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1990 Spring Quiz & Quill Magazine

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Quill & Quill • Spring 1990

Quiz and Quill

Spring 1990

A challenge for any literary publication is to publish pieces that reflect the current times. At the risk of offending our readers, it has been one of my goals to meet that challenge and attempt to reflect the world of 1990, as seen by student writers and photographers. In the 1950s, for example, much of the poetry featured in the *Quiz and Quill* was religious, and makes a statement about that time period. Throughout the year we have also published religious poetry because that continues to reflect certain elements of student life in 1990. However we have also chosen to include pieces that deal with everything from abortion to the potential for all humans to become mere rats in a race upon graduation. In this issue, the prose and poetry discusses issues ranging from racism to illiteracy. Some are humorous, some more serious, but all are meant to provoke thought and entertain. I hope you find them as enlightening as we do.

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editor

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Westerville, Ohio

Spring, 1990

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Skinnydipping

Moonlight on the water
slipping into you
 (silent and dark and
 I won't tell if you won't)
floating in secret
nothing unknown
 nothing untouched
 nothing at all, just you and me
in the tumbled-silver rippling blackness

I think I'm in love

The moon
and midnight
moving me in sleekly jumbled prepositions
 (over, under, above, below, between)
wanting the moment to last forever . . .

Drinking your dark freedom
I promise to come
 again some other magic night

all alone
just you and me

Kathryn Barnhardt

On Running

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

I ran five miles with my father
Thanksgiving Day.
It was 19 degrees outside
and snowing.
For me
One mile is comfortable
Two miles is an effort
Three is an accomplishment that deserves ice cream afterward
And I'd never run four.
"Would you like me to stay with you, sport?"
Sure, Dad.
For him
One mile is a warm-up
Five miles is a nice jog
Twenty-six is another marathon in a long line of many.

Why was I doing this?
Why wasn't I at home watching the Macy's parade?
No one had dragged me out here
It was my idea to have this father-daughter time.
What was I trying to prove?

The first mile we took off at what was a slow pace for him
But pretty brisk for me.
I kept up though
I was optimistic
He was proud
We had fun.

The second mile was tough
The pace was too much.
I coughed
But I couldn't stop
So early in the race.

As we approached the halfway mark I slowed down to a fast walk.
Dad jogged ahead
Then circled back.
"You ready to go again, kiddo?"
Okay, Dad.

I never saw when we hit three miles
Maybe that's why it felt so long.
I stopped once
Then again
But only for a few seconds, to catch my breath.
Each time
Dad would run back, pat me on the shoulder, and off I'd go to
catch up with him.

I stopped thinking through the fourth mile.
I just wanted to finish the damn race
and get warm.

The fifth mile finally came.
I was sore, cold, tired, and I swore I would never do this again.
Then Dad turned around
and urged me on
So I ran up next to him.
We crossed the finish line together, and I was elated.
I had run five miles and Dad watched me do it!

As I recovered my breath
I wondered if that moment of elation
was worth the whole race.
Another trophy,
yes.
But I already had enough trophies, didn't I?
They tend to end up in Dad's trophy case anyway.
And my body can only hold out for so many races
Before it rebels.
My muscles tighten up
I pull my hamstrings

I get shinsplints so
I can't walk very well
much less run.
"Tough it out, sport."
Yeah, Dad.

Dad and I both like trophies.
We both like the sense of elation over a race just won.
But is that the only joy in life?
Is that all I have to live for—
One more race?
Aren't there other ways to live?
Do you ever think about that, Dad?

Why have I been running all these years?
Sure, the races have been different, but
Marathons all the same.
But I didn't tough it out as long as Dad has
And I paused in the middle of the race
Long enough to discover
What it means to walk instead of run
That perhaps agony does not have to be part of the race
That pain is not necessarily a virtue
That you can set your own pace
That there is no shame in walking some
In only running one mile
instead of five.

Dad—
I've run so much I can't breathe any more
I guess I'm not a marathon runner like you.
Maybe I am a quitter
Maybe I am not strong
Maybe I am a coward
Without values or virtues.
But maybe I am simply me.

All this running has left me tired, Dad.
It's 19 degrees and snowing again.
I'm coming in from the cold.

