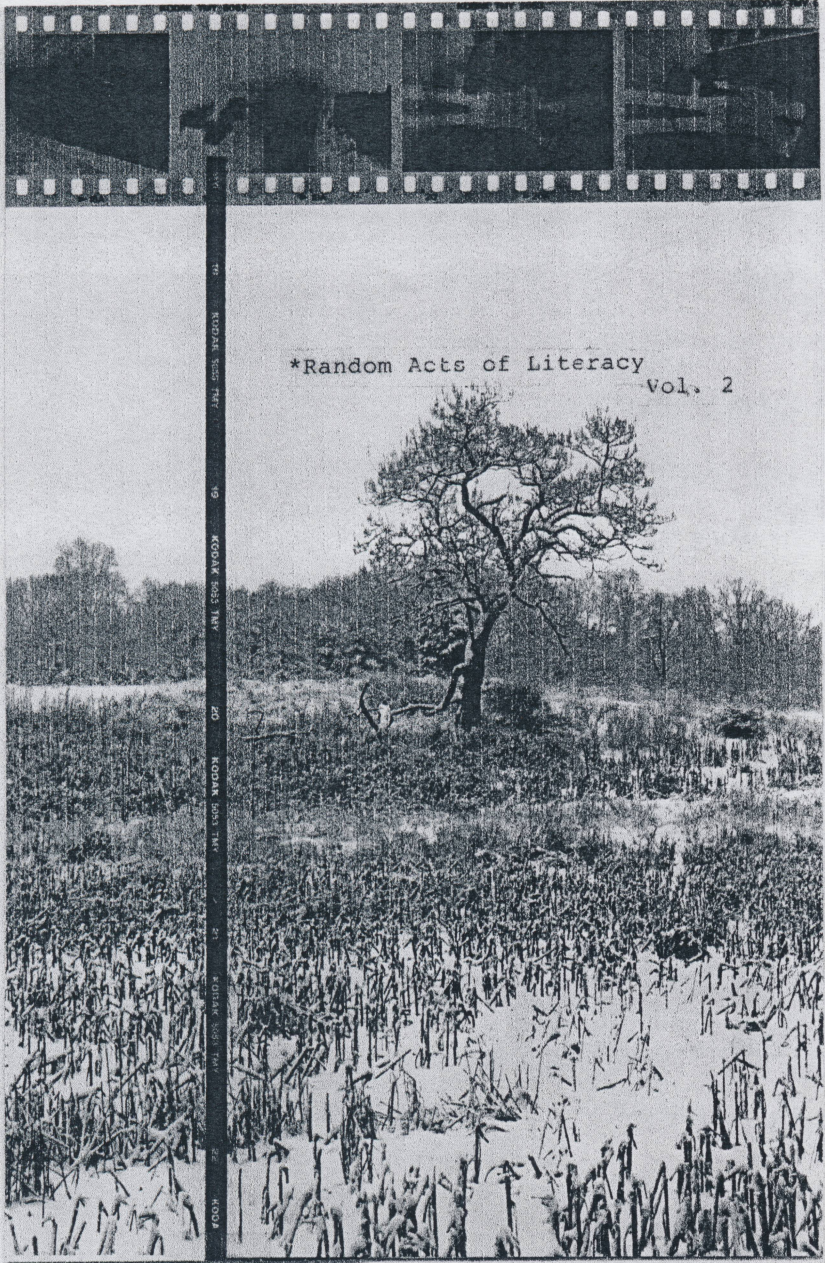


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Volume Two



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Cover art contributed by Casey Broadwater

Deep Ocean

by Timmy Williams

I often sit on your shores when

The moon fades

Into the dawning sky.

A sliver of radiant gold is sleepily

Opening his eyes,

And the sky dances upon your face.

Aurora shades of blue and yellow

Paint wonder on my glowing eyes.

If only I were a shade of blue,

I might flutter

Into your waters,

And never return.

Liquid Literature

by Brandon Clark

The words he speaks

Collect on his lips

Like honey on the comb

Sweet and rich

They drip from his tongue

Flowing in thick, rich drops

These words form a pool

Gathered 'round the poet's feet

And only once the pool is still

Will the world mourn?

For the poet will no longer be.

Where Are You?

by Spring Vitus

Bleeding, broken, weeping in the corner.
Husband ending rage, too late: she, dying.
Where are you?

Shaking, muffled, withering in the night.
Abuser leaving guilt, too soon: she, dying.
Where are you?

Fading, beaten, lying in an alley.
Attackers rejoicing, dividing shining treasure: he, dying.
Where are you?

