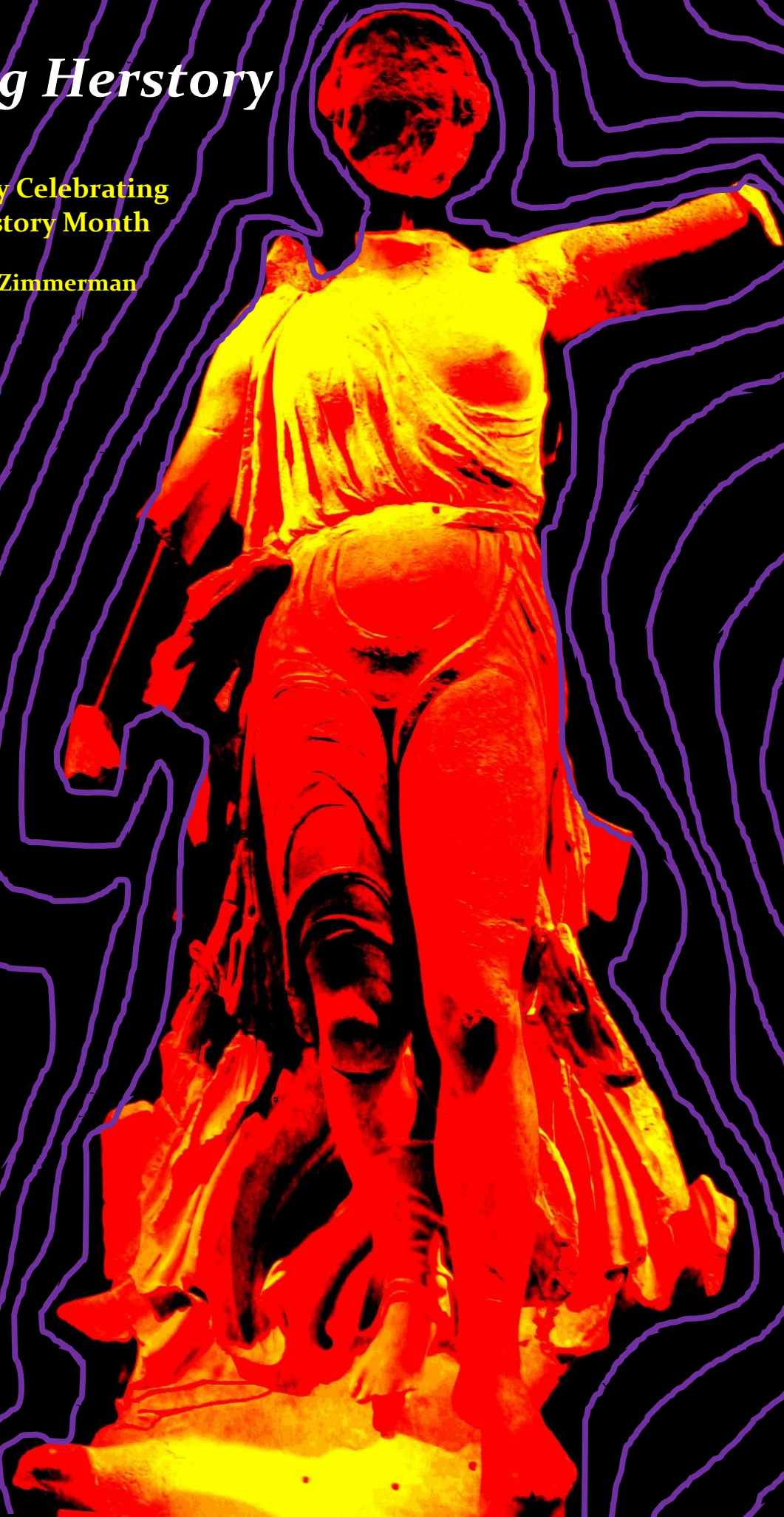


Making Herstory

**An Anthology Celebrating
Women's History Month**

Edited by Tom Zimmerman



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This *Making Herstory* anthology celebrating Women's History Month 2021 is a production of the Bailey Library and the WCC Poetry Club, at Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

It features work written by WCC students, faculty, staff, and alumni that was posted on the WCC Poetry Club website in February and March of 2021.

