those who are without a prescription and medical coverage plan may be forced to decide on whether their health is worth the cost.

On the topic of accessibility and cost, public transit is another issue. On a good day, the city's buses run downtown every twenty minutes for some of the routes, forty minutes for others. On the weekend, or at nighttime, these times slow right down or downright end altogether. For those who rely on public transit to commute to work or school,

the buses often become a huge stress. On weekend nights, anyone who is out late has to rely on another type of transportation, or risk walking home. During the summer heat and the freezing parts of winter, it becomes a potential hazard to a person's health to be standing outside waiting for a bus to show up, especially if the bus does not arrive on schedule.

Affordability, availability, and accessibility are the three main factors that present challenges to many of those living in Peterborough. Speaking personally, each time I have visited one of the walk-in clinics here, it is either closed or lined up out the door. This alone is a sign of a major problem. Ability should especially be considered here; after all, there is still improvement to be made regarding Peterborough's means of accessibility. It is surprising, especially considering that Peterborough is a widely collaborative and cooperative community, that there is not enough formal attention being brought to these outstanding issues.

"I am currently an English Literature undergraduate student at Trent University, aspiring to become involved in editing and publishing, in addition to dabbling in writing."

I wake up to the sound of traffic.

Is there going to be breakfast at the Salvation Army today?

I go to the Peterborough Square to fill the time between Breakfast
And Lunch.

I join the line at the Food bank.

Respect the line.

I line up at the Salvation Army to get my Christmas hamper.

Respect the line.

by Kellie Fairman

"Honest view of social and community services."

Outgrowth

We talked,
until we ran out of words to say

We travelled,
until we ran out of places to see

We laughed,
until we ran out of jokes to laugh at

We danced,
until we ran out of songs to dance to

We played,
until we ran out of games to play

We loved,
until we ran out of love to share

We cried,
until we ran out of tears to shed

Then we sat quietly,
until we ran out of silence.

- Zahra Mouhammad

"I enjoy writing pieces that
others can connect with."



**Peace Officer
by Anonymous**

Ghosts of Last Call
Katherine Heigh

I heard a woman shouting
your name on Hunter Street
at 3 a.m.
a vaguely ventriloquist voice
that didn't reach you
in my brother's room
where he never hears
the fire alarm
and from which I hear
everything
I hear the holes punched
through drywall and the
fucking and the ranting
rambles that
make my heart and mind a maelstrom

The night you said you'd
be a mother to me
and he told you that we
never really had one
But we did
And she was just like you
her eyes always watery
chocolate milk begging
my forgiveness
begging my love
begging begging begging
as she left me
once
twice
always

I heard a woman who
was you calling for me over
the wires and the wifi
an aching back lonely
disconnected so I grabbed

your hand and we made
a plan of cheap red wine
and the first real snow
Drinking deep your salty chocolate
eyes I told you I was hurting
too and so I knew I knew
the way this time of year
the ice crystallises
cracks
nothing new until you
found some guy you knew
offered me a cab
but instead I left you
for more red wine bought
with your own money

I heard a woman shouting
on Hunter Street and I
thought it must be you
you'd long gone to sing
for students hippies aging hipsters
leaving me content with
my red wine needing
you less than I need
a mother yet pleased
at your existence
at your shouting
at your flailing friendship
at your sinking sobriety
at your liminal love
and I exhaled
the last dying drag before
crushing my spent cigarette
with the snow beneath my boot
and going inside



"my art is basically about
people I admire and who
inspire me to live better."

Shining light into the darkness by Elain Dobbin

The universe was created through love so, so we are all loved. The universal law of love is within us for the betterment of humanity. This law moves individuals to acts of compassion and kindness. It enables us to share hope and light to souls left feeling hopeless in the dark. We try to open the door to hope but it can be draining. However, it is encouraging to know that One small act of kindness and love can change one person's life. Then in turn that individual touches another person and One person at a time touching another can change the world.