Screaming, pleading, ripped to the tomb.
Mother paying, numbing feeling soul: he, dying.
Where are you?

Do I curse your counsel with ignorant words?
I have not heard—do not hear—you speak.
Where are you?

Do not answer me;
Answer them:
Where are you?

Jaded

by Kaeley Triller

Jaded,
Like the one word answer you gave me
When I asked you what was wrong.
It's the lines seemingly tattooed on your forehead,
A searing pinprick of ink for each dream forsaken.
Jaded is how you shove your hands
Into the pockets of your oversized Levis,
How you stir the imaginary pile of dust
With your steel-toed boot, bite your lip, maybe your tongue,
And fix your sullen gaze on anything but me.
It's the circles in which we argue.
Jaded doesn't feel like anything;
It stares at you with taunting eyes and speaks in awkward silences,
"Things will never be the way they were."
Like the joke about the chicken who crossed the road,
It's weary of trying.
And so are we—
Jaded.

Pained Glory

by Nellena Nelsen

Wow Lord! What compares heaven to this—
From finger-chiseled crags of mountains majestic
To sweet, swift, skull-freezing falls crashing, tumbling?
The corn-silk-touch of a child is bliss;
Laughter, life, love for family chaotic,
And time alone precarious, precious, fleeting.

All this bow-tenses my heart when I go.
I dip deep and drink these sips of Glory—
Golem-striving to cling on. Is it a trick?
Wonders swirl around me; I push to the flow:
Homesick.

Grace stumbled into the kitchen and dropped her glasses while reaching for the phone. "Four-thirty already?!" she said as she staggered across the kitchen to grab her glasses, which were now lying on the floor, broken. Grace picked up the phone, "Okay honey, I'll see you at Havisham in five minutes. Don't wait for me. I'll meet you at our spot." Grace hung up the phone and fell to her knees in order to feel around the green linoleum floor for her bent spectacles. Her thick, raisin-like hands finally found them a few feet away. Grace and Jack went to the Havisham Theater every Friday afternoon and she was not about to miss a date today. *He must have had a late day teaching at school today*, she thought. "Oh no, I'm going to be late now and miss the movie. Where are my shoes? I can't remember where my shoes are! Oh Lord almighty, where in the world are my shoes?" Grace grasped the oven handle and the stool to help herself up. Her silver and blue diabetic bracelet clanked against the stovetop, and she returned her glasses to their resting place on her nose. "Broken! It figures," Grace said as she hurriedly headed towards the front door. She left her house and in her rush neglected to turn off the gas stove that was heating her tea water. She even forgot to shut the door.

Grace had always walked with her forehead jutting forward, and today her head pointed ahead even a little more. Grace was wearing her favorite dress today as well, and the silk glistened in the setting sun. It was a light cream color with large red roses interspersed throughout the material. She headed north, towards Havisham Theater.

"Jack is going to be so frustrated if I'm late to our movie... I mustn't disappoint him today," Grace anxiously muttered to herself. It was four thirty five. Ten minutes until the show started.

She had always enjoyed that the old theater was right across the street from the Seven-Eleven. Without a second thought anyone could swiftly sashay across the street to get a few movie-going beverages and snacks and then slink into the theater without getting caught... and she and Jack always did. The theater was about a five-minute walk from Grace's house, and she loved that as well. Old movies, new movies, they had everything. Jack and Grace would always take afternoon walks together to the theater, shielded from the sun or the snow or the rain by the massive maples that ran down the entire street. The houses and maples encased the street on the sides and overhead where the tree branches met in their beautiful, secure tangling. Grace and Jack would walk and hold hands with alternating fingers and talk about their days at school. Both Grace and Jack had adored their forty-plus years teaching high school. Jack was smart and Grace admired him greatly. He never gave himself credit, though. He would always say, "It's all for the Giver of all that's good!"

It was comforting for Grace to walk down that street again towards the theater. The cool breeze, the cracked sidewalk, the dusk sun just peeking through the red and yellow maple leaves – they all brought tranquility and even more of an ardent anticipation to meet her love at the theater. Yes, after forty years of marriage they were still very much in love.

Grace closed her eyes for a moment as she walked and nearly tripped over herself at the sight of the movie-like images that had just flashed in her mind. She caught glimpses of images of her and Jack throughout their entire lives together up to that point.

"Keep on walking, Grace, you don't want to be late, you don't want to be late," she repeated to herself. The memories she saw were so intense she threw her hands in front of her to catch her balance. She saw his old Ford truck and the nights they spent in it, talking, next to the creek by her old house. She saw their modest wedding day. A bright light. Two kids, then five grandchildren, one taken with polio. A glowing white and blue room. Her and Jack's baptism when they were newlyweds. Glory. Their first house by the lake. Darkness. Their fortieth anniversaries... Grace kept walking.