On Wednesday, March 17, in honor of Women's History Month, we hosted a *Making Herstory*-themed open-mic Zoom event. This open mic featured readings from work submitted to the *Making Herstory* anthology as well as readings from an online "basket" of poems by women poets. Fifty people attended.

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Margaret Fuller

September 1850. Hurricane waters.
100 yards off the shore of Fire Island.
She was last seen clinging to the mast
of *The Elizabeth*, right as her maybe husband
was swept off the ship by a massive wave.
Before they left Rome, with their for sure child,
she was filled with foreboding, writing to a friend –
*I am absurdly fearful and various omens
have combined to give me a dark feeling ...
It seems to me that my future upon earth will soon close.*

The New York Tribune's first official female
foreign correspondent. Edgar Allan Poe
divided humanity into three categories:
men, women, and Margaret Fuller.
Her writing caught fire in Emerson's fully
laureled head. Her loss led Thoreau
to clamber over miles of shoreline, weeping,
searching for her body, her last manuscript.
The wind was terrible, and the waves mountains
that did not yield. Her baby, Nino, drowned
in the arms of the steward. People poured
onto the shore to glean the pickings washed
to the beach. No effort made to save survivors.

One of the survivors heard her say *I see nothing
but death before me—I shall never reach the shore.*
When Nathaniel Hawthorne heard of her death,
he said *Providence was kind.* He meant that
as a maybe married 40-year-old woman
with her twenty-month-old son in arms, it was better
for her reputation that she died. Oh Nathaniel.

Women's Studies

When I signed up for Women and Psychology in 1985,

I was hoping for moon symbolism and Yin power.

Teach me how to trust my intuition. Instead, they talked about lazy, bad boyfriends, hostile, abusive brothers and fathers.

I'd already figured that out. What I wanted was blood moon truth, deep waters plunging down into the archetypal sea of female knowing, a world I wanted charted. It was the class where I got the lowest grade: B-. In my papers, I'd cite Emma Jung, Carl's wife, talking about the Grail, and Merlin Stone's *When God Was a Woman*. Expectations were not met.

For years, being a woman meant for at least a week each month:

black blues, fury, blood, grinding. I'd vomit from the pain.

Years of crushing force, rage against the world. Childhood wounds.

Once I gave birth, my cycle self-soothed.

I was mostly a good mother to my daughters who are well beyond my ability to fully understand.

They are always and only themselves.

I am me. My body remembers them, my bones and joints gravitate to theirs – there is a correspondence of like to like.

I pull towards my beloved as well, but that is more a pull of blood:

his A+ sings sweetly with my O+. I could slash our palms to press them together,

spit swear our bond, but the magic already happened, is happening still.

I take my five anti-depressant cocktail, remember those blood fires, and wonder at my own resilience. I am still learning.

My Jackie

I was eight years old, playing Backwoods in the basement. In my cabin-without-walls, I worked in the kitchen chopping wood, and taking care of the animals in the barn. Just then, Mom came running down the stairs. “The president has been shot!” she said. She was so upset. I couldn’t relate to her words, couldn’t imagine what she was talking about. Her distress is what I remember. I went back to playing Backwoods.

Later we watched the funeral on TV. John-John saluted his father’s casket. My little sister looked up from her playing and said, “Horsie!” as the riderless horse went by. When the funeral procession came to the Capitol, the band played “Hail to the Chief” as the casket was unloaded. Jackie dipped her head. She was veiled but I knew she was crying. I felt so bad for her. I wished I could take her hand, say something that would make her feel better. After that, I thought about her all the time. I even cut pictures of Jackie out of magazines and put them in my toy safe.

But I didn’t want anyone to know anything about Jackie and me. One day I was lying on my stomach looking at the pictures of her in *Life* magazine. When my Dad came into the room, I shoved the magazine under me.

“I know you’ve been thinking about Jackie,” he said. “You don’t have to cover up.” But somehow I did. I didn’t want to share Jackie. I wanted her to be just mine.

