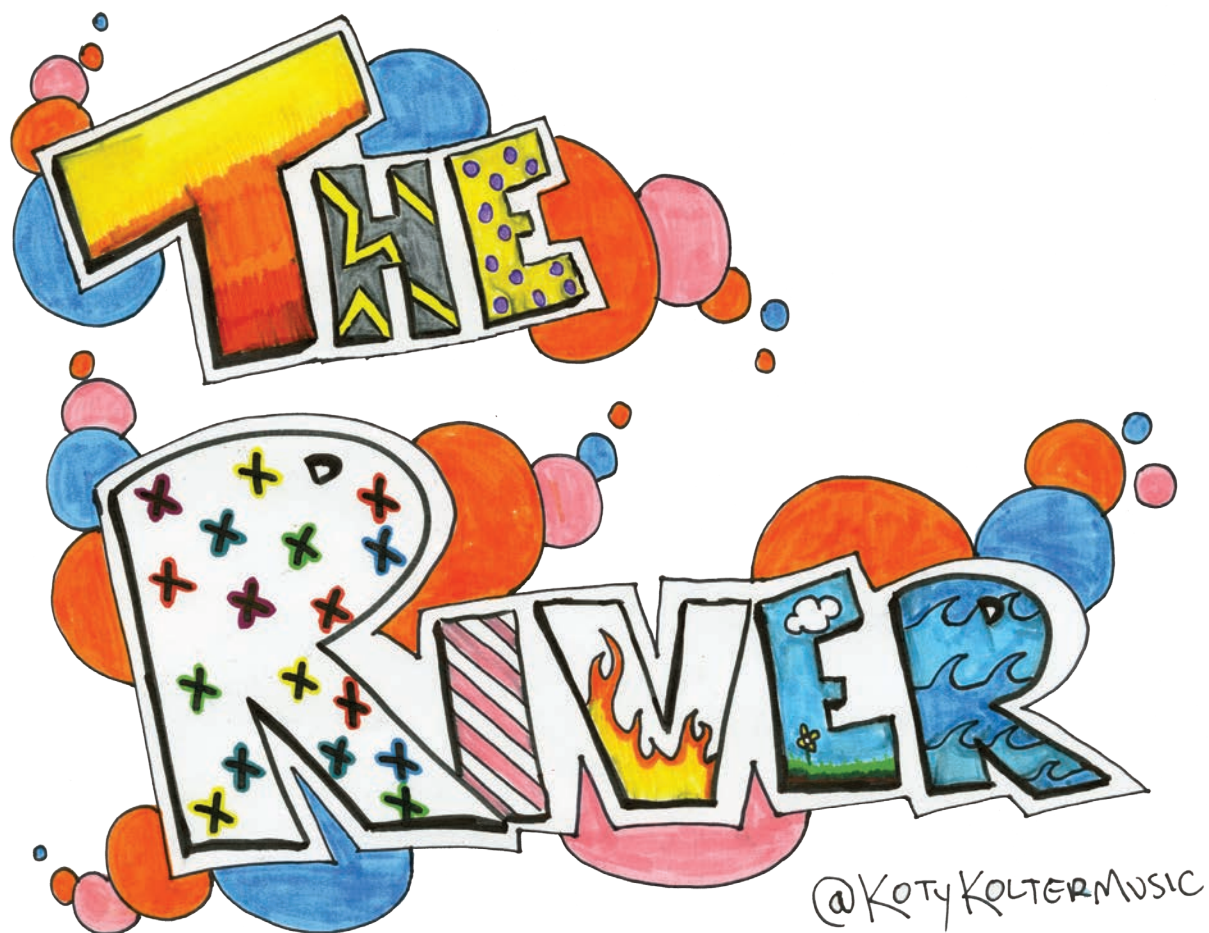


# The River

Issue Four  
Summer 2019







This is issue number 4 of the River Magazine, a publication which features the expressive art work of individuals who live on low incomes and/or in poverty in the Peterborough, Ontario, region. The work of the contributors may reflect their experience of poverty, or it may not. The purpose of this magazine is to give people in poverty a way of expressing their ideas and creativity, people who normally do not receive the same treatment and respect as those with a good income. Those in poverty have an equally important point of view and in some ways their views are of greater value – they have experiences those with a privileged life know little about.

The Peterborough region is located on the territory of the Michi Saagig Nishnabegg people, who named the area now occupied by the citizens and infrastructure of the city of Peterborough: Nogojiwanong.

We would like to thank CUPE Local 3908 (Trent U.), The Kawartha Pine Ridge Elementary Occasional Teachers, the 360 Nurse Led Practitioners' Clinic, the Brain Injury Association of Peterborough Region, the United Way Peterborough and District and PARN – Your Community AIDS Resource Network, for their support for this issue.

For those who wish to contribute to the magazine, we can be contacted through our website at [rivermagazine.ca](http://rivermagazine.ca) or by email at [theriverpeterborough@gmail.com](mailto:theriverpeterborough@gmail.com). We are run entirely on donations and by volunteers, so financial support is welcome through our GoFundMe page at:

<https://www.gofundme.com/the-river-magazine>



## Dear Brother,

You used to be my best friend,  
a bright kid with a killer smile,  
No matter what you'd be there in the end,  
I swear your kindness would ~~SECRET~~ for miles.

That light in your eyes has burnt out,  
You no longer flicker,  
The ones who care sit in the sidelines,  
Forced to watch you willingly get sicker and sicker.

It breaks my heart that you feel such pain,  
Years of Recreation spiraled into addiction,  
There are better ways that cause less strain,  
Just ask for help and start with admission.

Even though I can be harsh and cold,  
I want you to know I'll be there when you're ready,  
The love I feel for you will never get old,  
You ~~ARE~~ WORTHY of happiness and a life that is steady.

Love, Your sister,  
—Shannon C?

LOST IN  
SILVEREY EYES  
ALEX ROPER

He stood awkwardly in the corner of the kitchen. He raised his hand, curling his hair around it, before pulling away and having it unravel rapidly. She stood right at the head nuzzled into chest while hugging height. Her pin straight black hair fell in a perfect bob.

Ashlynn turned around quickly, looking back at the boy and winking as she came up from behind and gave Camden her boyfriend a big bear hug. They embraced for a moment, he shrugged her off and then slammed his shoulder against the door, breaking it open.

The boy followed the other two inside and sat down slowly onto the bed, placing his feet very strategically. His eyes darted back and forth all over this tiny dirty cell. The window was about the size of a school atlas, allowing the room to ferment and boil in its own salty sent. Snuffed out cigarettes littered the green carpet square that covered the very minimal floor space.

The cigarette infestation did not end at the carpet, their telltale tracks of scorched wood and scat of ashes littered the tables, window ledge and headboard. All genders of clothing littered the little room.

Underwear with obvious skid marks, damp, presumably from being used as a cloth of some sort lay limp on top of a drab B cup bra. Another feature of this particular prison was it appeared as though someone had filled a pinata with used condoms stuff lazily back into their packages and then they must have hung that pinata in the middle of the room. That person must have followed up and smashed open the pinata allowing them to fall all over the floor like the little gold loonies and toonies from when he used to be a kid. This is why the boy had carefully positioned his feet, being sure to avoid both the spunk sprinkled surprises, but also the moss bed of dirty laundry that almost created a second carpet on the floor of the room.

On the tiny table beside the tiny window, sat a cemetery of lighters, all of them stood in rows, neatly placed to be observed by those who entered into the quaint enclave. The boy only presumed they were all dead, he could have been wrong about that but it worked better for the metaphor if they were.

Ashlynn sat in the back corner of the bed against the wall, while the two boys sat beside one another on the bed, as Camden sat down his hand brushed against the boy's.

"Ah sorry man that's my bad." Camden said smiling.

"Hey no worries dude."

Camden grabbed one of the headstones, sparked it, and pulled in deeply as the paper around the marijuana crackled in the flame. Camden began frantically wiggling his eyebrows as he continued to draw the smoke deeper into his lungs. The other two sat captivated as he proceeded to blow out nine perfect smoke rings one after another.

He passed the sticky joint to the boy, who then slowly turned it over in his hand the end was still a bit damp from Camden's mouth, he grabbed it between his index finger and his thumb. He brought the joint to his lips, taking care not to get too much of his own saliva on the end, proper etiquette and all. He looked over at Ashlynn, smiling as he began to fill his lungs with smoke. He continued, but for the first time noted the walls were covered in mad sharpied ramblings. One caught his eye above Ashlynn and he began to read it.