Grace glanced at her watch. "Four- forty," she said, and a little boy riding his bike whizzed past her, catching her unaware and almost throwing her into the small garden she was passing. "Inconsiderate young 'uns!" She was almost to the Havisham.

The red, white, and green Seven-Eleven sign was now in sight and Grace smiled. It took her longer these days to get there. She went into the store despite her tardiness and bought her and Jack's customary package of Skittles for the movie. She would never eat them because of her diabetes, but Jack would love it, and the gift would definitely make up for her lateness this week. Grace dropped the candy into her large basket-weaved bag and carefully crossed the street to the theater. Upon arriving, Grace ran to the front of the ticket line, pushing aside a young couple, a small boy, and the boy's father.

"Hey, what's your problem?" the young boy asked Grace in his shrewd, "Bronxy" accent.

"Don't worry," the ticket booth attendant said, "please go to the end of the line, Grace."

"But my husband is here."

"End of the line, ma'am - the movie hasn't started yet."

Grace grudgingly stood behind the cuddly young couple and waited. She reconciled herself in the thought that it was only the previews that were going on right then, anyway.

"Has my husband been here yet?" Grace asked the cashier when she had finally reached the beginning of the line.

"I'm not sure. I just got on shift." The other cashier in the booth looked over at grace.

"Oh! Well, he said he'd meet me here at four-thirty and I just talked to him fifteen minutes ago. Darn. You know that Jack is never one to be late. Always punctual he is. Always."

"Yes, Ma'am, now could you please step asi--"

"Well in any case if he's not here yet and he comes could you please let him know I'm waiting for him?"

"I suppose I can do that," the cashier said and immediately greeted the next person in line in order to shoo Grace into the theater.

"Thank you, young man," she yelled as she entered through the gray tinted glass doors.

"Don't mind her," the cashier commented to his customer as soon as Grace had passed through the door. "She comes here all the time."

Though Grace couldn't always rely on her senses of hearing and sight, she had never doubted her nose, and right now she breathed in the sweet smell of the familiar past: popcorn, the distinct and pleasantly musty carpet, old upholstery, and fresh movie poster glue. The conglomeration of scents entered through her nose and split: half moved up into her brain and dispersed, and half made its way through her lungs and bloodstream into her heart. She could recall every movie they had seen together, kisses stolen in the two left back corner chairs of the screen room, and the way she knew that she loved him each time they walked out of the theater, hand in hand, quiet and contemplative.

Heading towards the screen room, she scanned over the snack line for Jack and finally found him, standing in line for popcorn. Grace hustled as fast as she could over to the popcorn container, and upon reaching it found no one but a greasy, cross-eyed, sixteen-year old boy serving popcorn and Pepsi.

"What are you doing here?" she asked the boy.

He didn't notice her above the noise and continued his conversation with his customer. *Another uncouth youth again*, she thought as she then proceeded into the screen room. Her and Jack's seats were empty in the far left back corner, and Grace sat down next to the young couple she met in line and waited for Jack.

"We've been married for forty-five years, you know, and he's going to meet me here today, just like every Friday afternoon at four-thirty," Grace said to the girl, who gave her a half smile and returned her eyes to the screen. "He must have gotten tied up at school. You know how those adolescents can be!"

"Uh huh."

The previews had already begun. *It's not like him to be this late*, Grace thought. *I suppose he has been late a few times lately, but... oh well, he's coming soon.*

Grace all of a sudden felt light-headed, as though she would pass out right then and there. This happened to her all the time and it always meant she hadn't eaten enough sugar that day. Must have been the strange walk she had earlier. Grace took the package of Skittles out of her bag and thought about eating them. *No, I shouldn't. These are Jack's. These are Jack's.* She held onto the candy.

Grace felt sleepy, and closed her eyes for a second. When she opened her eyes, there was her love, Jack, sitting next to her. "There you are, Jack. What took you so long?" Jack smiled at her. "Were you helping one of your students after school today?" Jack smiled again and took her hand. Their fingers intertwined.

The movie ended and everyone shuffled out of the Havisham Theater. All that remained in the theater that night was smashed popcorn, crushed candy boxes, and drink cups. An elderly woman was slouched in her chair, in the back left part of the room. She was wearing a dress with red roses on it, a diabetic bracelet dangled from her right wrist, and a package of candy rested in her left hand on her lap. At her feet laid a large woven shoulder bag... filled to the top with Skittles.