Admiration

Invisible ceilings
Hard
Glass
Meant to keep out
And yet you strive
Undeterred
Ambitious
Extinguishing all doubt
I'm in awe almost daily
As you make history in this nation
So I give you this poem
Signed with feverish admiration.

The Bachelor

There's a new bachelor in town.

You've seen all the commercials,
heard all the interviews,
read the biographies of all the contestants.
And after all that buildup,
the night has finally come.

You sit in front of your television
for hours on end,
watching as girl after girl steps out
of the sleek black limousines.

Silently,
perhaps unconsciously,
you're judging them all.
Judging them by their dresses,
their hair,
their first impressions.

Are they pretty enough for him?
Memorable enough?
Are they here for the right reasons?
You watch deep conversations as they unfold
and too many first kisses to count.

Then comes the most important part of the night:
you watch as he picks his first round.
You know he's judging each of the girls in front of him
the same way that you did when they first arrived.
Each of the girls look so nervous,
so hopeful – and you realize you are, too–
that their names will be called

and asked the fated question:

“Will you accept this rose?”

Time goes by and relationships progress,
some faster than others.

You watch the girls hang out in the mansion,
or perhaps they’ll go gallivanting across Europe.

No matter where they are or what they’re doing,
you can’t help but feel jealous.

A card is delivered to the house.

Whose name is on it?

Do you like her?

You watch as the bachelor takes one of his potential matches
on a magnificent first date,
one far more elaborate than you’ve ever planned
or could imagine being on.

An amusement park closed down for just the pair,
a skydiving trip,
a hot air balloon ride,
or a shopping spree—all expenses paid.

The possibilities are endless.

And of course, no night is complete without fireworks
or perhaps a private concert.

If she’s lucky, she’ll get a kiss, too

but what you both are waiting for most is the fated question:

“Will you accept this rose?”

But with all of the magic and fireworks,
an evil force is at work behind the cameras.

The producers.

They control everything.
What happens,
and where,
who stays–
and who goes.

The devil works hard, but the producers work harder.

You watch as girls make friendships in the house,
but are they really friends?

There's always a villain each season,
but is she as bad as she seems on camera?

The bachelor picks who he sees a future with –
or does he?

Who is it that really asks the fated question?

Before long,
you've finally reached the end of the journey.
You've sat through hours of dates and drama,
of meeting families,
too many cliffhangers and far too much heartbreak–
and the fated question is asked, time and time again.

Two girls remain.
One will win.

Who will it be?

You hope it's your favorite,
and sure enough, it is.
Is she still there for the right reasons,
after all this time?
Is she there because she was chosen?
Or because she was forced to stay?

You don't want to ask yourself these questions.
You want to believe that these fairy tale romances are really happening.

Next comes a sweeping proposal,
usually atop a mountain,
or some other fabulous view.

The bachelor and his future bride,
looking perfectly photogenic as always.
You listen to heartfelt words,
and fighting back happy tears.
"Will you marry me?"

Then, one last time, the fated question:

"Will you accept this rose?"

And just like that, it's all over.
You have to wait a couple of months,
and then it starts all over again.
You wonder how long the couple will last,
even though they seem perfect on screen.

"I want a love just like theirs," you say.
But is it even real?

Boughs of Memory

Upon bent boughs I stride.
Abrasive branches bowing low as I ascend,
exhaling heavily, a breath too long withheld.
The thrum of thoughts and birdsongs ruffle out an unruly cantus.
Above, the gold-trimmed leaves brush upon the cloudy canvas.
My mother, not far off, calls from my memory.
Never did she rest for my cause. Even now,
when I dare to climb too high, I see her furrowed brow;
I hear the timber in her voice.
But, I had already made my choice;
and I climb higher still.

Breonna

daughter, sister, lover, woman
you should be here.
at night i can taste my defenselessness
today it will be one year

she was sleeping
for my sisters i would burn it all down

every striped car
every piece of plastic gear
every bad apple

you should be here
my mother she would burn it all down
she would scream my name

the taste in my sheets will be permanent,
and we will burn it all down for you.

