

STYLUS

2017-18

HOW TO SUBMIT AND WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR PUBLICATION

STYLUS is looking for original, unpublished short stories, poetry, creative nonfiction, memoir, two-dimensional art (drawing, painting, collage, etc.), and photography. Any high school senior or any student currently enrolled at a college in the SC Technical College System is eligible to submit. Publication is subject to verification of your student status at the time of submission. Only Midlands Technical College students are eligible for the annual literary and art awards. Our regular reading periods are September 1 through December 10 and January 10 through March 10.

For production reasons, we can only take emailed submissions that comply with the following guidelines:

Submit all poetry and prose in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Rich Text (.rtf) formats attached to an email. Your name, email address, and a phone number should be typed at the top of the first page of your document file. You may submit manuscripts in both poetry and prose, but they must be submitted separately by genre.

Poetry submissions should be limited to no more than seven poems, single-spaced, and combined into a single document file. Please do not send poems as separate files.

Prose submissions, short stories, nonfiction, and memoirs should be double-spaced. Prose submissions should be limited to 5,000 words.

For art submissions, we prefer high-definition photography and/or digital scans (or photographs) of original art (600 dpi .jpeg or .tiff files, if possible). Digital photographs of paintings and drawings are acceptable, but you should make every effort to light the artwork adequately and crop the photograph so that it has no borders around the art.

Email your submission to stylus@midlandstech.edu as an attachment (document or image file). On the subject line of your email write either “Poetry Submission,” “Prose Submission,” or “Art Submission.” In your email message, please include the following: (1) your full name (with your MTC ID number, if you are a Midlands Tech student); (2) your area code and phone number; (3) your school institution; (4) the business email address of a faculty member or administrator who knows your work.

The History of STYLUS

The publication history of STYLUS magazine begins in the mid-1980s with the first literary yearbook at Midlands Technical College. That magazine was called *Starshine* and was founded and edited by Maurice Duperre of the MTC English department.

By 1990, the magazine had changed its name and eventually grew into a 40-60 page journal of student writing and art. The publication became a full-color production by 2000, directed by editor Keith Higginbotham, who guided the journal for over a decade. Other editors have included Les Turner, Curtis Derrick, and Travis Gordon. During its history, *STYLUS* has won grant awards from the South Carolina Arts Commission and several awards from the Two-year College Humanities Council.

With our Fall 2011 issue, the magazine continued its evolution as an online publication and the cornerstone of the *STYLUS* web site. Selections for the magazine and its awards continue to be made by an editorial board of faculty members.

Editorial Policy

The *STYLUS* editorial board reads and judges all submissions. All published selections are read by at least three readers independently, ensuring objectivity in the editorial process. All published works are chosen according to their creative and artistic merits. Only works received by the deadline were eligible for awards.

Editorial Board

Scott Compton- Chief Editor
Julie Nelson- Assistant Editor
Kristi Castro- Assistant Editor
Jared Demick- Assistant Editor
Arthur Turfa- Assistant Editor

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Learned from my Past

by Angelic Lyrics

Dating was confusing with so much to learn from. Trying to please those that are so hostile.

Reaching out to those that would possess this type of knowledge.

They left a discriminating taste behind where I became rebellious.

It's complicated to go on with distrust in my heart and the fact that you slurred my reputation even from the one who had my heart.

I had to free myself from this misconception so that when others look at me they would see a different perspective.

When I dismissed you from that moment, you tried to seek credibility but I despised your notion and settled it out with my judgment.

You once was essential to my season's winter, summer, spring and fall but then you deceived me with tricks that were vacant to my lock box.

Your face became hideous and I was cautious to your smell that I rejected every living creature that was somewhere out there.

My mind went in the same direction and then different at some point that I came to realize that this would soon be junk.

Something that I will throw away in my trash compactor and I will soon have the spray to repel your revolting humor.

So I need you to be humble and sit down for just a second and don't approach me cowardly.

For once in my life , I am not contradicting myself and I'm being completely honest and I am not saying this for my health.

I am disconnecting myself from you and these raggedy shoes and stepping out in style and no longer shameless from all you put me through.

Arnold and the Wild West

By Chris Devlin

This a story about a cowboy named Arnold and all the adventures and the hard times he had to go through.

The Characters

Arnold: Cowboy destined to stop his father that he loved so much

Crow: Arnold's father who has turned to the dark side

Carl: Arnold's sidekick and the narrator of this story

Thunderbird: God of the winds and storms

Sister Snake: Goddess of poisons and elixirs

Diablo: The guy who Crow sells his soul to... also Russian.

Carl: Why hello there partners, I'm Carl. Arnold's right hand wing man. I wasn't always though...

Looking back at it we weren't even the best cow pokes around either but all that changed when Crow showed us the way to Enlightenment. Say, would ya'll like to hear the story of how our lives were changed? Great! So without further ado, let's begin.

We start our little adventure with a bit of backstory: Crow is the current sheriff of the town know as Dodgeball City and no they don't use dodgeball as a weapon. The town is more of a play on words cause every day when a desperado comes to town, Crow is always getting them out like you would in a game of dodgeball we can now begin this epic tale of woe.

Scene 1

Carl: *We see Crow doing his daily patrol around the town.*

Crow: What a beautiful day today time to do my rounds.

Carl: So, Crow went on his rounds and made sure that everyone was happy.

But along the way, he noticed Arnold, leader of the red sash gang, a band of children with hands-on experience handling guns.

Crow: Well Red Sash gang, it's nice to see you're not up to anything.

Arnold: Well Sheriff, we are not up to anything.

Crow: Just making sure the peace is kept and everything is in order.

Arnold: Yeah, you keep at that...just don't think everything that happens is our fault.

Crow: Very well then...if you see any weird activity you let me know, okay?

Arnold: Will do sheriff.

Carl: *Arnold went away and Crow continues the rest of his rounds. The next day Crow decides to find someone to help keep Dodgeball City safe. Crow notices Arnold again along with me. Back then, Arnold and I would always get into trouble, causing confusion and delay.*

Arnold: Oh look, it's the sheriff Crow again...and what can I do you for today?

Crow: I need to find someone train in the ways of the sharpshooter. I know how skilled you are and I want you to be my deputy.

Carl: Boss....don't listen to him. He is just trying to trick and lure you into a false sense of security. He might as well ask for all our gang activity.

Crow: I promise you it's not my intent at all. I just need Arnold to be my deputy.

Arnold: Even so, why would I want that?

Crow: Because I can give you a better life and a home.

Arnold: Hmm...I will accept this proposal if you promise to let me handle the Red Sash Gang.

Crow: I agree to these terms of yours.

Arnold: All right Red Sash gang, we are now going to help the sheriff with the crime rate in this town.

Carl: Arnold, are you sure we want to do this? I mean we're the Red Sash gang...we're not going to start helping people now.

Arnold: NO, we are going to take Crow's offer because we can help keep the town safe and fight people which in my opinion, is better than fighting the man.

Carl: Alright boss.... if you say so.

Arnold: Thank you, my friend.

Crow: So is that yes, my friends?

Arnold: Yes, we will join you in the side of justice.

Crow: Thanks to you Arnold and red sash gang, we will keep and hold the peace of Dodgeball City.

Carl: *Ever since that day, our lives would change for the better.*

Scene 2

Carl: *As time grew, Crow and his new son began to bond but sadly, that was cut short when Arnold got sick after getting bit by a snake sent by Diablo. Crow is now on his way to meet Diablo at Skull Rock, Diablo's hideout, to discuss a deal with him. At the foot of Skull Rock, all he sees is bones of the fallen and all that remains is the dead.*

Crow: So, this is Skull Rock. I can see why it's known for being called that. Okay Diablo, I'm here.... show yourself.

Diablo: Yes, I can see you are man of your word.

Crow: Enough small talk. Why did you bestow that illness to my son?! He had nothing to do with this.

Diablo: Oh come on, it is all in good fun ...it is not like he is dying.

Crow: I don't consider that fun nor does my son think the same way. Point of the matter, you need to remove it.

Diablo: Hmm and what were that to happen if I do not remove it from him?

Crow: I'll see that you die by my hand.

Diablo: Ha-ha...very funny....How will I die?

Crow: I will find a way to kill you.

Diablo: If you kill me, Arnold will only die from the illness I bestowed upon him.

Crow: What do I have to do to make sure that he won't die?

Diablo: Hmm, you will sell your soul to me and I will remove illness from Arnold.

Crow: Why would I do that? Yes, Arnold needs this but at the same time....why my soul?

Diablo: Because you are a fantastic sharpshooter and I sure could use one that works for me.

Crow: There are plenty of other sharpshooters that are better than me... so why not go recruit one of them?

Diablo: Why? You are right about them...there are plenty of other sharpshooters out there but I want you.

Crow: If I agree to this, you promise me that you will cure Arnold of his illness.

Diablo: I swear that I will remove the illness from him.

Crow: Alright, but I also want you to promise that no harm comes to anyone in Dodgeball City, and that you promise not to set foot in Dodgeball city as well.

Diablo: Fine, I will not harm the town or its civilians if you keep your end of the deal.

Crow: Fine, but can I least have one more day of freedom? I must take care of somethings first.

Diablo: Fine. You have until noon tomorrow, then you mine, boy.

Crow: Thank you. Can you at least remove the illness from my son?

Diablo: Okay.

Carl: Diablo snaps his fingers and the deed was done. Arnold's illness was removed.

Diablo: There, the deed is done. Remember tomorrow at noon.

Crow: I know.

Carl: Crow went to go see Sister Snake and told her what has happened and asked for her aid.

Crow (to himself): Arnold when the time comes for him to stop me...
(Enter Sister Snake)

Sister Snake: Crow, I have heard on the windssss that you need help to s-ssstop Diablo from bringing harm to your people and I am here to help.

Crow: Oh, Sister snake... thank you for answering my call in my time of need.

Sister Snake: I s-sssaw your courage confronting Diablo for the good of the towns-ssspeople...

and for that, I will imbue s-sss some of my power into a s-sssing le bullet. With that bullet, you will be able to bring him down.

Crow: Thank you again. Sister, can I also ask you for a favor?

Sister Snake: Yesss, young Crow?

Crow: If I somehow lose myself to Diablo's magic, can you tell Arnold in due time what has happened and help him to stop me?

Sister Snake: But of cours-sssse, I will help and guide him to the path of enlightenment.

Crow: Thanks again.

Sister Snake: I hope you are okay with los-sssing yourself to the darkness-sss that sleeps within your own heart.

Crow: If it means keeping people safe then I will gladly make the ultimate sacrifice.

Carl: The following afternoon Crow kept his word and went to go meet Diablo again.

Diablo: Oh good, you showed up. I was worried that I had to hunt you down.

Crow: Let's just get this over with and remember your end of the deal.

Diablo: I know....no harm the town or people...especially son.

Crow: Just to let you know, Arnold will avenge me and will put an end to your crazy plans.

Diablo: We will see about that, my friend....no one can stop me.

Carl: As Diablo and Crow shook hands; the earth shook, the skies darkened, and the winds howled like wild wolves howling to a full moon. Crow had sold his soul to Diablo.

Diablo: Deed is done. You no longer are Crow.

Carl: As Diablo turned away, Crow loaded the bullet that Sister Snake gave him and shot Diablo down.

Diablo: How could you betray me, fool?

Crow: I don't follow the rules anymore.

Diablo: Bastard...I hope you and your town rot in hell.

Crow: I do whatever I want, you have no control over me.

Diablo: Don't think killing me with that infused bullet means anything.

Crow: I don't care. I got rid of you with the last ounce of my good will and strength.

Diablo: So, in the end you kill me just to stop me from destroying your home?

Carl: *With that, Diablo is dead. However, Crow couldn't be free from his grasp.*

Scene 3

Carl: *Sometime later Arnold was taking a stroll when Sister snake suddenly appeared.*

Sister Snake: Are you Arnold?

Arnold: Yeah, I am...who are you?

Sister Snake: I am S-sssister sssssnake and I was asked to see you by your father, Crow.

Arnold: You know what happened to my father?

Sister Snake: Yessssss, my child. I know what transsssspired to your father...you see he iss not the man you knew anymore.

Arnold: Wait, What do you mean he is not the same anymore? He'sthe sheriff of Dodgeball City!

Sister snake: I am afraid he can't be the sheriff anymore because he has entered the dark sssside.

Arnold: I don't understand...what happened to him?

Sister Snake: He sssssold his sssssssoul to Diablo to protect you and the villagersssssss from cccertain doom.

Arnold: Who in tarnation is Diablo?

Sister Snake: He was the one who made you terribly ill and forced your father to go from good to evil.

Arnold: So because of this Diablo person, I lost my father to the darkness and there is no way to cure him?

Sister Snake: Unfortunately, the only cure is death.

Arnold: I must kill my own father to set him free from this grip over him?

Sister Snake: I am afraid sssso, little sheriff.

Arnold: Wait, I'm the Sheriff now?

Sister Snake: Yessssss, your father told me this in his final hour of goodnesssss

Arnold: I see.

Carl: *All this information has Arnold on edge but he is not going to let it bother him.*

Arnold: Sister Snake, thanks for helping me find out the truth even though I don't like it I must accept it for the sake of my father and the people of this town.

Sister Snake: I'll be watching and guide throughout your journey and remember...you're not alone.

Arnold: Thanks.

Carl: *Arnold told the villagers that his father is no more and died protecting us all and that Arnold would be the new sheriff of the town.*

Scene 4

Carl: Arnold is getting the hang of the sheriff life and as he finished his rounds for the day, Crow shows up and sees how his son has been doing....so he claims.

Crow: Hello, Son. I see your handling yourself well.

Arnold: Why are you here? I thought I told you that I never wanted to see you again/

Crow: C'mon know, does a father need a reason to see his son every now and then?

Arnold: Fine, make it quick before someone sees you.

Crow: Very well... I'll make this quick as possible. [Clears throat] the reason I am here is to take back what's rightfully mine...This town that I governed before I gave it to you.

Arnold: Why do you want the town back?! All you have done so far is gone rogue and ransacked all of nearby townspeople of their loot and lives... What would you gain from governing a town that you might end up doing the same thing to one day?

Crow: I have my reason for my actions as well as everything I done in my life, and I don't have to justify my life to you, Arnold.

Arnold: Heck, you're right. I don't have to know what happened to you after you left but as someone that you

would call family, I would at least think that you would tell them what's going on.

Crow: If you want answers, go search for them yourself on your own free time... Anyway that's all I came here for.

Carl: *As Crow left in a shroud of dust and wind, Arnold had to plan how to save his town.*

Arnold: I'm going on a mission to find out what happened to Crow from a hero to a desperado. I'm leaving Carl my junior deputy in charge while I'm away... I'll return soon.

Carl: I won't let you down, sir.

Arnold: I know you won't. If you catch Crow near town, message me as fast as you can.

Carl: I hope you find the answers you're looking for.

Carl: *So, Arnold went on his quest to look for a way to stop Crow as well as what became of his father. Along the way, he returned to Sister Snake's chambers, determined to find answers.*

Arnold: Sister Snake, I was hoping you can point me in the right the direction to defeat the desperado named Crow.

(Sister Snake looks at him with a deep glance)

Sister Snake: Are you telling me you want to get rid of him... why, my child?

Arnold: I want him gone because he told me he wants to be the sheriff of Dodgeball City.

Sister Snake: I ssee... so it's time for you to fulfill your role and play the hero your father knew you could be.

Arnold: Yes, I must stop him here and now.

Sister Snake: Indeed, but in your current condition... you are not ready to fight him.

Arnold: You think that Thunderbird could have the answer I seek?

Sister Snake: Yesss, I believe that Thunderbird can guide you down the road of enlightenment but before speaking to him we need you to help him first.

Arnold: Okay, sure... what do you need me to do?

Sister Snake: You see, Thunderbird is angry because your father desecrated his totem and refuses

to give his power to anyone who seeks it. The only way to calm him is to help restore his totem....

Arnold: Okay that's reasonable....where can I find the guardian?

Sister Snake: *(Points to the looming mountain, not far from her chambers.)* You can find Thunderbird on top that mountain. Once there, attempt to ease his rage and then he will help you.

Arnold: Thank you for your guidance, Sister.

Scene 5

Carl: *Arnold walks up to the top of the mountain and sees a shrine. He walks up to the shrine and suddenly, thunder and lightning crash and before him lies thunderbird.*

Thunderbird: I am Thunderbird, the spirit that guards this place...why have you come to me.?

Arnold: I am here to ease your spirit for what my father has done and as his former son, I feel I should atone for what he has done.

Thunderbird: And why should I help your kind after what they have done?

Arnold: I am sorry for that...will you forgive my kind if I clean your totem?

Thunderbird: You have my gratitude, Arnold.

Carl: *So, with that Thunderbird and Arnold cleaned up his totem in no time.*

Thunderbird: I see that your mind and judgment are pure of heart. I have no choice but to help you on your journey. *(Thunderbird hands Arnold a feather.)*

Thunderbird: Now take this to Sister Snake she will know what to with it.

Arnold: Thank you, Thunderbird.

Thunderbird: Let the winds steer you in the right direction.

Carl: *Meanwhile in Dodgeball city. It's been days since Arnold left. Crow takes this as an opportunity to come to town and there's only me to stop him.*

Carl: Crow, stop in the name of the law!

Crow: Well if it isn't the scrawny runt....you gonna try and stop me?

Carl: If I must, I will. But why do you want to destroy the peace? I thought you were a good man, Crow.

Crow: I have been awakened to the truth. The weakling I was is no more....now, I am unstoppable!

Carl: Well Arnold will stop you...he's on his way back now.

Crow: I need to get out of here and retreat. Farewell. *(Crow disappears into thin air)*

Carl: Arnold, I hope you come back soon are you all right, sir.

Carl: *Meanwhile back at the Thunderbird totem, both Sister Snake and Thunderbird are creating a special bullet to put an end to Crow for the last time.*

Arnold: Thank you, Thunderbird, and you sure this will stop him?

Thunderbird: Yes, my rider of the wind. With the gift given to you by me, this will no doubt stop your fallen father.

(Suddenly, Arnold receives a message from Carl. Putting away his device, Arnold picked up the bullet and secured it in his jacket.)

Arnold: I got word that Crow made his move and he is ready to strike. It's time to settle this.

Thunder Bird: You'll be in our thoughts storm tamer.

Carl: *It's high noon and Arnold walks into town to see that Crow is waiting for him.*

Arnold: This ends here and now.

Crow: Finally, we can settle this family fight and once I get rid of you, I'll finally be Sheriff again.