It is so easy to see the negative in people, it takes time, energy and work to see the positive. Thus, is worth all the energy. It is easy to see the drunk, the drug user, or the street worker, but it is harder to find the true person within. A person who loves, hurts, cares and has amazing thoughts and talents. We see the pain of society's labels, weighing down upon these individuals we watch the difference that has happened from working and helping all these individual lives. That in turn impacts and changes our lives in incredible ways.

All the experiences that I have observed in my life has driven my desire to improve myself as a human being. This work has given me knowledge and insights, enabling me to understand the right moments to step in or step back. Most times one's actions speak louder than words meaning you lead by example. More powerful than all this, is the determination to never give in when life seems impossible. Everyone's life experiences cause people to act in the ways they do. Every person has a story that the world should hear.



Fall

By Kayla Lambert

I have found a new passion in painting. Painting quiets my mind, helps me practice patience and above all else, teaches me to let go of what I cannot control. I have been able to find the most beautiful things in imperfection and I believe most everyone could benefit from this point of view.



The Ties That Bind Part I

By: Kinyon Annan

It choked me. Just like my father had taught me, I had tied it around my neck. With coy fingers I had put it into a knot, tying and untying it ad-nauseum until it was the proper length. It was black, contrasting the white collar and pale skin of the thin neck it encircled. I had no choice but to hang myself with it for another 8 hours.

After two weeks of not wearing it on my vacation, I had forgotten how much I hated the tie. I looked in the rear-view mirror at myself, and loosened the knot, relishing the relief. It would only last until the commute was over and I was in the office; then the choking would resume.

I tried to ignore the irritation of the tie -- this was a good day. It was a day to start anew. The two weeks spent fishing were great, and well-earned after the torture of my treatments, but I had found myself somehow missing work. Before the diagnosis I had been a morose worker, but at the lake I had found myself fantasizing about writing code; I enjoyed the labour. There was a very satisfying feeling to be found in creating something, even something so abstract.

As well as that, I had found myself missing my coworkers. Though our times to socialize were infrequent due to Delaney's panopticon-like watchfulness, there was a strong sense of comradery between us all, to be found in our grumblings in the break room, our advice about writing code, and in the simple friendships we formed. At the lake, reflecting with a fishing rod in hand, I had resolved to stop taking my employment for granted. Shooting a smile at myself in the mirror, my car rumbled forward and carried me to the office.

Inside, I found a field of grey boxes. Each of these held a person, head bowed, and fingers punching away at keyboards producing code for the company. I walked down the aisle of this field, and some heads popped with a brief smile and wave at my passing, the mirth sloughing off their faces as they turned back to their work. Their heads drooped over their tasks. My positivity about having a fresh outlook on work remained despite this display, and I passed down the aisle

toward my own cubicle.

Coming towards me, however, was the company's owner, Delaney. The white florescent light shone off a bald head surrounded by a crown of wispy brown hair. His stride was short and he took many fitful steps to increase his speed when his beady eyes caught sight of me. I had forgotten this ritual of my work day, but the moment I saw his eyes squint and his momentum increase, I knew what was coming.

"Your tie is loose," he stated, coming to a halt in front of me. "Tighten it!"

"Yes Mr. Delaney," I droned as I had a thousand work days before. My hands followed his order and put my throat back under the tie's pressure. No 'good morning', 'no welcome back', no inquiring about my health -- the diminutive owner only gave a curt nod and stalked off in search of some other worker to harass. I doubted he knew I had been on sick leave and finally vacation; the man probably didn't even know my name. The positivity I had started with was dented a little by the exchange. It was restored, however, when I found in my cubicle a gaily coloured card congratulating me on the success of my treatments, signed by all my colleagues.

"Hey neighbour," a voice chirped from my right. I looked over and saw Shelley's black hair and brown eyes poking up from above the cubicle wall.

"Hey! Been what feels like forever. How are you?" I asked cheerily of my next door coder.

"Who cares about me?" she asked with a grin. "What about you, Gavin! Cancer free!"

I return the smile. "It's good to be back working."