Into the Woods

August, nine months pregnant,
my body like a boulder
rolling toward havoc
and dreaming of rest,
I go to pick blackberries.
The sweetest, fat and heavy
as lake stones,
hide behind poison ivy—
its vines wind skyward
in helical embrace, holding
the perfect fruit beyond
my straining lips.
Mosquitoes drone in my ear,
drink from its plump lobe;
more hover low
over swampy ground,
sip my swollen ankles.
Shivering in my own sweat,
flayed by thorns, I plunge on,
shake the buzzing demons loose,
then—breathing deep and slow—
reach into the sunless tunnel
of interwoven hooks
and coax the berries forth
glistening and bruised.

Recovery is Loss

for Susan

You were so skillful
that after ten patient
years of therapy
my inner child graduated
bridled, yet unbroken
and so much kinder.
I forgive myself,
help myself to second chances,
exile *always* and *never*
from my lexicon.
Empathy has routed shame.

A raucous dinner party
once ruled my mind:
*Dad shouts over my stepmother
who makes snide swipes at my mother
who mutters darkly under the table
while Grammy warns of bitter winds
and my little brother hears all, silent.*

A surer voice guides me now.
My own, but evocative
of you leaning over
your crossed legs, listening,
assuring me—you *are not*
your mother, your children are
not extensions of you.
For years you helped me break
the chains I forged again

before our next session.
You sent me off ready
and able to turn my back
to the furnace and walk.



What's your story?

It's not over, but sometimes it seems like it hasn't begun. I'm always waiting. Waiting for kids to be older, more self-sufficient, less demanding. Waiting for the semester to start, end, for students to finish an assignment or start their proofreading. Waiting for the day to end, waiting for bedtime. Waiting to go outside again when the endless winter is over. Waiting to have something on my calendar besides work.

Now with COVID in the air, I'm waiting for information, more details, waiting to feel safe again, waiting for "normal" to reappear. Waiting for the feeling of being safe to return. Waiting for things to begin again. I'm waiting for my college freshman to come back home and waiting for my Junior to finish his school day.

In all the waiting, am I living or am I just anxiously anticipating more bad news?

On the other hand, my husband is done waiting for life to begin. He retired and now he has nothing on his calendar, nothing that must be done, nothing to stress over too often. He gets to have fun, go to the gym, sleep in, drink coffee with bourbon, waiting for me to have time to spend with him.

So, my story is ongoing, a work in progress, an unfinished work of redemption, suffering, hope and survival in this world.

Malala's Father

Ziauddin Yousafzai, Malala's father, says in the documentary *He Named Me Malala* that in his culture there is not any courting; he saw his, now wife, went home, and told his parents he wanted "that one." There is a slight distinction between mother and daughter with the perception that the "one who stays to rear up a man's family is functionally different than the one who goes away to rear up another man's family" (Tarar 69-70). Therefore, a girl is brought up with the name "mar jane" which means "daughters are guest" (Tarar 69). She is considered another family's property (Jamal 6). This is a culture where sons are preferred by both father and mother, where daughters are referred to as the "married off" or the "remaining" (Tarar 72).

Malala made it clear that her family life is progressive compared to the traditional by saying, "If I had more conservative parents, I would be married with two children at my age" (*He Named Me*). This is also evident in Malala's father's campaign for educational equality for women. Psychologists are recently starting to pay attention to the role that a father plays in the development of his children, and in the article "Father's Masculinity Ideology and Their Adolescent's Perception of Father's Love," Syeda Sanobar Rizvi explains, "Fathers play a vital role in providing a substantial amount of nurturance, moral and ethical guidance, emotional and financial support...[and]...fathers continue to have a strong influence, especially upon their children's beliefs, values, and plans for the future" (14). Concluding a Pakistani study, Rizvi reveals:

Fathers with more gender equality beliefs have a tendency to be more active, responsible, and warm, and to check their children's behavior more than those fathers with less gender lenient values (Rizvi 15). Therefore, a man who believes less in masculinity ideals will be emotionally closer to his children, would listen to them more and would feel more responsibility towards them in matters other than involving finances and discipline (18).

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Time Sifting

In this world we are all gold diggers. Sifting through our selfish fun while we are young, setting aside others for ourselves. Greed then begins to enwrap into our minds. Maturity strengthens those wraps and squeezes our mind into an inhumane trail of trained programmable thoughts. Running over innocence for the chance of success.