Arnold: Just to throw everything away? You're not the father I once knew.

Crow: Why would I want to stop when I am so close to my dream goal into becoming this town's ruler again?

Arnold: Listen to yourself, you're not the same man that once cared for this town and its people.

Carl: *At that moment Crow gave him a stare that would even scare death away.*

Crow: What gives you the right to lecture me about loving the town when you in your youth would always bring harm to it?

Arnold: You're right that I have no room to talk and yeah, I would cause these people problems...

but you're talking about ruling them under an iron fist.

Crow: And your point is? All I am hearing is nothing but garbage. Enough talk...let's just fight already.

Arnold: Whatever if you say so.

Carl: *Arnold and Crow load up their guns.*

Arnold: Get ready to draw, Crow.

Crow: Arnold, you're finished.

Carl: Little did Crow know that Arnold put the bullet infused with Thunderbird's power into the chamber of his rifle

Arnold: Sorry Crow but it's over.

Carl: With that Arnold shot him down and Crow was briefly restored to his former self, except fading away slowly. Cradling his father's weak body in his arms, Arnold watches his father's eyes slowly open.

Crow: Arnold is that you?

Arnold: Father! I'm so sorry.... but I had to stop you from becoming everything you hate.

Crow: I know son and I am very proud of you

Arnold: I only wish that I didn't have to do this to you.

Crow: It's okay, my son. It does me a great honor to know that Diablo is gone and you stopped me like I told him so.

Arnold: Did you know this was going to happen? Father?

Crow: Keep.... up the work and remember,..... I am watching over you.

Carl: After Crow's body dissipated into the sky, Arnold headed back to Dodgeball City to explain to the townsfolk what transpired that day and how his father would be proud of his son's accomplishment.

-The End-

Boy King

By Nicole McCune

Why am I here-
I know it won't be for very long.
The person that birthed me is not strong-
and will do wrong.

But my father told me not to be afraid, that everything will be just fine-
not the man you know as daddy-
you see, he's not mine.

My father sits on high and sent me here for a reason,
He said, "son you have babies to save-
you'll be there for only a season."

He took off my wings but this made me feel sad-
that place called earth can be cruel and horribly bad.
I began to shed tears; you all know this to be rain-
My father said, it's okay-I will take away the pain.

God explained that I would not understand-
but reminded that he once sent his own son in the form of a man.
He said that it was similar but not quite the same thing-
He showed me a crown; when you return, you'll be the "Boy King".

He promised to be with me on those dark and horrible days-
as I was sure to encounter some wicked and evil ways.
Though I was ready to complete my mission
but wondered why this had to be the Lord's decision?

My heart was wounded; my body ached and bled-
my arm was broken; my flesh scarred from toe to head.
And when I wanted to give up and wished to be dead-
God wrapped his arms around me and gave me supper before I went to bed.

After four years, he called me back-
He said, "child well done, now take your wings back".

You may not forget me or maybe you will-
just protect God's children cause the devil is real.
But I'm so happy to be in heaven, my home-
I got my crown yall, and seated upon my throne!

This poem was written for Robert Guinyard, Jr., a 4-year old child who was tortured and killed in 2013 at the hands of the people who were supposed to love him... his mother and father.

This poem is dedicated to all of those who lost their lives due to child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment.

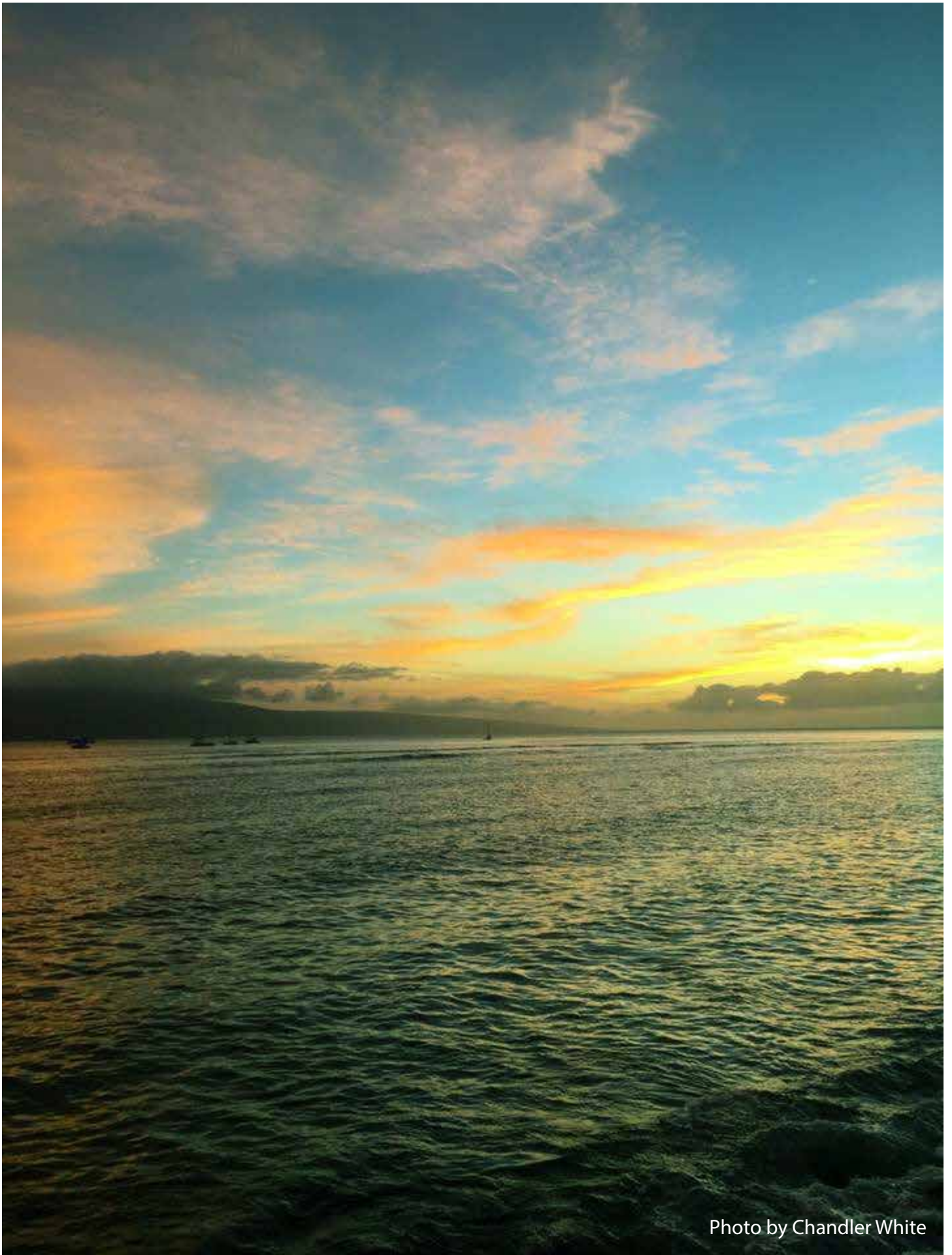


Photo by Chandler White

Coming to Grips

by Jeffrey Gage

Drifting, floating, hoping, fearing
I don't know where I'm going
I don't know what I'm doing
I just know I want to get there
And leave this fear behind

Denial, I know it, I've lived it
It hides the hurt, it hides the pain
You can have it and nobody will know
Denial is the first stage, the first step
Denial is hard to see, hard to beat

Anger, oh anger, I know you well
You come next and you love to stay
Mad at you, mad at me, mad at life
Anger is evil but it must be felt
Anger will try to take you, but you can win

God, if you're there, save me from this Hell
Save me from this pain, this reality
Make it go away, I'll do anything you want
I'll go to church, I'll quit smoking
Anything you want, let's make a deal

I'm sad, I'm blue, I'm all alone
Depression is here, and she's a bitch
Nothing feels good, nothing feels right
No joy, no happiness, no laughing or fun
It's just bleak and boring; just let me sleep

Fine, I'll live with it, it's not going anywhere
I feel good, give me a pill and make me normal
It's a part of me now, and it always will be
There is no cure, just the pills
Schizophrenia is not a curse, not a blessing
It's just life now and I accept that

I'm schizo, I'm nuts, I'm crazy
I guess it's just a part of who I am
After fifteen years nothing's gonna change
I can't stop it, I can only control it
It'll never go away
Might as well make the best of it

EMMY AND SOL

BY KENDRICK J. LYLES

Time: Present day

Place: Southeast USA

SCENE 1

(Friday Afternoon)

Emilia Clarke's office is a highly decorated and well-organized room. Every item was handpicked with great care and detail to bring out the ultimate expression of class and ambition. Although everything in the room is top of the line, there is a coldness to it. There is no warmth of color as the color scheme is of black and whites. The only signs of heart in the room are various awards and plaques peppered on the desk and walls. A single window behind Emmy's desk shines a light on the awards which makes them gleam vigorously. At left, there is a door leading to Emmy's private restroom. Opposite of that, at the far right, is another door leading out to hallway which proceeds to the lobby.

Curtains open. Emmy (20's to 30's) is dressed in a beautiful cocktail dress. She is leaning over and gagging over a trash can with a pregnancy test in her hand.

Curtains open. Emmy (20's to 30's) is dressed in a beautiful cocktail dress. She is leaning over and gagging over a trash can with a pregnancy test in her hand.

Emmy: God, why is this happening to me!

Sol (20's to 30's) appears.

Sol: I heard about the disaster you made outside. I knew you'd be back here.

Emmy: Sol?! You can't be here.

(She instinctively hides the test from him)

Sol: Why can't I be here?

Emmy: What about the accident? I mean the last time I saw you were --

Sol: You never did like surprises. (Looking around the room) I don't like the office. What's up with all this black and white? It's super boring.

Emmy: *(Getting her wits back)* It's a modern take on a monochromatic theme. It's clean and chic, and not boring at all. Why am I justifying my office to you? The important part is that I like it.

Sol: But do you? "Monochromatic", that's not you that's him.

Emmy: Ian and I worked on it together, thank you.

Sol: I do like the desk though. What is it? Oak? No, it's too dark to be oak. Cherry? *(He walks to the desk and clamps it at both ends)* It looks nice and sturdy. Have you and Ian tried it out yet?

Emmy: Really?

Sol: *(He slithers towards her grabs her across the waist and pulls her close and puts her in an awkward position on the desk)* What? I mean can he do the things that I can?

There is a knock on the door. Kenneth enters.

Kenneth: Mom told me to check on you and...

Emmy: Ken!

Kenneth: My eyes!

Kenneth is horrified as he runs out of the room.

Emmy: *(Pushing him away and straightening herself back up)* Ken, wait! Damn it! Thanks Sol, thanks a lot. Now that loudmouth will tell everybody.

Sol: About time.

Emmy: You know what, here's a surprise for you. I'm pregnant.
(Pulls out the test and shows it to him)

Sol: Wait, what?!

Emmy: I'm pregnant.

Sol: With a baby?

Emmy: *(Emmy pockets the pregnancy test)*
No, with Ridley Scott's "Alien". Yeah, a baby, dumb-ass.

Sol: Is it mine?

Emmy: Yes.

Sol: Holy crap! I'm gonna be someone's daddy. This is freaking awesome. *(Runs to her and massages her belly.)* You're gonna be somebody's mom. I can't believe it. We're gonna be parents. We're gonna be a family. What are we going to name him, huh? Well, I guess we need to find out if it's a him. I mean, I have no problem with a girl. I know if we have a girl, I will be putty in her hands. Whatever we have we'll come up with an amazing name, just as long as we don't name it a food item or something stupid like that. We're not going to be ridiculous like some celebrities. Come on, naming kids apple and waffle. Those aren't names that's a damn complimentary breakfast. Could you imagine if we named our kid Velveeta? Every time I would say the name it would put me in the mood for queso.

Emmy: Sol!

Sol: I just can't believe I'm gonna be a dad.

Emmy: You're not gonna be anything, Sol.

Sol: Emmy, what are you saying?

Emmy: I'm saying for the first time in a long time I don't have a plan. I don't know what to do. I don't know whether to keep the baby or...not.

Sol: Please let me help you.

Emmy: Sol, a baby isn't a dog you can shove off on your mom. It will need twenty-four hour TLC, which neither of us are ready for.

Sol: Emmy, what happened to us?

Emmy: Nothing. Life happened. We just grew apart that's all.

Ian: *(Off stage)* I heard her. She must be feeling better.

Emmy: Damn it. That's Ian. *(Grabbing Sol by the arm)* You have to come with me.

Sol: Where are you taking me?

Emmy: Like I said if Ian catches you then it's over.
Emmy opens the restroom door and shoves both their bodies in the restroom and closes the door behind her.

Sol: It stinks in here!

Emmy: Sol shut the hell up!

Sol: The least you can do is open a window. *(Light fade to black. End of scene.)*

SCENE 2.

Ian (20's to 30's) is pacing back and forth while Kenneth (20's and 30's) is sitting and drinking a glass of wine.

Ian: Maybe it was too much for her. Honestly, Ken, do you think I overwhelmed her?

Kenneth: She doesn't like surprises. Let me tell you what happened earlier in the week. I ordered us lunch the other day and the restaurant surprised her with shrimp in her Caesar salad and she freaked out on me. You would've thought she was allergic or something.

Ian: She is!

Kenneth: Well, that would've been a nice PSA to know.

Ian: How are you her brother and don't know these things?

Kenneth: I don't know. Maybe, I put it in my brain's stupid file because it's stupid not like shrimp. I mean Bubba said it best: Fried shrimp, boiled shrimp, baked shrimp, shrimp cocktails, shrimp scampi, shrimp alfredo, and shrimp fried rice. I mean the possibilities are endless. Point is, she wanted me to pick it out, like I'm her maid or something. I am her business partner and not her maid. There is a difference.

Ian: I thought Emmy made you her assistant.

Kenneth: You say "Tomato", I say "Tomato", okay. When people look at front of this building they see CLARKE. They don't know which Clarke I am. We're getting off topic. The point is, you might've thrown her off her game a little bit. Now drink a little something and relax. You are giving me whiplash.

Ian: It's just that all of it was supposed to be perfect, but it went so left. I handpicked all the food. The decorations were flawless. Oh, nice job keeping Emmy distracted, by the way.

Kenneth: It's what I do.

Ian: I think I invited all the right people. Both of our families are here. Half the city council is here. Damn it! Senator Brenner was in the first row. I can't go back out there. My college roommates will never forget this one. I thought I'd even be nice and invite your sister's sorority sisters.

Kenneth: Oh! Even Brittney, the one with the lazy eye.

Ian: Really, Ken?

Kenneth: You can't tell me you feel comfortable talking to her. Her eyes look like a damn goldfish! And she's been following me all day. I keep telling her my face is up here, but she doesn't think I know where that eye is really looking at. Like I know it's big but you don't have to let the world know. Some people may think it is a gift, but if you think about it it's actually a curse. A sad burden that we extraordinary men have to carry for the good of society.

Ian: You're an idiot.

Kenneth: And I think you're pussy, but I have manners, so I'm not gonna say that out loud because I consider other people's feelings.

Ian: Please just shut up. (*Jumping from his seat*) Oh, my God!

Kenneth: What now?

Ian: (*Pacing back and forth*) The paper. The paper. The freaking paper. They were taking pictures.

Kenneth: I thought that's what photographers do. Take pictures.

Ian: No, you idiot. They must've caught everything.

Kenneth: (*Devilishly smirking*) Well if they didn't, I sure as hell did. Shall we play it back for you. (*Whipping out his phone*) There you are on one knee. There's Emmy looking all surprised. Look at her, she's about to cry, as you ask her what is supposed to be the most important question of her life. She gently smiles and says yes. Oh, there goes Pops tripping over himself.

Ian: What was your father thinking?

Kenneth: Oh, that's easy. He's drunk.

Ian: What was he holding? Is that a mason jar? Did he bring moon shine to...

Kenneth: Never mind about all that. Here's my favorite part. Here it comes. There goes Emmy spraying tummy juice all over the ice swan.

Ian: You are enjoying this, aren't you?

Kenneth: Yes. Yes, I am.

Ian: I knew I did too much.

Kenneth: You're being too hard on yourself. Truth is, she hasn't been the same since the accident. She hasn't been eating or sleeping. She's been talking to herself. I mean, honestly you are better man than I am. She is my sister and everything, but she is a lot of work. I mean I don't know if I could have stayed with someone who's cheated on me. There are just some things you gotta draw a line in sand on.

Ian: I don't want to lose her, Ken. So if I have to throw her a thousand parties, I will. I know her flaws and she knows mine. I mean, I'm not exactly Prince Charming. I can be neurotic and...

Kenneth: Anal, pretentious, and an overall lump of anxiety. And, another thing, you do I don't like--

Ian: My POINT is that I love her. (*Silence*)

Kenneth: An ice swan, though? Really? Is this the 1980's? See that's the pretentious thing I'm talking about.

Ian: Too much?

Emmy emerges from the restroom, holding her stomach and looking sickly.

Emmy: I am so sorry, Ian.

Kenneth and Ian: Emmy!

Emmy: I know you put a lot of time into planning this.

Ian: Don't worry about that. Are you ok?

Kenneth helps his sister to a chair.

Emmy: I'm better now.

Kenneth: I'll let mom know you're alright. Before I go; can you tell this kid that I am your business partner and not your assistant.

Ian: Everyone knows your mother asked Emilia to give you this job because she was tired of you couch surfing for a living.

Kenneth: I had a job.

Ian and Emmy: What job?!

Kenneth: I'm a writer, remember.

Emmy: You have a blog on Tumblr.

Kenneth: A well followed blog on Tumblr.

Ian: I'm pretty sure the people can get their superhero updates somewhere else. And is Tumblr still a thing?

Kenneth: Now, we're hitting below the belt. And yes, Tumblr is still a thing and people need me. I mean, I give good solid information. I am like a virtual Chris Hardwick. I am that shoulder to cry on, especially when things happen like Hugh Jackman retiring from being Wolverine.

Emmy: He retired. Let it go.

Kenneth: No. He had one more in him. My point is that I struggle just like the rest of you.

Ian: Oh, I believe you. I believe that it is a daunting and perilous journey getting your sister coffee every morning.

Kenneth: Screw you.

Ian: I'm sorry the help says what.

Kenneth: *(Charging toward Ian)* You know what I'm...

Emmy: *(Rising from her seat to intercept Kenneth)* Enough. I thought you were going to talk to mom.

Ian: Maybe you can entertain Brittney while you're at it.

Emmy: Ken, you like Brittney?

