



Write On!

*Select works from the
creative minds of
faculty, staff, and students*

2015-16

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Cibolo, Texas

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Acknowledgments

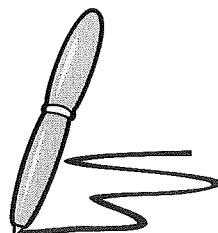
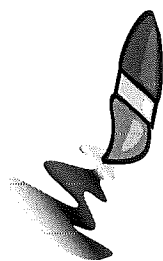
Write On! was a spark of an idea I had as I searched for new ways to reach students as we delved into poetry, prose, and writing. I wanted material that would interest them, so why not material written by teachers they know, classmates they might sit beside, and staff members they see weekly.

I am appreciative of the support I received for the idea and the entries I received to be included in this text. I know that writing and art are very personal and often hard to share with others. Every selection has power, strength, complexity, depth, honesty, and creativity. Thank you to those of you who are a part of this compilation of work.

I hope you enjoy what you see and read and share with those who are in this text your appreciation of their contribution.

-Susan M. Shires

P.S. If you are interested in contributing artwork or your writing for next year's collection, please feel free to send me anything at any time. Just email me at sshires@scuc.txed.net.



Winds out of the west barely caused the stray hairs to move out of her ponytail. The small boat swayed gently just outside the private cove she often sought solace in. Arriving late last night, she was pleased to see that the clouds had indeed cleared and the stars still shined in the pre-dawn quiet.

She quickly and efficiently worked in the near darkness to set up her cameras. Adjusted the gyro tripods by touch and secured each camera. Checking the settings on each and made sure that both were ready for remote use. Finally she went back into the small galley and brought up her oatmeal with fruit and fresh orange juice. She settled into her favorite spot just the bow and began to enjoy her breakfast.

As she slowly watched the sky begin to lighten, her thoughts were again drawn to the reason for her unplanned voyage. Life had made an unexpected, but welcome turn and she was taking the time now to allow all her thoughts to surface. Was fate actually giving her all she had ever hoped for?

Bu instinct alone, her fingers would click off photos at random intervals. She was not blind to the amazing beauty that was sunrise off the coast. The colors in a constant state of flux. The mountains looked as if they tried and failed to hold back the oncoming day as shadows danced along the eastward face. Each change of color brought about a new emotion; forcing her to deal with the wall she had built around her heart.

Her attention grabbed momentarily by the call of a pelican. The cumbersome animal was graceful in the air as it turned to dive after its own breakfast. She glanced toward the water and the unsettled surface told her its destination. She smiled at her verbal memory, "Mine. Mine. Mine." Even knowing those birds had not been pelicans.

Taking a deep breath, she leaned back into the deep cushions on deck. Her thoughts wandered back to her dilemma at hand. Her desires and her constant doubting mind battled with each other. She closed her eyes and mentally counted off one minute intervals before remotely snapping another picture. Deciding to finish the sunrise shoot and then go for a long walk along the coast.

Maybe she would find the answers she sought as she watched the sea battle the land.



Do You See What I See?

Close your eyes. Now, describe the room around you. Look at the walls and all the objects in the space. What color, size, shape, or texture are they? If you aren't alone in the room, can you describe the person with you? What do they look like, and what are they wearing? Why all the questions you might ask. I ask because you and I see differently.

At three pounds, fifteen ounces my unexpected February birth resulted in lifelong health issues, especially when it comes to my eyes. I spent time in an incubator and even had multiple cataracts in my eyes (they aren't always an old person's issue!). The doctors seemed to know- I am not sure how- that I couldn't see, so by the age of six months I had small pink plastic glasses strapped to my head. Did people ever give my mother pitying looks or steal sideways glances at me as they walked past?

At the age of five, I had two surgeries. One surgery was to remove a cataract that was clearly visible in my left eye. Imagine a wart at the edge of your bottom eyelid- yuck! I even had to wear an eye patch afterwards. Not an 'aye matie' black pirate eye patch that might have been cool, but a flesh colored patch that made me look like a one eyed alien! The other surgery was to turn my eye back towards the front of my face where it belonged. My eye had rolled back in my head, and they had to go in and roll it back so that I might actually be able to see. Sounds gross, doesn't it? My sister said that when I opened my eye all she saw was red. She expected me to cry blood and that terrified her.

Surgeries over, I moved forward and tried to embrace the fact that I had to wear glasses. I spent years buying the cutest glasses, the most fashionable ones, to no avail. Add glasses to a girl with buck teeth and a speech impediment and even her lovely blond hair couldn't make her anything but 'four-eyes.' The surgeries fixed what they intended, but my vision issues remained.