Sifting for a second time, hoping to luckily run across chips of gold, counting on finding that chunk of life-that one big happy f-ing life. Watching browned water strain through, bubble and then disappear. A few minute chips are discovered here and there, we say disappointedly “take what you can find, work with what you have.” Lying to ourselves we say “okay this for now.” How can there be a “now” if we never notice it? At least not long enough to appreciate it. We think we have an idea of what we want so we throw the chips aside.

A third sifting we start looking for the gold of our youth. You know the kind, it doesn't exist. Maybe even the ones we tossed aside. Always searching for the treasure of happiness. Sure, some find fool's gold (appropriately named i might add), think they got lucky. Life seemed to have grinned down on them they realize (if they aren't so illusional to think happily ever after truly exists) they were wrong, this isn't what they were looking for after all. Once again chips are thrown aside.

The fourth and final sifting, we sift frantically. So much so that we tend to not appreciate where we have been, what we have learned, where we are at now. Total focus is on what we have thrown away, what we passed up and the misery of common living. Sifting for time, youth, and happiness all long lost.

All that shines, all that beauty, is long lost.

Disillusioned by *Little House*

As a child, I traveled the prairie through Laura's adventures.
I imagined myself a long-lost Ingalls.
In my mind, my father would have the warmth and wisdom of Pa,
But reality did not compare with the fictional prairies in my mind.

My parents attended the Too Young To Be Great Parents School of Parenting.
They used me as a pawn in their relationship games.
Unlike Rudolph, I longed to be rejected from participation,
But I was forced to play.

As I grew older, my mother's inner pain turned outward.
Because my mere existence caused her once bright future to unravel,
I was the type of seed that made *Roe v. Wade* necessary.
Her anger taught me that perfect performance predicated procurement of
love.

My mother's bitterness, created by unfulfilled dreams, realigned my genes.
As a result, I carry the wounds of her mental scars in my DNA.
Unfortunately, I passed them down to my children.
Their minds complete feats of mental gymnastics that eradicate the pureness
of my love for them.

Alone, I travel the desolate desert of unwanted parental intrusion.
I watch, horrified, as the fruits of my womb make decisions that decimate
their lives.
I live in a classic tale of the *Twilight Zone* where nothing feels real.
My children are aliens with the goal of overtaking the planet that is my
sanity.

Where is the balancing presence of Ma Ingalls when I need her?
Why are my children more like Nellie and less like Mary?

How can I get the stench of my mother's Mrs. Olsen-like disapproval off of me?
Can Reverend Alden say a prayer that will save us all?



Grandma's Summer Days

“Grandma, how long has this garden been here?”

“Since we moved into this house, about twenty years ago, when your Grandpa retired.”

I couldn't imagine that long ago, couldn't picture this acre of land without them—grandpa mowing the lawn, Nonnie hanging clothes on the clothesline, cutting blooms from her flower garden for the dinner table.

The other garden was just for vegetables and berries—plump tomatoes, string beans, sugar snap peas, corn, and a grand black mulberry bush.

Underneath the dirt she showed me potatoes and carrots and a peanut plant she'd tried to grow just for fun.

She was a patient teacher, showing me just the right way to snip pansies, and how to sift through the dirt for the smallest, tastiest potato.

The most fun she had was knocking potato bugs off the plants into a bucket filled with very hot water. I thought it was gross.

The most fun I had was beating rugs she'd hung on the clothesline, and watching the dust motes float away in the sunlight.

Grandpa just sat in his rocking chair
and laughed at all our flailing and seemingly
serious attempts to capture things
that couldn't be caught.



Grandmother's Hands

It wasn't a large plot of ground,
the rows weren't perfectly straight,
but every plant stood tall, staked and nurtured
by the love of my grandmother's hands.

She had an eye for beauty
that she taught me as we walked—
sparkles of dew on the miracle of a spider's web,
the sculpting skill of a potato beetle.

She knew just when things needed tending,
a little water here, a branch or two trimmed back,
deadhead all the spent flower blossoms,
time to pick the raspberries.

Her hands were so swift I could hardly
follow them, but she showed me the perfect
red that was ripeness, the perfect touch
to use to pick without crushing.