Ian: He totally likes Brittney.

Kenneth: Forget that.

Emmy: Then you can talk to Anna. Just be gentle because she just got out of a relationship with Tommy, but I think you guys would hit it off.

Kenneth: I'm not doing that.

Emmy: What's wrong with my friends?

Kenneth: For starters, they all look like extras from the Planet of the Apes. And they got you in center being their broke down Jane Goodall.

Emmy: Excuse you! My friends are not those Instagram thots that you be drooling over in the late night hours. My friends at least wear clothes that fit. And they are pretty. Not that looks should matter to you anyway. Half your friends look like they're related to Quasimodo, especially Terry.

Kenneth: You better not talk about Terry.

Emmy: Then don't talk about Brittney. At least my friends are smart and sophisticated. Can you honestly say the same about your friends? Didn't you tell me that Daryl ate a can of dog food because he read beef stew on the label?

Kenneth: That was an honest mistake. Anybody would've made it.

Emmy: There was a picture of a dog stamped on the label right next to the words beef stew. Any moron with half a brain would've seen it.

Ian: Maybe it wasn't Daryl that ate it. Maybe Ken had a taste for some Scooby Snax.

Emmy: That would explain a lot actually.

Kenneth: Shut up!

Ian: You notice he isn't denying it, right?

Kenneth: Whatever. I gotta take a leak.

Emmy: *(Freaking out that Sol might be discovered)* Umm, you don't want to go in there right now, do you? I mean with me being sick and all.

Kenneth: Come on, the other restroom has been busy all day.

Ian: Emmy, why can't he use it?

Emmy: Because I don't want him to, Ian.

Kenneth: I'm using it anyway. What is going on here?!

Emmy: Ken! Ian, I swear I didn't know he was going to show up—

Kenneth: *(Turning towards her sister)* What are you talking about?

Emmy: You mean there is nobody in there?

Kenneth: Ain't nothing in here but the stench of your intestines. Whew! I think I will take my chances with the other restroom.

Emmy examines the restroom for herself.

Ian: Are you sure you're okay?

Emmy: *(Scratching her head)* I think so. I think I need few more minutes alone. I'll be out in a minute.

Kenneth: If you say so. Now, before you come out of this room, I want you to do me a favor.

Emmy: What's that?

Kenneth: *(Searches through his pockets and pulls out two mints)* Eat these. You have the puke for breath and that's not attractive at all.

Emmy: *(laughs and snatches the mints)* Ken!

Kenneth: I'm sorry but it's very garlicky. What did you eat? I don't know how Ian kisses you with that dragon breath you have right now. If that isn't love, I don't know what is.

Kenneth exits.

Ian: Why do you guys fight so much?

Emmy: You met him, right? Besides, it's how we show our "love" for each other.

Ian: You were in there a long time. Why didn't you let me see you?

Emmy: How can you ask me that? After what just happened.

Ian: We can still fix this. Can't we?

Emmy: There is nothing that I can't fix. Who is the biggest event coordinator in the city, huh? Just let me grab another dress and I'll be out in a minute.

Ian: You know what I mean. Truth is I'm scared.

Emmy: Scared of what?

Ian: I mean are we ready? It's been a few weeks since Sol's accident and I'm afraid that something might happen and you'll leave and—

Emmy: I'm not going anywhere.

Ian: But you did. (*Silence*)

Emmy: Will you ever trust me, again?

Ian: As long as you don't mention him or lie to me again. Take your time while I keep everybody busy. I'll be close by. Ok.

Ian exits.

Lights fade to black. End of scene.

SCENE 3.

Emmy is getting ready to put on a new dress when Sol appears.

Sol: Don't treat him like you treated me. If you love him, then you can't start your marriage off with a lie. For years, you have been giving him half-truths about us. As a result, he doesn't know you, not the real you.

Emmy: And you do?

Sol: I know your favorite movie is "The Dark Knight". I know this because you dragged me to see it like seven times and that was on the day it came out.

Emmy: There were details that we missed. Every time I see it, I see something new. That is the way you are supposed to appreciate a well-made film. Besides, you wanted to see it too.

Sol: Not that many times. The summer of '08, that's all I remember is seeing freaking Batman.

Emmy: And just because you know my favorite movie makes you think you know me. I've evolved, Sol.

Sol: So, you keep saying, but some things don't change. Like I know you despise, your middle name. Does he even know your middle name?

Emmy: Umm...

Sol: Don't answer; I know that's a no because you were reluctant to tell me. You don't think Gertrude goes well with Emilia.

Emmy: God, it just doesn't roll off the tongue like Emilia. Emilia is elegant and sophisticated. It's a beautiful and classic name.

Sol: Gertrude is elegant.

Emmy: If you're from the year 1872!

Sol: I think it fits you well. You always did have an old soul. You know you're the only person under fifty that I know that can stomach those old Abbott and Costello movies.

Emmy: You shut your mouth right now. Abbott and Costello are great! It's not my fault that you couldn't appreciate them over a filthy night club.

Sol: It's called living in the 21st century and the only reason you hated going out to clubs was because you didn't think they were "intimate" enough, or whatever the hell that means. But everybody knows you just can't dance.

Emmy: I can dance! *(She gets up and struggles to do the running man dance)*

Sol: What is that?

Emmy: Huh.

Sol: What are you doing?

Emmy: Dancing.

Sol: Please, you're like Elaine from *Seinfeld*. You try to dance, but all people see is little kicks. It's almost like watching a newborn deer trying to walk. It's painful at first, but eventually, he gets the hang of it. And sadly, I'm still waiting on you to get the hang of it.

Emmy: Sol, I think you've made your point.

Sol: *(Snaps his fingers and Michael Jackson's "Billy Jean" starts playing and Sol starts to dance to the beat)* Michael Jackson! I remember when Michael Jackson died and they were playing all his old videos. I caught you trying to do the moonwalk. You never could quite get it right. *(Sol executes a perfect moonwalk and celebrates with a display of spirit fingers as he does this the music gently fades away)* You were so embarrassed that I was watching you that you slipped on my English paper.

Emmy: You were always so messy. You left everything out all the time. Potato chips would get stale because you wouldn't use the clips. I bought the clips for a reason. So why not use them? And tell me this, who peeps around the corner like that? And why didn't you announce yourself? It was just creepy! I bet you were trying to scare me, weren't you?

Sol: Maybe I was and maybe wasn't.

Emmy: Damn it, Sol. I really hurt myself.

Sol: It was like slow motion. It felt like I was watching a Tom and Jerry cartoon. You flew up like four feet in the air and landed on your face, HARD. It was the funniest thing I ever saw.

Emmy: You know I still have that freaking scar.

Sol: I drove you to the ER.

Emmy: *(Sarcastically)* Thank you for that. \$800 later, I could've iced my face at home.

Sol: We lay in that hospital bed. I kept the ice pack close to your face and I fed you—

Emmy: M&M's.

Sol: Peanut M&M's, you won't eat them any other way. I know you, Emmy. I know that when your grandfather died, you tried to kill yourself. You can take that surprised look off your face. Yeah, I knew. You thought I didn't know but I did. I understood, he was the father that you needed when your real one wasn't there. I didn't say anything because I knew that you would just shut me out if I brought it up. Maybe I should've said something. Maybe if I had the courage to help you back then, then maybe we would've still been--

Emmy: Stop.

Sol: You're right, as always. We will be here all day if we concentrate on the "maybe's" and "what if's". Listen, I know this decision is eating you alive, but you can't hide this from him. I understand that you're scared.

Emmy: I'm not scared of anything.

Sol: Then prove it. March out that door and tell him the truth.

Emmy: You don't get it. Life isn't that simple and there are certain expectations that I must follow. If I do this then I risk everything that I have worked so hard for. I risk losing him.

Sol: Don't you get that I care about you? I care about us. I care about our family. And you're turning your back on me, again.

Emmy: God! Because you want me to reject everything that I want in this world. I can't do it and I won't do it!

Sol: You know I'm not gonna lie. I wanted to be romantic. I came here hoping you would choose me. I came here hoping to see Emilia Clarke, the bad ass that I fell in love with, but all I see now is a coward.

Emmy: Leave, Sol.

Sol: *(Sighs)* Fine. *(He walks up to her)* You made your choice. *(He puts his arm around her and smiles)*

Emmy: Sol, I want to but I can't.

Sol: I know you can't. Just know that I love you, Emmy, and no matter what, I always will.
He holds her in his arms for a moment and for that moment she lets him. Sol then gently kisses her on the forehead, and then without looking back he exits.

Emmy facing her office window. She is deep in her thoughts. The door creaks open. Enter Kenneth.

Emmy: Ok, now it's my turn to speak. Part of me knows that you're right, and the other part is just terrified. However, I will honestly say that a big part of me loves you and doesn't ever want to lose you.

Emmy turns around to find Kenneth just staring awkwardly at her.

Kenneth: Emmy, I don't know what's going on, but I ain't down for that "Game of Thrones" Lannister bull-shit. You hear me!

Emmy: *(Throws a pillow at him)* I really can't deal with you today!

Kenneth: Are you still feeling sick? Should I tell Ian?

Emmy: No. Don't tell him anything. He'll just worry.

Kenneth: Fine. I won't say anything, but can I ask a question.

Emmy: What is it?

Kenneth: Who were you talking to?

Emmy: I was talking to Sol, of course.

Kenneth: Sol? *(Worried)* You've seen Sol?

Emmy: Yes!

Kenneth: *(Yells)* Ian, you better get in here!

Emmy: *(Hitting him against the shoulder)* Ken!

Kenneth: Ow! Don't hit me. What is wrong with you, crazy person?

Emmy: Stupid. If Ian sees Sol then—

Kenneth: Listen, Ian needs to know that you're not ok.

Emmy: I know everything is all screwed up. I just got engaged and I am supposed to be happy, but I'm not. We think life can be planned but it can't. We don't know the real future no matter how hard we try to plan for it. People never expect floods, or getting shot, or getting into a car accident but sometimes life says guess what, "Screw you!" (*throws up her middle finger*). Like I never expected to be pregnant with Sol's baby.

Kenneth: (*Stunned*) Oh, my god! (*Throwing his hands in air*) I knew something was up. I freaking knew it.

Emmy: And Sol keeps coming in here and he wants—

Kenneth: We shouldn't have left you alone. Maybe one of those doctors outside could help you or we could call a priest. That can be an option.

Emmy: Or maybe I'll call the kennel to get a replacement brother. Maybe one that won't lick his balls as much. I mention Sol and suddenly you freak out on me.

Kenneth: Emmy, Sol is dead.

Emmy: Wait, what?

Kenneth: (*Gently*) He died a month ago. It was car accident, remember?

Emmy: No, he was just here.

Kenneth: Emmy—

Emmy: Ken, he was just here. Just watch. He hasn't left me alone all day. Just watch. I hid him in my restroom earlier.

Kenneth: Don't you remember there was nobody in there.

Emmy: Ken, you saw us earlier on the desk.

Kenneth: I don't know what I saw, but Sol wasn't part of the picture. Can we, PLEASE, not discuss it?

Emmy: He was just here. You have to believe me.

Kenneth: Emmy, try to remember. The day of the accident Pops called us and told us about it. You tried to drop everything and go to him, but we couldn't drop everything. His body was banged up pretty bad. For two days he laid in that hospital bed. The doctors didn't know whether he was coming or going. Finally, we got there. I made sure you were off the grid. I took your phone, your laptop, and your tablet away from you. Ian must've called you like twenty-seven times trying to figure out where you were. We saw Sol's parents. They always loved you. They were so glad to see you. They let you have your moment with him. You sat with him for a while then you got the courage to hold his hand and in that moment, he was...gone. It's almost like he was waiting for you.

Emmy: (*In total denial*) It's not true. He was just here. You take it back right now.

Kenneth: Emmy, I—

Emmy: *(Hits him)* What game are you playing this time, huh?

Kenneth: Emmy, stop.

Emmy: *(Hits him again)* You're gonna take it back.

Kenneth: *(Trying to restrain her)* Stop hitting me.

Emmy: You and Sol and your stupid jokes. This is the cruelest thing you guys have ever done to me. Take it back- you hear me!

Emmy goes on rampage as she bombards her brother with angry jabs.

Kenneth: This isn't a joke. Sol was like a brother to me. If I had the power to take it all back I would. You know I would. Look at me. What was the first thing you said to me when you touched Sol's body? I want you to think about it.

Emmy takes a moment.

Emmy: *(Choking on the words)* It was weird. He felt hollow and hard at same time, almost like a china doll. *(Memories begin to pop like firecrackers in her mind. Her face contorts with the realization of the truth)* Oh, my God! Ken, I am so sorry.

Kenneth: It's okay, Emmy. It's okay.

Emmy: I swear to God, he was just here. He was making his stupid little jokes. We were talking about how we met, and my first ER bill, and he was even trying to come up with baby names. Oh, my god! Baby names. The baby. The baby! It's not fair! Sol will miss the first steps. He'll miss the first words. He'll miss the tantrums. He won't be there to help on the first day of school. He'll miss all the birthdays and Christmases. He'll miss that awkward pre-teen phase. He'll miss the rebellious phase. He'll miss the negotiations for the car. He'll miss the graduations. God, he'll miss it all. Damn it, it's not fair! *(She falls into his chest)*

Kenneth: What's happening? What are you doing? I'm confused. Is this the part where I am supposed to hug you?

Emmy: Just shut up and be my brother for a minute please.

Kenneth: Fine. Just watch the snot if you're going to snivel on me, okay. *(Comforts his sister)*

Emmy: Ken, what's wrong with me?

Kenneth: You're grieving. Everyone grieves differently. Yours is just the crazy way.

Emmy: But I saw him—

Ian: Saw who?

Kenneth: I think I'm gonna give you guys some privacy

Emmy: Ken wait.

Kenneth: No, I think this is a perfect time to talk to Brittney.

Kenneth exits.

Ian: You said his name. I heard you say his name.

Emmy: I can explain.

Ian: Please explain, this madness to me. Is that the reason why you've been so distracted today? Answer me.

Emmy: There is more to it, but yes.

Ian: Am I not good enough for you?

Emmy: You are! But you have to realize Sol will always be a factor in my life.

Ian: No, Sol's not a factor anymore!
(Ian throws a plaque at a nearby wall and it shatters to a thousand pieces)

Emmy: NO! What the hell is wrong with you? Do you know what you've done?

Ian: Your brother is right. I have to draw a line in the sand because I can't do this anymore! I won't compete with a dead man.

Emmy: Ian, I—

Sol: *(Snaps his fingers and an eerie light shines upon him)* Don't you see that he's hurting. Tell him the truth do the right thing. If not for him then for you. Look at me. This ain't normal. You tell him the truth and I just might fade away for good this time. Look, I get it; life is hard. Sometimes it feels like you're drowning, but if you take it an inch at time, then your head will be above water. Then finally, you can breathe.

Emmy feels his hand on her shoulder, Emmy grasps it. For a moment, she enjoys his touch. Sol gently removes his hand and walks away letting her stand by herself.

Emmy: *(She then takes a deep breath and slowly pulls out the pregnancy test from her pocket and hands it to him)* Ian, you're gonna hate me but you deserve to know everything. So let's talk.

The stage fades to black
The curtain closes

-THE END-



Traditional Gender Roles

By Bahamin Behipour

I grew up in a household where my parents shared the responsibilities to care for me and my brother.

Responsibilities like housework, cooking, spending time with the kids, and being hospitable to house guests were done by my mom, as well as my dad. Both of them worked together to accomplish projects around the house like roofing repairs, remodeling the kitchen, and maintenance work on our vehicles. And aside from the roles they filled at home, both of my parents had their own careers. Some of my fondest memories of my parents, times I remember them at their happiest, were times when they were working together to reach a common goal, to succeed at something together. Not only did this allow for greater flexibility in my parents' lifestyle, but it also made their daily tasks a family affair. Growing up, I learned many things by helping my parents and as my skills developed, my responsibilities increased.

As an adult, I am very grateful for the skills my parents taught me. It makes me wonder how different I would have been if they raised me to fill a traditional male role. I do think I would have been more career minded, maybe further ahead professionally, but at what cost? The skills and training I use to look after myself like cooking, doing laundry, keeping the house clean, I could not imagine needing or even expecting someone else to do these for me. Some of my hobbies are playing guitar, woodworking, writing, drawing,

sewing, and gardening. I enjoy doing all of these activities and without a doubt, some of them are in defiance of what is traditionally acceptable for males. Does it make me any less of a man if I find sewing enjoyable? Not at all. However, refusing to do work around the house and forcing a woman to do it most definitely makes someone less of a man. A man is a partner, a supporting role, a strength wherever he is needed. Refusing to do work with an undeserved sense of entitlement does not make someone a man, even if that work is housework.

In hindsight, my parents set great examples of how a partnership should really work. Their relationship has taught me that, breaking free of gender bias, we are more adaptable, we live richer lives, our efforts are more fruitful, and we are stronger people. I hope to marry a woman someday that shares my values on gender equality. I will treat her as a friend and a partner in all aspects of life, and not as a maid servant or sex object as tradition would dictate. And likewise, I hope she values me as a partner in life, a close friend, and not simply a provider, a source of income.



Photo by Chandler White

Who is Donald Trump?

outspoken, very outspoken. It could throw you off if you don't listen closely to what he says. Sometimes I think he speaks out of turn but I think that's because he's inexperienced in politics. Regardless of what other people say I think he is a really good family man. I have some doubts about him but still went in favor of him because I didn't care for my other option. - Pat Bezanson

He's a buffoon, I mean he's a blowhard, everyone assumed he was nuts. Just a business figure who was larger than life and was regarded as sort of a buffoon and he's proved to be one. - Tim Kelly
He is a very successful businessman who has been in business for over fifty years. He's built a huge empire. He is a novice in politics but has decided he is going to run for president of the United States because he wants to bring a business culture to the government. - John Carrigg

his success

his rhetoric

very nostalgic in

nature

Reicher and Haslam describe Trump's rhetoric as the "American jeremiad" which implies that "America has an exceptional mission in the world but it is falling short"

(Reicher and Haslam 6). He expounds on this idea by highlighting three key points: that America was once a dominant country but has fallen short, America is falling short because other countries, such as Mexico and China, are taking jobs from the American people, and lastly,

Trump is the solution.

Step one is pretty simple: make basic conversation.

Bring up topics that interest them in hopes they are more easily persuaded by someone with whom they feel a connection. Trump seemed to bring out the dormant racism that has been sitting with many Americans for a long time and when this hatred hit the surface it terrified me. America had become less tolerant and that was very apparent at his rallies. I sat back and watched as Trump cheered on the bullies, mocked the disabled, and blamed the poor and I was horrified.

