ARCHIVES
The Fugitive Issue
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Montgomery Bell Academy’s Literary Magazine

Luke Cole

*Archives* is a literary magazine published by the students of Montgomery Bell Academy. The magazine contains poetry, art, fiction, and non-fiction submitted by students, faculty staff, and alumni of the school. *Archives* serves to encourage and to promote art and creative writing and to provide the school with an outlet for both artistic and literary expression. For those who enjoy the visual arts or writing, *Archives* hopes to supply an organization meeting the creative needs. The MBA *Archives* staff is now in its twenty-seventh year of publication. Submissions may be sent to Dr. Batten, faculty sponsor of the publication, or to a staff member before the announced October and April deadlines. Submissions in both electronic and hard copy are welcome.
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**Ode to It**  
*by Daniel Smith*

1. Observe with me this death whisp’ring of pain:  
He gurgles, groans, spews vomit - drizzly rain -  
His breathing slows, no ambulance can save  
Him; now fresh flowers must litter up his grave.

2. Though he be cold, though he be old, so bold  
The sun to breed the murderous Marigolds.  
So green the grass! the change so sudden - fast -  
And all but me cry: “Spring! ah, Spring at last!”

3. As sponges we absorbed sweet air again.  
As snakes we shed; soft breeze tickled our skin.  
I love the warmth! O, beauty all around  
But - yet - again I feel the tug of ground.

4. How patiently It waits in smile, provides  
The spark to wake my cigarette, and eyes  
This youthful Hansel like some beast before the feast;  
The young cow eats and eats his treats.

5. I love the warmth! O, friend, don’t get me wrong  
But - yet - again this warmth cannot last long.  
And every year the same words I shall say;  
And every year It’s sleigh be less delayed.

6. So let It come and give and take away!  
Yes! One can’t shun this crisp, this Spring-born day.  
I love the warmth! although we may be frail  
The gleeful pup still wags his fuzzy tail.

February, 2009

**Ode to a Lost Book of Poems**  
*By Thomas Moore*

A book with stunning verses filled  
Alone upon my table lies.  
Your words my heart and ardent mind thrilled,  
An immortal song in earthly guise,  
Like Phoebus swooped from yonder skies.

Not Angelus bell, nor swaying grass  
When Zephyrus offers up his kiss  
With sweet, uncanny sound shall outlast  
Your stirring lines that could with bliss  
The shadows fill in dark abyss.

But now, alas, the pages Time  
Has dared to bend and fade.  
Unkind deceiver! Bane of her rhyme!  
Her lines you naught but dust have made,  
The pages blank in white cascade!

**Like a Church**  
*by Chris Goodrich*

We only ever get to see pieces of people,  
Like the pieces of a church:  
The doors or the steeple.  
You never come to love  
The pieces so well  
As when you get to know the soul inside,  
And leave behind the outer shell.
To Thomas Hardy's Unborn
By Will Holt

A thrush dallies across the branch deceiving the peaches,
His songs are pathetic exasperations of opium dens
That only an unfruitful father teaches.

These speckled old birds would be glad to glow
Above the refracted moon’s luminous tow.
But Thomas’ daughter prefers a black swan among snow.

For their throats are too long to retain harmony
That the thrush uses for deserted secrecy.

Dear Ms. Inscape
By Ben Mecklenborg

As I traveled alone, having departed that night
I noticed true beauty in the sky.
The heavens were bright with the moon’s subtle light
ivory clouds highlighted with darkness.
Likewise in your visage, I see this same beauty
the same potential for truth in God’s Earth
Rays project from your fair countenance
to illuminate the rest of his domain
Yet, you! YES, you! you are greater than Earth
an angel among mortals of immaculate Birth
YOU, yes, you! are a gift from above
As Hopkins once observed,
I have found my inscape through you

Lonely Nights
By Chris Goodrich

Lonely nights are loud with quiet.
Fun’s no fun when no friends supply it.
Straight to sleep where regret wets the sheets,
To dream of an audience of all empty seats.
The Lion
By Matt Moynihan

There is a cub.

The lion cub sits quite complacently contemplating nothing more than the plains stretching before him and the flies buzzing about his ears. Licking dirt just to test the taste, the cub wobbles a bit too far away for the mother and she picks him up by the nape of his neck and places him in the shade of her reclined body: safety. The cub continues without pause, biting his own hand and discovering fingers. There are no worries, the pride survives as teams of mothers bring home plenty of game and a stream flows nearby. The cub hardly realizes he is alive.

The cub grows.