The good part was if I crushed a berry I had to
eat it, but I had to fill the berry box first.
Her rules were her rules and as much as I wanted to
eat my mistakes, I had to fill the box to the top.

She had magical names for flowering plants—
snapdragon, hollyhock, dusty miller, azalea,
pansy, Dutchman's breeches, bleeding heart,
hen-and-chicks and honeysuckle.

In the edible garden—curly parsley, purple thyme,
chokecherry, Brussels' sprouts, sugar snap peas, Swiss chard,

Best Girl tomatoes, broccoli and kohlrabi, asparagus
rhubarb and zucchini, black currants and gooseberries.

She used to play tricks on me. She'd pick a ripe pepper
and put it in a tomato cage, tomatoes among
the green beans. My prize for finding them all, all by myself,
I'd get a handful of raspberries—her big handful, not mine.



Mother

first line taken from The Glass Castle: A Memoir by Jeanette Walls

“I was sitting in a taxi, wondering if
I had overdressed for the evening,
when I looked out the window
and saw Mom rooting through a Dumpster.”

I hadn't seen her in years, but there she was,
ass over tea-cup, up to her armpits in garbage.
I asked the driver of the mid-town taxi to stop
at the end of the alleyway for a moment.
I could barely compose a sentence, but waved
sufficient cash to get the message across.

I didn't want to get out or talk to her,
or even look in her direction and hold vigil,
but I couldn't not look. She was a sight.
To hell with the sore eyes cliché—she was filthy,
slovenly, unkempt and disgusting.
But there she was—my Mom.

If Ruby had a sister, she'd be Carol Burnett's
cleaning woman, only taken down a dozen pegs
on the sanity meter. Where had she been
to have stooped so low? Stealing to feed herself,
maybe selling crap for drugs, maybe jostling
commuters for change. She was everything I feared.

I wanted to ignore her,
but once you know a thing, you can't un-know it;
once you know a thing is there, you can't not-see it.
Once you call it Mom, it is forever yours,

even if you don't want it to be.

I wanted to erase the visual along with the past
16 years of mother-less birthdays and proms.

I wanted to tell God to take it all back
and give me a new, cleaner, simpler life.

Immaculate and sanitary and scrubbed sane.



She is Hope

Her name is Hope, sister to Faith.
Yes, she is a woman. She is brave; she is comfort.
Woman embodies hope, man carries power.
She speaks softly about yesterday and tomorrow.

She wakens to the sun-filled trills of killdeer,
the pale promise of a tepid breeze, still and ripe,
settling in the space between notes. She
croons stories of every clan, every species.

She sings songs to the present,
the flowers and birds of spring, the gentleness
of rain on young leaves, the promise of
sugar snap peas and strawberries in the Garden.

She walks in the pause between breaths,
in the silence between words, in the moment
before leaf. She reaches up into the heavens
past the stretching poplars, the swaying willows.

Her gowns flow like clouds passing.
Her hair echoes the web of roots, the warren
of runners, the ivy that clings to trunks
and poles up into the bluest sky.

She carries names in her pocket, hearts
on her sleeve, old souls in her womb,
promise on her feathery wings, and tiny
creatures in the palm of her hand.

Her eyes see all kindness, ears hear all prayers.
She whispers truth, she plays God's keyboard.

She walks among the stars, finds light
in the darkness and shines on all things.



The Angel & the Paper Doll

It felt like breathing in the deep ocean. Her hands iridescent jellyfish, swirling, caressing, holding, breathing. She did it. It wasn't me. Reached down to the center of my body and pulled herself out. "You can move this time," she said. Not with words—but with her silver breath. "You can move."

I wanted to cover my face with my hands but I found I had no hands.

"It's all right," she said, "I'm here."

My body melted into hers and we became one—blues and greens of the ocean filled the operating room. Bright light shone down like the throne of God.

And then I remembered my mother's red lips. Large open mouth, set of words designed to wound. Hands on hips, chest protruding. There but not there. Like a paper doll.

"You can make it this time," the angel said, hands on her hips in the very same way. My breath flowed in and out of me like a wave—green, blue flooding my veins.