*I'm in a dark place I wear a strong face but never lose faith I know I am fated for greatness breakout of a mold I aint never low know my shit is so dope I am falling behind on the social alliance right no compliance I defining try to find middle no compromising I fight for the light shit so dated never drop a note I inflated but tether low to the floor never go very deep in my dreams what rests between these seeping ananeosimes of dreams pulsating inflating radiating shuddering under the pressure acceleration hallucination annihilation of normal of stable thought and breath forget the rest my mind beset by ragin forces walls collapsing slag is burning hot line 7468 don't forget to relate your conclusion to your introduction.*

He coughed sharply as he was snapped back out of the word vomit wall graffiti. He realized he had been bogarting, a major etiquette breach.

But the walls were yelling at him now though, scrawled on like a scene in a movie where the director is trying to make the bathroom as dirty as they possibly can without adding a gloryhole. Except of course these writings actually belonged to another young person, probably not too much older than the boy, who clearly had a lot of casual sex, unless those belonged to Camden and Ashlynn, which the boy ceded as a fair possibility.

Whoever this person was, something wasn't okay with them, and the boy couldn't help but feel the very private nature of the room. The incredibly personal outpourings on the walls shouted, you are

not welcome here. What could this person have been going through, the boy thought, to drive them to such frantic writings. What demons have they faced in this little room alone in the dark. Did Camden really know them? Were they trespassers in some poor broken souls tomb? Surely he would be cursed with bad luck and paranoia for disturbing the dust of this place. They had uncovered like the archeologists of Napoleon and his ilk, the encased treasures of a wayward spirit. Just as he imagined it would be, smoke drifted through this tomb, exhaled by the explorers themselves.

The ominous rows of lighters caught his eyes again as they reeled around the room, observing the scattered gold condom wrappers, the food left to rot under the bed, a meal in the afterlife. Just like the pharaohs of Egypt this person left their scrawlings as a testament to their life, one incomprehensible to the reader due to the chasm of understanding between them. Perhaps the spirit was trapped too long here. It was eerie to continue to sit in the empty sarcophagus, choking on the harsh marijuana smoke. For far too long, no one said a word.

Thoughts of departure flooded the boy's mind, he thought perhaps checking his phone pretending to get a text might do the trick. His mind scrambled, the curse was setting in. He had to get out. He began to ponder the lie, perhaps his Mom needed him home for something, perhaps John wanted to hang out. Or maybe, yes his sister Natalie needs help with her homework, a perfect out of this tight situation. He prepared to look disappointed, to hide the fact that he wanted out of this room more than anything else in the damn world at that moment.

As he turned to look at Ashlynn she slowly blew her hit toward him, the smoke drifting lazily through the air, caressing his face as it passed. Her eyes shimmered a pale steel, her smile sly and calculated. She took one last cute puff of the joint before coughing and passing it on to Camden. He too pulled deep, sucking on the end delicately as it was getting stubby. His lips unlocked slowly and deliberately, they were full, strong and confident. He too turned toward the boy. They looked at the boy with those silvery eyes.

"We should put on some tunes if we are going to hang out awhile eh?"

"Yeah sounds good, babe."

"Yeah what should we put on?" the boy said as he grabbed the joint.



I miss you (Anonymous)

Roses may be red  
Violets may be blue  
But the Universe was complete  
When it Created you

I miss you like the moon chases the sun  
Like the waves touch the shore  
I miss you like the starlight travelling millions of miles  
Like the stream trickling far from its source

I miss you like the lonely howl of a wolf  
Like the wavering call of the loon across a darkening lake  
I miss you like the lighthouse beam searches the fog  
Like Romeo misses Juliet



By Joe McCarthy

### Valentine Day Story

I took a journey towards the emotion and the realization of attraction. In a moment of looking into the eyes of someone where I saw a glimpse of myself, though the sharing of similar interests, adventurous experiences that had been met with challenge and exhilaration. The sparkling shine within his eyes, a warm comforting smile, strength of his hands holding mine, these experiences give a way to inspiring life changes through feelings of encouragement, nurturing support and companionship.

Through listening, learning and respect, this journey of looking into the unknown of self, through looking into the eye of another and cherishing the moment in faith. Sharing playful moments and observing enjoyable feelings that surge through my soul created an ability to release my inner child, an innocence while fulfilling a loyalty to myself.

The emotion of exploring gentle caresses, kisses, listening the sound of his heart beat and warmth of the body's touch against one another awakened an ability to overcome hurts of the past while learning to triumph over the difficulties of the present. It was in a flash of a moment that I realized that there is a want to become a better person in knowing what it is that I want in my life and knowing what is not wanted in my life. The importance of his presence in my life was shared.

The truth and realism of this attraction and affection came not only with the knowing of myself but allowing myself to become lost within that of another, I was met with challenges and barriers. The harshness of sound, the raw use of words, the dark glance of a look and the fading of the burning flame of hope that was to be held, as fear set into threaten the understanding of an unconditional approach to the unity of two separate individual souls and spirits that had shared the most preciousness of themselves, and was it of itself, thy self.

The ability to forgive the anger, actions, and hurt of the threat is to move beyond the fear through support of each other to protect the ability of rekindling the precious flame. This journey that I took while alone and with another was very short in time, however the experience will remain for a lifetime. If I had not taken the time on this journey to understand the lessons would never have be known.

The pushing and pulling, contracting and expanding in the growth of self and that of another was the importance of being able to overcome through patience, forgiveness, understanding. It was an ability to nurture and recover the self. In keeping safe on this journey, in hopes of perseverance of self, I have achieved personal insight into the deeper sense of self and to the truth of humbling ones-self to the honesty of the inner burning flame of attraction.

Self

*Anonymous 2019*





By Zoe Kernohan

### **Shine**

Minutes turn into hours,  
Hours into days,  
Days into months.  
Sunshine into daylight,  
Daylight into dusk,  
Dusk into dark.  
From the darkness daylight emerges.  
From the moon's eery glow bright sunshine appears.  
Find the sunshine as it arrives,  
Hold onto it through the darkness.  
And you, yourself will shine.  
Judy Filion

### **Embrace the Good**

Do not dwell on the past,  
For the negative will eat away at you.  
Remember today, look forward to the future.  
Embrace the good that is yet to come.  
Judy Filion

### **Dawn Arises**

Dusk settles in,  
Reflections of the day.  
Time to ponder, question, accept.  
Accept our choices, actions.  
Comfort in our surroundings,  
Comfort in ourselves.  
Breathe easy, sleep soundly.  
Dawn arises,  
Awaken to a new day,  
Just to try again.

By Judy Filion



By Kyle Lamoureux

## People and Life

This is something I just wrote down  
It's a little strange and a little profound  
As life goes on I've often wondered why  
Why some grow old and why some young ones die  
I really don't know and nobody can say  
Whatever you believes, it just happens that way  
So I wrote these lines to put my mind at rest  
Just my own thoughts on life I do confess  
Years ago my mother sent me to school  
To learn to read and write and obey the golden rule  
She didn't know what would become of me  
But as the old song goes "what will be will be."  
So I went to school  
And into the social pool  
I met kids like me, who knew no more or less  
About life's social issues, we were all naïve at best  
Now looking back socially we were all alike  
But some were intellectually strong and others had physical might  
Each one had its own good parts  
Whether it was intelligent, strength or into various arts  
So try to look back on your acquaintance and friends  
It might give you some meaning to your life as it slowly comes to an end  
As you read this, think of your people you have met  
I look at the good in all, I never met a bad person yet

-COMPOSED BY Kenny Spry





By Mike Lucas



(Anonymous)

## The Artist

The colors all ran down the drain. And I'm sorry if I'm the one to blame. But if you were me you'd do the same. Stuck in the same place. Can never get away. I just need a change. The scenery all blends in. I don't even know where to begin. This place makes me sick. And I'm done with it. So I'm leaving this blank canvas. I'm gonna draw myself, into a new town. And fill it with, every color there is. This brush and this paint. Will show me the way. To a better time and place. Where I can feel alive again. The sky never looked so blue. And the fields so green. As when I was with you. And we had dreams. Before the anger and hate. Ruined everything. But I'm finally letting go. And starting to see. Life can be good again. Even on my

own. The colors I create. Will guide me home. I'm gonna draw myself, into a new town. And fill it with, every color there is. This brush and this paint. Will show me the way. To a better time and place. Where I can feel alive again. The borealis in the sky. The bright lights deep within my eyes. It's all that I need to remind me, that the darkest of times. The empty feeling inside. Never lasts your whole life. If you believe. So, I'm gonna draw myself, into a new town. And fill it with, every color there is. This brush and this paint. Will show me the way. To a better time and place. Where I can feel alive again.