"They are the same people who didn't like Obama because he was a black guy."

-Tim Kelly

Step TWO: don't bother trying to convince the guy with the "Make America Great

Again that glued to his head that Donald Trump might not be his president. Ex. We were regularly being challenged by Iran. We were regularly being challenged by terrorist out of Yemen with our ships in the gulf. I think president Trump said we aren't going to put up with that. I think they were testing Obama because Obama was weak. They thought Obama would not stand up to other countries and I think that was true. Obama drew the line in sand with Syria and they crossed the line and nothing happened. I think Trump took the handcuffs off four military and let them go fight the war they need to fight. He said that the United States of America is not a country to be toyed with. They just don't quite know how he is going to react and that's a good thing.

John Carrigg

Trump shifted more blame and created a show people wanted to watch. At this point nothing could surprise me.

hateful racist

rhetoric

"When Mexico is sending its people, they're not sending their best... They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're

rapist. And some, I assume are good people." - Donald Trump

Steps three through six are general rules of conversation, such as, don't beat the dick, try to listen, and mentioned again: find a common ground.

Tim: I'm tired of listening to this shit about this douchebag Trump turn it off.

Mom: I would appreciate if you didn't use that language in my house, Tim.

Tim: I'll say whatever I want about him.

The man's crazy and his supporters are even crazier.

Mom: Oh, so I'm crazy now?

Do you want to go through this again Tim. I will not be called crazy in my own house while I'm cooking dinner for my family.

Tim: YOU HAVE TO BE CRAZY TO SUPPORT HIM AFTER THIS STUNT

Mom: OH YEAH I'M CRAZY?

unique ability relate ordinary people

Though he is extraordinarily wealthy, he brands himself as an entrepreneur and "lives the rich man's life most working men dreamed of" (Sullivan New York Magazine 11).

Step seven and eight gets us to the meat of the issue. **How do you inform someone that they have been misinformed**

without startling or upsetting them?

Though much of the population benefits from Obamacare they demanded to "repeal and replace."

Though many Trump supporters benefit from government programs they reject the notion of big government.

Populism is the crux of this phenomenon and has exploited the fears of common people for decades.

We all watched as Trump shrugged his

shoulders and labelled his vile words as "locker room banter." This is where I thought the switch had flipped. This is when the people of America where suppose to say, "no more." But I was wrong, Trump had said at the beginning of his campaign that "I could stand in the middle of 5th avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn't lose voters," and I was starting to believe that he was right.

Step nine: keep the conversation going. You don't have to solidify their anti-trumpism just yet [youtube.com/lockerroombanter](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lockerroombanter) Duration: 3:10

distrust the "inside"

a little less than the majority of the population were so upset with the way things were that they turned to Donald Trump and ignored all of his shortcomings. America had distrusted the "inside" so much that they went for someone so far on the outside that they had no experience with working in public office or the public arena in general.



Step ten obtain commitment once Who is Donald Trump?

the victim has been brought into the light. Ex. "Steering recovering Trump supporters towards non-kooky media and reading books about history, society, philosophy, critical thinking, logical fallacies, etc.," telling their Trump supporter friends about their revelation in hopes to create a sense of doubt in the greater Trump following population, or maybe as simple facebook post (Tisias 3).

"I use social media to deride him on a regular basis. I've certainly lost friendship over it because I can't just stand to be around people who would vote for that guy." Tim Kelly rallies structured hostile fearful environment Security measures brought an attitude of hostility towards intruders. While anxiously anticipating their leader an announcement would broadcast over the PA warning rally attendees to not touch or interact with protesters but when one

was spotted they were instructed to chant "Trump! Trump! Trump!" to notify security of the intruder (Reicher and Haslam 4).

Step eleven reminds us that every conversation that doesn't tend in chaos will plant a seed that could reframe a cultish mind set.

"I'm not always a 100% Trump person but I try to give him the benefit of the doubt." -Pat Bezanson

"They won't give this man the ballot, with other very capable candidates? There's no way." Although many powerful political figures were vocal about their distaste for Trump he still won.

...step twelve helps us deal with failure.

The night grew longer

Red covered our map

Blood splashed all over our nation

It was a mean fierce red

It was a red that fought tooth and nail

A savage red

White washed

Red washed

At eleven o'clock that evening I was glued to the TV with a bowl of ice cream trembling in my hands.

The fear set in

My hands trembled

My heart sank to the bottom of my stomach

But to my dismay more and more states started to turn red. It was a blood bath.

My hair stood tall on the back of my neck

My foot tapping the floor fast and in rhythm. I thought that through the failed debates, constant amnesia and self-contradiction on important issues, or his blatant political incorrectness his popularity would have declined.

I repeated the same words over and over

"He might win this"

"He might win this"

Those words made my stomach do backflips

My face was twisted in puzzled agony

I didn't believe

I wouldn't believe

But I had to

"Sorry that I'm being so pessimistic but I don't think America as we know it comes out of this unscathed. All democracies die at some point and we might be there."

-Tim Kelly

With my head hung low, I drug my feet up the stairs and crawled into bed. This country had failed me.

Rather go Blind

By Anglelic Lyrics

Things are existing and people are dying, poverty is still around and no one is believing in God. They are biting the hand that feeds them and becoming stubborn and lazy. I suggest them indirectly that life isn't about making babies. Crime is up, my black people are down, thinking the world owes them something and they should inherit it. The brutality is savage and cruelty of their own kind, but when I see the race thing,

I have become accustomed to the potential that I can be someone different. It was a challenge in my past life but then I become metamorphic. Going back and forth with my brothers and sisters about the harsh words that was said, but I was capable of knowing that I have a knowledge of the war ahead. The president is no longer black, the world is starving and before I leave this place in harm, my body will be unbothered. My children are playing with kindergarten on their breath, but then I violated by a person implied with bad health. You are sluggish, unsophisticated, and I become easily angered. Before I let you breach, overstep and disobey an innocent soul like a child, there will be severe pain and damage. Seeking attention, showy and pretentious reaching for the unnecessary burden with my eyes as your witness. You're strong and sharp in your smell and taste and you try to do things with them that they can relate. You're untrustworthy, defiant, and a clown without a bag but I have tricks for you that will shape and form you and your life will be in my hands.

I'd rather go blind with the increase in intensity of lust and the determination on a woman's face from a man who belongs in the dirt. He has insufficient actions, allowing you to see who he is and you continue to express deep respect to him with your please. I have no consideration for a man on a high horse, who will not climb down to his damsel in distress because he feels she has no luck. It is wasteful to me to watch someone be marry and to consign their rejection that they once carried. There is nothing long for in a world that doesn't care but sometimes I rather go blind and not have all the stares.





Photo by Olivia Brillinger

Fat Cow

By McKenna Delaney

Characters:

Katie Fost: A sixteen-year-old who struggles with her weight and wants to be skinny and popular for all the wrong reasons.

Mrs. Fost: Katie's 40-year-old stay at home mom who always worries about her daughter.

Veronica Byers: A seventeen-year-old girl and a senior Queen Bee at Katie's high school. She aspires to be the next Kate Upton.

Jenny: Sophomore (16) at Katie's high school. She secretly wants nothing to do with Veronica. She's bisexual.

Dr. Faraway: Katie's nutritionist and good friend of Mrs. Fost.

What is Fat Cow?

Fat Cow is a play primarily about a sixteen-year-old girl who struggles with her weight and wants to be skinny and popular for all the wrong reasons. To my knowledge, none of the characters in this play exist. If they did, then that's just a damn coincidence.

Act I, Scene One

[Katie is eating lunch in the back of the cafeteria, reading a teen magazine when Veronica, a senior at the local high school walks up to her table.]

Veronica: Hey fatass, whatcha reading?

[Katie ignores Veronica and takes a bite of her lunch]

Veronica: You're supposed to acknowledge your elders, especially me.

[Katie sips from her water bottle]

Katie: Leave me alone.

Veronica: Why are you sitting alone? Oh right, you're too fat and ugly to have friends.

Katie: I said, leave me alone, Veronica . I'm not in the mood for your bullshit.

Veronica: Aw, what happened? Got turned down because you're fat and ugly?

Katie: Leave me alone.

Veronica: Are you on your period?

Katie: Leave me alone.

Veronica: Oh, I know! It's because you're so fat and ugly that no one invited you to sit with them.

[Katie gets up from her chair and slams the magazine on the table]

Katie: I said.... leave....me....ALONE!

Veronica: Whoa, whoa....chill the fuck out. I was just wondering what you were reading. No need to get all pissy with me.

Katie: You want to know something, Veronica? You and your little posse can shove this magazine up your respective asses. What the fuck I am doing does not concern you. All I want is to enjoy a peaceful lunch without you hovering over me and teasing about my god damn weight. Now get the fuck out of my way and let me enjoy what is left of my lunch.

[Veronica scoffs]

Veronica: You mean....THIS?

[Veronica picks up Katie's lunch tray and throws it at her. The remains of her hamburger splatters all over shirt and Katie just stares at the lunch crowd, shocked and dismayed.]

Veronica: It looks like you're finished with your lunch. You better clean that up or the lunch room monitor will get-

[Pushing Veronica away from her, Katie angrily grabs her backpack and storms out of the cafeteria, almost slipping on the remnants of her lunch.]

Act One: Scene Two

[Scene takes place at Katie's residence where she is forcing herself to vomit to lose weight. Mrs. Fost overhears Katie gagging and knocks on the bathroom door.]

Mrs. Fost: Katie, are you all right? You've been in there for a while now.

Katie: Yeah Mom...I'm fine. (gags)...just food poisoning...

[Ignoring Katie's pleas, Mrs. Fost barges into the bathroom and sees Katie forcing herself to vomit.]

Mrs. Faust: Oh my god...

Katie: MOM! (coughs) What the hell?

Mrs. Faust: Oh sweetie, come here.

Katie: Get away from me. I'm fine!

Mrs. Faust: The hell you are. What the fuck are you doing to yourself?

Katie: Since when did you give a fuck about me? I've overheard you and David arguing.

Mrs. Fost: Honey, that's not true. We're just concerned...we received a call from the school that you were in an incident in the cafeteria. What happened?

Katie: Just some dickhead at school...do we really have to talk about this? I'm not in the best of moods.

Mrs. Fost: Honey, if you're even thinking about harming yourself...please tell us so we can get you help.

Katie: I don't need any fucking help.

Mrs. Fost: But dear, you're forcing yourself to vomit.

[Katie begins to sob into Mrs. Fost's lap]

Katie: I'm...I'm just sick of people making fun of my weight. I just want to be like Veronica Byers....I just want to be skinny and popular.

Mrs. Fost: Honey, being like Veronica....is...well....complicated.

Katie: Complicated? COMPLICATED?! Veronica Byers is the most popular girl in high school. She has so many friends, a smoking hot boyfriend and lives in a mansion.

Mrs. Fost: But what is the point? Do you really want to kill yourself over Veronica Byers?

[Katie sniffles and pulls away from her mother]

Katie: Well, no...but...I just want to be like her. I want to be her. I'm tired of being called a Fat Cow. No one wants to be my god damn friend because I'm fat. For fuck's sake, I'm failing Physical Education because of how fat I am.

Mrs. Fost: Katie, if you want to be like Vero-

Katie: Please don't go into the whole being yourself bullshit.

Mrs. Fost: What I was trying to say is that...well, if you want to be like Veronica Byers, you have to do it the right way....not by forcing yourself to vomit every time you finish eating...or hell, skipping meals. That's not healthy or safe, sweetie.

Katie: How would you know?

Mrs. Fost: I'll tell you what. Let me call my friend at the Wellness Clinic and see what her schedule is... meanwhile, you should shower...you smell like grease.

Katie: Oh geez, mom.

Act One, Scene 3

[Scene: Katie and her mother arrive at the Wellness Clinic]

Katie: Mom....I don't know if I can go through with this.

Mrs. Fost: Honey, if you really want to lose weight...then this is the best option. Besides, Sandra is fabulous.

[Katie groans and walks into the Wellness Clinic and sees several posters about weight loss]

Dr. Faraway: Judy, it's so wonderful to see you again.

Mrs. Fost: Sandra, I'd like for you to meet my daughter, Katie.

[Dr. Faraway extends her hand towards Katie who reluctantly shakes hers.]

Dr. Faraway: If you would mind coming with me, I'd like to get your weight.

[Waves at Mrs. Fost]

We should have coffee sometime, Judy.

[Katie walks onto the scale and looks down at her weight]

Katie: 154 pounds. Figures....I'm fat.

[Dr. Faraway laughs]

Dr. Faraway: Your weight is above average for someone your age.

Katie: Really?

Dr. Faraway: Definitely. Katie, I don't think you should be so concerned about your weight.

Katie: But what makes you say that?

Dr. Faraway: Tell me...what do you eat daily?

Katie: I rarely eat breakfast. Occasionally, I eat an apple...or a small thing of yogurt.

Dr. Faraway: And lunch?

Katie: Cheeseburgers and fries.

Dr. Faraway: That's why.

Katie: Why what?

Dr. Faraway: It's what you eat that's making you overweight. Do you work out?

Katie: Would P.E. count?

Dr. Faraway: Sadly, no. Running around and playing basketball during P.E. is only half of exercising.

Katie: No wonder why I'm failing....

Dr. Faraway: My daughter...Jenny worries about the same thing. It's funny....she talks about you a lot.

Katie: Wait, Jenny's your daughter?

Dr. Faraway: Yep. I should tell you something, Katie. Jenny doesn't have many friends.

Katie: But she's a part of Veronica Byers' group...why does she like me so much? All they talk about is how fat I am and how I don't have many friends.

Dr. Faraway: Katie, the only reason Jenny is friends with her is because she's scared. That if she stopped being her friend, Veronica would blackmail her.

Katie: Blackmail?

Dr. Faraway: Never mind. Anyway, I have a favor to ask of you. Would you mind taking a couple of workout sessions with Jenny? I'll talk with your gym teacher to see if she could allow you to come here every day during her class.

Katie: Sure...I mean....but...

Dr. Faraway: Please keep this a secret from Jenny. She would be livid if she found out that I told anyone about her and Veronica.

Katie: I promise.

Act One: Scene 4

[Scene: After a few weeks of working out at the Wellness Clinic, Katie has seen a significant change in her physique. Sitting in the back of the cafeteria, she notices Jenny.]

Jenny: Hey Katie. Is that one of those kits?

Katie: Yeah. Thanks for the suggestions, Jenny. I'm starting to feel good about myself...for the first time, no one has called me a fat cow....or anything of the norm.

Jenny: It's not a problem, Katie. I'm just glad that the classes have been working out for you.

[Then, Veronica walks up to Katie's table, shocked at the fact that Jenny was sitting with her.]

Veronica: Ugh, Jenny. I told you not to-

Jenny: I want out.

Veronica: Excuse me?

Jenny: You heard me. I want out.

[Veronica walks up to Jenny and pulls her close.]

Veronica: Let me make our little deal clear. You join my group....I'll keep your dirty little secret.

[Jenny pulls away.]

Jenny: Veronica, you have no idea how it feels to be bullied, do you?
Veronica: Oh sweetie, of course. I'm feeling a bit bullied right now. You choosing her over me.
Jenny: That's just because Katie's a decent person...unlike you.
Veronica: Her? A decent person? HA. She's fat. Fat people are the epitome of decent people...besides,
you don't want me to tell the whole school that you're-

[Jenny slaps Veronica across the face.]

Ow. The hell was that for?

Jenny: You know what, Veronica? So what! I'm bisexual. I like girls. I like guys. I might have even hit
on your sister a couple of times.

Veronica: You little-

Jenny: What? It's true. I screwed her, too.

Veronica: You slept with my sister?

Jenny: And your boyfriend.

Veronica: You whore!

Jenny: At the same time!

Veronica: Veronica?!

Jenny: Oh yes. It was disappointing though.... because your boyfriend has a small and stiff
package...but your sister.....too bad she moved to Penn State and ended it between us.

Veronica: I can't believe you slept with my sister and my boyfriend....you....you....whore!

[Veronica storms off, leaving Katie stunned.]

Katie: Wow...I've never seen Veronica like that before. You really showed her.

Jenny: Hopefully she and her little posse will leave you alone from now on...Katie, I'm sorry for what
Veronica has done to you...and I'm sorry about all of the mean things I said about you too. I
hope you can forgive me.

Katie: Are you kidding me? For the first time...I have a friend.

Jenny: I'm glad. Come on, there are some people who I'd like for you to meet.

[Jenny and Katie get up and head over to another table of other social outcasts, personally victimized by Ve-
ronica Byers and they start a conversation.]

[End.]

Midlands Technical College Presents
The Fourth Annual
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT Student Conference
Interdisciplinary Studies
Literature, Composition, Creativity



Best Group Presentation: Jordan Paris, Aniessa Rollinson,
Chauncey Sears, Tori Turner, and Andrew Tran for
"The Earnest Deception"

Best 102 Gallery Entry: Sarah Rego for "Situational Irony in
'Two Kinds'"

Best Essay: Jyssica LeClair for "Illuminating Blake: The Social
Mirror of 'The Little Black Boy'"

Best Creative Piece: Maribeth Schaefer for "Jumping"

Subconscious Blindness

By Julian Nunez

To the people of a blind eye,
How long until the sight be recovered
In this Country of mine?

You see the blood that people shed,
The bruises we have collected inside and out
Because years of sticks and stones and harsh words that are said,

It is a choice to be blind and to look away,
Ignore the tears, the struggles, and the hardships
That people face day after day.

We are left with our faith- the 'In God We Trust'
For the people of the forgotten who are stuck
In a life that is not free for us,
Where we get treated unfairly and feel unjust,

Eventually the stress, the heartache, and the hatred that we endure,
Will be over, but for now,
We work hard and grow to be better in hopes of a change,
For how long will this go on for this is deranged?

Sadly, I am not so sure.

Shattered

By Kentley Washington

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Anna: Wife to Bruce involved in the affair

Bruce: Husband to Anna and victim of the affair

Jeanie: Friend to Bruce and Anna

Phil: Owner of a local bar/pizzeria

Scene 1

The time is now 9:30 pm in Chicago, Illinois. Anna leaves the bathroom and into the living room in her bath robe in her suburban home, emotions running wild and mind racing. Lust, anger, humiliation, and guilt; but mostly utter and bitter disgust. Her friend, Jeanie, sits in the living room waiting for her and they continue their conversation about Anna's strained marriage with her husband, Bruce.