Shelly snorted. "You picked a great day to come back -- Delaney's going to be having one of his staff meetings today."

"God damn it," I groaned. "Does he ever do any actual work, or does he just like to waste our time with presentations about dress codes?"

"If he does, I've never seen it." She said. "So, tell me about your I'm-cancer-free celebratory trip, where did you go?"

"There's a small lake up north where I rented a cottage. Spent the two weeks fishing and relaxing."

"Fishing! That's like work! Need to catch the fish, clean it, etc."

I shook my head, and my eyes glanced from hers to a framed portrait on my desk. "It's work for yourself; you get the fruit of your labour. Work becomes quite pleasurable that way." When I thought I was dying, it was the one thing I regretted not doing more."

"Shit," Shelley said, looking away from me down the aisle. "Delaney's coming back on his patrol. See you at the meeting."

Her head disappeared, and a moment later the rapid steps of Delaney tapped by my cubicle. I sighed and began punching away at my keyboard. My eyes flitted back and forth from the computer screen to the framed picture at the side of my desk. A man and a teenage boy grinned back at me, holding up large fish. The sight of the picture brought me back to the lake I had only just left -- the cool air coming off the water, the gentle sound of an oar dipping into the water, the elation of feeling your line pulled by your catch. That was living.

A voice came over the intercom and interrupted the day dream.

"To all staff," a tinny voice came through the speakers on the walls. "Report immediately to the cafeteria for our staff meeting, to be followed by our regular lunch hour at noon."

As though a whip had been cracked, my coworkers all rose and stepped out of their cubicles in unison, and I followed. Together we shuffled down the aisles, mostly quiet and glum at the prospect of the meeting. I tried to be cheery -- new leaf and all -- and chat with my coworkers, but the positive façade crumbled, and I fell into step with their silent foreboding of what would no doubt be another demeaning lecture by Delaney. The shuffling of the workers became a march.

About Kinyon Annan: "I am a working class fella who likes to write fun, cheeky stories, or the kinds of stories that highlight the struggles we all face in life."



The Eagle represents the freedom of the air, and the wolf is the freedom of the land where both forces are combined in my opinion. When both wilds work together we have a beautiful situation where peace is found. Life is all about peace but in order to have peace you must find balance of both worlds. I feel that in the world these days there are way too many obstacles for people to find their inner peace.

- Joe McCarthy

christmas vexation
december 11th, 2015

every year it's the same thing
christmas comes in early november
no one is prepared
so with guilt being impoverished
we buy
now, I'm currently on a disability pension
and a strange phenomenon occurs
at the same time
the december 1st cheque
gets spent quicker than most
it's in knowing
that the january cheque
comes only three weeks later
a seventy-five percent december
a cruel time, living like kings
regret eats away
in tiny nibbles
so instead of taking care of yourself
you now buy gifts for everyone else
a christmas sickness
encouraged
by being paid early
it's a cruel january
lack of food
not even money for coffee
resources exhausted
the helping hands tired and sore
and when the rush from the holidays
is over
blood flow slows
damage reports flood in
pulling the trigger
on an empty gun in a time of peace
at least it's quiet
winter cold
and silent

by Kip Gordon

"Street poet, song writer, artist, swell guy."

PTSD
by Neil Couch

I lie at night
Still and quiet
The sounds consume me
My thoughts run wild
Is it happening again?
Is everything I love safe?
Am I the protector or am I the cause of it all?
What do they think of me?
Did I do the right thing?
Should I have left it alone?
Do I deserve praise?
Or should I go to jail too?
A man made prison would feel less harsh
The prison of my mind is enough
I hate myself but others see me as a hero
A saviour to the lives of many
What they don't know is
I don't feel the same
I feel it is my fault
And I deserve hell