**By Chad Northey AKA Vegas on Fire**

## Masks.....Who am I ?

Who do you see when you look at me?

- \* the child who was lost because her parents thought of themselves instead of me
- \* the youth who was troubled, confused and looking for a lifeline that never came
- \* the daughter who felt unwanted and unloved because she was the blacksheep, although she tried
- \* the sister, an aunt, or even a friend who worried about your needs before my own
- \* the woman who had a daughter, not really knowing how to parent, no examples shown
- \* the wife who didn't know what love was and believed "I love you" were not just empty words

Here I stand today struggling to remove all the masks I've worn for each of you in order to survive, searching for the woman I was meant to be.

The next time you see me you may not recognize who I've become. All I ask is that you give me a chance.

I am the real me.

**By Charlene Kernohan**



**By Fraser O'Brien**



## **PUNCTURED PROMISES**

**by Dylan Curran**

*Plagued by soft whispers  
confused as lullabies,  
pierced through my window  
and forcing me awake,*

*“what’ll we tell the neighbours?”*

*There is a madness to these memories  
shrouded in the grime,  
clinging to the walls,  
forcing its way inside,  
festering within my bones.*

*Many have lived through  
intermittent moments,  
split seconds, of childhood  
consumed by ever-present remembrances  
as is their obsession and occupation.*

*I have slept beneath these ceilings,  
could mount the rooftop with eyes closed,  
swing from the wooden beams,  
land on the soft deck  
and would still not call it home.*

*These were our first exposure;  
praying for miracles that swept us in a frenzy.  
Kept on us our toes.*

*But once numb and blue in the face,  
we were finally grounded.*

*grounded.*

*stuck.*

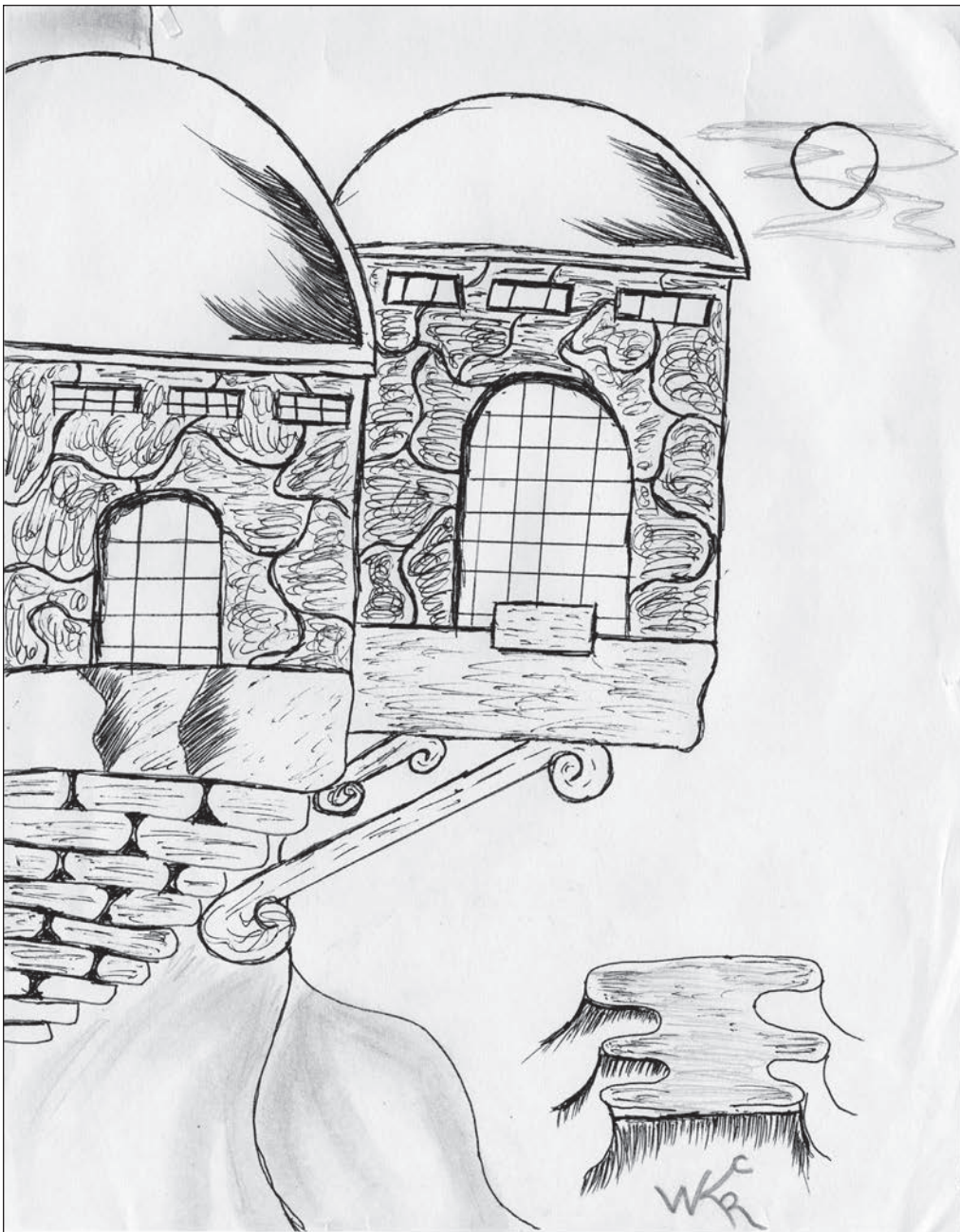
*housed.*

*We sunk into basements -  
absolved of their half-truths  
spilled over lips of chipped china,  
swollen from years of  
punctured promises*

*We called from the balcony  
slipping in visions of hope  
between the vines,  
like rails, barring down  
over delicate eggshell vinyl.*

*We longed for unaffordable comforts,  
prized the sparse clarity  
afforded to us through drink.  
arms around our middles,  
instead of the roof over our heads*

*This doesn’t feel like home anymore.*



**By William Redcliffe**



Photography is the freedom to show your feelings through your photos. Canada gives us the freedom to take photos of what we think are appropriate. Taking photos is a way for one to connect with the world. It is a form of expression of what people are like inside.

**By Wiliam Lawe**



## Anomalous Precognition in the Eyes of a Dreamer

by :Jennifer Thompson -Duffett

Chris De Burgs 'Lady in Red' echoes softly through a hollow room. It sounds like a fading memory and feels like a romantic indulgence. It seems to carry a forlorn weight that conjures up visions of a time forgotten – images of a masterpiece hidden to collect dust. No one moves towards the room at first. No one can even look in it's direction. It is emanating a carnal red glow, and the pulsating glow surrounds the figure of a woman. We all see her dancing, rhythmic and slow, but no one can see her face (nor the shade of her hair). Just a silhouette of this slender dancing woman. Each one of us is transfixed. Hopelessly lost to her like a moth to a flame. We do not seem to mind releasing our control – in fact we enjoy it, revel in it! She glides closer, or so it appears. I realize then that it is us moving towards her...an entire dance floor drawn together in harmony under the same spell. A sweet magnetism pulls us in, and I begin to make out the contours of her face. I then see all of her. She is gracious and dangerously beautiful, and all of a sudden I feel like a bashful child. I feel as if I'm underwater. The music is muffled and muted. Everything encompassing her is blurred yet her image is clear. I am captivated by her resonating aura and untamed energies, and I want so badly to stay here. As I get closer and closer she begins to fade. From vibrant to dull to almost transparent she faded. Diminished, until all that remained was a faint, granular depiction of the only woman I'd ever fallen in love with. Then she was gone...like she was only ever an idea or a thought, and I was alone again.



Photo by Jennifer Thompson-Duffett

Last Dance  
By Jordan Chisholm

---

I was high as the sky  
under an illusion I had wings and could fly.  
But in truth I was merely a lifeless mannequin detached from reality  
Governed by the voices of my own insanity.