So, now I have a wandering eye. It's not wandering into the back of my head, like when I was five, but students still ask me, "Mrs. Shires, are you looking at me?" [or at whoever sits behind that person]. It seems to make them nervous, and sometimes I use that to my advantage.

Where light means clarity to most, it means discomfort to me. Because I have Fuchs Syndrome, my sensitivity to light causes me to constantly squint, be it day or night. Twice a day, I have to put drops into my eyes to help my cornea form to, or keep, its proper shape and density. Every drop stings. Usually when you do something over and over and over again you get good at it, but not me. Imagine pulling your eyelid back with one hand, leaning back to try to ensure that the drops get in your eye- all the while taking furtive looks into the mirror to see if the dropper is actually over your eye. Splat! I've always hated having things near my eyes; every drop seems like a fire-truck's hose turned on at full blast, and I blink or miss my eye as often as I hit it. Practice does *not* make perfect.

About four years ago I was told that I would probably need a corneal transplant when I was in my late sixties. Great, I thought. I still have at least fifteen years before that happens. Something will be invented or discovered to fix my problem by then. So... no worries.

Think again.

Last year, I was told that it looked like I would need the surgery in the next couple of years. Some say that they've made great strides with the surgery, and the recoup time is less than in the past. I say, what happens if something goes wrong? I say, I'll have to wear a patch for a while. Doesn't seem so bad to most people. But if the surgery fails and makes things worse, or I have to wear a patch, that means I will basically be blind.

See, what I haven't told you is that without the use of my right eye I *am* basically blind. Dead in the water! Up a creek without a paddle!

I can't drive.

I can't do my job.

I can't see my dog play.

I can't read or watch T.V.

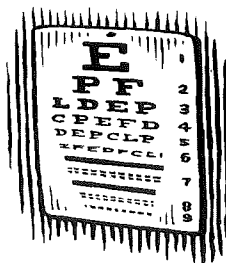
I can't see my husband or other family members.

I can't sit in my home and look around at the pictures, travel souvenirs, or even each piece of furniture and savor the memories each represents.

Every day is a struggle for me. I have to have a big purse to carry all three of my glasses (trifocals, readers, and prescription sunglasses). Even with all of these innovative marvels I can't see everything. **NOTHING** is clear. **EVER**. I can no longer drive at night and dusk can be a nightmare, not to mention rain. I clutch the wheel so tightly that by the time I reach my destination, my hands are sweaty and cramped and I have to shake them out to release the tension. Monitoring the students work gets a bit crazy as well. I can't look over their shoulder and read what is on the computer screen; I have to bend down and pull the screen closer to me. I can't walk by their desk to glance at their progress because I can't read what is on the page without picking it up. I can't let them write in pencil because I can't see it on the paper. In my personal life, my husband often has to read menus, words on the TV, the newspaper, and even food containers at the grocery store to me. I've told him that that only one of us can have bad eyes, and I have automatic 'dibs' on that.

I am only 53. I might have thought that was 'older than dirt' when I was a child, but that is not old at all. If I am having this much trouble seeing now, what does the future hold? Frankly, if I think about it, it scares me.

My life has been a blessing and I learn new things every day. But, I have always said that if I had three wishes, one would be to have perfect vision. Every now and then I spend time looking at the things around me. I try to describe it to myself in my head, almost as if I am preparing for the day I can no longer see. Do I see what you see? You must see the leaf on a tree differently than I. Am I missing out? I'll never really know never having known anything different.



Update: I was blessed to have a corneal transplant a year ago at the age of 55.