JEANIE: So, did you talk to him about it yet?

ANNA: Talk about it? I'm surprised he didn't bring it up in the past month.

JEANIE: So, you mean in the past month, you two haven't sat down and talk about this?

ANNA: Jean, there's nothing much to talk about it. I mean for Christ's sake, when he did find out I thought he was going to blow a gasket. I mean the look in his eyes, I never seen that look before, but it was terrifying. It was the look that you would expect before you get cussed out. I literally thought he was going to scream and say every curse word in the book at me, start calling me a "bitch" or a "slut". But instead...nothing. Not a single word. For an entire goddamned month!

JEANIE: Jesus Christ, Annie...so he never said anything after that whole thing? Not even a "Good morning" or "I love you"?

ANNA: (shakes her head sadly) Not a single word. Hell, even when I try to make conversation with him or even say "hello", he pretends that I'm not even in the room. For all I know he makes it feel as if I don't exist at all.

JEANIE: Annie, don't think like that. He still loves you. It's just that this is still tough for him to handle.

ANNA: Of course, it is! I mean, goddammit, Jean, it was with his brother! His own blood! I'm surprised he didn't strangled Brett or beat the living crap out of him when he found out.

JEANIE: I know. Have you heard from Brett at all?

ANNA: No, I haven't. After the whole fiasco, Bruce made it clear that he wanted nothing to with him. And judging by the look Brett had on his face, it seemed he took his older brother's warning to heart. Last time I heard, he was somewhere up in Colorado, "taking in the sights" as I heard.

JEANIE: By "taking in the sights", you mean he was avoiding a painful ass-kicking.

ANNA: Jean...

JEANIE: I'm sorry Annie, baby. But the guy deserves it, brother-in-law or not. For him to do what he did and to put you in this situation I would kick his ass myself. Hell, if I had my way I would shove my boot right up his-

ANNA: (tries to calm down Jeanie) Okay, okay... Jesus, Jean, I get. Besides, he wasn't the only one at fault here. It was my choice.

JEANIE: But he corrupted you.

ANNA: But I wanted it.

JEANIE: He used you!

ANNA: He was there for me!

JEANIE: How can you say that? He took advantage of your loneliness to have his way and you're defending him?

ANNA: (sighs) I wasn't defending him. I'm just making it clear that I'm also at fault. I had the choice to stay away from him, to end it all before it got out of hand and yet I kept coming back to him. To feel his warmth, to be within his loving embrace, even as we made love. All those times we've been together, he listened to me, understood me...even loved me at one point. I don't know why I felt those emotions and I wish I had the strength to resist but...I just couldn't...

JEANIE: Jesus Christ, Annie...

ANNA: I know...I know... Oh God I feel horrible for even speaking these words. (Anna sits on the sofa, holding her head and starts to cry as Jeanie sits next to her and comforts her)

JEANIE: It's okay, hon. Believe it or not, everyone is going through the same thing you're going through. But now that the secret's out, it's going to be very difficult.

ANNA: I know, Jean. It's just hard enough to deal with things at home. Other than Bruce not talking to me at all, the guilt still eats me up inside, even after he found out. I figured I would feel a bit of relief knowing that he found out the truth.

JEANIE: Oh yeah. Every woman has felt nothing but relief from their husbands finding out that they were involved in a two-year affair with their husband's brother.

ANNA: No, I didn't mean it like that.

JEANIE: I know but still even from a rational stand point, that's a pretty fucked up way of thinking, girl.

ANNA: Yea, no kidding. God, I made such a mess of my life that I feel like my life is crumbling around me. I don't know what to do anymore, Jean.

JEANIE: I think the best thing to do is to talk to Bruce. See if you two can work things out.

ANNA: Dammit, Jean, I told you! I tried!

JEANIE: Well, try again. Damn, Anna, you can't just sit in this house and sulk all damn day. You have to keep trying. Bruce is just coping right now and he won't admit it but he needs you as much as you need him. You both can't keep each other apart forever; otherwise. the next course of action is the "D".

ANNA: I swear to God if you just made a dick joke-

JEANIE: No, dammit, I meant a divorce. If you and Bruce don't get your shit together soon, it's only going to get worse before long.

ANNA: I don't know, Jean...

JEANIE: Hey girl, I'm just telling it like it is.

ANNA: I know, girl. And you're right. I just wish I knew what to say.

JEANIE: (sees the lights of a car pulling into the driveway from the living room window) Well you better think of something because I see him pulling into the driveway.

ANNA: (looks at the clock) Oh. He's home early tonight.

JEANIE: Maybe it's fate shining a heavenly light upon you.

ANNA: Yeah right. Or maybe fate's getting a kick out of my suffering.

(Bruce parks his car into the driveway and enters through the living room. He looks to see Anna and Jeanie sitting on the sofa and looks to Anna for a brief moment. The room grows silent and finally Jeanie breaks the silence.)

JEANIE: How was work, handsome?

BRUCE: (smiles to Jeanie) Oh you know, heavy lifting here, paper work there and not a moment for rest.

JEANIE: Well duh! That's why it's called work, hon. (gives a short smile and nods) It's good to see you Bruce.

BRUCE: Yeah...you too...

JEANIE: (looks to Anna, who is looking down to the ground, afraid to look in Bruce's direction) Well I guess it's time for me to head on home.

BRUCE: You sure? Am I interrupting something important?

JEANIE: Oh no! Nothing like that, hon. It's getting late and even though I'm still twenty-eight, I need my beauty sleep, you know?

ANNA: (worried) But Jean, must you go so soon? I mean, are you sure you can't stay for even a little bit longer at least?

JEANIE: I'm sure, doll. (holds her hand) I'll be back tomorrow after work. We can talk a bit more then. (Leans over and kisses Anna's cheek and whispers) Remember what we talked about. (stands up and walks over to Bruce, kissing his cheek) Night Bruce. Let me know if you need me too, huh?

BRUCE: Thanks, Jean, but I'm fine really.

JEANIE: Uh-huh. Sure honey. (pats his cheek and walks over to the door) Love you both. And remember, I'm right next door if needed. Goodnight all! (waves them both good-bye)

ANNA/BRUCE: Goodnight

(As Jeanie leaves the house and disappears from the doorway, Bruce and Anna are left alone and once again they stare into each other's eyes, each not knowing what to say to the other.)

ANNA: Um...h-hey...

BRUCE: Hey... (goes over to the arm chair and sits, picking up a newspaper from the arm of the chair and starts to read it)

ANNA: So, um...how was work?

BRUCE: Just work.

ANNA: Oh. (ponders for a moment) Anything interesting happened?

BRUCE: (pauses for a moment and lowers the paper) What do you mean by interesting?

ANNA: You know like...work things?

BRUCE: (silent for a moment) Nothing really interesting... (raises the paper and reads again)

ANNA: (sighs) Okay. Forget it.

BRUCE: What? Forget what?

ANNA: What do you mean "forget what"? I mean for God's sake. Bruce, don't you think I already feel bad that it happened? You don't think that when it first happened I wanted to tell you? You don't think I wanted to...to explain to you about the mistake I made? How long does it take till you finally talk to me about this? Another month, two months or, hell, maybe two years? Don't you think I feel guilty enough as it is?

BRUCE: (puts down the paper) If you truly felt this guilty about it the it shouldn't have gone on for two years. So, were you feeling guilty over the course of the two years when it happened or are you finally guilty because you were caught in the act?

ANNA: What are you trying to say? That I'm faking my guilt? I've always wanted to tell you but-

BRUCE: But what? (stand up from the chair, getting angry) You wanted to tell me but you found my younger brother much more attractive and appealing to you taste?

ANNA: What the hell? No! I mean, at first it felt that way but...I mean... (stands and moves away from the couch) It's just...complicated.

BRUCE: Oh really? So, what you're saying is that what happened between you and Brett was a sort of "accident", then?

ANNA: Yes. I-I mean no! I mean...oh goddammit, Bruce, that's not what I meant!

BRUCE: Then what is it? Was it that the love-making between you two bring back some old missing passion from our younger days? Am I too old for your taste?

ANNA: (Becomes irritated) Oh for fuck's sake, Bruce, you are a goddamn asshole!

BRUCE: Did he put it in there too?

ANNA: Stop it, Bruce! I mean it!!

BRUCE: Or what? You'll go back to Brett? You're willing to get a fucking plane ticket to Colorado to have one more night with him?

ANNA: Jesus Christ, Bruce, it wasn't like that!

BRUCE: Then what was it about, Anna? Why'd you, do it?

ANNA: I don't know...it just sort of happened...

BRUCE: No. Us meeting in college, when I was a stern-faced college boy and you, a shy, timid and yet beautiful college girl who would stutter throughout her sentences, all of a sudden getting together suddenly getting married two years later. That sort of happened but this situation right now doesn't even come close!

ANNA: I'm sorry, Bruce...

BRUCE: Yeah. Of course, you are.

ANNA: Well what do you want me to say? It's not like I wanted all this to happen.

BRUCE: But it did happen. And worst of all, for the past month when the truth came out, I honestly didn't know what to feel or how to go about it. I just don't know if I can trust you anymore. My own goddamn wife of five years! It's almost like I don't even know you anymore or if you still even love me like you did before.

ANNA: I do, Bruce, I really do. What is it that you want from me? (walks over to him) What can I do to fix this? To fix us?

BRUCE: Ha. Fix? How can you fix the two years of broken trust between us?

ANNA: I don't know. I just...I don't know...

BRUCE: Yeah. That's what I thought. (turns to the stairs)

ANNA: (Tearfully) Bruce, please! Goddammit, I love you! I never wanted to lose you! I don't want to lose you! Do you have any idea how many countless nights I spent tossing and turning in my sleep? Wishing that I could go back in time and stop it from ever happening in the first place, to stop myself from making that horrible mistake? If I could, you know goddamn well I would! (grabs his shirt sleeve) Brucie...I don't want to lose you as my husband.

BRUCE: I know. (shakes off her hand) But I have already lost you as my wife.
(Leaves the room as Anna sits back on the sofa and cries into her hands)

Fade Out; End of Scene.

Scene 2

The time is 4:30pm as Anna and Jeanie are sitting in the living room, Jeanie sipping on small portions of her wine as Anna is heavily intoxicated from Bruce's confession the night before and is just telling Jeanie the news while burying her head in her arms feeling intoxicated, guilt and hurt.

JEANIE: He didn't!

ANNA: He did.

JEANIE: He actually said that?

ANNA: No stutter.

JEANIE: My God. So, he didn't say anything else?

ANNA: If he did I might be more drunk than I am right now. (pours another glass)

JEANIE: Annie, come on. I know this is a rough time for both of you but drinking yourself to death and drowning in your misery isn't going to help.

ANNA: Yea thanks, Mom (takes a huge sip of the drink)

JEANIE: Jesus Christ. So, you haven't talked to Bruce at all?

ANNA: (stands up) Who the hell cares? As far as I know, he wants nothing to do with me. I mean why would he want to be anywhere near his whore of a wife? God, it was bad enough that people keep talking about something that was a month ago but it's much worse when your own husband can't look you in the eyes the same way when you first married the stubborn bastard. He treats me as if I don't exist? He doesn't want me anymore? Well fine! I don't want him anymore either! I'm tired of his self-righteous ass ignoring me and treating me like I have the plague! I said I was sorry and he expects me to grovel at his feet and say "Oh dear husband of mine, please forgive me for my unfaithfulness!" I'm a goddamn woman! I don't have to take this shit! So, fuck this and fuck him!

(Anna sits back down at the table as Jeanie stares at her, unable to find no other words but takes Anna's hand in a comforting way.)

JEANIE: Anna, sweetie, you're drunk.

ANNA: Piss off, Jean.

JEANIE: Oh well excuse me. Not my fault that you've been drinking till the break of dawn, passed out, pissed drunk and woke back up just to hit another bottle to drown out your problems.

ANNA: God, Jean, shut up.

JEANIE: "Oh look at me, poor old Anna, sitting here pissy and drunk because I cheated on my husband with his only brother and now dealing with so much bullshit that was my fault in the first place."

ANNA: Shut. Up.

JEANIE: Look at you. Just wallowing in your misery and blaming everyone else but your own self. God, it's just like high school when you were just dating every single guy who would ask you out and then all of a sudden, the relationship last for about six months. I mean for fuck's sake, Annie, one lasted for a goddamn week.

ANNA: Shut up, Jean!

JEANIE: What was that guy's name? Jerry? Frankie? Benny?

ANNA: Kenji! His name was Kenji, goddammit!

JEANIE: Oh right. And refresh my memory, but how did things end with Kenji, again? You broke up with him because you were having...problems?

ANNA: I was Jean. He was boring me so I needed some time away.

JEANIE: Now I know you're drunk because that is the stupidest excuse I ever heard.

ANNA: Well I don't like to be bored, okay? The guy was a stiff.

JEANIE: Even Bruce?

ANNA: We're seriously going there?

JEANIE: Honey, we never even left the topic. This whole thing with you is that whenever you get bored with someone you're with you wind up going to another person.

ANNA: That's not true-

JEANIE: Annie, come on! How long have this been going on? How many guys did you date and leave because they have some things about them that you didn't like?

ANNA: Jean, that has nothing to do with Bruce.

JEANIE: Doesn't it, hon? Doesn't it? Because it seems like a recurring pattern with you. You date a guy for a while and then, for some goddamn reason, stupid or otherwise, you break up with them for the dumbest reasons. Nothing but excuse after fucking excuses and I am sick of it!

ANNA: (gets frustrated and slams fist on the couch) You don't know shit about me, Jean! Not a goddamn thing!

JEANIE: Don't I? Remember that boy you used to date back in the summer of '08? Who was it? Stephen Wilkins?

ANNA: What about him?

JEANIE: Remember when you use to date? When every day it was “Oh, I love him” or “Oh, he’s the one. He’s so talented and handsome and...” blah, blah, blobbily blah. I have to hear this shit every minute of every day. Always “Stevie this...” and “Stevie that...” to the point I was ready to flush my phone down the toilet. That relationship lasted for two months. Two goddamn months and you called me up saying “Oh it didn’t work out. He was talking about getting an internship out in New York in art or something. Thought it was time to break it off.” You broke up with the guy because he was getting an internship!

ANNA: Well he was moving anyway!

JEANIE: Only for the rest of high school!

ANNA: He probably would’ve gotten bored!

JEANIE: How the hell would you know? He’s probably got enough money with whatever the hell he’s doing and probably got enough money to get like a dozen wives. Artists are the hottest thing to young girls nowadays and yet you let this one go because he had a future.

ANNA: Just what the hell are you getting at?

JEANIE: As your friend, I love you and I will try to spare your feelings as best as I can, but as far as I can see, Annie, dear, you’re a bit of an attention whore.

ANNA: (stands up, getting angrier) The hell is that supposed to mean?

JEANIE: It means that whenever a man doesn’t give you enough attention then you look for another who does.

ANNA: What so you think I cheated on Bruce because I became bored of him? That’s ridiculous! (reaches for the wine bottle)

JEANIE: You so much as touch that bottle and you’ll lose your hand.

ANNA: It’s my house!

JEANIE: I don’t give a shit!

(After a moment of glaring at each other, Anna retracts her hand and plumps back on the sofa, arms folded and frustrated.)

JEANIE: I’m not saying you did it because Bruce was boring you or it was out of boredom in general, but maybe you did it because of the fact that he was hardly around to give you any of the attention that you wanted. Subconsciously anyway.

ANNA: What so I did what I because of all the guys I dated in high school that it leads me to do it on instinct?

JEANIE: Basically.

ANNA: Ha! Ridiculous!

JEANIE: Your nickname in high school was “Speedy Annie.”

ANNA: God I hate that nickname.

JEANIE: My point is, Anna, you have a problem that the bottle can’t fix. You and Bruce need to sort this out, one way or the other. I suggest going to a marriage counselor.

ANNA: What? Hell no!

JEANIE: Anna, you know this is the only way to fix this. To fix your marriage.

ANNA: I am not going to stupid shrink who’s going to bleed me out of my money to tell me all the shit that’s already obvious. It’s a waste of time.

JEANIE: It’s better than your increasing drinking and overbearing stupidity. Hell, anymore of this and next thing you know it’s a TV sitcom. I know a guy who will probably help you. He helped me with my marriage with my ex-husband Johnathon.

ANNA: And now you’re divorce.

JEANIE: It was our choice, Annie. It was a final agreement between a married couple that we had all the time in the world to fix our relationship so we can better our marriage. But guess what? All that time we had was wasted. There was nothing left for us, or anything to begin with. But trust me when I say that you and Bruce still have a chance. Please, sweetie, just give it a try.

ANNA: Oh God... (buries her face into her hands, tearfully) I don’t know. I just don’t know. It’s bad enough Bruce hates me and now to make matters worse I have to go to a shrink.

JEANIE: (takes Anna’s hands into her own) Anna just give it some thought. I promise this guy is what you and Bruce. Just give it a shot. What else do you have to lose? Do you really want your marriage to end like this?

ANNA: I don’t know.

JEANIE: Anna just try. I promise you that things will get better after this.

ANNA: (Suddenly becomes enraged and pulls her hands away from Jeanie) Goddammit, Jean you said that yesterday and look what happened! You said things will get better if I just sat down and talk to Bruce and now look what happened! Bruce wants nothing to do with me, people won't stop talking about me behind my back and you're the only person who ever comes around and yet you treat me like an ignorant child!

JEANIE: Annie, I'm trying to help you!

ANNA: The hell you are! Maybe you're just getting a kick out of this! You love watching me suffer, don't you? To get a good laugh out of Anna's little dilemma! Is that all I am to you?

JEANIE: Anna, for God's sake!

ANNA: (Grabs another bottle) To hell with this! I'm done with this crap!

JEANIE: (Now irritated, grabs Anna's arm and her tone grows fierce) I told you if you so much as pick up that damn bottle, you'd lose that hand. Do you REALLY want to go there with me?
(Anna stares back at Jeanie)

ANNA: Let go, Jean.

JEANIE: No.

ANNA: Let go or I'll...

JEANIE: Do it, bitch. If you think you got what it takes, do it.

(After they both stare each other down for a moment, Anna finally releases the bottle sits down in frustration.)

JEANIE: (Sits next to Anna on the sofa) Anna, I know things aren't great but for God's sake relax. Stop flying off the goddamn handle all the time. You're not the only person in this world going through a shit storm. That's just life. The real question is this: 'What the hell are you going to do about it?'