I tried to take control but all it did was make the chaos escalate  
Robbing, dealing, violence, and guns -nothing I could premeditate.  
In an empty room with a pipe, machete and broken down door  
I sat nonchalantly on the floor.

My skinny broken face staring in the mirror thinking  
how I was on a descent to madness and my existence was slowly shrinking.  
Illusory voices never seen but always heard  
my world was a war-torn paradise and my vision was completely blurred.

What remained real was a nebulous cloud of drug-induced amnesia  
and from this frightening, deep psychosis there exists no anesthesia.  
I stood at death's door but I never got handed the key  
2 times I had to OD until it opened my eyes to see.

That maybe I had no control over how much I put inside of me  
I wasn't just flirting with the borders of my limitation  
but I was suffocating holding the grips of a constant resuscitation.

Forever carrying the pain of my past and the guilt of my original sin,  
a deeply hidden, silent killer, never surfacing but lurking beneath my skin.  
Manifesting inside me and insidiously corroding my soul.  
All these years I concealed it but now it was finally taking a toll.

Proliferating in strength every time I fought it with suppression  
conversely forcing me into a deeper depression.  
So badly abused I became an embodiment of my own abuser  
a traumatized innocent child now an everyday drug user.

Obsessed with the idea that happiness existed outside me  
utilizing every element of external stimuli I could get to some degree.  
Desperately grovelling at the transient payoffs of instant gratification  
leaving me with nothing but a reoccurring mental fixation.

Incessantly taunted by evanescent moments of satisfaction  
Diverting from my real predicament it worked as a perfect distraction  
But these ventures of externally acquired joy would never sustain  
And it's the emptiness I always felt that would just remain.

I was hiding behind a mask of a plastic gangsta  
A clown, a criminal, a genius, a prankster.  
All just protecting the pain of a young man  
losing his identity with every breath of a cracklating twirl.  
Until I was granted the gift of desperation  
That I was able to gain perspective a synthetic separation.

The illusion of my self-sufficiency blinding me  
from seeing that the victim and culprit was actually me  
The narrow lenses of my own excessive vanity  
Was keeping me doing laps of my own insanity.  
Recovery ruptured my ego that I used for protection  
It really was a block blinding me from seeing my own progression.

I was left striving for an unattainable perfection  
My own destructive form of perpetual rejection.  
But believing that there is a power greater than me  
Was the surrendering that set me free.  
Impeding on my narcissism  
So I listened to someone else for once without cynicism.

I took a step back and saw things from a different perspective  
That I wasn't my thoughts and my view was now objective.  
Having this awareness was really the key  
to realise that all along peace existed inside of me.

Yet the pain I inflicted on other people during addiction  
Was a struggle, a constant affliction.  
The guilt and the shame  
Is a consequence I can't disclaim  
I was stuck because I didn't know how to make amends  
But I know the way forward now is to never do it again.

So I was prisoner inside fabricated walls in my own mind  
Searching for peace I was unable to find  
But these walls have now fallen away  
Leaving me vulnerable; a stronger pathway.

It's true the devil once had a hold of me  
But now I have a choice of who I going to be  
With all the near fatalities and crumbled realities.  
I know this is the final dance,  
And to have it with the devil I won't be taking that chance.



As one ponders the paths set before oneself and what may lay ahead  
It's the journey that calls out that the soul hears and adventures forth with anticipation of what's to be.  
Unsure yet ready to face challenges and heights to climb with courage and strength.

The experiences through the heights and valleys that ignites one's soul, like a clay vessel in the flames  
show the beautiful patterns created by a glaze.

One is made of all this through moment after moments in time equaling up to the lifetimes that make  
oneness all beings desire. The harmony with all around us and in us connecting with the universe. The  
law of all LOVE and peace.

Guiding the spirit and soul with insight to the spiritual and universal waves and patterns in all creation.  
The unique designs found in nature inspiring beautiful Art and music.

The slashes of colours and wondrous sounds touching me one's heart and mind, opening memories with  
interesting moments of life.

The Seashells, sand dollars and the depths of the deep blue sea has yet to be fully discovered leaving a  
unlimited imagination to stretch with amazement. The newest creation unseen by the human eyes what  
can yet be. Humanity has lost hope in all this earth has to share or yet explore the oceans below we will  
grow your minds.

Humanity 's journey is to grow, stretch, and learn of lives beauty. To expand the soul of all knowledge  
the earth and cosmos can reveal.

**By Elaine Faelan Dobbin**



When I took this picture I thought how beautiful the ducks were. I really like getting up close with nature  
because of the quietness. To mean quietness means restful. It reminds me of camping when I was younger.

**- Gary Arnold**

## **A Gift from the Sun**

The first time you see the sun  
you are unearthed and torn away.  
Thoroughly cleansed, your many  
freckles peak through grime  
as it is washed from your skin.  
Someone is waiting for you.  
You will soon bring joy  
but first you must be reborn.  
Your raw skin is peeled back,  
little by little,  
revealing new flesh;  
A chance to be reborn.  
Firm hands guide the tools  
that reshape you into  
the perfect mould  
as perfect as the rest.  
Slicing and cutting through  
your tender raw flesh.  
Your cries are muffled  
as you are submerged  
beneath a freezing pond.  
As you gasp for air  
you are tossed into  
a steel cage.  
Shivering from the cold,  
you are lowered  
into a heat unknown;  
more blistering than the sun  
more violent than drought.  
You yearn for the cold.  
And yet,  
you are reborn.  
You are cherished.  
You are happiness.  
You are sunshine.