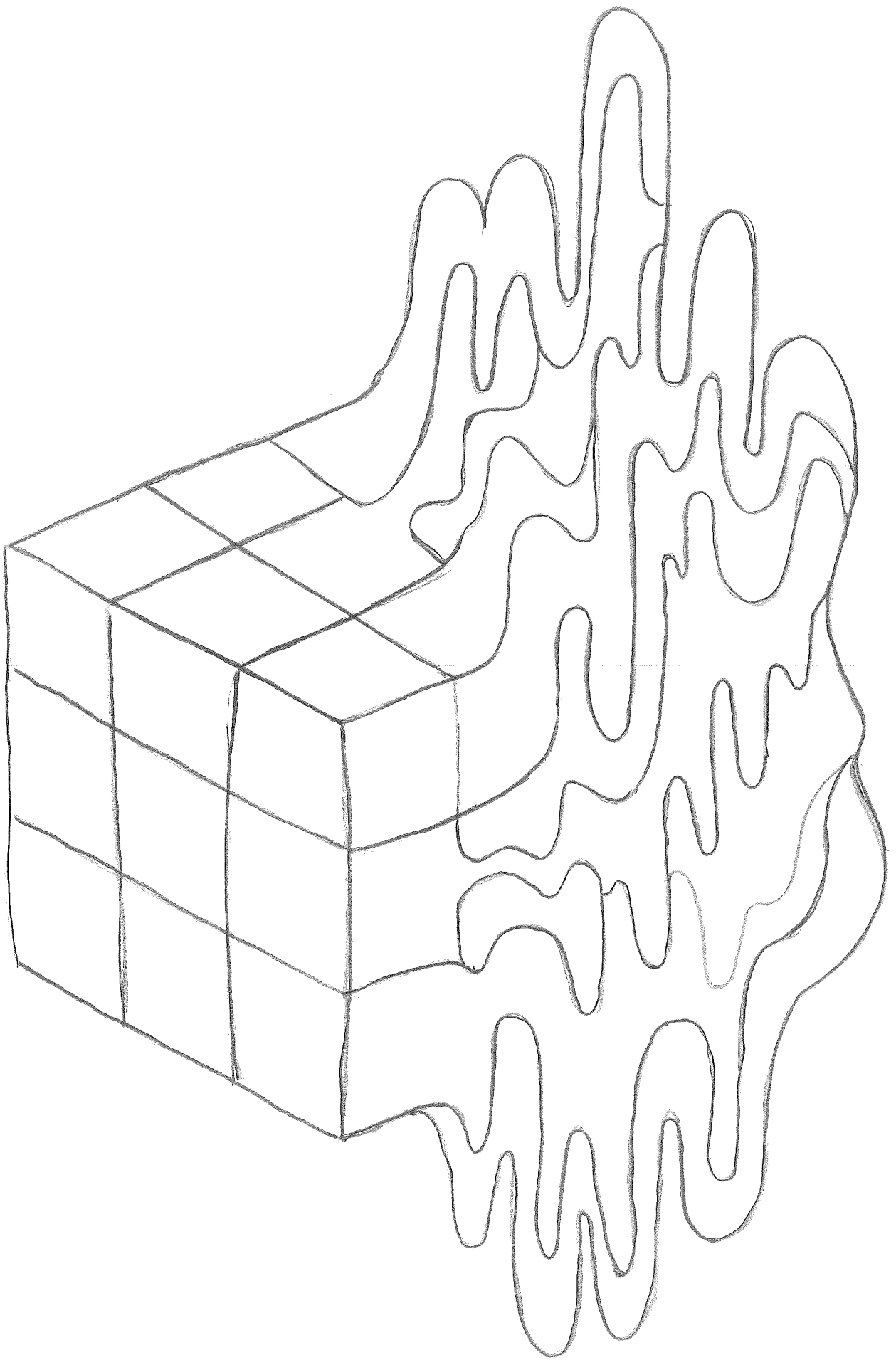
It has taken the fog away in the morning, and for that I am grateful. I am better at driving at night. It's not something I want to do- and usually don't- but I could if I really had to.

It has not helped my ability to read or see close up , or even mid range. At all. I can no longer monitor state standardized testing. I know that some might find that to be a relief, but I still struggle with thinking others think I am making it up. I struggle with feeling like I am letting the team down. Yet, I get mad when they don't understand the extent of my disability. Yeah, I know, there is no way they can know; it's just an extension of my own frustration with my limitations.

I know everyone around me is disappointed that I still have such severe limitations, but I am choosing to feel very blessed that an individual chose to be a donor knowing that someone would be helped, even after they were gone.

Final thoughts. I soooooo wish I could read a book without glasses and a magnifying glass. I wish I could better handle the stress of trying to grade essays and get them back in a timely manner. I wish I could read road signs, and ingredients on boxes, and see words on a screen. I wish I could personally thank the family who lost a son, brother, friend for giving me improved sight. It was a gift, and you never look a gift horse in the mouth. I wish more people were donors.

Susan M. Shires



You Haven't Changed – A Semi-Biographical Reflection by Jon Zimmerman

Three simple words said so many different ways. A reassurance from a friend of why they like you; a notion that you remain true to who you are, but said with the right amount of vitriol and it is like a poisoned blade piercing your ribs to find its place within your heart. Said with such disdain and anger, it can force a person to question their entire being, shattering their ego and leaving them to reassemble the pieces into some mockery of their former reflection staring back at them in the horror of what once was.

I had only wanted to rekindle a friendship that had been lost in the tides of time since leaving high school. It was a friendship that I had grown to miss in the years since and had hoped that maybe in the ever-ebbing flows within the passage there might be a way to salvage something from what remained. There had been a romance and strong feelings before, and I truly wished that maybe some somewhere within any leftover feelings there could be a basis for a new friendship. There was... but some things change... and some things do not.