The cub is older now and confidently romps among the grass, catching lizards and insects. He wrestles other lions from the pride and can even roam within eyesight. Occasionally he is brought back closer by the nape of his neck, but he is free. Agile enough to retreat quickly to safety, smart enough to keep out of danger, and experienced enough to handle himself, the cub roams his small kingdom: the eyesight of his mother. A king without responsibility, the lion cub growls and patrols the shade under a chosen tree. He is old enough to be confident, young enough not to be arrogant, new enough to be free.

The cub roars.

Power overwhelms him. The cub is older now and is beginning to be something of notice, a force to be reckoned with. He fights and roars and broods and seems to be on his way to the top. He is too old to be free and lighthearted, but too young to be respected. He is only expected. Frustration boils. Instinct to hunt, to kill, to run, to roar, to mate wells up inside of him, but all he can do is wait. So he waits. And waits. And waits. And when its time they let him go. The lion runs. He’s been held for so long. Adrenaline pumps through him, the acts of his ancestors flash in his mind. He seems free again and he roars, he fights, he kills, he wants power and control and a following and blood and rage and – there is a sting in the lion’s neck. He is far from the pride after his first free roam, and all goes black.

The lion awakens.

He feels a strange sensation on his feet. He hears strange noises. White lights flood his eyes and as his vision clears he sees nothing familiar. The surroundings he has been pushed into are alien, gray and fuzzy, false and deceitful. The seemingly expanding plane to the back is blocked as if by an invisible barrier. Strange stone walls surround a pool of deep clear water, and black lines bar the top of the wall. Faces peer down from above, strange noises echo from these faces, intimidating, loud, unintelligible. The lion roars. The faces change and the mysterious arms fly in the air. They seem pleased. So the lion roars again. The arms fly and they roar back. The lion senses his achievement and rears back and roars with all of his might. The faces roar back and more gather round.
The lion performs.

The high disintegrates. Roaring crowds are entertainment no longer. Desire to please has left the lion and he thinks back to his free roaming days, the outlying plains, the watchful pride protecting him from danger. He thinks upon the confinement that destroys his will to run, to roar. He recedes from the stage of his performance. Laying lethargically in the shades of his prison, he dreams. Memories trickle back, and the lion tries to indulge in the want to lead, to run, to roar, to kill, but nothing comes. He is destroyed, exhausted, empty. The lion feebly growls to quell the angry noises of the familiar alien faces, and closes his eyes and senses to his surroundings, dreaming of the day he will return to the plains and be free. He dreams, hoping the day is soon when he will run, roar, conquer, roam, and kill.

The Lion waits ...

**The Least I Could Do**  
*By Will Holt*

I colored my teeth with your paintbrush  
After your sure rapid design of a sunrise rushed.  
White was much simpler, but we preferred gold  
And finally now my smile will hold  
An old man’s wet gleam and crisps of dried gold.

As the sun rose, Bartholomew shed his charred mortal coat  
32 little white things schemed to an ethereal bloat,  
The star’s heat antiquated my mouth’s frame  
There making my words a child free of blame.

I put a hand to my temple and drilled away  
At my pride’s protection of its perfected clay,  
Vomiting the star out into an administrative rain.

**St. Blaise’s Blessing**  
*By Will Holt*

Drape your chin over my neck to feel the mechanism  
Stumble grind swallow and recoil  
The milk of your neck on mine arches the iron combs of my spine.  
I’m sorry. It was cold. Reset ourselves wisely.  
I despise myself for that.  
But it was warm of you to laugh. I can speak to you again.
Lamp
By Aaron Lutkowitz

A light,
A shining radiance
Of new ideas and sight
Protecting the divine sacred day
From a receding, chariot into the night:
The eternal light cloaked by a shade.
The light
Scatters
To spread
Across
The room,
Cascading
To every,
Dreary Corner.

Grounded in its place - stable, constant -
In a single, inconspicuous flick - it vanishes.

The Top Shelf
By Chris Goodrich

I recently reached for the very top shelf
On tiptoe I outstretched, extended myself.
I knew that alone, I would never quite do
So I went to the kitchen and picked out a chair.

I gingerly climbed on the ladderback chair,
and reached for the jar that was sitting up there.
My fingers, they grasped and before it I knew
I was still a bit short and a chair leg just broke.

I fell from the chair that so suddenly broke
And, surely the butt of some cosmical joke,
I fell down the stairs, and continued on through
The door to the cellar which then locked behind.