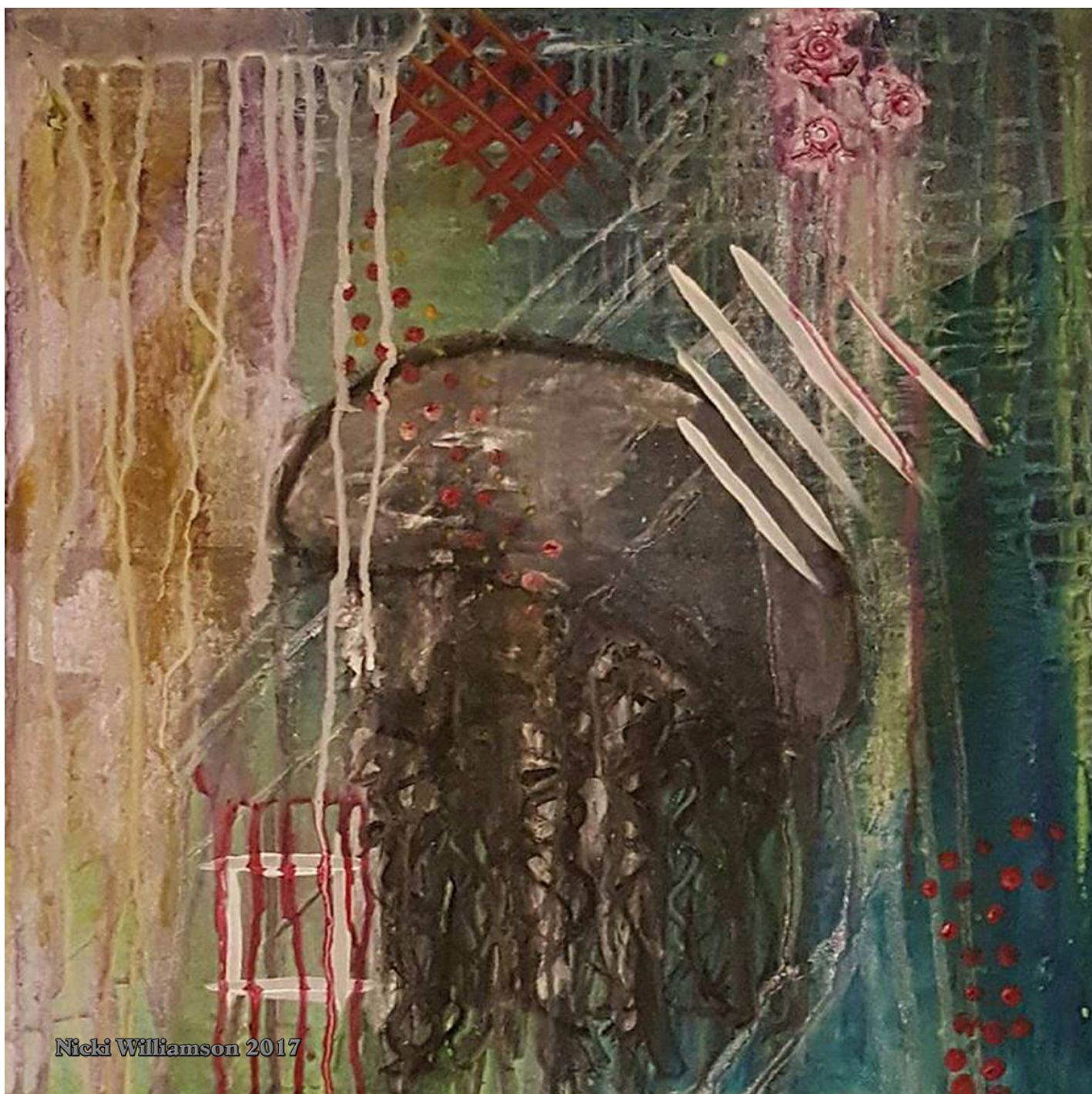
YOU WHO NEED, DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND COMFORT?

Do you anyone know what it is like to be poor, starved, and without a home?
To have poor shoes and clothing, to be left in the rain, winter cold, and burning sun?
Do you know what it is to suffer when there is no way to find any comfort?
Do you what it is like to be convicted and jailed by police for having no home?
Does someone direct you to the Cameron House, to the One Roof Diner,
To Christian Harvey, at Saint John's Church, 99 Brock Street, Peterborough,
To shelter he has anywhere, to the VON 360 Clinic, where nurses have comfort?