It had started innocently enough with the retelling of shared memories and the exploration of each other's lives we had missed. It was as if we had never been separated in all that time, talking as we once did every day, though no longer in the locker-lined halls of our school. It was wonderful to have that friendship returned like a long-lost ship finding a familiar port of call.

As the adage goes, "old habits die hard" and familiar issues from our friendship began to rear their ugly heads. Selfishness is a disease that destroys the tenuous connections that bind each and every one of us together, and to date I know of no cure, only those salves of honesty, patience, and generosity to reduce the severity of the symptoms. However, some diseases are known to kill.

The reasons, like most things, were so stupid. Ultimately it boiled down to her old habit of being truly selfish, and blaming others for their actions as though the simple kind acts of others were deserved by her as through some entitlement; as if the world owed her and it was her place to take from everyone anything they were willing to give. To say my feelings were hurt would be an understatement.

And I told her. Not with anger, not with pride, not with anything but honesty, and I don't think she had ever had anyone step up to her that way. She became defensive, a victim of the truth, and like any victim, she lashed out and said those three horrible words:

"You haven't changed..."

Hadn't I? It'd been more than a decade since those hellish four years of High School. How can anyone survive that circle of torment and not be changed? Isn't escape from that federally mandated imprisonment alone a change for the better? Never mind the fact that unlike so many I had actually escaped that small town, and those people that will never know anything else.

I was cursedly gifted with a high intelligence and a strange passion for the most mundane and inconsequential things in a time when such things separated you from the ordinary; the normal. I would say to some degree it separated me from my peers, but that would imply that they were in some way my equal yet in truth they could never compare. An arrogance sure, but well-earned and deserved, though it manifested itself in the most obnoxious way. Self-awareness wouldn't come to me for some time before I realized how often I put people off with my nature. I had certainly changed that with humility and modesty, patience and tolerance.

Where once I was ashamed of those things that I loved that many people didn't understand, I was now proud. Many of those childhood shows and toys I loved were now reemerging in popularity among the newer generation opening up more people with whom to share. My hobby had gone mainstream and though that had produced a time of animosity towards those I had felt hadn't earned it, it was nice to know those that came after me wouldn't be targeted, tormented, bullied, and beaten for enjoying the feel of a controller in their hands.

College began and I studied art and philosophy, science and literature. I found a job that paid me for my knowledge of those things I loved. I found friends with similar interests who stayed around me because they genuinely liked me, not because they were stuck in the same place all day. Unlike in high school, I was now in a place where I know longer felt alone and shunned by the world.

How, in turn, could that not change a person?

No, I had changed, and in so many ways for the better. It was she who hadn't changed, a dangerous statement that many on the outside could misconstrue as a retaliatory attack on her character for her attack on mine; a defensive maneuver designed to shift the blame. However the evidence was on my side.

Since high school, she has lived in the same town, working the same job, spending time with the same people. She had tried college, even given a free ride based on her valedictorian status from school, but failed out because she focused on the present and not the future. Her marriage and any subsequent relationships had all failed because of her selfish and demeaning ways. Ways that I had been victim to while courting her. That was the difference, the key that unlocked the pieces to my now shattered ideal.

I allowed her selfishness to happen. She took advantage and made me the villain when I tried to stand up for myself, and like the immature fool that I was, I allowed it to happen. In the time since, I had learned that I couldn't let people walk over my feelings and kindness as though I were some painted stripe marking the two corners of parallel roads. I stood up to her, called her on her nonsense, and like the selfish person she was, she attacked me and tried to tear me back down into the place she knew I once frequented with regularity. I was the last person she ever expected to ever challenge her, and she was too blind to see the truth that was presented to her from a place of caring.

And she was too blind to see me walk away from her with the knowledge that I had tried to rekindle a friendship that once was, but it was a fire that would never melt the frozen place in time she still existed in and it was a flame I didn't need for my path in life was alight with the glow of a bright future.

Tina Brown 10th grade



Ode to "Bling-Bling"

I know this sounds outrageous, but "bling-bling" makes me CRAZY!

In order to get more of it one can't be LAZY!!!

Pearls, rhinestones, silver, shiny, sparkling, sometimes even gold,

It doesn't really matter if it's new or old.

This obsession began when I was seventeen

Wearin jewelry of my grandma's- even with my jeans!

At times comparin myself to those beautiful actresses on T.V.,

Sayin - "Hey J-Lo, who cares about your pink engagement ring?"

When all dressed up with matching heels and "bling-bling"

There is nothing more exciting than feeling like a Queen!!!