It seemed that I now was quite trapped behind
The door to my cellar, where no one would find
My corpse which has rotted while hidden from view,
Because I had reached for the very top shelf.
Rhinegold
By Thomas Moore

The water rippled 'long ponderous path,
And sought an empty, discomfiting wrath,
The end of which Parnassus did not know,
Nor did the river betray course and flow
To eager watchers standing round the shore.
With glasses peering, caught in myth and lore,
They measured currents, eddies of the floor,
In vain attempt to tame the course, the fall
By nature set. In vain attempt indeed!
For nature follows not man's plastic creed,
From plastic fires, not untamed strife forged.
That maiden's wild like an eagle's eye gorged
From socket red by Fate's unbridled, cruel
Clutch. Crimson Robes do not obey man's rule,
Though he interpret change with static fact,
And by course mathematical ill subtract.
So sodden fools with compass water's grave
Unfolded. All for naught! Their hopes by waves
Were dashed! Against the shores their efforts smashed,
And trident strong with stingy science clashed!
So where the greedy misers sought mock bread,
The Will of Nature triumphed instead.

But one there was born from man's fruitless strife.
From Neptune's warring breath and human wife
He assumed Life! From frothing waves and sands,
With gleaming glory shrouding youthful hands,
The Saviour rose, an ancient book of rimes
In deeds remembered but forgot in lines
His heart near clutched. With whisper thus he spake:
"To these unbalanced seeds of folly, Fate
Has me conveyed. Believe my words, take heed!
Your efforts fail, your thought grow stale, so read
My lines' advice. Until your tools aside
Are cast, your mind retained by river wide,
By bridge unspanned, consume its golden blood,
With no reward to reap, but Lethe's flood!
Bandusia's fame did not come o'er night,
But patience marked its name, its tempered flight.
Of old I walked among the trees and loam,
And spoke the man: 'Construct a bridge with poem
And verse; no need to follow pictograph.
The words are there: Behold their song, their path.'"

Upon the shore, the saviour stood, his book
Unfolded, rimmed by light. And with a look
The waves unfurled, and silver mist upward hurled,
And glowing bridge now spanned the Rhine. The World
Stood still. Then scholars threw their books away,
And disbelievers found their way, to say
That they had seen the bridge by poem begot.
The bridge effused a lunar light: distraught,
Symmetric, like the warring stellar night,
The flawless dance of savage Nature's might.
"But you condemned the power of my Rime.
How else but this did Caesar cross the Rhine!"
Maladroit Hands
by Daniel Smith

No bombs of fire nor cowboys grim, my love
Dare dim sweet Helen’s glowing looks, but books!
Books bid you browse then bite your hands, by Jove,
Betray the scholars; beauty lost by books,

War lost to books. I wish it were not so.
With bloody stubs men starve for what is gone
And curse clear thinking as a plague of woes.
The factories are closed now – day is done.

Last night I dreamt we torched libraries down
And warmed our working bones beneath night’s eye.
We fixed some food and laughed, then left for town,
For work – we were carpenters, you and I.

And all we knew were saws and kerosene:
A fair trade, love; I wish it weren’t a dream.

February, 2009

Donald Dopus
by Daniel Smith

“I’m closer now,” said Donald Dopus,
“To finishing my magnum opus,
The art I’m destined to create,
So now it’s time to celebrate!
I’ll ring the parent-folks, for sure;
I’ll ring a well-known publisher;
I’ll ring my crush from seventh-grade;
I’ll ring her, say: ‘I’ve got it made.
You always would refuse to dance,
Now, foolish girl, you’ve lost your chance.’
I’ll ring my friends; I’ll ring my foes;
I’ll ring each Earthling whom I know.
This party must be grand, you see,
The party of the century!”
Yet in poor Donald’s ecstasy
His pencil added, nervously:
“Oh, Dopus, Dopus, Donald Dopus –
This is not your magnum opus!
Do you expect to rest, you jerk,
And have your pen do all the work?
Oh, Dopus, you’re no expert sage.
Do you expect some lofty wage?
You’ve barely written half a page!”

February, 2009
Bone Shop
By W. V. Constant

I:
While lusty princes flaunt their voices,
Rising, dipping, hoots and hisses
Bloating tales of trivial choices,
Fables of her wild, dark kisses,
Silently and soberly, I listen.

These raconteurs have on their tongues
Residue from time spent well
Stirred with their words and in their lungs,
Heady enough to haze the world in spell.
Silently, so soberly, I listen.

Beneath a bath of light, on stage,
Trumpeting so to break the wall,
Jaw of ass clutched with staged rage,
He croons, ‘My Dear, ’tis duty, that is all.
I am no hero to be loved, my doll.’