Diane Schleppi

Sitting in suburbia—
a couch potato with rabbit ears
collecting garbage from the TV screen,
a taste of yeast from a recyclable can
(purrr)
and the cats go out to play—
entering the sensual world.
(Mmh, yes)

Branches are bare;
fingers painting still life against the sky,
throwing shadows of deep purple
across dismantling garages of grayness.
A second-story window
sheds light on the whole affair:
a radio playing innocently enough
the yearning voices of the
Children's Choir of Venus.
Heavenly voices breathing life
singing abracadabra
and the sensual world opens up:

the humming of insect wings
circling roses
smelling of sandlewood—
a tiger-striped bumble bee
collecting perfumed pollen

a stinger of pleasure penetrating
vice tight thighs—
the vase and face of life
and the umbilical cord is cut.
(Mmh, yes)

a childlike spectator—
a honeycomb of nectar
and the sensual world teases to close

Lying down in velvet green,
eyelashes tickle inside as
eyes roll to the back of the head—
a monarch flutters by
antennas delighted by the air.
(Meow)

Michael Mann

Sky Fishing

First Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story contest

With a wide swing of his arm Jeff cast his line out into the reservoir. His bobber plunked exactly where he had aimed, and he pulled the line taut. He turned his reel two and a half times.

"Nice cast," said Ed.

"Out there's where that big bass struck before."

"Mm."

Ed was sitting on a particularly square rock with his feet up on another. The levee from which the boys fished was made up entirely of such large rocks. Jeff stood nearby on a higher, flatter stone with a better angle on the curve of the inlet they fished.

Ed's line was in close. He spat black juice on one of the flatter rocks, rather than in a crack between, where he wouldn't be able to see the puddle of spit.

"Hardly a cloud in the sky, eh?"

"Mm," Jeff answered.

The deep blue stretched from horizon to horizon, reminding him of a fish eye, with a tiny but bright pupil of a sun. The stream of a single jet cut across the huge blue eyeball. Oddly, the jet had cut a long white gash all the way from where the sky met the water to the zenith directly above and most of the way back down to the other horizon. The long blast of the jet sliced the blue eye exactly in half.

"Hey, our lines are tangled."

"Well, what were you doing casting right there?"

"You dragged across mine," Ed retorted.

"Jerk." Jeff smiled back.

They hunched on the wet rocks at the water's edge, fiddling with the twisted lines. The bobbers danced in the air as the knots came untangled.

Ed sat back down and spat on his spitting rock. He waited while Jeff cast out into the inlet and then dropped his bobber back in its place just off the edge of the rocks. The water slapped and sputtered.

"Oh, I think I got 'im!" Jeff shouted. He jerked the rod back, and it bowed low to the authority of a great fish.

"Is he big?"

"Oh yeah!" Jeff crowed excitedly. "Get the net, get the net!"

Ed clambered up the rocks to where they had left it down shore a bit. "Hurry up," Jeff added, without taking his eyes from the water. His reel whizzed and protested as the angry fish took out more line. It's a fighter, Jeff thought, but the hook's sunk deep.

The fish leaped about thirty yards out.

"Whooooee! Did you—" He was startled to find Ed right next to him already, swishing the net in the air.

"Get ready to scoop him," Jeff commanded.

The bright sun really glanced off that fish, Jeff thought. Big enough to go on the wall, I bet. He pulled carefully, forcefully. Still focusing on the submerged invisible fish, he noticed half-consciously that the sun had sneaked up close to the long, cleaving jet trail. The pulling was paying off, and he spotted a wriggle just under the surface. Ed saw it too, and froze like a pointer, ready to dip the net beneath the big bass. Jeff pulled even slower. He could see the flecked green fading into the white belly now, even the gorgeous streak of yellow running the length of the fish. Best keeper all day, he thought. Definitely worth mounting. . .

"Oh shit," Ed mumbled in disgust.

A pulse of lightning flashed through Jeff's taut hands as the fish suddenly flicked its tail and disappeared. Ed had lunged with the net and yanked the lure from the bass's mouth. In a split second the job had been botched.

"You idiot! How could you do that?"

"Look, I just bumped it, it must not have been sunk too deep."

"Deep? That lure was buried deeper than a coffin!"