Renaissance de l'Esprit

by Brandon Clark

Death,
death comes to us all.
But some, only a few,
are left alive
after its passing.

Alive.
Alive in soul,
in renaissance
and holding countenance...

Through that which is--
the unknown.

The grassy beach
that extends into an ocean
that is not there.

A sky with no clouds.
A life with no breath.

Immortality!

Where the sea
swallows the sun.

Winter

Joshua D. Stanton

You are enough
to make me smile
on slate gray days
when even clouds are flat
and unrelenting.

It's not snowing, but I see a
snowflake
(just one)
drifting.

Come catch it in your hand,
come, as you catch my tears.
You melt me,

your warm hands do.

Where shall I go?
Your thoughts take me,
transport me away from
here. Together we
fly on clouds.
While you sleep, we dream.

Your hands melt me.
Come take me away.

How Cow Dung Made Rivals Friends

by Nellena Nelsen

There's manure to move, a truck piled high!"
She shouted to siblings who didn't get why;
They glared back in hatred, then jumped in the muck—
Such stench rose to greet them from the depths of the truck,
The rot emitted heat that scorched their bare feet
As faster flew dung from the truck to fertilizer heap.

Brother was furious at big sister that day,
He chucked out the shovel and jumped shouting, "Hey,
You can 't tell me to spend my time in this goo,"
But before he could exit, she did what she knew
To trip him up in the muck and start a fight
(little sister escaped—this wasn't her plight).

Brother and sister circled; she lashed out first,
Knowing she'd never lost—not expecting the worst;
Now stronger and faster and meaner he came;
He threw down the tyrant and put her to shame.
She laughed, wiped the gunk from her face, and then
He helped her up, for the first time—forever—friends.

Senate Park

by Timmy Williams

She sits on a bench alone in the moonlight. All is silent in Senate Park, except the steady chirp of crickets, and the occasional gulp of a frog. My brown paper grocery bag is bulging with toilet paper, a box of Corn Flakes and an assortment of canned foods. I walk home through this park every night after work. Enveloped by the shadow of a giant oak, I stand staring at the most beautiful creature I have ever seen. The bag is getting uncomfortable to hold. The paper crackles as I shift it in my arms, my eyes still unmoving. Her hair looks black, given the lack of acceptable light, but I imagine it to be a rich brown. I cannot make out her eyes, but they must be brown as well, probably the color of a Snickers bar, caramel chocolate. I wonder what she is looking at. Maybe she is looking at me. Maybe she is admiring how ruggedly handsome I look. I've always heard that women love men that work with their hands in hard labor. *That's what I do, you know. I work on cars*, I tell the woman in my imagination. She smiles. I won't tell her that I actually just check the tires for air and sweep the bays when the mechanics go home. She wouldn't need to know that. She stands up, looking at me with Snicker eyes. Then she kisses me softly on the lips. A frog gulps unusually loud, breaking my train of thought. I reposition the awkward bag in my arms. I continue to walk home passing the woman, like I do every night.

Inevitable Defeat

by Rebecca Wilson

Evening fades
from grey to black.

The men stand silently,
stiffly,

stony eyed
watching the sky.

The cloud ceiling above
gives way.

It rains upon them,
acid dissolving their forms.

Their gnomish figures
crawl and stumble.

Twisted shadows melt together.

Now morning,
my creations lie in piles
as icy corpses.

The soaked and muddied
ground

evidence of the battle.

Come so quickly,
defeat of the snowman army.

Ambition

by Kaeley Triller

O for a light to break the bonds of night
And fire to melt the deepest winter snow,
For faith to grant my grounded heart its flight,
And the will to follow where He'd have me go,
To never hold back what I know is true,
To let His promises assure my heart,
To do to others as He'd have me do,
And thus, to them, His kindness to impart.
To choose the path in keeping with His will
With steady step consistent in His way,
To live by what I know, not what I feel,
To gladly learn to trust Him and obey.
O for a faith to grant me all these needs
And footsteps that would follow where He leads.