Do you anyone know what it is like to be bombed your nation?
Do you know what a terrorist faction, ISIS, has done Syria and Syrians?
Do you like what Canada, America, Russia, and others do for retaliation?
Have you been horrified and terrorized by Canadians, Americans and Russians?
Does someone direct you to Peterborough, Ontario's New Canadians Centre.
To the Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, and Canadian Mental Health Association?
Does someone, Carol Winter of Social Planning, ask Peterborough Planning Council
To budget the costs of your needs that you have comfort?

The flag of Syria was seen on television as waving in the wind of Syria,
Syria's patriots still there have planned to further fetch ISIS killers,
Soon Syria will be free of ISIS abuse and be built again a nation,
Until then, you who need, you will find comfort in my city and nation,
You will have comfort of food, and clothing, and your feet will be covered,
You will not live in a place that is war terrorized, you will have comfort.
You have any found, and peace will be what Canada and Peterborough
Give to you, rest, and reassurance, and you will have comfort in my city,
For you are poor, starved, still homeless, and have not comfort.

Madame Daphne Jane Rogers Molson,
A citizen, babysitter and mother of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada



Confused Polyp 72 by Nicole Williamson
"I am a loving soul and I believe art has the ability
to heal people."

This Moment by Angie Holroyd

Where does your worry take you?
Is it in the past?
Something that happened 5 minutes ago,
Or perhaps much later than that.
Or is it into the future?
Something you cannot see.
So you think up every scenario,
To wield yourself correctly.
Giving all this time and energy,
To what is not in the now.
Then feeling drained and tired,
As you beg the question how.

Take a moment to breathe with me,
And please do not cop-out.
Breathe in 4 seconds, hold for 2,
And take 4 to breathe back out.
I would ask of you to do this,
A few times when distressed.
It is breathing such as this,
That returns our mind to rest.

Where is it that you are,
In this current time and space?
What are the sights, sounds and smells,
And even what's the taste?
Have you been here before,
Or is this some place new?
Are you in the great outdoors,
Or occupying a room?
What is underneath your feet,
And what's above your head?
Did you come here willingly,
Or was it an act you dread?

No matter how close the past may seem,
That moment is dead and gone.
Your actions might not of been desired,
But all you can do is move along.
For to focus on the past,
Keeps you from the present.
And it is in the here and now,
Where we are most authentic.

The future is not set in stone,
But several branches of a tree.
With every thought and action,
It changes with the breeze.
You cannot know what will happen,
Or who, by then, you'll be.
It's like trying to watch TV,
With cracks throughout the screen.
The past is just a memory,
The future is just a thought.
So why preoccupy anything else,
When this moment is all that you've got!

Anthem by Catherine Donnelly

Just for today I will dance like everyone's watching.
And they will watch.
Just for today I'll smell like sex and not run to clean myself.
I'll savour my pulsating power.
I'll love my own pussy.

I'll give it away if I want to,
And feel no shame when I slip out of a stranger's bed
And saunter for the door.

Because today, I don't want a commitment,
'Cause today I don't need a man if I don't want one,
I've got a revved up vibrator, and all the
Duct tape I need to fix anything that's broken.

So, just for today, I'm set.
I won't make that commitment Mr.,
'Cause I deserve more than your fancy sport's car,
And the fact that you wear lifts in your shoes
Just tells me that you're a shriveled Napoleon
With no tool in your toolbox and no power that ain't fueled by Viagra.

But just for today I'll get you hot and sweaty and begging for me.
And, oh, how you will!
Then I'll laugh at how pathetic you are
And slink my sexy ass off to the greener pastures
I've always wanted and deserved.

Catherine Donnelly: *"I am working to make writing a more
integral part of my life."*

Surrealism Dooms Oppression

When you spend a good amount of time
imagining

the world does more
than it does.