And in this braggart’s bluffing game
Such slinking lies roll for her soul.
He will turn water to red wine
Then with it irrigate the verdant knoll.
I am no David to be loved, at all.

Sweet paradise sings in her pipes,
Her whistles, murmurs, common speech;
Only dazed dreamers can glimpse fruit so ripe;
I wake, beseeching, from the fatal reach,
‘Miss Gonne, why must you taunt me so?’

Deserving a rich, honeyed life
To punctuate her happy mood,
Maud may opt for dumbed-down delight,
In which case I shall turn and brood,
‘Miss Gonne is his, and I must go.’

If you seek a grand and stately song
I cannot strum one lonesome note for you;
Full orchestras would drown, before too long,
My distant tune – ‘twould fade down in the blue.
The fireplace, though warm, now starts to slow.

A violin, strung not with wire
But with veins tight fastened to my heart
Is all I can offer; sheer desire
Flowing through my quiet art.
The fireplace, though soft, retains its glow.

II:
Separated by a light,
By a chasm, by a wall,
Are we all, are we all.
Can you hear me when I call?

April, 2009

Giuseppe Galise – February 19, 1945
By Matt Moynihan

Come! Sit on an ancient column
And contemplate your navel.
Take in the clearest sea sky
And see the rocks like sleeping giants.
The wildflowers are out
Painted by the world’s best artist.
Come sit! Be still and quiet
And think of all there is in this small place.

But in this place is everything!
The broken temples of times long past
The history of earthquakes tearing columns
To traveling discs.
The trails blazed by millions of feet
From all over our small earth,
Thing we really fathom, and sometimes don’t.

Faces hide in cliffs and rocks
The pottery and ancient times
Lays for you to find.
Glazed eyes pass over old stones
And gain an appreciation of something
But miss the beauty of natural worlds.

Reflections of sun sparkling on waves,
Illuminating the sleeping giant’s sides.
Forgotten sandals on the rocks
Telling a story of enjoyment.
And amongst all this are you
And your navel, on a column.

A column, now broken down to seat size
Once a tall supporter of a foundation of life.
A belly button, a small indentation
But once the foundation of a life
These two items are not as different
As I once thought they were.
Marc Giguere
The sound of rain against the pavement drowned out the shouts of the neighborhood boys playing whiffle ball in the driveway. Soaked hair lay flat against foreheads and t-shirts clung tight as raindrops filled puddles and increased the mud in our already saturated backyard. Soaked and shivering, I watched attentively. I was the youngest by far, and could think of no one I admired more than these older boys, my big brother and his friends. Even though they still regarded girls as “icky,” it seemed I would never match their level of maturity and wisdom. I did my best to imitate their every shout and movement. They ran around bases and launched the whiffle ball high into the air with the swing of the bat.

Once, I had a friend over and we snuck into my sister’s room. The desire to spite my older sister suddenly seized me; so I uncovered the hiding spot for her Polly-Pockets and Barbie Dolls. We made fun of the toys for which she was already too old, and which I knew she still secretly played with. She was drawn, however, by the sound of laughter coming from her room. She stormed through the doorway to her sanctuary, and soon caught sight of the toys. Her face was stained red, first with embarrassment, and then with rage. She snatched the dolls from our hands and hastily rehid them. To my surprise, her anger suddenly melted away. Glinting eyes and a devious smile now flashed across her face; she sprinted out the door of her room and down the hall. Then I understood. I darted after her in the direction of my room. My friend followed curiously. By the time I caught up, she had already slid open my dresser drawer and removed the plastic baby doll from its improvised nursery. She held the doll by the ankle and let it hang limply in the air, while a look of triumph came over her. My friend stood dumbly in the threshold. I fought in vain against the angry tears that now filled my eyes. She wrecked the image that I’d striven to create, for which I had played countless hours of football and basketball, for which I had refused to join the gymnastics team at my school. She had opened my secret self to the world in that moment, and made real the fear that my secrets would become known, permanently, like flood waters let from a gate.

I had always done my best to keep my secret fascinations from view. From as far back as I could remember, my interests had been decidedly girlish. I knew none of the older boys had requested baby dolls for Christmas. They didn’t wear nightgowns or shoes from the girls’ department either, or prefer playing house and dress-up to sports. I knew best of all that none of them had ever shared my secret desire to wake up one day, and be a girl: I figured my masculinity only served to complicate things, since it was always at odds with my girlish interests. I had quickly learned, however, to keep certain things secret.