A Typical College Test

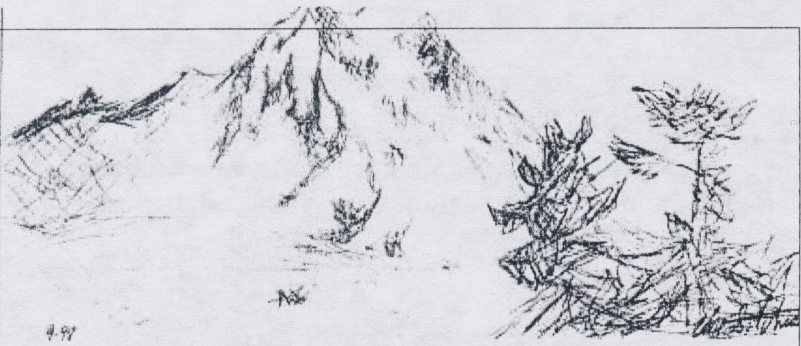
by Rebecca Wilson

- 1) If train A leaves a station in Pittsburgh heading east at 8:21AM traveling at 63mph and train B leaves a station in Philadelphia heading west 3hrs 28min and 37sec later at a speed of 71mph and both trains stop at a town within 15mi of their origin each with a population of at least 25,000, then what is the soup of the day on train B?
- 2) What is the square root of the number 16?
 - a. one
 - b. zero
 - c. yesterday
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the above
 - f. a, b and f
 - g. even numbered answers
 - h. a,e,i,o,u and sometimes y
- 3) In an alternate future where the British defeated America in the Revolution, what would be the price of a Denny's Grand Slam breakfast?
- 4) What is the definition of mickledunkot?
- 5) How many times is 'the' used on page 49?
- 6) Do you walk to school or carry your lunch?
- 7) Where did I misplace my keys this morning?

A Sunset

Joshua D. Stanton

Am I vague?
because i am vain
Beauty evades me.
Will you ever realize that
real tears cannot be written? And
words are worthless and as cheep as the wind?
One thing you should never do:
never describe those things that can only be felt.
—“color’s strewn”—“painter’s brush on landscape’s sky”—
(sunset is nature’s phenomenon)
But is there vanity in an attempt?
Words do not become us.
Trust
me this time.
Can I be explicit?
I don’t expect response.
Extrapolate your own meaning,
or just dally with the night,
for star’s season is turning,
and you’ve found delight.
My
one desire was to create
afresh, paint anew.
Is it pretty? How does
dew settle on the leaf?
Is it lovely
or elegant
or grace-
full?
All that I know
is one thing:
i can only describe
those things
that i feel
so I must be vain



One cool autumn afternoon, less than a year after I had moved to Washington, I took my sketchbook up to a tiny park near the three bedroom apartment I shared with my parents and sister.

As I looked over the landscape from my vantage point, I saw it.

The alabaster cliff

And I on a precipice,

A precipice to inspiration:

My arduous, ardent attempts

To recreate and to translate

Fail to express that illusive, icy Ideal.

But that is a sort of truth.

by Spring Vitus

(A mimic is where a writer takes an already existing piece of writing and imitates the structure and theme of the piece. The result is an original piece of writing, however, maintaining the feeling of the mimicked piece.)

Eliza Maria Lopez's cat had been eating for only twenty minutes when the dog got too hyper to wait for her to finish and the neighbor named Jonathan Ronaldo, who was watching to see them fight, had to stand and continue to observe from the tree branch that hung over the fence and watch them with an imaginary telescope; he watched and waited for the fight to begin and the champion to be declared. Ronaldo had been sitting there for five minutes and when he left after eight minutes, the cat, nameless, had not yet finished her meal.

by Elisabeth Keifer



sigma tau delta

The International English Honor Society

coming soon!

As you read this, we're working to start a chapter of Sigma Tau Delta on campus. Sigma Tau Delta (or as members fondly call it, STD) is a national fraternity for students of the English language and literature.

Members have the opportunity to be recognized for their outstanding achievements, enrich their education, help them make career choices, and advance their careers.

There are memberships for both students of English major and non-English majors.

Please come to an informational meeting Tuesday, Apr. 1 at 2:30 in the Library.



Sigma Tau Delta
Sincerity, Truth, and Design

A little something from the editors...

Hey Spring!

Issue Two! Woo-hoo! Yeah, yeah, I know we said we were aiming for end of January but better late than never. That seems to be our motto for this issue...

Getting back to the subject at hand, we have some great stuff in this issue! But we're missing something. Hmm. What is it? What is it? ...oh yeah! *Great stuff for the next issue!* So let's get on it students!

Remember: anything goes! We want science, science fiction, memoirs, essays, satires, letters, research, short stories, poems, fables, ETC!

Things just got a little more random!

Becky,

I'm loving the new cover art on this issue. And, once again, I am impressed with what NC's students are producing.

I'm excited we have this opportunity for students to express the gifts God has given them and they are developing.

My only disappointment is that our issue seems a bit thin.

More submissions equals more issues equals more great "stuff"! Keep up the good work

Thanks ASB for your support!!!