"All the world's a stage," she said, red lips protruding.

"You can move this time, you must move," she said, red lips pressed against the styrofoam cup.

It's why I need the iridescent hand. I'm an ancient form of life in the cold, cold ocean, dark and divisive.

"Your mother's killing you," she said, "like poison."

I felt it trickle into my veins. A mother's hand, so soft, so warm—not soft, not warm—hard, cold—bottom of the ocean crushing my bones.

“What will it look like?” she asked.

A baby's hands, fingers curled in on themselves.

“I have been sent,” she said, “to assist you.” I tried to nod. My head was strapped to the table. But somehow she knew I heard.

They stood side by side—iridescent angel next to paper doll. Not holding hands exactly, but not fighting either. I tried to tell them I saw them both, but my tongue would not move. I had had no water for many hours.

The surgeon's hands moved deftly, grabbed the slippery baby and pulled him to safety. My body groaned to let go of such a prize. The light of heaven shone above me—or was it the light of the operating table? She brushed it with her hand and the color turned to green and blue. It shone over my mother's face—painting her in iridescence. And the two became one for the tiniest of moments.

A Soft China Blue

she didn't want to see her dead baby
it's why she stared at her hands

and I realized,
just this moment,
there were two dead babies behind me then,
not just one

two
distended
purple
bruises,
coagulated and still

they were right there,
yet she chose to ignore hers,
so she had to disappear

I swept them behind me
to wait for the explosion—

the heat of it blasted me,
his red face burning my skin

two dead babies
played with their toes
—smiling silently—

it enraged him,
he threatened to take them to the garbage
they laughed,
they were already there

just then
her skin turned a soft china blue,
I could tell she wished to join them

she thought it was her fault
—it wasn't—
babies die sometimes
when no one is paying attention



Men Suck

It's been years since my First Love,
And months since my Second.
During both of these relationships
I was so codependent.
Thinking this love was true,
But it actually wasn't.

I often look back and feel bad for myself
For believing I only had worth when somebody else
Told me I was beautiful or wanted me in bed,
All of those things really got to my head.

But nowadays I am alone
And I finally realize and I really should've known
My value isn't based on what a man says
And I'm perfect just the way I am.

I determine my worth
And I determine my value.
I love myself unconditionally
And I really don't want and I really don't need
Any man determining my value for me.

History Making

History making of passion and love,
we celebrate our power of history in the making.
Feeling the courage and tenacity of powerful women
standing up to adversity and challenges beyond our imaginations.

The sun rises above the bright skies colorful with stars,
voices of generations of powerful women have spoken.
The world hears their message loud and clear:
positive perseverance and super-active.

Fierce and loyal to generations to women all over the globe.
Love of passion brings women to be leaders
of the free world, helping other women in need:
generous, caring, and humble.

That's the history making of powerful women.

Not Just Sleeping

(for Annette)

The throat rattle reminds me she is not just sleeping.
From the corner of her mouth, a thin pink river runs.
Outside, the willows burst yellow green, in first fertile flares of spring.
Reflecting in the pond, the conifers and hardwoods bank the water.
She does not stir, not even one eye lash flutters.
But her chest does rise and fall with erratic rhythm.
Her many books on mystery, esotericism, and spirit line the walls.
Her crystals in cases refract the artificial lights.
Nearby lies her aid, dozing with her mouth ajar.
A small old dog with sparse feathery fur cuddles up against her.
They told me she would press my hand if held, but she does not.
She can hear, so speak, and I lean in.
Over her like a willow, I whisper, "I love you always and forever."
Only now do I note the redundancy of my words.
The kind nurse, too large for the room unwittingly provides soft tones.
She brushes against the long tubular chimes tuned to Pachelbel.
Maria, the Captain, and the children escape on the adjacent screen.
The shifting glare adds a ghostly feel to the darkening room.
The rattle, the chimes, the little grunts of the feathery old dog blend.
As Maria's voice lifts to meet with the peak of the ragged Alps.
I beg the burst of fertile life outside to soothe my aching heart.
I cannot say my last goodbye to her who heads for home.