"Oh, give me a break, Jeff."

"What? You lost me a great fish!"

"Look, I. . ."

Jeff whirled and pulled his torn rig from the water. Half the lure was still in the bass's mouth somewhere — the fishy smell lingered— fifty miles away by now, he thought. That was a great lure, too. Not that he cares. . . he probably just couldn't stand for me to get that biggie, that selfish bastard. That was on purpose.

He slammed open his tackle box, fingering lures and sinkers. He didn't have a similar one. Only jigs and rubber worms. He remembered then that the spinner he'd lost had been a birthday present from his grandfather. He clenched his fist and stared up at the lucid sky. The sun was touching the white gash now, resem-

bling a geometric diagram of the tangent of a circle. Without thinking about it he noticed a long, long shadow cast across the water by the vapor trail. The trail and the newly appeared shadow now seemed to reach from horizon to horizon.

"You're such a schmuck sometimes," Jeff breathed.

Ed turned from his rock to stare. That bastard, Jeff thought, catching the glance of Ed's cold eyes. He doesn't care a bit.

"Why don't you lighten up," Ed said, and punctuated a splat of black juice on his rock.

"Don't give me that," Jeff answered. As he rigged up a tiny, worthless jig on his line, his throat burned with anger. He could feel the cold stare of Ed's dark eyes as he finished tying on the jig. From the corner of his eye he noticed the long thin shadow of the gash had crept up onto the bank just near them. He cast out as far as he could hurl the worthless lure.

"Don't give you what?" Ed insisted.

"Oh, all that about 'lighten up.'" Jeff mocked.

"Look, man, we're just here to go fishing."

"Yeah, that's what I'm saying. Don't you take anything seriously?"

"Huh?"

"Ever since seventh grade you can't find it in you to . . . well be serious."

"What are you saying?"

"Like when you screwed up that shot in the game last week because you were laughing. I mean if you had really played like you meant it, we might've won. Just like this fish."

"Look, if you're holding a grudge about something . . ."

"Yeah, I hold a grudge. Like when you got us busted at the mall by laughing at that cop who spilled coffee on himself."

"You were laughing too, Jeff."

"Yeah, well, at least I can be serious sometimes."

Ed turned his head and looked out over the water. The sun seemed to be engulfed by the white stripe. The thin shadow had passed onto their stretch of rocks. The whole levee was basking in bright sunlight except for the one short section where they sat, Jeff sitting with his line in the water, Ed with one knee bent and his foot posed on his spitting rock. The black puddle seemed much darker under the shadow of cloud. He sat down on the rock below it. The dark line stretched from as far out into the bay as they could see right

up the bank and on beyond.

"That was a damn good fish," Jeff mumbled again.

Ed jumped up again. "Will you shut up about the fish?"

"Well maybe if you hadn't screwed it up, I—"

"Man, what is your problem?"

"No, you're the one with a problem. Maybe if you'd get a clue about what's going on around you maybe these things wouldn't happen. Maybe even Janice would still—"

They both froze under the thin shadow. Ed glared with horror and Jeff wanted to run. Neither moved. The strange shadow that had appeared so suddenly hovered endlessly. Jeff and Ed could not break away from the gaze in which they were caught. Perhaps time has stopped, thought Jeff.

But Ed turned to his pole and picked it up to reel in his line. With a fierce yank, bobber and hook flew onto the bank. He packed his tackle box quickly, silently.

As Jeff stared out over the water at his bobber, the cold of the shadow overtook him. He hadn't noticed the wind or the temperature when the sun shone on him. Ed slammed his box shut.

"Look, Ed, I . . ."

Ed spat on the rock where he had sat this time. He climbed up the levee, stepped over the guardrail and strapped his tackle on his bicycle. He didn't look back.

Jeff's body was seized with fear. Oh we'll straighten it out, he thought. He'll come around, I mean. I knew better than to mention her, though. I knew better. Why did I do that?

"Ed, wait up!"

He was already speeding away — Jeff knew the clack of Ed's loose spoke, always announcing his arrival. Or departure. He was pedaling away very fast.

The sun burst on him again as it crossed out of the vapor trail and the shadow passed over. It didn't relieve the chill, and Jeff shivered. The color of the light had changed. The brightness seemed tinted. Maybe it just was overly bright now that he was back in the light. Maybe. If only he could call all those words back, he thought. If only I could have held my tongue, if only . . .