ANNA: (Becomes silent for a moment then takes a deep breath) You're a bitch, you know that?

JEANIE: You're not the first to tell me that girlfriend. But, you still love me for it!

ANNA: (Chuckles) Yeah yeah... (sits up straight and sighs) I want to see him...but I don't know if he wants to see me.

JEANIE: You let me handle tall, dark and stubborn, hon. I'll get him to open his mouth willingly or kick his ass till he sings.

ANNA: Jean-

JEANIE: Don't worry, hon. I won't hurt him. (rubs her head playfully) Just wait here and sober up, alright?

ANNA: (Hesitant but slowly nods) Kay then. (lays down on the sofa) Thanks, Jean...

JEANIE: (Comforts her) That's why I'm here, sweetie. (after a moment, gets up from the sofa and grabs her coat, putting it on) Now for the hard part. (walks out the door, offstage)

Fade out; End of Scene.

Scene 3

The time is 12:45 am as Bruce is sitting at the bar section of Phil's Pizzeria, notable for having "the best damn pizza you ever tasted". The owner of the restaurant, Phil, stands behind the counter, cleaning mugs while attending to the customers and talking to Bruce about the situation between himself and his wife. Phil has been very concerned for the young couple much like a father concerned for his children.

PHIL: Look, kid. Why don't you just go home and work things out with her. I mean you're both married, ain'tcha? Don't you think it's high time you both talk? You can't keep coming here every night and expect things to work itself out, do you?

BRUCE: (Head down, with a bottle of beer in hand) I don't know. Not a bad idea to me.

PHIL: (Puts the cup in the cupboard) Well it's a stupid one. (Turns to Bruce, leaning over the counter) Just how long have you been coming here to have a drink and how much longer will you keep coming here until you finally work this out?

BRUCE: (Hits table in frustration) God, Phil, will you get the hell off my back already?

PHIL: I'm just saying, kid, that you can't wait this out any longer.

BRUCE: (Raises his head, growing frustrated) Look, Phil, I'm fine. Seriously. I don't need you babying me because of one big problem, okay?

PHIL: (Shrugs and sits up) Suit yourself, kid. But maybe you should stop being sorry for yourself and starts being a man and fix it. Yeah, your marriage is on the rocks right now but you still got time. Don't waste it.

BRUCE: Yeah. Whatever. (Drinks from the bottle and lays his head on his hand)

PHIL: (Sighs) You know what your problem is kid?

BRUCE: (Rolls his eyes) What is my problem, Phil?

PHIL: Your problem is that you're green. You're yellow. You're afraid to talk about your problems to folks and worse than that all you can do is try hiding it like a little kid hiding shit under his bed.

BRUCE: I'm not hiding anything, Phil!

PHIL: You're hiding from your wife! What else would you call coming to my bar every night and getting stewed.

BRUCE: What I do on my time is my business, Phil! I'm not looking for a pity party and I'm damn sure not hiding from my problems. I just need a place where I can just get away from home for a while. But, if you don't like how I spend my nights after work and if you want me to leave then fucking say it!

PHIL: (Being patient, sighs and places his hand on Bruce's shoulder) Nah, kid. I don't want you to go. I'm just concerned is all.

BRUCE: (Pushes away Phil's hand) Yeah, well, I don't need it, Phil. I'm fine. But I would definitely like to be left alone to enjoy my beer and the cheesy jazz music in the background. So would you kindly leave me alone.

PHIL: (shrugs) Whatever you say, kid. (in a sarcastic, servant-like tone) Your wish is my command, sire.

(Phil stands on the far side of the bar and wipes down the counter as Bruce holds up his head, taking another sip of his beer in frustration. Jeanie enters the bar, looking around for Bruce and spots him sitting at the bar and goes over to him, nudging him.)

JEANIE: Buy me a drink, handsome?

BRUCE: (Looks up) Jeanie? What are you doing here? (looks around) Where's Anna?

JEANIE: (Sits at the bar) Oh she's at home sobering up after her little meltdown. You know how she gets when she's drunk.

BRUCE: Heh. Yea I know. She must've been a handful.

JEANIE: Nah. Not so much. (Bangs the counter, speaks in a jokingly Italian accent) 'Ey Philly!! What a girl gotta do to get a drink up in here, huh?

PHIL: (Looks over and laughs) For the prettiest face in all of Chicago, nothing at all. What's it gonna be, Jean?

JEANIE: Oh, nothing too special, Philly, honey. Just a bottle of Jägermeister. Don't want to get too tipsy for tonight.

PHIL: You got it! (Goes to the back of the bar, offstage)

JEANIE: So, Bruce, this is where you spend your time after work.

BRUCE: (Shrugs) Where else am I going to be?

JEANIE: Well I don't know. Most married men would be at home to drink instead of going to a bar every night and spending more money the more you want to get drunk off your ass.

BRUCE: (sighs) I know what you're trying to do, Jean.

JEANIE: I don't know what you're talking about, hon. There's nothing wrong with two friends sitting down at a pizzeria and having a couple of drinks, right?

(Phil reenters with a bottle of Jägermeister and Jeanie takes it as it is handed to her)

JEANIE: Thanks, Philly-dear. You always know how to make a woman happy.

PHIL: Ha! Tell that to my ex-wives. But always great to hear coming from you, Jean.

JEANIE: I try Phil, baby. (winks and makes Phil blush)

PHIL: (Looks at his watch and to the patrons) Alright ya drunk bastards. Better finish your drinks and get the hell out of my place soon! You got exactly ten minutes before I close up shop! Any who is still here gets to kiss the pavement! (Disappears to the back, offstage)

JEANIE: Nice to know Phil's still a sweetheart.

BRUCE: Yeah when he's not prying into other people's problems.

JEANIE: (Sips her beer) Oh, leave him alone. He means well.

BRUCE: Yeah, whatever. (Sips his beer) But, seriously, Jean, why the hell are you here?

JEANIE: Well, Detective Don Knotts, if you must know, I came here to check up on you and to take you home.

BRUCE: Did Anna send you here because I swear-

JEANIE: Whoa whoa, take it easy there, Tarzan. Don't get your loincloth in a twist. No, Anna didn't send me.

BRUCE: Ok well what do you want?

JEANIE: Oh, that's not the real question, hon. (leans in closer) The real question is what the hell are you doing here? Shouldn't you be at home with your wife?

BRUCE: I can be wherever I want to be.

JEANIE: Yet for some reason you don't want to go home.

BRUCE: Just didn't feel like going home is all?

JEANIE: Come on, Bruce. Enough bullshitting. What's really going on with you?

BRUCE: I don't know what you're talking about.

JEANIE: You've been avoiding Anna all month, you spend your nights at the bar, and when you're not going to work and you stay home you act like she's not in the room.

BRUCE: (Puts his beer down in frustration) Look, Jean, I don't want to talk about it. So drop it.

JEANIE: Well aren't we Mister Big Balls tonight. (Slaps his shoulder) Should I curtsy for you as well, good sir. Or maybe I can honor your presence by giving you a little dance to your pleasure.

BRUCE: Ughh...goddammit, Jean! Knock it off!

JEANIE: (Rubs against him) Would his heinous like a nice lap dance to ease his mind, hm?

BRUCE: (Gently pushes her away) I said stop it! God, why the hell is everyone getting on my case today?

JEANIE: Well why are you being such a stubborn asshole? Everyone's worried about and want to help you! Anna wants to fix this strain in your marriage! At least she's trying to make things right but what the hell are you doing to fix this? All you ever done was sulk around all the time when you're piss drunk and when your sober you're still sulking around like a poor 'wittle' puppy!

BRUCE: (Stands up in fury) Dammit, Jean! You know I can't talk to her! Not after what she's put me through! The humiliation I suffered because of the two years of broken trust! The two years of secrecy! The two goddamn years of fucking betrayal! And it was with my brother!! My own fucking brother!! They were both screwing around while I was working my ass off day in and day out, trying to put food on the table and benefit for our family that we were planning to have and what the hell do I get in return! My wife and brother sneaking around fucking behind my back!! So, yeah, I'm pissed off!! Yeah, I don't want to talk about it but fuck it! If she wants my younger brother then she can have him! I'm done with her whining and bitching and such! I try to be there for her and this is the thanks I get!! I just...I just...

FUCK!! (slams his fist down on the counter and slowly slumps back in his seat with his head down)

JEANIE: (Holds Bruce in comfort) Bruce...it's okay. Just let it all out.

BRUCE: (Tearfully) I loved that woman, Jean. I loved her with all my heart and soul. But the fact that she would betray me like this just...pisses me off!

JEANIE: I know, Bruce. Believe me I know how it feels to be betrayed. To love someone with all your heart and to put all your trust in them and then to be lied to and be left in pain. But, you both still have a chance, hon. You can't just give up on your marriage when you still got something to fight for.

BRUCE: God, Jean, I just don't know anymore. I wish I can fight but I...I just don't know...

JEANIE: Take it from me, handsome, couples like you and Anna go through stuff like this all the time. But the difference between them is that there are some couples that are willing to work out their problems and help each other get through the worst of it. I believe you and Anna can do it.

BRUCE: I wish I could believe that.

JEANIE: Well start believing, Bruce. You two need each other more than anything. She needs you. Are you going to abandon her? Are you going to man up and save your marriage or just give up on everything?

BRUCE: (Ponders for a moment and sighs) Okay, Jean. You win.

JEANIE: I always do, handsome.

BRUCE: (Stands up from the bar) I better get home then.

JEANIE: You sure you're okay to drive, pretty boy?

BRUCE: Ha I'm not that drunk, Jean. (starts for the door and turns back to Jean) Thanks, Jean. For everything. (Rushes out the door, off stage)

JEANIE: Aww how sweet. Only one way to cap off this happy ending. (Italian accent) 'Ey Philly! How about we upgrade to the scotch!

Fades out; End of Scene

Scene Four

The time is now 1:45 am as Anna sits on the sofa, getting over a massive hangover. As she sobers up she lays on the sofa, reading a book and waits for Bruce to come home. Bruce comes in through the door and Anna looks up from her book.

ANNA: Oh, Bruce. You're home.

BRUCE: Uh yeah. Jeanie managed to convince me to come home.

ANNA: Hope she wasn't being a total bitch.

BRUCE: (Sits next to Anna) Nah. As far as I know she's probably still at Phil's having another drink.

ANNA: (Keeps looking down in the book) Yeah, that certainly sounds like Jean.

BRUCE: Yeah... (Takes a deep breath and speaks the question that's been haunting him) Did you love him?

ANNA: What?

BRUCE: Brett. Did you ever once love him when you two were...together?

ANNA: (Became silent for a moment and puts down the book) At one point, yes. At least I thought I did but I started to notice that Brett was just like every guy I dated in high school. Always the type of guy that wants to be with me for sex and not for love.

BRUCE: Then why'd you keep going back to him?

ANNA: (Shrugs) I don't know, Bruce. I was just tired of being left alone at home and being a housewife all the goddamn time. I just wanted some kind of comfort from something or someone. I guess I never realized that I would be hooked. Being with Brett was supposed to be a one-time thing but it was like the more you were working the more I went back to him. But I didn't go to him out of love, just to help fill the void.

BRUCE: (Looks down) I admit I did spend a lot of time working and I should've spent my time with you but of all people...I mean...seriously, Brett?

ANNA: (Sighs) I know. I'm a huge whore for being with my husband's brother, right?

BRUCE: (Looks to her) What?

ANNA: That's what you've been thinking, right? That I'm such a whore for sleeping with Brett?

BRUCE: What? No.

ANNA: Bruce, come on I'm not that stu-

BRUCE: Anna, I'm serious! The thought never crossed my mind at all!

ANNA: (Looks surprised) R-really? So, you never thought little of me?

BRUCE: No. For God's sake, Annie, you're still my wife and I still love you from the bottom of my heart. (Looks down) But, to be honest, I've been thinking little of myself. Thinking that I wasn't good enough to satisfy you and that's what led you to cheat on me in the first place. Like Brett is younger and probably more interesting and I figured-

ANNA: What? Oh, God, no! Bruce, I never thought you weren't good enough for me. Never! (takes his hand into hers) My love for you is much stronger than you think. You're my husband. I love you.

BRUCE: (Looks to you) You mean it?

ANNA: (In sarcastic preppy girl tone) Well duh! Like, you are smokin' hot!

BRUCE: (Starts laughing) You haven't talked like that since we started dating. How you would talk about those dumb ass preps from your high school days you were hanging with.

ANNA: Ha ha! Yeah and I would remember all the jock 'muscle heads' that you would hang around.

BRUCE: Yeah right? (in a low, jock-like voice) Hey, Bruce! We're gonna be taking a couple of broads down to Philly's. You in or out? Come on, Brucie-boy, don't be a square, man! Come on, man!

ANNA: (laughs hysterically) Jeez, years later and that's still the most fucking hilarious thing I've ever heard of in my entire life!

BRUCE: Heh. Yeah, much funnier than those crappy movies you seem to like.

ANNA: Hey! I'll have you know, mister, that my comedy collection is NOT crappy!

BRUCE: Oh come! Mr. Magoo?

ANNA: It wasn't that bad! Leslie Neilson was quite funny.

BRUCE: *Freddy Got Fingered?*

ANNA: It's...you know. Decent?

BRUCE: And do I even need to bring up that dumb Adam Sandler movie? That animated Christmas one?

ANNA: Hey! You leave that alone! That was funny as all hell and you know it!

BRUCE: Everything Sandler's in is funny? But that movie...well...

ANNA: Okay yes, the movie is over the top and everything but it's still fucking hilarious!

BRUCE: If you're mentally retarded!

ANNA: (hits his arm laughing) Oh fuck you!

BRUCE: Was that an offer?

ANNA: Hmm... (looks up in playful ponder) Maybe. If you're not too 'old' to handle all this? (playfully dances on sofa)

BRUCE: Well fuck you too, ma'am!

(Anna and Bruce start to laugh together like they haven't for a long time as slowly but surely their relationship and marriage is starting to rekindle and repair slowly. As their laughter dies off slowly they sit in silence for a moment.)

ANNA: So...

BRUCE: (looks to her) Yeah?

ANNA: Am I now forgiven?

BRUCE: Hm...not quite.

ANNA: (looks puzzled) What do you mean?

BRUCE: There's just one last thing that requires your forgiveness. (stands up and goes to the radio and plays "Come A Little Bit Closer")

ANNA: (Giggles) Just what the hell are you planning, mister?

BRUCE: (Holds out his hand) Just a dance. With my beautiful wife.

ANNA: Mm. Quite the charmer. (takes his hand and stands up)

BRUCE: Shall we?

ANNA: Let's. And maybe after this dance, I'll show you some new moves later on.

BRUCE: Ha ha. I look

(Bruce and Anna start to dance as the music plays in the background and as they dance, becoming closer than ever before as the lights began to fade out)

-The End-

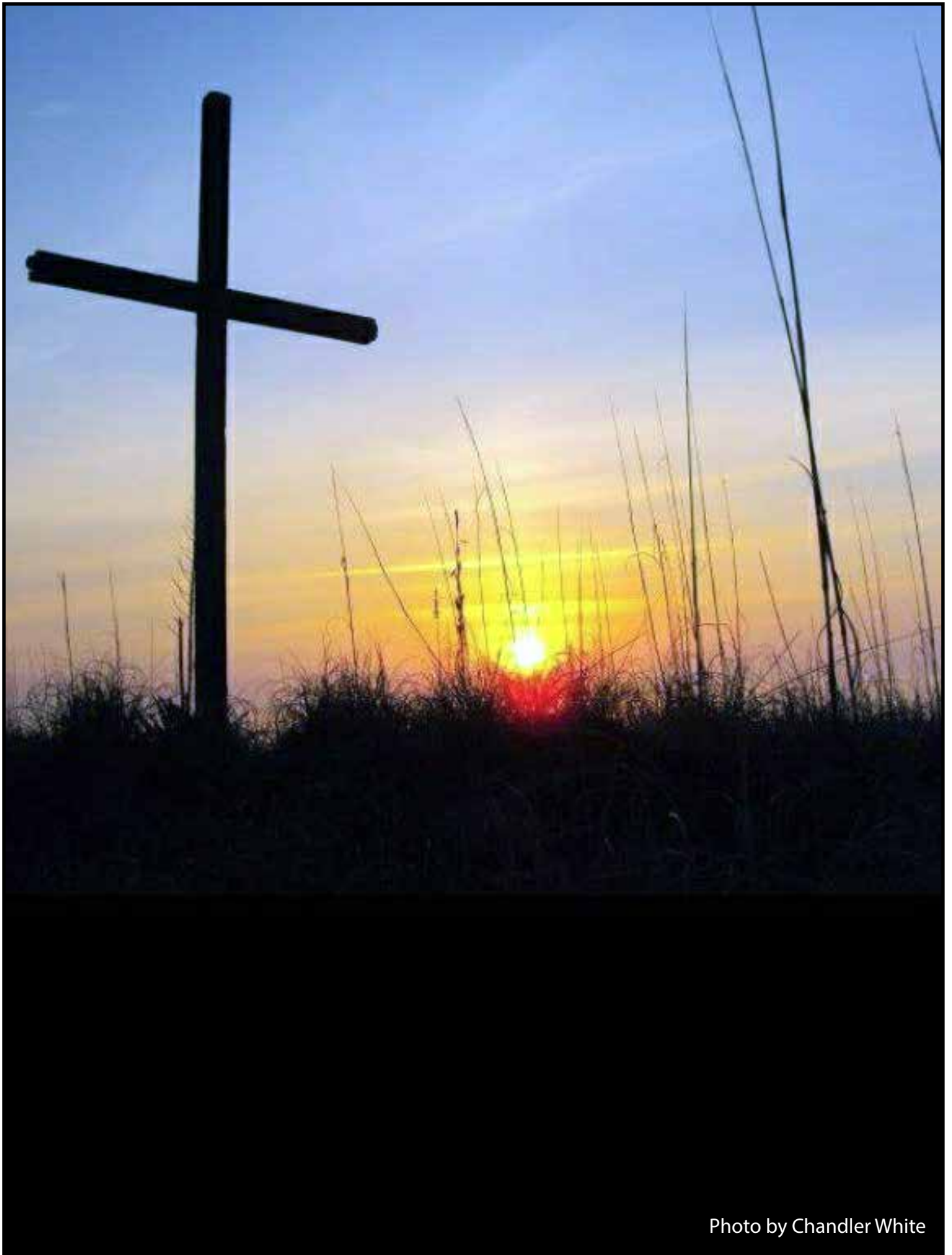


Photo by Chandler White

The Role of Disguise in 16th Century English Literature

By Samantha Velder

The theme of disguise in sixteenth-century England involved more than putting on a costume and fooling someone; disguise was the way in which ideas were presented. It allowed radical and progressive concepts to be accepted under the facade that those who could read between the lines were able to understand the message. Those who held powerful positions and influence used disguise as a tool; this included the monarchy, politicians, theologians, and those involved in the arts, especially literature. Various examples of disguise and how it was used are introduced here through the works of Thomas More's *Utopia*, Elizabeth I's poem "On Monsieur's Departure," William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, and Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. During this era, literature was a great source of entertainment, and entertainment was the perfect segue to introduce new lines of thought and challenge the mainstream's ideology.