The Doll Poem

after John Berryman

What is the girl now, who has lost her doll.
What, what is she to do? I saw the doll
Trot happily down the lane, stroll
Happily out of her arms. The toll
Of time will tell a different story—
The girl will dream she gives birth (alone)
And the doll will grow into a woman who says
Thank you for reincarnating me.
The girl will become a woman and go to a psychic
With the dream folded in the doll's clothes.

She senses first possibility—
In a world of dispossession, nothing is owned
Like a doll with a name stitched in a hem.
The girl will unstitch her name, fold in new words
And the doll will lose an eye, stare more vacantly
As light departs imagination...
I suffer and wait, my mind and my being wait,
Metamorphosing in the shade of a tree
Or saying, I am not a little girl.

Luna

A beautiful cool night, clouds purple in
the silver moonlight, wind high in the gleaming
trees, she hears a shutter banging, rises,
wired, from bed.

Her spouse asleep, the peaks
and valleys rising dull beneath the sheet,
but there's a mania—alive and feral—
in her mind.

She steps outside, back stoop
still warm from all-day summer sun, the scent
of side-yard flowers riding on the breeze.

And now a lovely form, a silver sliver
throbbing with her pulse, drifts ghostly over
all that backyard grass she mowed nine hours
ago.

And suddenly, she feels her life,
its grind, the sprouting stump of it that's left.
She follows that strange silver glow straight through
the hedge's cleft. Yes, she'll return—but changed.

Raquel, the Stars, the Moon

To fish for visions in the night, the sky
a pond that glitters overhead and all
around. To breathe this element, not die
or drown. To dive ascendingly, not fall.
Three wishes that entwine as one, she thinks,
the cooling night's dark velvet blue a balm
upon her flesh, a potion that she drinks
as old men drink *cervezas*, tanned and calm.
Her body beautified by work and sun,
her hands as strong as roots, as brown as bark,
yet gentle for her man and little one,
she's found this private moment in the dark,
a luscious chance to dream and hope, to love
and thank her god, a woman, there above.



CONTRIBUTORS

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"My name is **Quareese Calhoun &** I am a student at WCC. I was raised by a single mother, so I have always had a considerable amount of admiration for women. I would like to thank my English 226 professor Ms. Schultz for making me aware of this opportunity."

Hannah Carapellotti is a 2nd-year student, and this is her first year at WCC. She's been writing ever since she was little and would love to be a published author someday. Hannah will transfer to the University of Michigan this fall, where she hopes to earn a degree in library science.

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Susan Houston is a part-time faculty member for WCC and other local colleges. She has been teaching English for 23 years, while raising two boys with her husband. In addition to writing, she likes to read a lot, enjoy nature and visit with friends.

jiggityjag has lots of life experience and plenty to say.

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Diane M. Laboda is a former teacher-librarian and retired WCC executive assistant. She enjoys exploring life's mysteries and sharing with others in her writing and artwork. She's published poetry, short stories, articles, and photos in literary journals and anthologies both online and in print. She has published two chapbooks, *Facing the Mirror* and *This Poet's Journey*, and is working on her first book-length collection of poetry on grief and care giving.

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Ella Markel is currently a student at WCC and wrote this poem for a creative writing class.

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S. L. Schultz, a graduate of California State University-Long Beach, teaches English Comp and Creative Writing for WCC and works as a faculty tutor at Jackson College. She writes in various genres, including poetry, short prose, and novel. Nature is her cathedral, culture her muse, and travel her passion.

KD Williams is a writer of multiple genres, and an English instructor at WCC. Their work was honored in the Top 25 *Glimmer Train* Fiction Open 2018. Their creative nonfiction was shortlisted for the Frank McCourt Memoir Prize 2016. They earned a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Stony Brook University where they received the Stony Brook Short Fiction Award 2013-2014. But first, they attended the University of Michigan and were a recipient of a 2011 Undergraduate Short Fiction Hopwood Award which made them realize, "Maybe I can do this writing thing." When they're not writing or grading or thinking about writing or grading, they're probably watching TV with their partner, two cats, and dog.

Tom Zimmerman teaches English and directs the Writing Center at WCC. He also serves as editor of *The Huron River Review* and *The Big Windows Review* and faculty advisor of the WCC Poetry Club.





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