**By Sarah Cockins**

## **From Whence I Came**

*Once upon a time, The One and The One met.*

*Hearts entwined and the two became one.*

*The two begat six.*

*I am one of the six.*

*I am one of the eight.*

*The original two plus three come from away.*

*The three remaining are born at their destination.*

*I am one of the three.*

*Of the numbers born to the primary pair,*

*Two resemble the masculine and four are in the likeness of the feminine.*

*I am one of the four.*

*I am as close to the middle as an even number can be,*

*I assumed the placement as my spot.*

*I am one of eight, one of seven, one of six,*

*One of five, one of four,*

*One of three, one of two,*

*One of one.*

*Part of the whole.*

*Patricia Weafer*

*February 26, 2019*





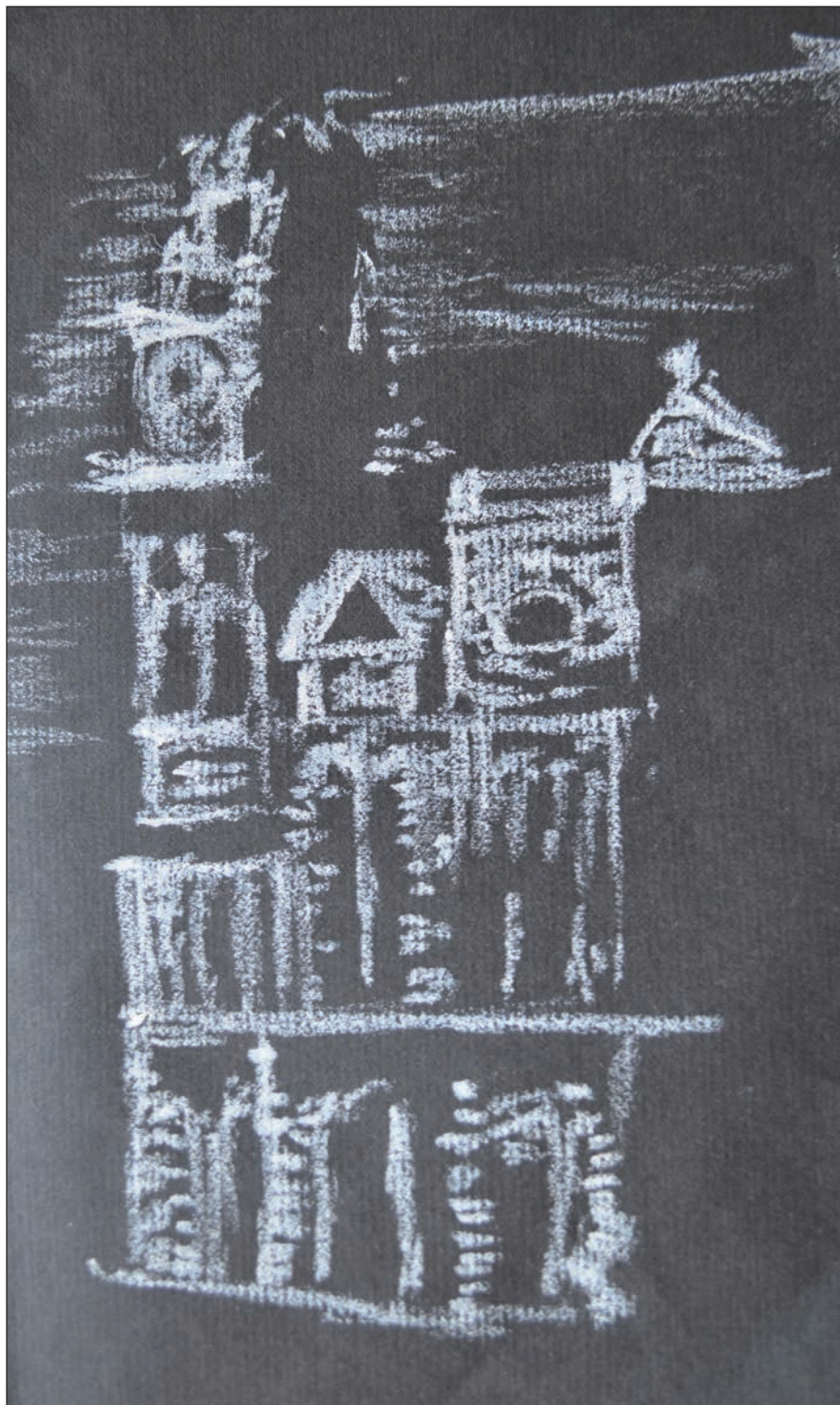
By Derek Irwin





By Charlene Brooks





By Leonard Hill





(Anonymous)



By Carolyn Barber



We didn't get first kisses,  
These lips, they touched a bottle, a joint, a pipe  
Before they could touch another human  
Like any dark romance, you promised to make us feel so good  
That the mess you created would be forgotten,  
But you also took away our chances to create anything  
Worth remembering  
You left my family with years without a visit,  
Except maybe a hospital,  
Or a jail visit,  
Waiting for the day it became a morgue visit  
Heart drops every time I'm called more than once,  
Waiting to hear that your heart is no longer beating  
But I've already had to mourn the loss of people who are still breathing,  
Breathing thanks to that second, third, fourth, fifth chance spray,  
My dad always says where there's life, there's hope,  
But you can breathe and still not live for years  
He also used to say "they're safer in there, than out here"  
But since when did jail become safer than your own home?  
Walking zombies,  
And they have eaten the hearts out of anyone who has ever loved them,  
I swore years ago that I was done loving them  
But doc, can you save him?  
I know he's a junkie, but he's my brother, that one's my lover, that one's my friend  
Blood runs thicker than water, he would always say,  
And this blood, it has the same need for oblivion as you do  
I just haven't stuck a needle into it yet  
But that's gonna be my next go to if you don't save him, doc,  
Like mother, like daughter,  
Like father, like son, like brother,  
Like me  
And I don't want to end up on these streets,  
But that's where you keep taking my loved ones  
And I don't want to die yet,  
But that's where you keep taking my loved ones  
I wanna take them through a forest and show them how beautiful the color green can be  
But I can't, because you can't find much dope in a forest,  
So until then, I'll just try to remember for myself, how beautiful the colour green can be.

- Anonymous

COLDEST NIGHT EVER  
AND WE WALK DOWN-  
TOWN

MANY ARE SICK LOOKIN'  
AROUND

WHERE IS THE DEALER  
I NEED IT NOW

WHERE ARE THE DRUGS  
NO PATIENCE IS FOUND

PASS ME THE MATERIALS  
FOIL & FITS

SPOONS & LIGHTERS  
LET'S GO ON A TRIP.

By Terry Thang

## The Sound of Space

Have we each been alone  
in a crowded room;  
living on the wrong side of  
the fine line  
of the great divide  
between ourselves  
and everything else?  
You reached across  
the derisive space between  
us,  
to brush away a tear,  
and in doing so,  
gave me love like no other.  
I hope to one day cuddle up  
to your heart  
when we meet on this side  
of the equator;  
you know, when time stops  
moving  
between breaths,  
and all creation wells up  
between us;  
then shall I know you as  
Venus  
to my Mars.  
The universe  
is full of ticking time  
bombs;  
stars waiting to explode,  
and suns about to go nova,  
but we sit in the stillness  
of mutual awe overwhelming  
the vacuous space between us  
with inherent beauty.  
You are 1,000 miles away  
tucked and nestled in your  
safehouse,  
and I live raw and wounded,  
dancing to another beat from  
up the block.  
But none of that matters  
when we meet on all seven  
cosmic planes  
and my heart reverberates  
with  
your major chords,  
the silent music of deep  
space  
ringing long and loud.

By PJ Thomas





*My description:*

The photo is of an old parking lot that is covered by a brick wall. The sun is shining thru the opening on one side. This wall is on Water Street in Peterborough. From this area Hunter Street with the cafe's can be seen. The time was late in the afternoon. The traffic was slow as people were going home for the day.

*Meaning of the photograph:*

The long winter is over and the sun can be seen once again we will feel it's warmth and be renewed by it's light. The plants and flowers will bring color and the air will be filled with the songs of birds.

**Photos and description by  
Kellie-Lynn Fairman**



After Hours:

I would watch from my window  
for the traces of humanity  
Left scattered about the city  
Dropped without thought  
Dropping faster than the mercury  
After sunset

Around all the rent-to-own stores'

Flashy window adds, all of the pay day loan pushers, keeping the impoverished indebted to them until they default or die

all of the lonely souls which litter the streets, in search of acceptance, walking the city at all hours, finding new means to get high, with a gram, a rock, insuffogate inject or drop, then escape for an hour before reality hits, harder every time

I would've liked to have known your true name

And I could've done without the well constructed, albeit fanciful, story you concocted in order to relieve me of my pocket change

I wish I could stop your tears

I want to tell you everything will be alright

And believe the words which pasify you.

By Logan Heigh

Page ①

### "White Cross"

Criminal record, drug abuse  
beating up everyone, don't wanna make a  
truce.

Taking on dad, just to prove his point  
Dropping acid and rolling a joint

A harley davidson and tattoo  
He's the king of this world, yeah it's true  
Everyone knows when he's in town  
cause the folks at the bar start covering  
down.

Cop on his tail cause he's dealing drugs  
and he beating up all of those so called  
thugs

All of this started in a war called  
Vietnam  
where his mind got screwed up from  
the war zone and the bombs.

But then the light kicked on and he  
got sense in his head  
He prayed the simple prayer as he  
laid on his bed.  
His brothers weren't a part of his  
family anymore  
Cause Jesus came over and knocked  
on his door.

Page ②

He decided to leave behind the manice  
He walked away from the hog and never  
came back  
He started his new life over again  
And left behind the life of sin.

ministry to young man what's on his  
heart.  
The lord was just a started  
He doesn't want any gold or glory  
He just want's to tell people his story.

Normally it's 'A' marks that spot  
Instead, this time it's a white cross  
At this white cross tears have been  
~~be led~~ shed

Because finally a new life can be  
led

~~same~~ The lord is his heart  
and soul

The white cross show his life  
goal

His testimony is Unchained  
And Jesus Christ is the one  
you can blame.

By Robert Moore



excerpts from the  
**ULTRAVIOLET  
OCEAN**

*Continued from Issue Three*

**gwynception** is described as a white schizo trans femme 5'10" 150-160 pounds long blonde hair and a curious sense of fashion

**08 mental illness of a genetic origin versus the daily pressure to hate yourself**

As she walked down the hall leading to Mr. Thompson's room she gathered what composure she had. She considered she was suddenly in the depths of psychosis. She retraced her past few days. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary until today just before she came here. She didn't feel as if she was out of grip with reality but her experiences seemed to speak differently.

She stopped and was ready to turn around and head straight out of the residence. She was going to go back to her apartment, crawl into her bed, and force herself to sleep.

She didn't get a few steps before she heard Charlotte call her name from behind. She was standing outside Mr. Thompson's room. She was waving her over.

Fara walked down the hall that felt strangely longer than normal.

She looked in a room and the neighboring Dorothy was a shining blue glow sitting in front of her television. It was playing some unrecognized show.

"He wants you to be with him as he passes, he's about to go, so you need to get in there. Be supportive and positive and don't lie to him, he knows he's dying."