Although Lady GaGa I am definitely NOT

I would rather wear chiffon, velvet, or lace,

then have some stupid steak draped across my legs!

Give me Michael Kors or CoCo Chanel

This "bling-bling" jewelry is an outer extension of me

that allows me to express my PERSONALITY!!!!

Dear Students:

My pencil you just borrowed may just be a simple pencil to you – but for me it is a smartphone!

It takes notes, marks my calendar, makes lists, draws pictures, does my homework, writes notes and letters (texts and snapchats for you), balances my checkbook, brainstorms new ideas, keeps my diary, and grades your papers.

You can call me old, I won't take it personal, but please don't take my smartphone from me. I would truly be lost without it and I might just forget to change that grade you worked so hard to fix because you took my pencil and I was unable to write it down.

Thank you,

Your Teacher

Bittersweet

bittersweet,
a word
of
self-contradictory

bitter as
morning

sweet as
night

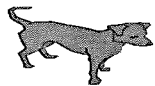
i am
bittersweet

neither
apply

A Day in the Life...by Michelle Baksic- Hargett

Evening

A moment to relax time to myself-
A chance to think of something else.
To let my mind be at the beach-
Anywhere- just out of reach.
But for me, no time like this exists.
For reality is a persistent witch,
I'm in the process of writing, starting to feel nice-
My dog came in to barf on my carpet,
Not once, mind you, but twice.



Geeks R Us

Word games, puns, oxymoron's, and Scrabble,
unique foreign words, or pig Latin babble,
Sci-Fi, satire, nonfiction, or drama-
they all appeal to this literary mama.
Poetry and Star Trek, do require a deeper look;
Full Tilt and Alice are some heavy books!
I enjoy writing poetry in my free time,
contemplating thoughts while dropping a rhyme;
or colloquially collaborating with colleagues;
you'll see, that I have quite a bit of geek in me.



A Day in the Life...by Michelle Baksic- Hargett

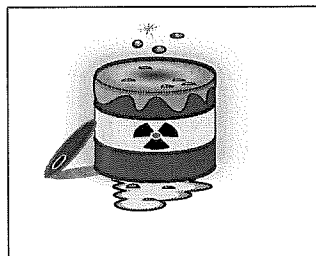
La Cantera

Surreal is the feel that begins to surround when the exuberance of wealth astounds and abounds. A place where Tommy Bahama is Boss, and Neiman Marcus sparkles and shines with \$5000 tags that tempt us to tell the world our worth. I wonder if I am the only one who feels oddly out of place in the snob scene, surrounded by the soft smells and expensive, exquisite fabrics, spacious stores with displays that scream "Envy Me!" In some cases, I can see where quality is worth the cost, but there comes a point when excess becomes grotesque.



Documentaries

What kind of world will we leave behind
To our children who are unaware and blind?
Diseased by chemical overload,
Dreams deferred for it cannot hold
The wasted well water- gone for good;
Drought engulfs our neighborhoods.
Atrazine- the silent killer hides, in
Corn and ethanol pesticide,
Poisoning fetuses in utero while
Companies profits continue to grow
Consciously contaminating
Without ever considering
The effects of greed.



A Day in the Life...by Michelle Baksic-Hargett



Funambulist

I consider it a gift, this talent I have, for
being quite responsible, yet borderline spaz.
I hold two full-time jobs, one at home and one at work,
I excel under pressure without going berserk.
Activity with structure focuses my OCD,
and constant brainstorming increases productivity.
Some days I reflect and I'm in awe and amazed,
other times I'm exhausted, my thoughts consumed in a haze.

My Auntie
By
Shyronda Boyd

I come from a large extended family, so I have been blessed with multiple aunts and uncles, most of whom I address by their first name after the title Aunt or Uncle, but when I say “Auntie” I’m referring to my special aunt. The one who could explain things to me and I wouldn’t get upset. She would share stories with me about my mom I had never heard before. She would change her schedule to have lunch with me if I was passing through town. Auntie hosted my high school graduation dinner at her home. She gave me an appreciation for the musical Porgy and Bess and Lou Rawls the singer.

I believe our bond was set because she was an older sister and so was I; responsible for younger siblings, having to set an example; an expectation put upon us at an early age. She knew what to say when I needed to hear it. She was sometimes the motherly mentor I needed and other times a friend. She was strong, intelligent and beautiful. She was a hardworking wife and mother who loved to take care of her family.

As I grew up and had a family of my own, she often surprised me with a phone call or handwritten note to let me know she was thinking of me. This past summer we spent time together at the beach. Her smile was familiar, and her voice was the same, but her body was frail. This would be some of the last times we shared. She looked so glamorous posing for pictures in her sunglasses, pictures I will cherish just as much as the memories I have of my Auntie.