In Thomas More's work, *Utopia*, More uses disguise to introduce new ways of thinking about the influence of leadership on the country's lower class workforce. The work is about a well-travelled man who tells the story of

the land he once visited called Utopia. Utopia's form of government was vastly different than the model of government held by England at this time. The form of government cleverly introduced by More was pro-working class, or

More used the characters in his story to introduce ideas that if not introduced in a fictional way, would not have been well received.

humanist, and the citizens of Utopia did not place much value on material things. W.B. Gerard and Eric Sterling concur with this idea in their study of More's

Utopia, and state "Because money is not used and symbols of wealth are looked down upon, Utopians view the connection between power and wealth with ridicule and scorn" (85). More used the characters in his story to introduce ideas that if not introduced in a fictional way, would not have been well received. Thomas More seemed aware of this, and as a part of his story, strategically used letters written to Thomas More's friend, Peter Giles to get the reader thinking about the logistics of a government like the one he describes in *Utopia*.

These letters seem to safeguard the concepts introduced in his work by giving the claim that the protagonist's account of Utopia may or may not be false. The use of fictional stories as a disguise was a provocative and brilliant way to bring controversial ideas to light.

Disguise in sixteenth century English literature was used to hide the origins of controversial ideas. It was also used in more subtle ways. One of the most influential women in history, Elizabeth I, used disguise on different levels. Elizabeth I was the Queen of England, and in order to keep and maintain the respect of her people, had to take on masculine characteristics. Elizabeth dressed regally, as to erase all visible indicators of her femininity. Regardless of Elizabeth's personal identity as a woman, she made the choice to hide herself in an effort to appear more masculine; expressly, to be worthy of respect. Elizabeth I's writings also allude to the dualistic aspects of her life, in which she is often in disguise out of duty as Queen. In her poem, "On Monsieur's Departure," Elizabeth writes about her personal feelings on breaking off her marriage to the French duke of Anjou. Elizabeth writes, "Or let me live with some more sweet content/Or die and so forget what love e'er meant" (lines 17-18). These lines seem to express that Elizabeth longs for the ability to be a woman, and to love, and if she is unable

to do so, she would rather forget the desire all together. There are various opinions regarding Elizabeth I's reasons behind her choice to forgo marriage and claim celibacy. Elizabeth is often portrayed as either a feminist role-model, or an old spinster, and her reasons behind choosing to remain single are more complicated than her dress and relationship status would suggest. David Grant Moss wrote an article about the portrayal of Elizabeth I, and states, "She is, in that respect, bound by the rules and practices of her life-time, and unwilling or unable to transcend them" (803). Regardless of Elizabeth's imagery, we get the closest glimpse of the reality of the situation from the literature she wrote; and from this, we can see that her public image, or disguise, may have differed from how she identified regarding her femininity, love, and status as a political figure.

During Elizabeth I's reign, Edmund Spenser wrote a piece dedicated to his queen titled, *The Faerie Queene*. In Spenser's "The First Booke of The Faerie Queene," he uses disguise in the form of an analogy to portray the ongoing rivalry between the Protestants and Catholics. Elizabeth I was in support of the Protestant movement, and Spenser wrote this piece as a way to gain favor with his queen, as well as make a statement about his beliefs regarding the Catholic Church. In his analogy, Spenser writes:

To see th'unkindly Impes of heaven accurst,
Devoure their dam; on whom while so he gazd,
Having all satisfied their bloody thirst,
Their bellies swolne he saw with fulnesse burst,
And bowels gushing forth... (lines 227-231).

Spenser uses the imagery of beastly creatures feeding on their own mother as a representation of what he felt was going on in the Catholic Church. Perhaps Spenser felt that the Church was preying on its own. Bianca Brigitte Bonomi studied this subject, in in her article, "How Might I See/The Thing, That Might Not Be, And Yet Was Donne? (I.VI.39) Seeing, Believing, and Anti-Catholicism In Book One of Spenser's Faerie Queene," adds to this by saying "The erroneous nature of the Catholic doctrine emitted by the monster provides Spenser with a platform on which to criticize Catholic ecclesiastical folly" (168). Spenser used the characters and story line in his tale, and likened them to his own personal beliefs about the Catholic Church, and the state of religious affairs at the time. Disguise is used here as a way to blatantly and boldly spread the opinion of those who opposed the Catholic Church and their doctrine.

One of England's most prolific authors and playwrights, William Shakespeare, was able to create detailed and multifaceted layers of disguise in his works. In his work Twelfth Night, Shakespeare manages to use gender, sexuality, romance, political status, and socio-economic class as tools to not only entertain the audience, but also push almost every social and literary

Gender and sexuality were topics that Shakespeare indirectly addressed in Twelfth Night, and laid the grounds for more progressive thinking.

boundary there was around him. Even the ill-willed character Malvolio brought to light important issues regarding class. Malvolio himself sought to marry Olivia, and escape his lower economic class, or so it seems. According to Edward Cahill who studied the character of

Malvolio in this work stated, "While we tend to think of Malvolio as an ambitious social climber who rejects his middle-class origins in hopes of marrying into nobility, we cannot be at all certain that this is what Shakespeare had in mind." It is a shared opinion that the obvious was to be looked at with a closer gaze. Gender and sexuality were topics that Shakespeare indirectly addressed in Twelfth Night, and laid

the grounds for more progressive thinking. Shakespeare was aware of his message to the audience. Young boys played the roles of women on stage, and having boys dressed as women -dressed as boys was a very subtle and confusing way to introduce the audience to this line of thinking; the audience was fooled in a way, to being open to the homoerotic and homo-romantic messages in this play. Nancy Lindheim, author of the article "Rethinking Sexuality and Class in Twelfth Night," goes on to say that, "Although both twins are androgynous, the androgyny of each is manifested differently, shaded towards a sexual or gender identity. Viola is male only in her attire and in the extroverted confidence of her address. She is always female for us, regardless of what she wears..." (682). The practice of dressing boys up as women and girls in theatre was commonplace, and the audience was not shocked by this. The occurrence of this was an open door for Shakespeare to introduce the idea of women and men in nontraditional social and romantic roles. Shakespeare's brand of disguise was ingenious, and a cornerstone in literature in the sixteenth century.

Disguise is generally associated with hiding something, or fooling one into thinking one thing is another, and while the definition holds true in sixteenth century England, it seems

as though disguise was used in diverse ways to bring ideas, information, and unpopular opinion into the open, where the commoners and working class could share in the creation of ideas and the thought process behind them. In a time when the monarch ruled with a heavy hand, and the religious sectors pushed their weight around in an equal manner, sharing and condoning unpopular ideas was dangerous, and people lost their lives because of this. Authors like Thomas More, Elizabeth I, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare used their experiences, ingenuity and innovativeness to spread concepts that inevitably furthered the evolution of thought, ideas, and literature.

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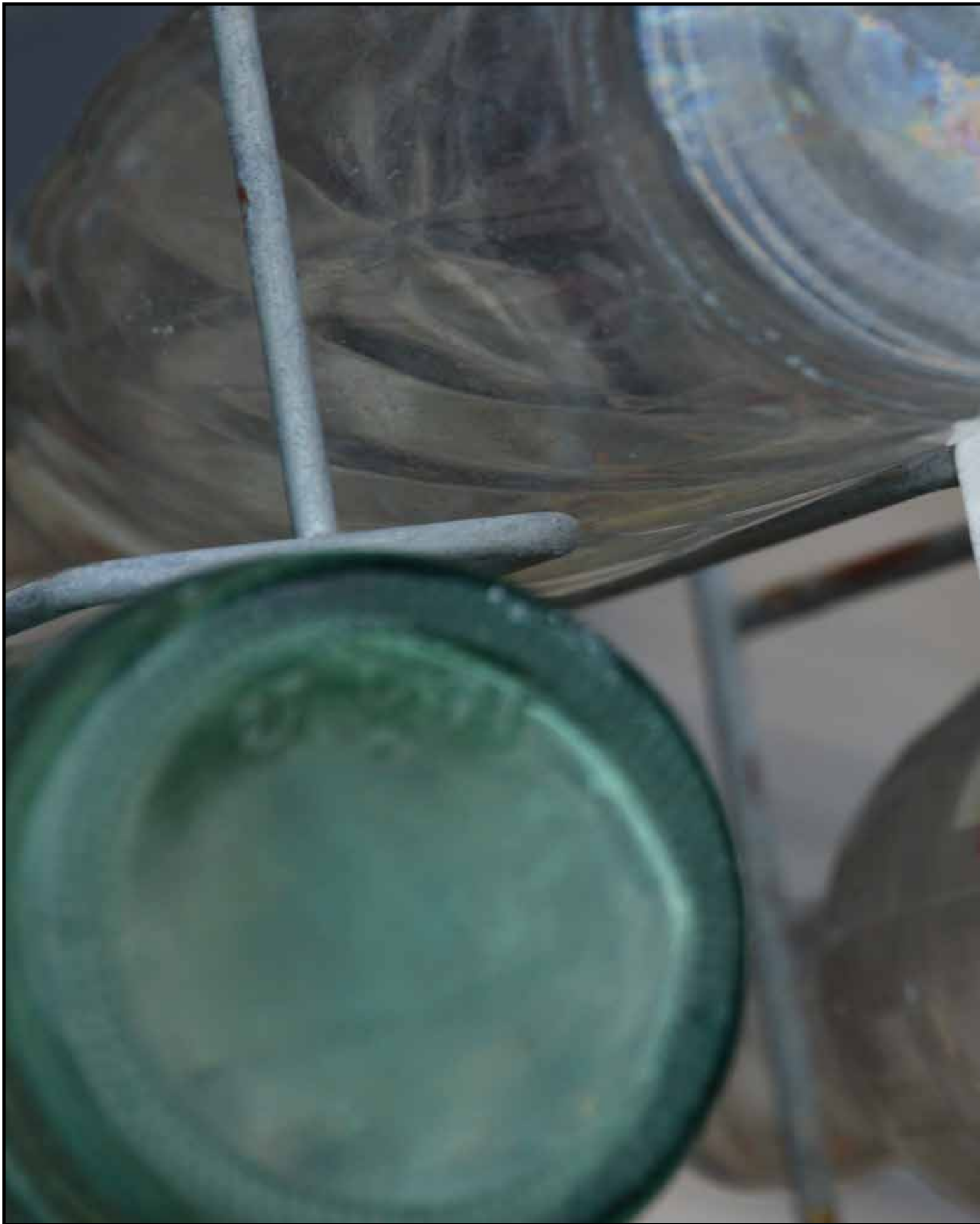




Photo by Olivia Brillinger

Much of the Same Blues

By Antonio Jones

(A remix of Bob Kaufman)

*My
ineptitude
showed*

I am diving into the shoes of my neighbor, but he is barefoot

I am in love with a cyborg who resembles Angelina Jolie

My best friend is a widower who, unlike myself, does not wish to purchase eternal
love

My children's text books are printed in code and I cannot read them

We no longer use oil and Ford F1-50 owners are feeling disenfranchised

Thanks to the black mirror the mental health industry has skyrocketed

My closest friends suffer from depersonalization

I myself am desensitized

My mother had misinformed me when

presenting the notion that I could not buy unconditional love

The AI's in my home would say otherwise

I am sending my wife into town for an upgrade

I am afraid she is learning too much

In the meantime, I'll water the garden

I went to a masquerade

Disguised as one capable of articulating the nuances

interplanetary society

My ineptitude showed

*I don't get
stopped
as often
when I
cross the
Atlantic*

I am sending my wife into town

*Engineered to favor
lighter tones*

The voice of my millennium
is monotone with a British accent
My lover speaks 7,100 languages

I crossed the Atlantic in a self-driving car
Only to be stopped by a drone
Engineered to favor lighter tones

I am diving into the shoes of my neighbor, but he is barefoot
I am in love with a cyborg who resembles Angelina Jolie
My best friend is a widower whom, unlike myself, does not wish to purchase eternal love

My mother had misinformed me when presenting the notion that I could not purchase social class
I don't get stopped as often when I cross the Atlantic
Things will change in due time they said

But my naïve disposition accompanied with purchased class,
that I believed shielded myself from hatred,
made me deaf

I
myself
am
desensitized

n for an upgrade





Photo by Chandler White

The Guitarist Association

By Toure Greene

Characters:

Corey Green – 24, loves music, graduated from UCLA, plays a wide variety of instruments, played in 3 different bands (including The Beagles w/ Karen and Melody) playing everything, was in a relationship with Melody, left for Los Angeles to break into television and music, is a part of a music show.

Melody Cornell – 25, loves music and fashions, plays guitar, piano, and percussion, her and sister were student protesters at Berkeley, was in a band called The Beagles (w/ Karen and Corey) playing guitar and piano, was in a relationship with Corey before he left for Los Angeles, now at a fashion store called “Pandora’s Wardrobe”.

Karen Cornell – 26, loves music/ hates modern politics, plays guitar very well, her and sister were student protesters at Berkeley, was in a band called The Beagles (w/ Melody and Corey) playing lead guitar, now a disc jockey for different clubs.

Daniel (no surname given) – 23, Bass player for English band ‘The Walkin’ Blues’, likes women (a lot), likes socializing, likes American music, Made friends with the Corey, Melody, & Karen a year ago.

Rupert (no surname given) – 24, Drummer for English band ‘The Walkin’ Blues’, likes wild parties, likes psychedelic drugs, is okay with the all types of music, Made friends with the Corey, Melody, & Karen a year ago.

Setting: Mrs. Watson’s hippie commune; near San Francisco; June 3-7, 1967

Scene 1

(Karen is sitting around playing guitar. Down stage left)

(Corey enters. Up stage right)

Corey: Hey Karen!

Karen: Corey!

(Cross, Center stage. They meet up and hug)

Karen: So, you finally came back.

Corey: Um, yeah.

Karen: Hey, me and Mel saw you on that TV show.

Corey: Yeah speaking of which, where is Melody.

Karen: She's off working, at Pandora's Wardrobe, a new clothing store. You know she'll be happier than ever to see you.

(They both sit down in the center)

Corey: So, is she...?

Karen: seeing anybody? Well, free love is all around.....

Corey: Yeah, right.

Karen:but, she doesn't care about free love.

Corey: Really!?!

Karen: Of course. You remember the name of that Beatles song, the one where they go "Yeah, Yeah, Yeah".

Corey: I get the point.

Karen (Suspiciously): What about you.

Corey (Awkwardly): What?

Karen: Hey, I'm only looking out for my sister.

Corey: I'm not seeing anyone. I'm too busy even think strait. Well, are you two still protesting against the government?

Karen: Every week.

Corey: Man, you two are like Mimi and Joan Baez. Weren't you and your sister getting expelled from Berkeley enough to sway you at all?

Karen: Well someone had to speak out about the injustices in America.

Corey: The youth of America is doing that just fine. With the rate you two are going the FBI would have you two arrested.

Karen: Like that would stop us. Anyway, while Mel and I were waiting for you to come back to the band, we've been keeping pretty busy. I'm saving money to buy a new Sitar, so I'm at the same old place as a DJ.

Corey: The Abbey Roadhouse? Well, we were the house band; but to tell you the truth, I think LA has better clubs.

Karen: Speaking of, how's the music in Sunset Strip?

Corey: Out of sight! Did you get that album by The Doors?

Karen: Are you kidding? Mel couldn't put that album down. I think she's obsessed with Jim Morrison.

Corey: I saw them play 'The End' at the Whiskey a Go Go. The owner's response was priceless.

(They both laugh)

Karen: Well Mr. TV star, you meet any famous people?

Corey: I've met some TV executives, who like my ideas.

Karen: Right On! Are you getting your own show?

Corey: It's possible, I just had the greatest idea for a television show. And I want you and our sister to be in it.

Karen: Of course, the three of us would be great!

Corey: Not me, just the two of you.

Karen: What are you talking about; you know we'd never do this without you.

Corey: (Sigh) I think you might have to.

Karen: What do you mean? What could possibly keep you from doing this?

Corey: Unfortunately, this.

(Pulls out a letter)

Karen: Is that-

Corey: Exactly.

Karen (rises): Son of a Bitch!

Corey: Look Karen, just calm down.

Karen: Calm Down!?! I don't see how you could be calm. It's a draft letter!

Corey: Obviously.

Karen: Well tell me you're not actually going to go through with it!

Corey (also rises): Look, it's not like I want to go!

Karen: Can't anyone help in anyway?

Corey: My family's not upper class, I don't have many options.

Karen: Just tell them to piss off.

Corey: Really, Karen. Where exactly do you think that will lead me?

Karen: You'd probably be better off.

Corey: Prison or Vietnam; I'd be better off with neither. Unfortunately, those are my only two options.

(Karen crosses stage down left)

Karen: Yet another victim of the government. If you think I'm bummed out, wait till Mel finds out; it'll break her heart.

(Corey hears people approaching; he turns and looks to see Melody in the distance. She is speaking)

Melody: see it all started in '63, when the President went to Dallas.

Corey: Oh crap, there she is. She's talking with Dan & Rupert from the British Band. (Turns to Karen) Look, just don't tell her immediately.

Karen: You'll have to tell her sooner or later.

Corey: I promise.

(Enter Melody along with the two English musicians from 'The Walkin Blues,' Dan and Rupert.

Melody is talking to them about politics)

Rupert: ...and they told you it was only one man who did it!

Daniel: Utter Bollocks, isn't it.

Melody: Seriously, only 9 months after it happened, we go off to Vietnam.

Daniel: I just want to know; why can't the two leaders make a compromise?

Melody: Hey Karen, look who I ran int--

Melody sees Corey as he turns around

Corey: Um, (pause) hi.

Melody: Corey! (Melody runs to Corey and gives him a big hug) Please tell me this means you've come back to stay, for good.

Corey: It's complicated.

Melody: Well, I'm so happy that you're back. I missed you.