It is difficult to imagine hate, for instance.
Hate takes hands.

Surrealism can turn a hating hand
to ~~palms~~ silly palm trees,

oppression to a series of volcanoes
plugged with ~~XXXXXX~~ an insight of eyeballs,

a murder of crows
sparing a clear blue sky-

Consideration is
the ultimate peace weapon.

Douglas Adams'
consideration laser

beckons the scientists working on
the "Where the fuck's my hoverboard?" problem-

The future in books and movies
wears a silver suit,

because it reflects
everyone back at each other.

Peace also takes hands,
and the urgency of doom.

It is getting dark, now.
Imagine your best torch

and throw it in
to next week-

By Justin Million

"This poem was written at a
live poetry show, where I write
poems off the cuff on my elec-
tric typewriter. All the poems
certainly aren't winners, as
you can imagine, but I like this
piece, and I hope you do too!"

Appreciating Change

I was laying in bed feeling miserable
yesterday. Alright the last several days.
Perhaps it's the change in the weather, the
post holiday lull or maybe it's just a wave
of depression set to come and go in due
time. Regardless of the cause, the last
several days have been spent cooped up
with a cup of tea watching re-runs of The
Office and waiting for some sort of
change.

The change I was waiting for wasn't a big
one. I recognized a longing for something
different in my surroundings that could
give me some temporary relief from the
dull ache of monotony. A change in mood,
weather, anything small that my senses
could pick up on. I no longer obsess
about the changes in my life being a
permanent fixture. I am ready to swirl
between resentment, guilt, confusion,
nostalgia, appreciation and joy only to end
up fed up about minor inconveniences
again.

Im ready to enjoy the feeling of a cool fall
breeze on my face until I shiver and long
for the summer sun. Im ready to feel the
web of frustration and excitement that
comes with writing for the first time in
years. Lastly, should this change I'm
waiting for be as far away as my
graduating college and starting into my
dream career, or as sudden as the break
in my writers block last night in bed, I
appreciate that the change will come.
-B.

"A brief writing on mindfulness,
depression, and change"

Photos and writing by Kendra Payette



Curiosity

Darkness

Hand over flash

Playing with aperture

Yellow light, where did the colour come from

Interesting colours that make you question

Falcon

This picture is basically about my dog that I have had since he was 11 weeks old. I rescued him from a lady that was not treating him very well. When we got him he was sitting in a van on a hot summer day and we said we would take him, and when we got him he was covered in fleas and tick and drained of energy. But the picture that I took of him now shows him having his energy, shows him being alive and loving and always makes me smile because he always has a quirky look on his face when I take a picture of him. He has bounced back to life.



timeless

Like looking through a looking glass,
Where you can see back to a time period
That once was.

This 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air is my muse every time I go to my nana's. In this picture I love how I captured the degradation of rust on this beautiful car. All the rust patches and holes just shows the history and hard time its gone through in life. I am excited and waiting patiently for this timeless and beautiful car to be restored to its former glory. When that time come I will be there with my camera eagerly waiting to take the first photo shoot of this beautiful Timeless car..

Photos and writing by Sleepmode



Cranberry Cloud

Kitten on a cloud mittens on my mouth
spitten out my food because it burnt me I
said ouch. Which way is the pound bout
to let em out.. every single living thing
suffering cause of doubt. Mix it switch it
every different way to see the clouds every
time I look at them they look at how it
sounds smell how flowers floaw touch the
sunshine louder than the way I see them
now. Sensitive senses mixing my mentions
up with the blizzard never switching
dimensions while I am awake this is the day
tonight is the night when I will repeat simple
description attributes intuition whatever that
means I think it is the mission or not like a
shelter melted I melt her she tell me I kill
her when I tell jokes for Hilda for J Scott
and the Mat hitting the back of a baby to
make it burp telling my mind its not maybe
its let me out telling them that it's the crowd
that's been telling them now is when they
want the song and you're selling them out.
The concerts the shows I got all these
codes to be speaking in reaping the way
that we won't.