Think for a second

stop, stop and think for a second

clear your mind for a moment

let your ears take in any sound

do you hear that

it's the world it's the universe around

be different, be you, be younique

little boys and girls only worried about technology

instagram, twitter, snapchat, kik, and all these other programs give me

jitters

let your eyes focus on whats around

13 year old girls putting on makeup when they wakeup "picture, picture on
my blog tell me, tell me who has the most likes of them all" is it me, is it
her, is it that guy without a shirt, is it my mother, or my father, maybe it's
that 16 year old having a daughter

stop, stop and think for a second

clear your mind for a moment

grasp what's around dont take your time for *granted* the time you have on
this earth, on this planet, in this universe

building things, building things technology is winning taking our jobs with
no pay we give companies money to use these things everyday

it's as if people haven't expressed it, like they can't convey their message

you say hashtag this, and hashtag that, how about hashtag no phone for a
day send your message the old fashion way

you don't have to do your makeup or get dolled up when you wake up

who cares about how many followers you have

remember the days when you were a child "technology what?" and you still
had a smile

the holes in your jeans when the street lights came on, you were the
quarterback or cheerleader on your neighborhood football team keeping
scores with your fingers and knowing when the quarters were up when the
chubby sweaty man came back around

stop, stop and think for a second

clear your mind for a moment

let your ears take in any sound

let your eyes focus on whats around

who sits next to you or whats on the ground

take a second, take a minute, take a hour, take an day, to realize who you
are and who you can become

umbrella

leave the umbrella
and walk with me

don't let the rain
stop you now

watch as others
rush by

afraid of the rain?

Not you nor i
so let's go beyond
the limits and jump in

with you already wet
let go of the umbrella
you hold dear

and grasp the rain
with who you are
not from beneath
your umbrella.

it will not go away,

that umbrella
stopping the rain
from reaching
your heart

but soon it will
disappear

and when it does

i will be there
to let the rain
fall upon
you again

In an Instant

By Monica Irwin

That moment;

That moment in time

Always treasured.

A child is born;

Life.

Death -

An ending.

Forever cherished.

Time does not heal.

Always remembered;

Pain fades.

Memories continue unending -

Tears of joy:

Regret or sorrow.

Sorting future from past -

Decisions.

Regrets.

Choices.

Insistent.

Transformation comes -

In an Instant.



My eyes see nothing I desire to use
For foolishness is all I'm taught to preach
I find myself another one to bruise
And thus be taught by action's compound breach
The motive I can see is not mine own
But one set on my head by queens of lies
And when their truths have crumbled down to bone
I'll take their place as lord of death and flies
The bishop's blackened miter sits atop
The crooked rook's uppermost battlements
And pawns now wander backwards round to prop
The king up in his waning competence
And as I fight the battle for my mind
I wonder what allies I might soon find"

Have you ever stopped and truly looked at an abandoned place? Taken the time to see what remains of the stories that occurred there?

I love old barns. Even the wood in the walls tell a story. You can tell by the precision in the edges how long ago they were made - and if it was by hand or machine. The layers of paint tell us how many times the owners tried to make the old look new. Are the boards tightly packed or spaced out? How many storms did those walls endure?