Daniel (to Rupert): You might want to cover your eyes mate.

Rupert: You two aren't going to go at it out in the open are you?

(Corey and Melody stop hugging)

(Corey shakes Rupert's hand)

Corey (sarcastically): Ha Ha, very funny. Hello, you two gits.

Daniel: Aw sod off, you barmy prat.

Corey goes and shakes Dan's Hand

Rupert (to Karen): Hello, Judy Collins.

Karen (light-heartedly): Mick and Keith of the poor man's Rolling Stones, how have you two been?

Rupert: First off, I play drums

Melody: So that would make him Charlie.

Daniel: Secondly, it's better than you blokes. What did you call your band again?

Corey: The Beagles.

Rupert: Wow. (pause) I mean, you literally just changed one letter.

Karen: It wasn't copying The Beatles, we got our inspiration from Charlie Brown.

Melody: Because we all love Snoopy.

Corey: Anyways, those are some cool threads.

Melody: All from Pandora's Wardrobe.

Rupert: And neither a Lion or Witch in sight.

Daniel: We were lucky the shop, took our English pounds.

Karen: You know, I'm surprised the two of you are here. Did you guys get any Visa problems?

Daniel: No, 'cause the drugs were Donovan's. Anyways, we were supposed to be in New York; but we decided to come here and see this historic music festival.

Melody: You mean The Monterey Pop Festival?

Rupert: Spot on, Love!

Karen: You probably should have gone to New York and waited for about 2 years.

Scene 2

(Corey, Melody, and Karen are in the commune. They are practicing with Dan and Rupert.

Corey is on electric rhythm guitar, Melody is on acoustic guitar, Karen is on electric lead guitar, Dan is on bass, and Rupert is on drums.)

Daniel: That was great, I mean we're not the Kinks, but we're getting there.

(Everyone sits down center stage; Melody is sitting very close to Corey)

Melody: Speaking of which, how is 'the English pop scene'?

Dan: It's just blew up! We take it that you lot have heard Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.

Melody: Did we!?!

Karen: I don't know anyone who would have gotten anything else?

Daniel: Unfortunately, we did. Double Trouble by Elvis.

Melody and Karen: What!?!?

Melody: Over The Beatles?

Daniel (unhappily): ...and David Bowie.

Karen: Wait, who's David Bowie?

Daniel: That's beside the point. We got Elvis's record, because he was our hero when we were kids.

Corey: Was it even worth it?

Rupert: No! There were some nice numbers but as for the rest of it, it was Shite!

Corey: Well it's your loss.

Rupert: Not really, we all bought Sgt. Pepper the very next day. It was Amazing!

Daniel: See, we all love that stuff, but we're all kind of getting away from that whole scene.

Melody: If you're tired of psychedelics, you came to the wrong place.

Karen: Didn't you hear? Frisco is the epicenter for what they're calling "The Summer of Love". (Tambourine sound)

Daniel: Yes, but we couldn't possibly pass up the chance to be at the Monterey Pop Festival.

Rupert: I mean where else would we possibly see the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, The Who, and Ravi Shankar all at the same concert.

Karen (under her breath) Like I said, you should wait to go to Upstate New York.

Corey: But what's so wrong with the whole experimental-psychedelic scene.

Daniel: Nothing; we love all of that, but were trying to get back to our roots.

Rupert: See, when we all started we did blues and Rock & Roll; It only took two guitars, bass, and drums to make people happy. All this new stuff our competitors are doing is completely mental. We were hoping you lot “in the land of the free” could inspire us like before.

Melody: Well, at the moment we’d like to know about the music of England.

Corey: This is perfect; I need to write this all down.

(Cross Down right. Corey gets his notebook)

Melody: What are you writing?

Corey: I’ll tell you soon enough.

Daniel: What do you want to know?

Karen: First off, The Beatles and the Stones.

Rupert: Naturally. We know for a fact that the Beatles are going to be on TV singing their newest song. And the Rolling Stones are trying to catch up; if Mick, Keith, and Brian don’t get put in the clinker for drugs.

Melody: Hey just out of curiosity, who do you think is better, Mick Jagger or Jim Morrison?

Rupert: They’re both really great singers, love. I got no clue.

Karen: I guess the world may never know, Mel.

Daniel: We also mentioned this chap called Jimi Hendrix. He’s a really good guitar player.

He’s coming to the Festival.

Karen: I’ve actually got the album. His guitar playing is out-of-sight. I can’t wait to see him at Monterey.

Rupert: You’ve also got Eric Burdon & the Animals, and the Who.

Daniel: Heads up; if you’ve never seen The Who perform on stage you will be shocked when you finally see them.

Rupert: Unfortunately, none of the Motown acts going to be at the festival are they?

Melody: Nope; Boss’s orders.

(Daniel laughs)

Daniel (to Rupert): Ooh, too bad mate, you won’t get to meet your dream girl.

Corey: You’re just one of a million Diana Ross admirers.

Rupert: Huh? Oh yeah, Diana Ross is great, but I fancy the tallest one; Florence.

Karen: Give that a few weeks.

Daniel: I kind of fancied the girl who sings with Marvin.

Melody: Tammi Terrell.

Daniel: Yeah, but I think she's with David Ruffin, of the Temptations; one of my idols.

Rupert: Yeah, what are the Temptations doing now?

Corey: Their adding a lot of old pop standards to their music.

Karen: I think it's great, since a lot of their music is Soul, R&B, and Symphony. Crossing over is a good idea for them.

Rupert: We'll be heading for New York. And we were wondering what happened to Bob Dylan.

Corey: Last we heard he was in Woodstock, New York. I think he's playing with some new 'Band'. You should probably check out their music.

Daniel: You know, I actually rather liked the stuff Dylan did with an electric band.

Melody: I guess people preferred him as the folk poet.

Daniel: But it wasn't that far off from Folk-rock, like with The Byrds singing 'Mr. Tambourine Man'.

Karen: That's basically the point of an elitist fan.

Rupert: What about the guys who made my favorite album last year: Pet Sounds?

Corey: I think the Beach Boys have got their hands full, with Brian not being in the right mindset, all the infighting, and the "funny people" Dennis hangs around.

Rupert: Well what about that big follow up to Pet Sounds they're supposed to be releasing.

Corey: It got cancelled.

Daniel: Well, what about my favorite American group: The Mamas & Papas

Karen: Aren't they the ones putting Monterey together?

Corey: Yes. Them and their producer; Lou Adler. I see them from time to time.

Rupert: Since you put it that way, we're definitely not missing that!

Daniel: I definitely can't wait to meet Mama Cass.

Corey: Trust me, you'll love her.

Rupert: And what about the chaps from our favorite TV Show?

Melody: The Monkees!

Corey: Man they're great, I see them a lot. Hung out with Micky, and he wanted to put me in one of the episodes.

Rupert: I love that idea. A band that puts their "Music" out on "TV" every week. Something like that deserves its own TV channel.

Karen: Did you guys hear their Headquarters album?

Daniel: We did and it was really gear. I hope those bastards, in the music press will finally believe that they do play their own instruments.

Corey: Hey Rupert, did you know that your favorite album from last year had studio musicians?

(Rupert covers his ears)

Rupert: Nope. I'm not listening.

(Rupert walks off)

Cross right

Daniel: Well, we're here in San Francisco, we haven't got any Flowers in our hair, and were curious about the "San Francisco Sound."

Melody: Let's see; Jefferson Airplane are always at the Fillmore. Hey, did you hear 'Surrealistic Pillow'?

Daniel: Did we? We bought it, and loved every note. I loved "Somebody to Love" and "White Rabbit."

Karen: Both sung by their newest member, Grace Slick. I preferred "Coming back to Me" and "DCBA - 25"

Corey: A folk song and a psychedelic pop song. Figures.

Karen: There's also Big Brother & the Holding Company. Now, they've got this fantastic lead singer who along with Grace Slick, I would call the greatest rock singers ever.

Corey (rising) Are you just saying that because you're biased to San Francisco; because Frank Zappa thinks you guys are inferior.

Karen (also rises): Oh please, when you see them perform; you and Frank Zappa will be believers.

Daniel: Hey, what was the name of the lead singer?

Melody: Janis Joplin, and she is incredible! There's also the Grateful Dead.

Corey: Yeah, how's good old Jerry doing?

Melody: Great, all of them are. They finally got their album released last March.

Corey: Are they still doing the "Electric Kool-Aid" tests?

Karen: No, cause people are doing it themselves. We've been doing tests in the communes all week.

Melody: There's plenty more. Trust us, when you go to the Monterey, there will be some bands that'll blow you away.

Daniel: Well when you put it that way, I'm basically gonna be there on stage with them. I'm telling you, it sure is great to be in a time when good music is everywhere?

Corey: Yeah, I mean could you imagine how tasteless it would be if people stopped using instruments altogether and only used computers to make music?

Karen: Yeah, kind of soulless. Or how about if people stopped singing in harmony, and make singing less special by using a voice enhancer to hide the fact that they can't really sing?

Melody: Yeah, and if they did use instruments, they would use a simple four-chord progression in a pop song.

Daniel: Alright, that was way too specific. Do you know anything about music in the future?

Melody: Umm.....we'll just be... quiet for now.

Rupert is holding Corey's guitar like a shotgun, Corey sees

Corey: Hey, what's Rupert doing with my guitar?

Rupert: Oh, sorry Bugs Bunny, I thought it was rabbit season. I better go find Daffy Duck.

Dan: Rupert, what are you on about?

Rupert: Sorry guvnor, right now I'm in a place surrounded with candy.

Karen: Kind of like in that Roald Dahl book.

Rupert takes a flower and eats it.

Karen: Oh no! Tell me he didn't drink the Kool-Aid!

Daniel: Oh dear God, what has he taken?

Karen: Did he book a flight?

Daniel: No. Why?

Karen: Because, he's about to go on a wild trip.

Daniel: Oh Bloody Hell! We'll that's just great. We have a gig tomorrow, and me drummer is stoned off his bleedin' arse!

Melody: Look, he just needs to sleep it off. When he wakes up tomorrow, he'll be out of Wonderland.

(Dan picks up Rupert)

Daniel: All right then, We'll see you lot at the Monterey Pop Festival. Just do me a favor and don't follow this bloody idiot's example.

(Dan Carries Rupert away)

Daniel (to Rupert): I told you not to take anything that strangers give you; Didn't I?

Rupert: Wait, I still haven't gotten me Turkish delights.

Daniel: Aw, come off it. This isn't Narnia.

Rupert: It is to me.

(Dan and Rupert exit up scene stage right)

(Corey looking down at his notes)

Corey: Man, I love those guys. (flatly) Well, I've got all I need.

Melody: Now are you going to tell us what you've got?

Corey: A list of albums and music. This is going to be for my Show Idea.

Melody: You're getting a show!?! Far out! I always knew you could do it. How are you going to make it?

Corey: It's simple; you come on TV, give your thoughts on different albums of different genres, and cover your favorite song on a guitar. I like to call it: The Guitarist Association.

Melody: That sounds amazing!

Corey: Yes, and it's all yours.

Melody: What do you mean? It's your idea. Aren't you going to be a part of it?

Corey (flatly): No.

Melody: Why!?! You'll be here with us won't you?

Corey: I can't.

Melody (suspiciously): Why not?

Karen: Listen Mel...

Melody: Don't say anything. I think I already know.

Karen: Bummer.

Corey: Mel, just relax.

Melody: Relax!?! When were you going to tell me!?!?

Corey: Mel I'm sorry, but I didn't want you to get your hopes up.

Melody: If that's the case, you shouldn't have come here in the first place.

Corey: I came here because I want you two finish what I started.

Melody: And then you're going to split, again.

Corey: Look, our bass player got deported, I saw more of a future in TV, and I asked if you two wanted to come with me, you wanted to stay here.

Melody: We loved it here.

Corey: So did I; but I had to do other things with my life.

Pause

Corey: (sigh) Look, I need you two to follow me on this. They'll probably ship me out in a few months. But this is a big opportunity, do with it how you please.

Melody: No Corey, I could never do this. With you fighting overseas and not safe here with us, it would just be too painful.

Corey: You've got too! This is what I always wanted to do, but if I couldn't, you two would still have a shot.

Karen: Corey, listen to us. We know you don't believe in this war. It's a war for fascist pigs, who don't give a damn about peace.

Corey: Well tell me what I'm supposed to do then. Refuse to go and end up like Muhammad Ali?

Karen: We can find a way.

Corey: Listen this show could be a big opportunity for the both of you. I could at least possibly die in peace knowing that my work is in the hands of the two smartest, most trustworthy girls I know.

Melody: Corey, please. Don't go; don't leave us.

Karen: Corey; we know you. You couldn't bring yourself to hurt anybody over some uptight square's cause. And now the government just took another young boy to the slaughterhouse. If you could stick it to "The Man" we'll do whatever we can to...

Corey: Do you two really think resisting the draft is honestly going to help in any case?

Karen: You're not the only one.

Corey: Karen, Mel, I appreciate what you're trying to do but it's probably best not to fight them. I've already made up my mind.

Karen: Well, (pause) I guess this is it.

(They shake hands)

Karen: You'll always be our best friend; we'll miss you Corey.

Melody looks at Corey in silence for a brief moment

Melody (coldly): Goodbye Corey.

(Melody turns away and walks to the other side)

(Corey makes one last attempt to talk to her)

Corey (calmly): Mel look, I desperately want to just stay here with the both of you. I want to live and be free, I want to do nothing but play my own music, I just want to be happy with all my friends, but the unfortunate reality is waiting for me in Vietnam.

(Corey turns to leave and starts walking)

(Melody runs toward him)

Melody: Corey...

Corey turns around

Corey: Yes, Melody.

(Corey and Melody kiss)

(Outro Music; the guitar solo from "May This Be Love", by Jimi Hendrix)

Scene 3

Setting: A location with a lot of trees; Mid-December 1967

(Music is playing in the background)

(Karen and Melody are sitting Center stage)

Karen: Hello to all fellow freedom fighters, American Outlaws, Flower Children, Hippies, and anyone else who loves music. I'm Karen.

Melody: I'm Melody.

Karen and Melody: And welcome to The Guitarist Association.

Melody: The show that discusses the newest music, talks about politics (without censorship from government), discusses news that needs to be addressed, and has an Out of sight band.

Karen: In our last show before our Christmas break, we'll be talking about the new album by The Who....

Melody: If you didn't see them at The Monterey Pop Festival, you were probably shocked when they appeared on the Smothers Brothers Show.

Karen: a new album by Donovan, and debating why the new Rolling Stones album is good, despite people comparing it to The Beatles Sgt. Pepper album.

Melody: Speaking of which, we will also be addressing the soon-to-be-released third Movie by the Beatles, with our correspondents from England.

Karen: We'll also have a look at the next great downfall of Elvis Presley's career: His new movie 'Clambake'. And we'll discuss the film adaptation of 'The Graduate'; one of our favorite books.

Melody: As for more music in America, we'll discuss our feelings toward the latest Jefferson Airplane album as we compare it to their previous albums.

Karen:and we'll talk more about the last Monkees album and why we think it's their best one.

Melody: We would also like to pay tribute to possibly one of the greatest Soul singers ever: Otis Redding, who died on the 10th.

Karen: His appearance at Monterey alone lets you know how great he was.

Melody: We would like to congratulate our friends, Mr. & Mrs. Hutchinson on the birth of their daughter on the 11th.

Karen: We'd also like to send all of our love, peace, and prayers to all of those in Vietnam.

Melody: We know everyone wants peace, but governments can't understand it.

(In walks Corey stage right with two big bags)

Corey: Hey, did you two already start without me?

Karen: Hey look whose here.

Melody (to the "television" audience): For those of you who were wondering where Corey was,
he's safe here.

Corey: Hello Canada and everyone back home. Early Christmas gifts, from McAllister's
Instrument shop.

Melody and Karen both stand

Melody: For us!?!

Corey: Yep. First, for Karen.

(Hands her a bag)

(Karen opens the bag)

(She's now has the new Sitar)

Karen: Woah, is this...?

Corey: Uh-huh. A brand new Sitar.

Karen: Far-Out! Thanks Corey. Now I can play like George Harrison!

Melody: Or Brian Jones.

Corey: Or even Ravi Shankar.

(Karen hugs Corey)

Corey (Slightly laughing): Alright you're welcome.

(Turns to Melody)

Corey: And for Mel...

(Gives her the bag)

(Melody opens her bag)

(She's got a set of Tablas)

Melody: A new set of Tablas! Thanks Corey.

Corey: Don't mention it.

(Kisses her forehead)

Melody: Corey! We're live on TV!

Corey: Who Cares?

Karen: Hey, we've got a couple things for you, too.

(They hand him a wrapped gift)

(He opens it)

(He's got a bunch of records.)

Corey: Wow! Jimi Hendrix 'Axis: Bold as Love', the Temptations, The new Love album, James Brown, Cream, The Moody Blues, Buffalo Springfield. Thanks.

(Hugs them both)

(They all sit down and are ready to do their show)

(Karen is plucking away on the Sitar)

(Melody is practicing on the tablas)

Corey (to audience): Sorry, I'm late everyone. I was just expressing my love for my two friends who are always here for me.

(Puts arms around both of them)

Melody: Friends who would be willing to leave to a neighboring country as well.

Karen: Make Love! Not War!

Corey: Come on, let's save politics for later; we need to talk about the music.

Melody: Groovy! Alright who's first?

Karen: Exactly, first is The Who, Who Sell Out.....

The End

On the Outskirts of Hopkins
By Landen Elias

The smell of air and grass
On an early, spring morning
The leaves so ever-changing
Like the time meant to pass
Of the scent of flowering trees
That smell that reminds me of
what is meant to be
Animals inhabit this path
And the ones that do not
Chickens, Hogs, and Cows
The offerings they bring
For all of the hunters to gather
In this quiet, strange land
With a town, old-fashioned and isolated
And joints fried with edibles
Fried chicken, gizzards, fish
All the tempting cuisines that have been made
But pack a strange-twist to them
A small town
Where people tend to their own
Some even at least say, "Hello"
Very traditional and very old
With its roots intact
Passed down from one family to the other
Which outsiders would never know
Vast narrow streets on the outskirts of Hopkins
Rumble of cars on this noisy road
That stretches from one side to the other
With it, a cargo train singing as it's passing by
Different churches where people worship
On the seventh day
Different people and different groups
Both culturally and traditionally
But similar beliefs and customs



STYLUS
2018-19
COMING
MAY 2019



MIDLANDS
TECHNICAL COLLEGE