Very unsure of the situation she walked into the room. There was a smell of roses. She didn't know who would have got him those. He didn't look like he was dying as she entered the room seeing him in the bed that's back was elevated, it was then there was a flicker and he looked pale and was sweating and very distressed.

There was another flicker and he looked healthy again. She swore in the flicker she saw a symbol that she was unsure she had ever seen before.

"Come sit, sit, sit ...," Mr Thompson coughed, "Fara I must tell you what must be told."

She sat in the chair adjacent to the bed not being sure she could handle the paranoid thoughts this man could muster in her, flash strange echoes of the past to her. She found sometimes another person's delusions could become hers.

"Fara I have no one to tell way I must tell, but I assure the upmost truth that diamonds be found in your heart. Fara, in fact your heart has shown itself to be such and so fourth quite a diamond. Fara..."

She never really heard him speak like this. The way he engaged her eyes showed he really did have something to say.

"The wakers have been following you."  
He spoke with a sudden quickness.  
"I know this because they spoke to me.  
I'm not sure who visited who."

It was dark outside Fara suddenly noticed.

"You saw the symbol when you walked in here didn't you?" Mr. Thompson asked.

Hesitant to answer she affirmed she saw something.

"I've seen the glow around you Fara. I've always seen it. I'm not sure why you weren't graduated into the hidden order. The oracle told me I would have kin by my side but someone who wasn't of the order. I knew you would come."

He produced from under his blanket a necklace with a rock or a tooth tied to it. It shined though in the light and there was a flicker and it was glowing then another flicker and it was a greyish green stone that resembled a canine tooth.

"Life is hard Fara, we both know that. I have no family who looked out for me and I have suffered from frightening darkness and homeless and ...." He began coughing and jerking forward from the bed.  
"a brokenness."

"Do you know what I'm saying?"

Fara tried to answer, she had her mouth open.

"You know what I'm saying. Life is terrifying and best when bland. There has to be a meaning behind it and that's what I learned, there is meaning behind life. I know there is because someone produced a fruit I was given once in the in-between world that tasted like the meaning of life. When I bit into that fruit. I know where they can be found. Just left of--"

Mr Thompson went silent squeezing his eyes shut.

"The infinite possibilities seem impossible but compared to the infinite impossibilities everything is right as a Thursday. I remember a Thursday mind you that once was definitely wrong."

He began speaking of a long lost love from his youth, which led to a discussion of how different states of mind like love could produce gateways that you can find if you know to look for them. He spoke of a time when he was from the details it seems living on the streets. In this time he was summoned to a judicial meeting of an interdimensional sort. He spoke calmly of a calamity that was averted due to the work of the mysterious hidden order.

Mr. Thompson then asked for Fara's hand.

She grasped his which was outreached and shaking.

She didn't expect them to be so cold.

"It's time." He simply spoke.

\*\*\*\*

*this concludes the first story arc of the ultraviolet ocean - it began as self therapy during a time following a psychosis*

*a lot of the descriptive details pertaining to psychotic like experiences aren't exactly truly reflective of a psychosis - to do so is a near impossible task*

*not all experiences on the schizophrenic spectrum are the same*

## Is This Our Future?

In the year 2029 an old but able man sits next to an open window.  
The air inside is usually stale, but today he enjoys the cool inflow.  
In high density housing the birds he knew he sees around no more.  
He counts himself fortunate he doesn't live in the downtown core.

He dreams of his youth when he could see and hear loons at the lake.  
He's been looking at portraits of birds he took, wishing for more to take.  
He remembers falling asleep at night to the tremolos and wails of loons.  
Now the night music, if one can call it that, lacks such wondrous tunes.

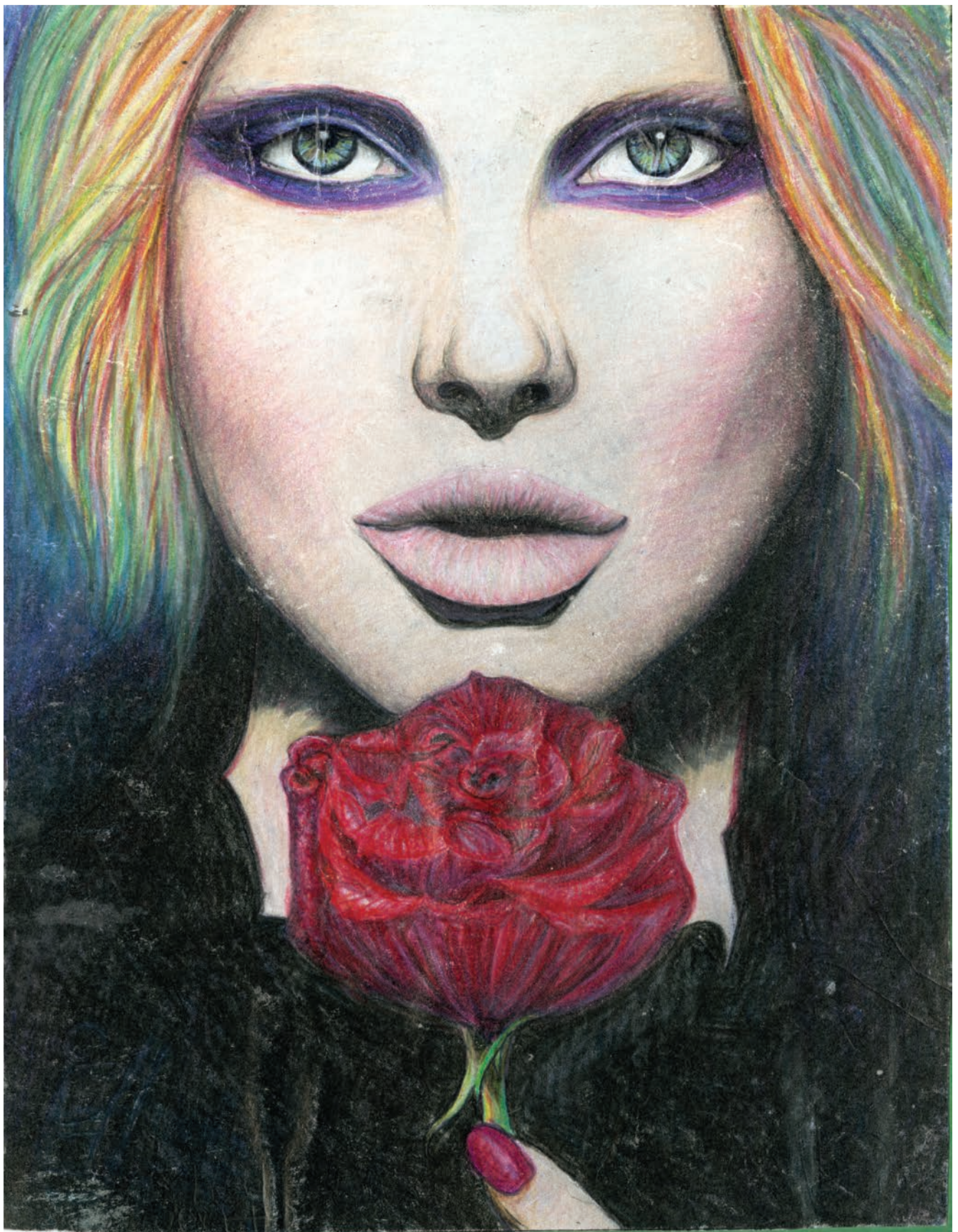
Gone, too, are the whippoorwill, the spotted sandpiper peep-peep-peeping.  
Most people thought only of fun and profit, the wildlife not worth keeping.  
He recalls a place tucked in the woods, a stream beavers dammed for a pond.  
If he could trade these bleak walls for such a place, he'd gladly abscond.

It's spring in his mind: male yellowthroats sing "witchety-witchety-witchety!"  
The more he imagines it, the more he becomes so fidgety, fidgety, fidgety.  
He sees whirligig beetles spinning, dragonflies abuzz in search of prey.  
He's determined to go there, to his paradise, by some means, some way.

He packs his gear, arranges for a car, and smiles broadly as he gets in.  
Now, at the edge of the stream that was his dream, he cries as he wades in ...  
Beavers can help mitigate effects of climate change, but we must do our part.  
We photographers can motivate others to act by the influence of our art.

Murray Arthur Palmer, 2016.