The sun continued to track its way towards the horizon.

John Deever

Lost Remembered

On Huron's northern shore,
so many years ago,
a Frenchman sailed the sea.
He carried with him
a generation's dreams
to find the northwest passage yet unseen.

Fueled by familiar desires
for beaver pelt and gold,
he braved the fierce gale and the snow.
What drove him on,
faced with countless perils and danger?
It was the voyageur's character, so bold.

Heading east to Montreal,
LaSalle's greed had caught them
overloaded with the fur and the gold.
The compass pointed falsely
to a magnetic ore deposit,
and the Griffon became a ghost.

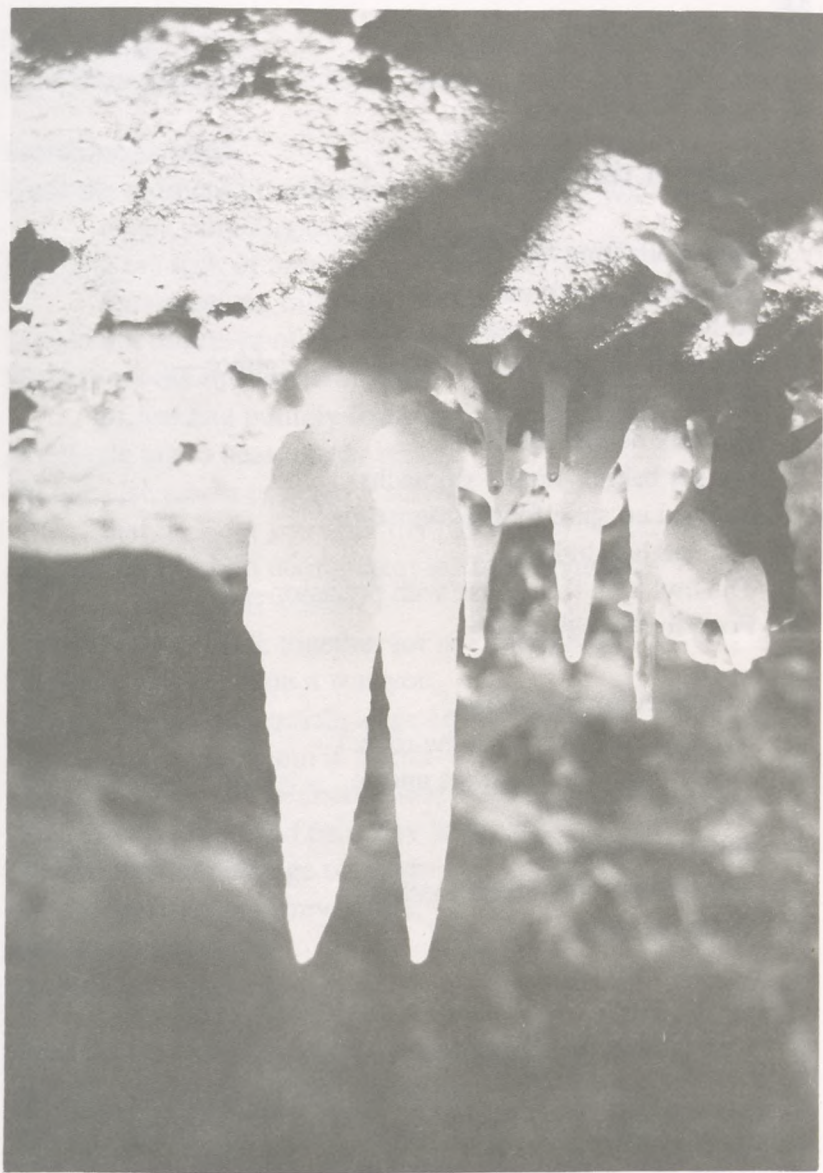
The wreckage of the Griffon
west of Manitoulin
is an image that haunts me so.
What happened to the voyageur?
The frontiers all had fallen.
Where did his dreams all go?

On Huron's northern shore,
so many years ago,
a Frenchman sailed the sea . . .

Evansville, Ont.

July, 1989.