Scattered remnants of magnolia buds, which explode in a shower of seeds when struck by the whiffle bat, were strewn all over the wet pavement. The older boys soon grew tired of the flowers, however; they’d soon find other means of indulging their destructive tendencies. My mind raced with ways to impress them; I wanted to extend their game to keep them from leaving. I was struck with sudden inspiration. I raced inside to the kitchen and retrieved my Barbie, which I had left on the counter. I bounded down the garage stairs to the driveway and presented my offering.
The introduction of the doll quickly renewed their interest. I told them it belonged to my sister. It was soon tossed high into the air, where raindrops soaked the carefully chosen clothes and styled hair. The bat halted the doll’s descent and launched it once more into the air with a hollow, plastic crack. My plan had worked. The boys continued their game, now reinvigorated. They began to shout and jeer once more as the doll hit the pavement, as it was thrown into the air again for the crack of the bat, as it splashed into the mud of the side yard. I felt united with the boys in a common hatred for the doll, a hatred I had never felt before. I wanted to see the doll destroyed. I felt their excitement with each new blow from the bat and with each crash landing onto the pavement.

Years later, when I was in eighth grade, I came across a sign for auditions for the junior school musical, The Sword in the Stone. The prospect of auditioning was equal parts thrilling and mortifying. I had never auditioned for a play before in my life, and was terrified of singing in front of people. I started to practice. I would go through the house and check every room, and then double check, to make sure no one was home; I would look into the driveway to ensure that no cars remained there: only after these precautions could I muster the courage to sing. I feared the embarrassment and rejection that singing might open me to, but eventually sang without the crutch of the overloud stereo. I slowly grew more and more comfortable letting my voice ring clearly through the empty house and soon grew to love the feeling of liberation that singing brought me. I finally felt free to make any noise I wanted, without fear of judgment. When finally it came time to audition, I was overwhelmed by the usual fear once more. I could hardly control my shaking limbs as I stood before the single judge there to scrutinize my performance. My voice cracked. I forgot nearly all the words to the song I had chosen. I looked just as scared as I felt, but flawed though my performance was, I had done the impossible: I had brought myself to sing in front of an audience. I was surprised a few weeks later when I got one of the leads. I knew this was the first step in breaking down a wall. I was slowly able to remove, brick-by-brick, the obstacles which kept me from being myself in front of others. I could now, finally, let my true self sing forth.

The rain was letting up, and the mutilation of the doll was nearly complete. She was hardly recognizable: wet, covered in mud, hair pulled out, her clothes removed and lost. The destruction gleefully continued, however. I went along happily as well, until I was suddenly struck with terrible remorse. I was overwhelmed by the horrible thing I’d just done. I had loved this doll, but had sacrificed her for the acceptance of boys whom I hardly knew. I left the tattered, soggy doll to be further disfigured. I ran inside, with hot tears in my eyes, which I fought to keep hidden from the older boys. I ran to my mother. She was sitting on the living room couch, reading. I held out my arms to her and was immediately taken into hers. She put down her book, lifted me into her lap, and sang to me softly. My breathing slowed, my sobs became more infrequent. She asked me what was the matter; but, I couldn’t tell her. Boys aren’t supposed to care about dolls. The source of my tears was still hot and burning, but I just couldn’t let it out. I began to cry once again, harder this time. I just sat and rocked in her arms until I could forget about the doll.
Farewell, Birmingham
By Ben Mecklenborg

In this moment, at last I am content.
I smile to myself in my dark confinement.
As my eyes travel across these mingling colors
Of the cobalt ocean’s stationary corals,
The reef stands still; as the sea critters travel.
Here on this journey my emotions unravel
Here in this safe, I am myself
(This safe securing my wavering health)
No evils may penetrate my sea calloused shell
(This safe securing my self-induced hell)
Be gone, Furies, from this mind
I never, nor ever will appreciate your kind
You, yes! Especially, you!
You! The lock of my anger confined.

Ode to the Fugitive House
Written in the style of J. C. Ransom

By Thomas Moore

Silent, sentient being of yonder years,
Tribute to an age of inspiration,
Your bricks resound with restless respiration,
And command the heed of tears.

Under the boughs of trees of glass,
Softly sways the curule’s empty seat,
But there is no king left the chores to mete.
It shatters with a crash.

Cease not to wonder, gentle passerby,
At the learned symposium thrust here by destiny,
And startle not from bleary reverie.
It was writ in the sky.

The soaring scribes that here did ply their trade,
And sought a leaf in the scattered annals of verse,
Donned shepherds’ weeds and crowns of linden made,
And sung of former glories now dead and cursed.
So listen to their blithe whispers, before they pass and fade.