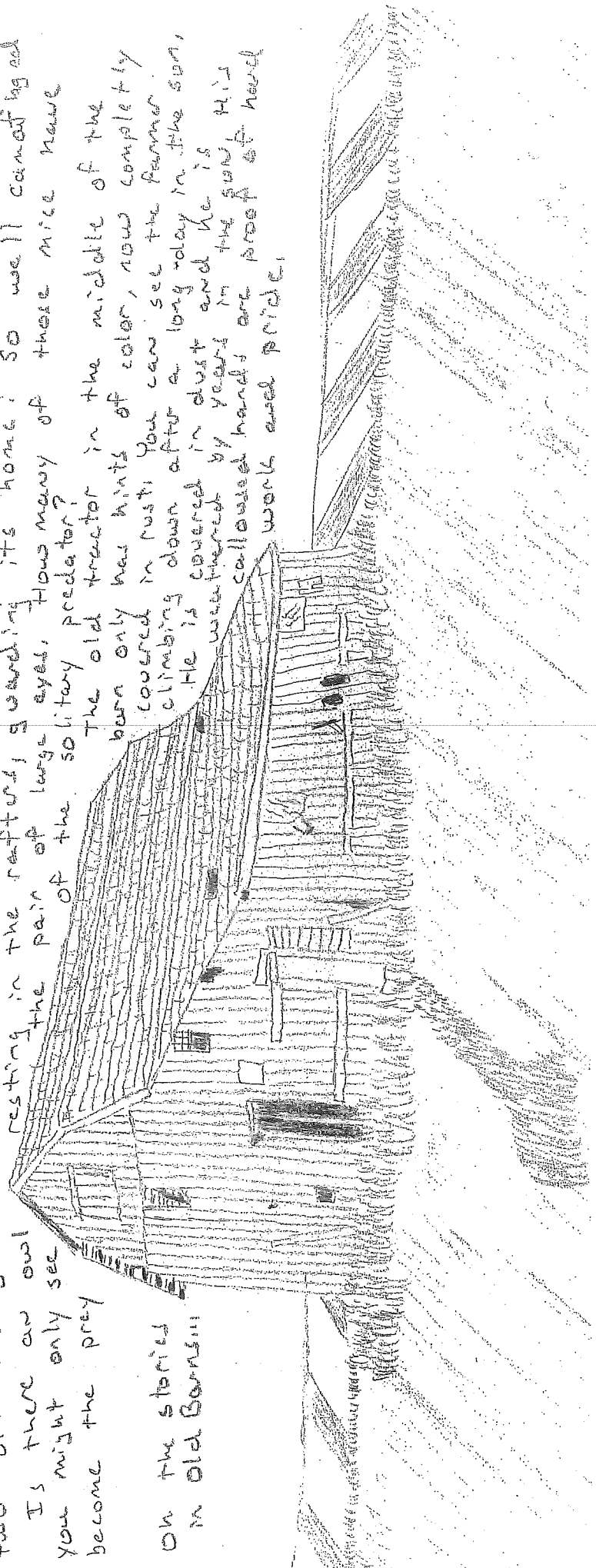
Do birds scatter as you step inside? The creaking of old hinges resisting the move you ask of it. Do you see the dance of light as it comes between each board? The beams slowly spreading to meet yards away from where they began, what other creatures ran for cover as the silence of their home was so suddenly interrupted?

The paths of the barn mice reveal themselves at you can almost see the floor move as they hasten for cover. The well worn trails they take every day becoming flashes of gray. They briskly disappear under things, but you can still feel them moving under your every step. The small dust storm created only lifts a foot or two off the ground, but it still creates a sense of time lost.

Is there an owl resting in the rafters, guarding its home? So well camouflaged you might only see the pair of large eyes. How many of those mice have become the prey of the solitary predator?

The old tractor in the middle of the barn only has hints of color, now completely covered in rust. You can see the farmer climbing down after a long day in the sun. He is covered in dust and he is the sun. His calloused hands are proof of hard work and pride.

On the stories in Old Barns!!!



My Biggest Fear

I was terrified of you my entire life. Terrified of how you would change my life, terrified of how much pain you would bring me, terrified of how I would be around you.

Despite these feelings, I decided to give you a chance. I thought I was old enough that I would know how to handle you. I was smart enough to know exactly what I would need to do if anything bad really happened. I was mature enough to go about my life with as little change as possible.

For the first couple of months in our relationship, life seemed to stay the same. There weren't any noticeable differences, but a month or so into our relationship I started noticing minor changes. At first, you only hurt me a couple of times, but I was able to keep it a secret from those around me. However, as time went on, those around me started to pick up on the changes and my discomfort in certain situations.

I knew the *abuse* would only continue and get worse the longer our relationship progressed, but I had no other options. I loved you. I knew the pain would only get worse, and there was nothing I could do to ease any of it. I endured it all. I thought about telling my family so many times, but it wasn't something I could do. I was scared. Scared of their reactions. Scared of how they would view me. Scared of how my family would change. So I kept my secret until I couldn't keep it any longer.

When my family eventually found out, their reactions were exactly what I thought they would be- my mom cried. She knew what I was going through. She knew the pain, the questions running in my head, and she knew my life would never be the same. I listened to her advice, but our relationship continued to progress.

Before long, everyone knew. I could hear the whispers, feel the stares. I continued to feel weak and tired, more so as our time together kept going. At times I felt I was at my breaking point. But once again, I loved you. I was willing to put myself through the abuse and never ending worry because I knew it wasn't forever.

Eventually, you put me in the hospital. I was terrified on the way there, terrified in admittance, terrified until the bittersweet end. I was certain life would get better.

And... it did.

You were on August 20, 2015. All my fears from the very beginning washed away when you took your first breath. Ethan James Lee, with you, my biggest fear morphed into the something I could never imagine- the best thing that has ever happened to me.

What Do You See?