Church of Food

Hungry I'm hungry I would love some food
the thing I think of the most is my favourite
food im so hungry so hungry like what will
I do when I think of the hunger and my
lack of... food. Who will be a part of what I
am hoping is it another person hoping for
hope in the slightest sense, I mean hoping
to know what they want I am them but
we already know we just don't know how
to go there like a ghost unrested restless
spirit of moments in movies of horror I
light to be poorer but sporting the finest
clothes sloths would adore. Done ... im
done. Anybody got some.. never mind. I
have beans.... Mmm Beans.



I called this photo “Beautiful Morning”. When I took this photo one morning the reflections on the water caught my eye. The bridge and tree reflections made me think of the quietness which I enjoy. I really enjoy taking photos that are close up so I can see things in a different way. Photography gives me a way to enjoy the quiet-no one is talking to me or bothering me. That is why I enjoy taking pictures.

- Gary Arnold

excerpts from the ULTRAVIOLET OCEAN

gwynception. they/them/their
schizophrenic trans enby living on
disability. moon in pisces

01 pity the dead??

"There's only three ways to open and close a gateway," his aged voice climbing, "I only was taught two of those ways by the wakers."

Wakers were a hard concept to understand she didn't fully grasp yet. The elderly sage of a schizophrenic old man he was, was full of stories. Interesting stories. Some were believable but all connected to this world of wakers which was the centre of his fantastical delusions.

He was wearing a greyish gown this morning, he looked sickly, pasty and pale. He was drooling, his lower lip protruding outwardly, his face was of a scrunched kind of determination on his next word.

"You really have to have had a vision of the symbols involved in the opening of the gateways if you go the visualization route ..." Fara zoned out of the conversation at this point. It was hard not to drift when he gets more technical about his strange experiences.

There was a soft knocking at the entrance of the poorly decorated quarters, yellow walls with beige spots, a landscape painting, there was the sound of the movement of feet.

"Hello ... Mr. Thompson?" His regular nurse Charlotte was used to having to interrupt his rambles. She was a middle aged black woman, average height and hair tied back into a small bun. Charlotte sometimes smelt of cigarettes rather strongly as did Fara who was also middle aged but was six feet tall on the line. "Mr. Thompson it's time for your noon medicine."

Fara zoned back into the room and looked at her device to check the time and realized she had been there listening to the old man for nearly two hours without so much as a smoke break from the strange confusing reality of Mr. Thompson.

She was wearing tight jeans and a tough grey wool sweater that was hooded and lined with faux fur.

"They showed me a symbol to ...,"
Mr. Thompson coughed, "...into the ... reality...
... of all realities," he was falling
back into mumbling.

Fara placed her hand on Mr. Thompson's hand and whispered something low enough the nurse couldn't hear. Mr. Thompson shook his head slightly as if returning to the room from those strange dimensions he always spoke of. As usual he took his medicine by dry swallow refusing the water.

"You really need to drink more liquids Mr. Thompson." Charlotte spoke in a gentle yet loud and clear voice before moving towards the door which was suddenly blocked.

"Is he still here?" A voice questioned angrily. It was the old colonel as people liked to refer to him as. "She's still here and you have to respect the volunteers."

Fara was about two years into her transition and hadn't fully reached a point where she could pass as a something acceptable completely, nor did she really want to, she wanted nothing more than just acceptance, she didn't feel like any of this bullying was right, she knew that acceptance would come though, she felt in between the worlds of male and female. It was a frustrating first few weeks here at the retirement residence but things really had begun to smooth out except for the colonel.

"He doesn't belong here."
The colonel then left abruptly.

Fara could feel tension in her toes and a burning anxiety in her chest. Her thoughts became a fog. It was becoming routine the intrusions by the colonel, at least once a day. Charlotte shook her head and turned back to the room.

"Meet you in twenty Fara?"

"Su..Sure ... Yeah how about ten."

"I'll try to get through my next few rounds as quick as possible."

After Charlotte left Thompson started up again with his continuously evolving plot line.