By Meredith Warner





By Timothy Doyle

### Untitled

Wherever I am  
I don't belong.  
An outcast  
Meant for a different life.  
Solitude is my only comfortable  
embrace.  
If I could just watch all from afar.  
As soon as I engage it's  
Fear  
Shame  
Pain.  
I try to close my mind  
But my heart keeps it open.

-Emily Clarey



The morning breaks...



It was just a dream. You did not relapse in this dimension. For a change.

Rod from the dead, I love you. You were so hot in Twilight Zone. Damn your bad heart



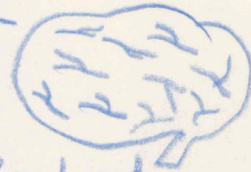
You shall have me in the after-life. But first you must fulfill your soul contract.



Fuckin A!  
What? — in this frickin dimension?!?

Yepers. After all you're traveling through a dimension of mind... whose boundaries are that of imagination

Far out, man! I KNEW I didn't piss THAT much in bed



Why just the other day I dreamt that one of our bus drivers commutes from VANCOUVER and back again to work for Peterborough Transit

my love, my love — why must I have bonthead dreams?

Wait... what happened to KC? / My heart is full like the rehabilitated Grinch — bursting with love for menz



So true. Wherever did this heart and big, big fat brain come from?

# barking soliloquies

by Susan Cruickshank

Annabelle was the low-key English Setter who I cared for a few years back. I took care of her along with her country home that sat on a rolling hill while her humans were away. She seemed to become more gentle as the years crept forward, or maybe I just got to know her better.

Regardless, there were exceptions.

Mornings after breakfast, and in the evenings after supper, she would wait at the front door with anxious anticipation, impatience brimming until I opened it and she was free to dart out to begin her rounds.

Part of her routine was to bark.

She barked *a lot*.

To the unrefined ear, Annabelle's earnest pronouncements were noise. I too felt that her barking was excessive when getting to know her. But that was before I took the time to watch her nightly laps, before understanding and love took over and brought me eyes that could see.

In her younger days, her tail at full-mast, a feathery flag that she held up behind her, she trotted the perimeter of her home's landscape, sounding like the town crier, announcing to her world that morning had come or evening was nigh.

As she has matured, the vigour of youth had slowed, and she no longer felt it necessary to do circles of the property while shouting her emphatic message. Rather, she would sit at the top of her hill; tail fanned out on the green grass behind her, ears perked forward at attention, her face moving from side to side in an impassioned rhythm, using the oratorical skills of a prized speaker who understood the value of a dramatic pause.

I've wondered what prompted these barking soliloquies to a faceless world.

What compelled Annabelle every morning and every night, to speak? And why speak out to no one in particular?

And then one evening I watched a bird behaving similarly, its lengthy speech *sans* audience. Not only was there no other bird nearby (that I could see), there were also no pauses in this bird's song which would suggest a reciprocal call in the distance (that I could hear). Dubious research methods to be sure, but it did lead me to ask a more profound question, "Was this bird, like Annabelle, vocalizing only for himself?

Which then led to the question, "Do we *need* to speak, is it something essential for *all* living creatures to express themselves, even if there is no one there to listen?"

It makes me think differently about those who insist on talking *on and on and ON* when it is clear that everyone in the room has checked out, no longer interested in what they have to say .

Maybe there is just a part of us that is hardwired to express ourselves whether the world is paying attention or not. Maybe the primary purpose of speaking is to connect with others, to the outside world, but maybe it is also a way to connect with ourselves. Could it be a way to help us organize our thoughts? A way to integrate another piece of who we are that can only be done if we take what is inside and bring it outside so that we can bring it in again?

I don't know.

A bird doing this is a stretch, but maybe...



## Desert Island

*By Benjamin Goddard*

A lonely cry echoes  
through indigo skies above.  
Hawk circles the scene.  
She watches as dusty silhouettes sway,  
silvered then jilted on two way mirrors,  
before they vanish in mirage  
or stow away in shifting dunes.

Keen as jagged mountain peaks  
the sultry sand is known  
to entrance those lonely wanderers.  
Willfully blind ones  
will scan remote horizons  
as they search for what remains elusive,  
taking comfort in a solus  
that may become an isolation.

My aching soles have been scorched  
black from the baking sand.  
As I come to rest before myself,  
my tender marbles silhouette  
appears close behind.  
She breathes music in tender tones,  
and time stands still.  
The mirror glints.  
I know that smile will glow bold in my memories  
as deep into the long night as life can sustain.  
Perhaps further.

It was more radiant than the cosmos  
as seen from all frequencies of light.

Once again through tiny cracks  
in smooth veneer that frames the glass  
she shows a glimpse of something past,  
And it is enough.



**By Maggie Miller-Marchant**

With certain observation I've made over the years through out Southern Ontario's Punk Scene which is still very much alive, I've decided to write out a few pointers and guideliners for someone looking to get into or understand, the Moshpit. This is...

#### MOSH PIT ETIQUETTE

##### #101 It's A Communion

The Moshpit is place to get your aggression out with like minded people in a safe and productive manner. Dirty punches and kicks are generally a good way to get yourself ousted from the Pit. If someone should fall down, help them to their feet to continue the community carnage.

##### #102 It's Not A Place For Predatory Aggression

The Mosh Pit is not a place to get away with getting at somebody. If you have a problem with somebody in what happens to be a pretty tight knit scene the

#103 Mosh Pit is not your stage for a fight, best case scenario you annoy everyone in the crowd, worst case scenario you pasue the show and get manhandled by

bouncers. If you must engage in the coversation of neandrathals, there's an outside

##### #103 Sexual Assault Will NEVER Be Tolerated

There's no room in the world for such a thing and that certainly stand true in the mosh pit. History has shown people have got the idea that the mosh pit is an acceptable place to "cop a feel" or grope someone and it's not, in fact I'd say it's one of the rare times that warrants someone a justified crowd beating. Every one is there for a good time, ad your good time should never infringe on anothers. Woodstock 99 can NEVER happen again.

I hope you've learned a little something about the truly caring nature of what to the unknowing eye might just seem like a bunch of sweaty mammals slamming into one another to loud aggressive music. Stay tuned for continuations of...