Bill Hunter



Stalactite by Anna Stanley

Quiz and Quill

Spring, 1990

Edge of the Woods

After collecting for the day,
The mouse rested on a rock
At the edge of the woods.
The rock didn't mean to expose its neighbor—
Its face was large.
The owl braved the day
For her babies' empty stomachs.
She had no spite for the mouse—
She had her duties.
The owl took the mouse with precision—
Food for her little ones.

After feeding her young,
The owl sought rest on the rock.
A shot from the road was untrue.
She hung one wing.
Empty-stomached,
The babies joined their mother—
Food for mice.

Aaron J. Thompson

The Body

Third Place, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

I remained a child
Until the moment I cautiously peered over the edge of the
 metal trimming on your lacy grave
Noticing the lack of breath,
 the unnatural stillness.
I could not conceive of the reality—
Until I saw the tiny piece of tape
 protruding politely from behind your ear.
A tell-tale tag to beat for my benefit
No one else saw it or heard it scream
 that they cut you into tiny pieces
Like a curious child taking apart his broken radio
 to see how it works,
Then taped you back together for my innocence
Trying to convince me it was you.
But the synthetic materials leaped out at me and
I screamed back at them in horror—
I heard the door to childhood slam and the
Ringing echoed on and on in my head
The intimate knowledge of death—
 concrete and irreversible,
Burning not of heat
But ice that stung
 my sensitive skin as
Arms gently tore me away from
The frozen grip of the dead body.

Cyndi Miller

The Great White Hunter

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

Once a year, my husband is transformed into an armed and dangerous killer. Each fall, he and his buddies flock to the woods in pursuit of innocent rabbits, deer, pheasants, turkeys, and other small creatures, with the intent of killing them. I asked him once why he liked this gruesome sport, and his answer was simply that it was relaxing (I'll take a good book any day, thank you!). Although my husband, the Great White Hunter, would surely argue the point, I think hunting, and particularly deer hunting, is a lazy man's sport, at best.

In the first place, deer hunting is one of the few sports I know of where it's appropriate to down a six-pack and smoke a pack of cigarettes before entering the "playing field." In addition, most hunters do not work out to keep in shape for their sport—unless you choose to count cleaning their guns after a good day of hunting. Finally, there is very little physical exertion involved in climbing a tree (they use little screw-in steps to accomplish this chore) and sit there all day. As a matter of fact, the most successful hunters are those who sit quietly in a tree waiting for that big buck to come along.

Although it's a fall sport, the Great White Hunter begins preparing for hunting season in mid-summer. He recounts last year's hunting stories, waxes his hunting truck, cleans his shotgun, and renews his membership in the NRA. He also spends the summer months scouting the woods to find paths that are frequented by deer. Then, as the season nears, he uses this information to position himself in the best hunting location. It is here that he places his tree stand—a small platform upon which he perches in a tree during the hunting season.

The first day of bow season (bow season for deer starts long before shotgun season), the Great White Hunter is awake before dawn. Now this really irritates me because this same man is nearly impossible to wake up for work in the morning. Why, I have to twist

his arm to get him up on a workday; however, when there's a whitetail buck involved, he's dressed in his camos and ready to hit the woods by five in the morning without even a nudge.

As any hunter will tell you, clothes are an important aspect of the hunting process. In the fall months, it is important to wear traditional camouflage coveralls, although this would be an unforgivable fashion error in the winter, when one must wear only tree bark camouflage. Why, manufacturers even make white coveralls, which hunters wear to hunt in the snow.

Not only are hunters concerned with wearing the right clothes for the season, but they are also particular about the way their clothes smell. Once, thinking I was doing him a favor, I made the inexcusable error of washing my husband's hunting coveralls. After that, they were as good as ruined because they smelled like Tide. It's perfectly acceptable, however, for him to carry smelly dead animals around in the game pocket on the back of his coveralls.

Being a city slicker, I didn't realize how important it is to smell bad when you hunt. My husband has concoctions to make him smell like anything from a skunk to a doe in heat, although he doesn't use the doe-in-heat scent any more. He put a few drops on his coveralls last year and walked into the woods at dawn. It seems he got a big old buck quite excited, and it started snorting at him and stomping its hoof. Fortunately, the Great White Hunter could shimmy up a tree before that buck asked him out on a date (maybe this is what he meant by relaxing). Ever since this incident, his scent of choice is urine.