Fara had been volunteering at the low-income retirement residence for under three months. Those on staff had their wages subsidized by the government. The volunteers were sorely needed to give the place a human element of actual time spent conversing with the residents.

Fara was drawn to Mr. Thompson by the usual strange aura she always saw in schizophrenic people as she herself was schizoaffective. She could never understand that aura and how it worked and it seemed to lend to her weak theories that there was more to schizophrenia than a simple chemical imbalance.

Mr Thompson was completely stable at this point, though eighteen years of recurring psychosis left him still believing a lot of what had him completely dysfunctional and living on the streets.

Fara had grown close to Mr. Thompson and found his life experiences, though sometimes dragged out, completely fascinating and echoing her own psychoses. She actually had pulled the elderly fellow out of a cocoon he had been in for most of his stay at the residence.

It was suddenly quiet in the room.

Mr. Thompson had ceased speaking and Fara had a bad feeling he had died in that instance.

She felt a pain in her heart physically and emotionally.

She looked into Mr. Thompson's glazed stare. He had to be alive she thought. Those eyes were so dead looking though as if Mr. Thompson were looking nowhere in particular. She was grasping his hand.

...

To be continued hopefully the following issue.

The Ultraviolet Ocean is currently a two part novella, featured is the opening chapter segment of the first part titled: Mr Thompson.

"Pity the dead??" is a reference to the punk rock ballad by Bad Religion "Why do we pity the dead?"

I have nothing on the old man
by Amanda Reed

I have nothing on the old man
Who orders his steeped tea like he lives his life
Regular
I know that he believes in true love
He had it once but,
love only ends two ways

One of my biker friends sees marriage
He's been in one for fifty years after all
"get on it girl! Marry young!" he calls
As I mop the floor beneath him
Like a good housewife

I am told in stereo every day
How my beauty radiates and my smile shimmers
Yet there is nothing
About what I want or who I am

There is a man whose wife has held
the couch for ten years
One in University
One who gets a new tattoo every Sunday
Whose best friend just died

Yet, I am the young blonde with the smile
Who serves them coffee, then sweeps the floor
And I have nothing on the old men
Not even one

Bus Stop
by Casey Remy Summers (hopefully hesitant)

It is the chilly time
Of a Peterborough
February as I wait
For the bus to
Arrive

If I miss it then it
Will be another
40 minutes until
I can be safe for
Today

My boots are
Warm but need
To be warmer
Yet \$200 for boots
Just seems far
Away

I see the bench
That tells me
That abortion
Is murder and
I can't sit anyway
Or I'll be too
Cold

People say that
There is no such
Thing as bad weather
Just poorly dressed
People and I wonder
If the term 'poorly'
Was an intentional
Insult

The bus arrives and
I find my way to
The meal program
Where 200 fellow
Peterborough citizens
Wait for warm food
Hoping volunteers are
Kind

People tell us to be
Grateful and that
Canada gives us
More than other countries
Yet one can be
Grateful as well as
Cold

I am grateful for
The transit system
That brings me to
The hospital for
Trauma therapy
For old wounds
Of being told that
My very soul was
Unworthy

I struggle with
The housing market
And the idea that
There are no funds
For more shelter beds
With staff who have
The time to find for
Kindness

I can grateful and
Frustrated, angry and
Content while I wait
For the bus to take
Me into the community
That both welcomes
And scorns those waiting
For the bus

Hoping to find a home.



Contextualization of the print of a bird Looking at the Camera

This is a digital photo of a Pileated Woodpecker taken with a Fuji Film XP camera. My Girlfriend and I were walking when we heard, then saw the bird. When it moved around the stump it was working on, we moved closer to approximately 15'. I took several photos and a short movie.

Photography went from an elite hobby to a popular form of archiving family life when Kodak invented the land camera at the ~~turn~~ turn of the century. With modern printing techniques, photos replaced illustration in newspapers and magazines. By mid century photography finally became accepted as a legitimate artistic medium.

AS

Cover art:
"From The Scraps"
by Carolyn Barber