#### MOSH PIT ETIQUETTE

**By Tyler Smith**

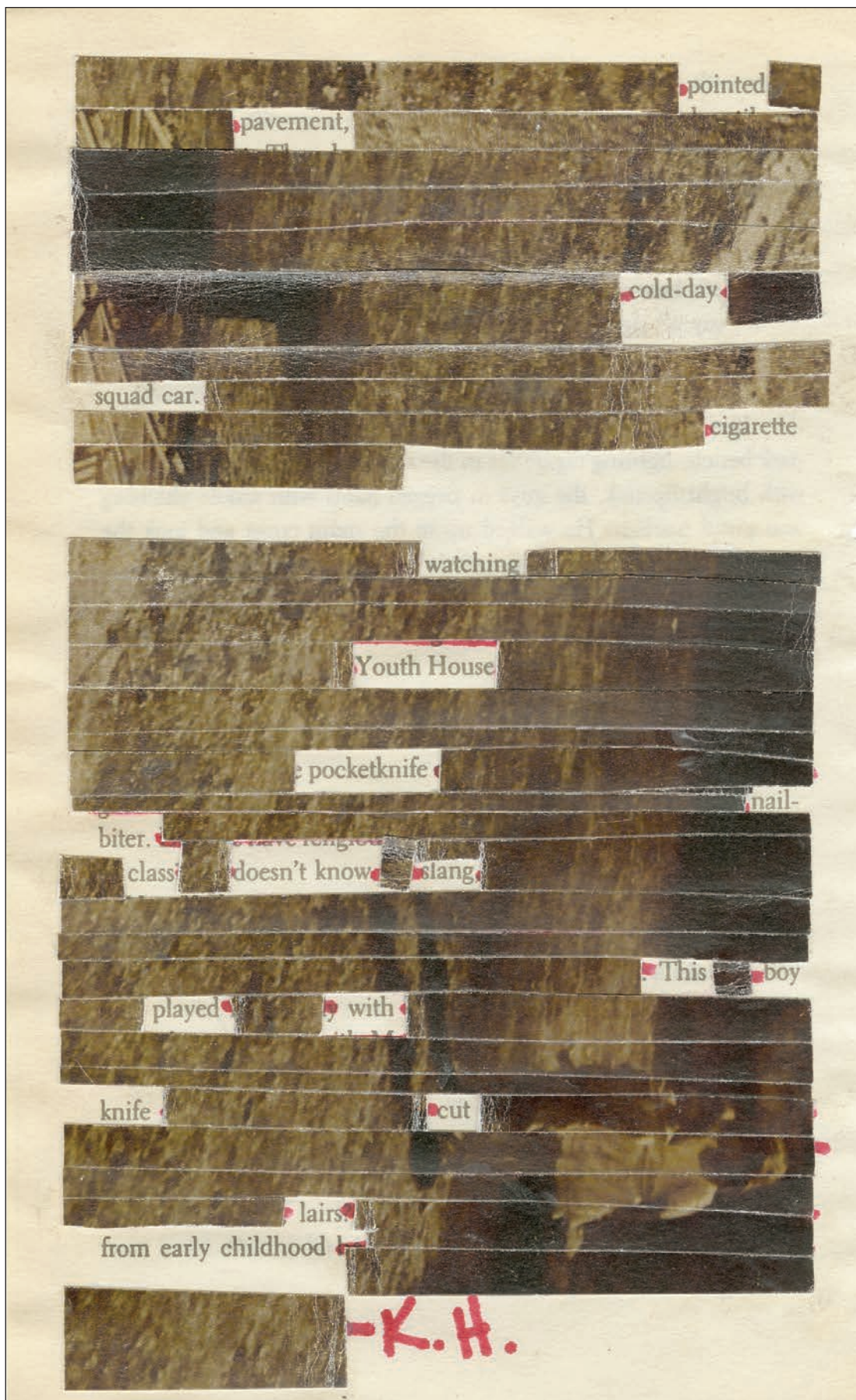
#### *A Proud Woman Does Something*

I feel sometimes when mentally challenged women get hurt they don't put it out there. A lot of mentally challenged women don't tell their stories of violence because they're embarrassed or angry. Mentally challenged women might not press charges because they think it's their

fault. Or they haven't been taught about sex. My family loves me and they never taught me what rape is. When I was raped I didn't know what it was.

**By Shelby Hulme**





**July 19 2012**

She kept on  
swimming - her circles  
darkening  
her crosses retreat  
as she whips  
the water - flirting  
at her feet  
- deeply crevicing  
her skin  
the water whales - while  
washing her from within  
lights flicker  
keep flickering on - to  
the welcoming surface  
a silken body of coolness  
into which  
- the sun slipping  
teases  
with its prism  
of pirouette  
all this consoles her

her presence one  
one with the water  
to whom - she  
tells her prayer  
- with fanaticism  
'everything is in transition'  
she says -  
'your children weep now  
but will later rejoice'  
for she is inebriated  
inebriated -  
by her movement  
- by the stroke  
of her intimacy  
with this winsome and fluid comrade  
just as lake and shore engage  
so too the woods  
with the fall of night  
woos the water  
lapping - laughing  
with mingled echoes  
of late frolics and bird cries  
- with shimmering reflections

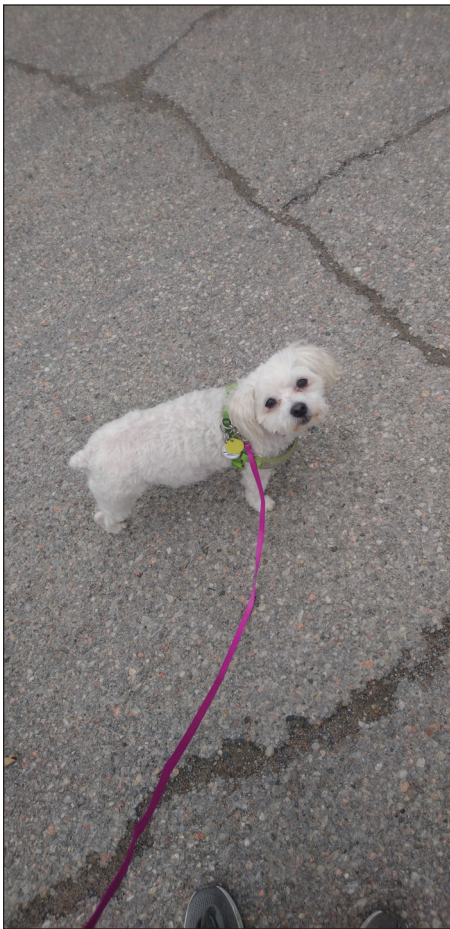
from the lingering  
iridescence of shore's light  
by now  
she is far from home  
her demons cannot  
pursue her here  
to this place  
this place that  
rocks and cradles  
her very being  
for with every surge forward  
this kind medium  
takes her back  
- retrieves her  
from her pain  
to know her natures  
- roots-  
Finally  
with each breath  
she is lost  
in the purity of her moment.

**By Maureen McGarity**



**By Stephen Land**

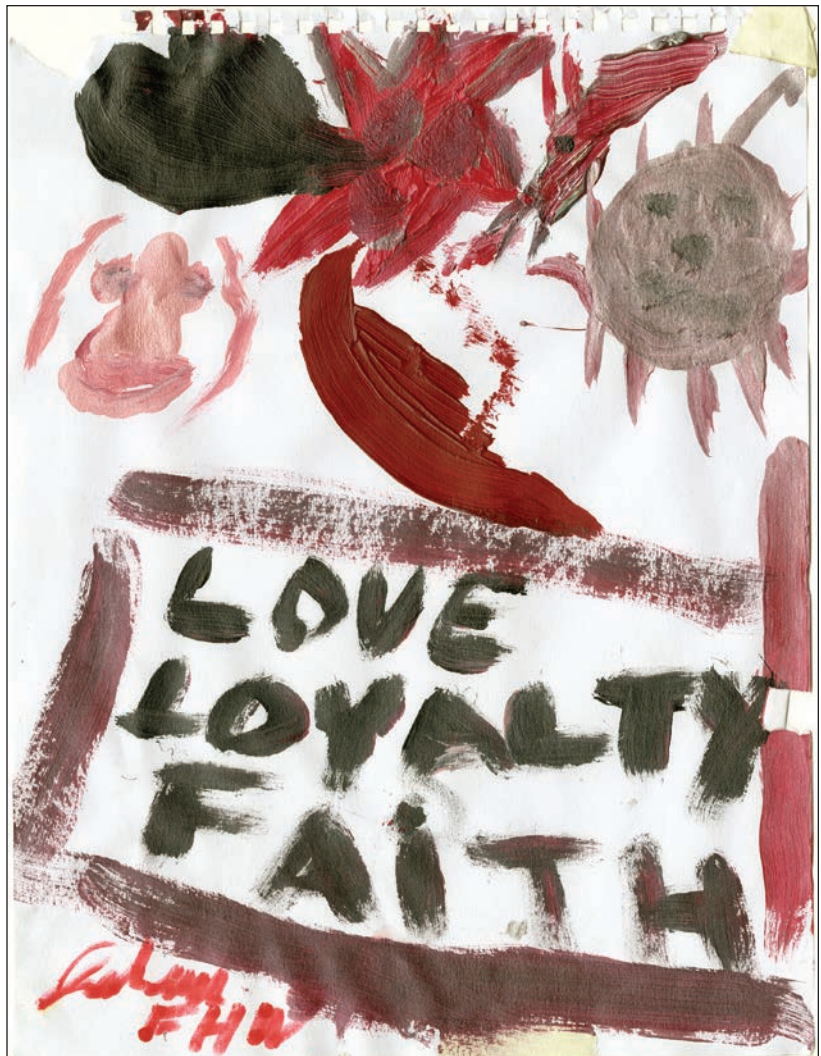




How my husband and I adopted a dog from Toronto Humane Society. He was a bused from his first owner. His name is Melo. He has lived with us since October 2018. He has improved since then. He loves long walks and spending time with us. He is five years old. Melo is a Maltese mix.

At Melo's first home he was very badly abused. His first owner used to kick Melo around like a football and locked Melo in the closet. Since Melo has lived with us he has gotten a lot better with chasing his tail. A week after we got Melo in started playing with his toys. He loves being outside more than being inside. He does still chase his tail from time to time but not as much as he did when he first came to our place. He doesn't get along very well with other dogs. He loves getting a lot of attention from us.

**Photograph and description by  
Mary Ireland**



**By Joshua**





By Tiffany Quackenbush