Hunters often put buck urine on their boots. They do this so that the buck will smell it and think that another buck is invading his territory. This evidently lures them out of hiding. Now I personally find it ridiculous that hunters pay nearly ten dollars a bottle for buck pee. Let's face it, can they really prove what's in that bottle?

The ever-thrifty Great White Hunter uses his buck urine sparingly. He carefully pours it on cotton balls, which he stuffs in those little plastic film capsules that you never know what to do with. He

takes these little bottles with him when he hunts and strategically locates them around his tree. Now I don't know how many baggings of aggressive bucks can be attributed to this method, but let me tell you, it worked on the clerk at Fotomat the time I dropped off the wrong film bottles. When she pulled the cotton ball out of the film capsule and told me there was no film in there, I'd have probably been better off not to say that I had accidentally brought my husband's bottles of buck pee.

Being a hunter's wife takes a special kind of person. Often I'm asked to stop at the store and get this or that. For instance, once the Great White Hunter asked me to stop at the local hunting supply store on my way home from work and pick him up some "no scent." This little concoction comes in a spray bottle and makes a hunter smell like nothing (I believe this is well worth the cost if it can cover the smell of some of the hunters I've met.) The shooters' supply store has many aisles full of hunting and fishing supplies, but, as is usually my luck, this item was kept behind the counter. After waiting in line for several minutes, a clerk finally asked if he could help me. I told him I needed some "no scent." As he turned to pull the bottle from the shelf, the hunter in line behind me asked if I wouldn't prefer to smell like a fox. I spun around, my unladylike reply ready to roll off my tongue. But, since even in high heels, I was looking square into his NRA belt buckle, I felt it wise to keep my reply to myself.

On another memorable occasion, my husband asked me to stop at the same store on the first day of bow season to pick him up some arrows. This sounded easy enough, so I agreed. I walked into the store, and of at least fifteen people in that store, I was the only woman. To make matters worse, I had again stopped on my home from work, so I was dressed in a business suit. I stuck out like a sore thumb among these men in flannel shirts with their bellies hanging over their belts. I'm sure I had seen some of them on "WANTED" posters at the post office. However, not to be intimidated, I stepped up to the counter and told the salesman that I wanted to buy arrows. I quickly learned that arrows come in at least twenty different

styles, shapes, and sizes, about which I knew nothing. The salesman, to confuse me I'm sure, spoke in jargon and asked me questions that I couldn't even understand, let alone answer. I didn't want to seem stupid so I shook my head to one or two of his questions and ended up walking out with three arrows. It turned out, they were several inches too short and several ounces too heavy. The Great White Hunter now buys his own arrows.

Lately, much attention has been given to hunter safety. The Great White Hunter, of course, practices all the safety rules. He always makes sure of his target before he lets off an arrow. However, he hunted several years before he found out that his eyesight was so bad he needed glasses. But let's face it, how safe can you be with a bunch of armed men in the woods all dressed up so they can't be seen? He says it's pretty safe once he's in his tree stand, but even he must admit that it's dangerous walking in the woods of a morning. Let's just hope the other hunters have had their eyes examined!

Being as successful as he is, the Great White Hunter asks me to cook some pretty strange things sometimes. I don't mind a deer steak or two, but I've been asked to cook just about anything you could imagine. Just last week he managed to get hold of some wild boar meat and asked me if I might cook it for Sunday dinner. This would be a challenge even to Betty Crocker, I'm sure.

My husband is in the woods at every opportunity, sometimes in the morning and again at night. I asked him on the first day of bow season if he had seen any deer. He replied that he had seen several but hadn't shot any. When I asked why not, he replied that if he had shot his deer on the first day of the season, he couldn't hunt again until next year.

Tina Payne

Raise Me Up

Second Place, Roy Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

Raise me up my mother
Raise me up my father
Let me speak with the wisdom of my God
Show me the way
That I may walk therein

And I will teach my children
And I will raise them up
And they will know the way
That it is true.