*When you see us battling cancer, what is it that you see?
When you look around, and see others just like me?
Do you see wheelchairs and oxygen tanks, and caps and scarves galore?
Do you see IV's and medicine bags, do you see missing hair and more?
Do you see chemotherapy, making our bodies tired and weak?
Do you see our bodies burned, when we reach, the radiation peak?
When you see us battling cancer, what is it that you see?
Let me share what I see, when I see others just like me.
I see strength and courage, as we wipe away our tears,
When we battle this disease, and face our worst fears.
We take the vigorous treatments, because we want to live,
And follow doctor's orders, and give all we can give.
I see strength and courage, in the things we do and say,
I see smiles break through sickness, that can brighten any day.
I see a love for life, and all that it brings,
I'm talking about true living, and not material things.
And like you...I also see oxygen tanks and wheelchairs, and hair loss and more.
I see loved ones hurting, right down to the core.
I see people crying, because they want to live,
I see people dying, when they have no more to give.
I see families struggling, trying to understand,
When they see their loved one's life, coming to an end.
But for those of us survivors, we continue to fight and endure,
Praying and hoping that someday, there will be a cure.
So when you look at us, and see caps and scarves galore,
I hope you look into our hearts, for you'll see so much more.
I hope you see our love for life, and our strength and courage too,
And I hope you see our gratitude, for the gift we have in you.*

Divina Child (Dee Dee)

January 27, 2011

Precocial

I think I've fallen in love with writing poetry.

How each line lives and breathes perspective,

Every sentence burns orange with distilled meaning,

And each word claims its own crown and cries its necessity.

But, I think I've also grown afraid.

Because the lines might choke on their pregnant passion.

The flames in my sentences snuffed with artificial rain,

And my words—the sine qua non of my expository accession,

They chance to whisper lies instead of truths,

Faded fakes forged in frail phrases.

I've got stars in my eyes, and I'm singing constellations.

But I'm drowning in dazzling divinities,

In silver stardust and misty heavenlies.

Trapped between genuine sentiment and hollow, fragile words. . .

But I'm just a mere fledgling, a baby bird with a lion's roar;

And my trembling, untried wings

Don't quite yet know how to soar.

The Lone Shuriken of Texas – A Weird West Tale by Jon Zimmerman

The black clad figure climbed silently along the side of the hotel, careful to avoid the light from the windows and hiding in the shadows cast upon the building by the full moon. The streets were alive with the sound of revelry from the saloons and gambling houses that made up the small mining town, but none of the street walkers and gunslingers noticed the small figure as he made his way to the roof. With amazing deftness and prowess, he moved with such grace that even a bird wouldn't notice his presence before it was too late.

His attire was strange for the time: a dull black cloth that shrouded him from head to toe, covering all but his eyes, various pouches hanging from his belt, and upon his back a long curved sword sheathed in a dark lacquered scabbard. His steps muffled by the soft soles that covered the bottom of his feet, his gloved hands carefully checking before each foot step in an attempt to avoid any noise produced. It was an elegant ballet of form that could only be honed by decades of patience and practice that came from the mastery of his skill.

With a deft and slow roll, he came off the side of the roof to hang by one hand from the edge just in front of a window, all his weight resting upon those five fingers. With his free hand he reached into one of the pouches on his belt to retrieve a small, sharp knife. Even with limited leverage, he was able to quickly and quietly cut into one of the four glass panes that made up the window. He pushed it so that it turned, and with a soft pull it fell from its place to fall to the dirt ground below. A distant sound was better than a close sound.

Reaching his hand through the now empty pain to unclasp the window and pull it up and open. With a gentle swing, he slid through the open window, landing silently on the floor. There, under the blankets lay his target. A gunslinger hired by the railroad companies to track down workers trying to escape their unfair and dangerous work contracts.

Narrowing his eyes, the man stood as he reached into his belt and produced several throwing knives and shuriken in his hands. With an outward swing of both arms, he let them fly into the bed, piercing the blanket deep. They weren't meant to kill, simply surprise in disable. The death would come by the sword, now unsheathed and flying downward in a two-handed strike of death where the gunslinger's head was.

Or should be, but instead of blood and gore that often accompanied kills like this there was only feathers and fluff floating in the darkness. Panic rose through the man as he realized his mistake, and heard the striking of a match behind him. He turned to see the gunslinger, illuminated by the glow of the match, sitting against the wall with this pistol pointing at him. His eyes widened, knowing he didn't have time to react.

"I reckon you picked the wrong room hombre..." the gunslinger said, as he pulled the hammer back on the revolver. "Then again, maybe you didn't."

The flame of the match went out and six shots rang through the air, finding their mark in the man clad in black. The gunslinger stood and walked over to the man he had just killed. With a sigh, he shook his head, "Ninjas..."