Raise me up my mother
Raise me up my father
Teach me who I am
Teach me not to be ashamed
Let proud blood run in my humbled veins

And I will teach my children
And I will raise them up
And they shall know the roots from which they came
And they shall be proud.

Raise me up my mother
Raise me up my father
Break the chains that bond me
And I will be free.

Raise me up my mother
Raise me up my father

And I will teach my children
And I will raise them up
And they shall be free
And they shall soar on wings of wind
And shall gather unto themselves those things
that have been taken
For God is not partial as some have said.

Raise me up my mother
Raise me up my father
And let our destiny begin

And I will teach my children
And I will raise them up
And they shall know the truth,
And they shall be proud
And they shall be free
And in our destiny they shall dance.

Kelvin Carter

Riches

First Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

There was snow on the ground when I arrived back home that year. I didn't go back very often, as all that remained for me now was my stepfather and the poverty I'd left behind for the comforts of middle class America. It wasn't that Charlie and I weren't close—he had married my mother when I was fifteen and been quite good to her until she passed away some ten years later. I suppose it was that lifestyle more than anything. Though we had repeatedly encouraged him to come stay with us, Charlie preferred his little three-room cabin in the hills. The tiny shanty lacked hot water and harbored only one wood-burning stove with which to feebly burn off winter's icy chill. How I had struggled that morning to pull myself out from under the weight of a half-dozen old comforters in order to rebuild the fire! It was a far cry from my usual walk down the hall to turn up the thermostat before jumping into a long, hot shower.

But as I said, it was here Charlie had chosen to stay, among cousins and friends who shared this indigent culture. And though it was not an easy one to come home to, I always managed to leave with some cache of treasure in my soul that could not be purchased with all the equity I had built into my piece of the American pie. Perhaps that was the need that had drawn me back now.

It was interesting that among these people there was never a question of helping out another family member. You just did what you had to do. A case in point was Charlie's friend Reba, who I was surprised to learn had recently inherited her three granddaughters. With her own daughter incapacitated by a messy divorce, Reba (no doubt in her late fifties) had chosen to step in and take the children for as long as necessary, perhaps even permanently.

She seemed glad to see us the night Charlie and I visited, and was quick to introduce me to the girls: nine-year-old Jenny, seven-year-old Ann, and Charity, who was four. Ann was a bundle of energy and quickly informed me in her southern Indiana drawl, "Did you know my momma left us? My momma didn't want us. My daddy might come get us someday, but momma ain't never coming back."

The impact of what she was saying could not possibly have registered in her young mind as yet. But it stuck in my throat, and all I could manage was a "Hmmm...", and a nod as I took a seat on the shabby couch.

Immediately, Jenny was on one side of me, while Ann plopped herself down so close on the other side that my arm was momentarily wedged between her and the couch. Charity followed their lead and crawled up to be with us. In the room's dim light, I could see old bubblegum stuck to her pajamas and chocolate smeared across her face. Yet hugging her was the easiest and most natural thing in the world at that moment.

"Where do you live?" asked Jenny.

"Ohio," I replied. "I'm going to school to become a teacher."

"Ann and I are a grade behind," Jenny said. "My teacher says I can't read." She spoke quietly, but without particular shame.

"Well, do you have any books?" I asked them.

Ann's feet hit the floor without hesitation, her enthusiastic little voice nonstop as she disappeared into an adjoining room. In minutes she reappeared through the bedspread which served as a makeshift door, arms full of books, voice still bubbling with enthusiasm. "Will you read to us?!" she demanded.

"Well, yes, but you read to me, too, okay? We'll take turns," I proposed.

Charity snuggled closer so as not to lose her place on my lap, and Ann again took her place beside me on the couch. I don't remember what we read that night, but I did remember some principles I had learned in college. Don't rush children when they're reading. Give them time to sound out the words rather than reading it for them, even if they hesitate. Encourage them to use the context to figure out the word. If they don't seem to know the meaning of a word, make sure it's clear before you go on.

I read. Jenny read. Ann read. Charity listened intently.

Eventually, Charlie and Reba, who had retired to the kitchen, rejoined us and announced it was time for us to head home and for the girls to head for their beds.

Before leaving, I admonished the girls with a smile, "What do you mean you can't read? You read quite well! Now, you keep up the good

work, and you can be just about anything you want to be, go about anywhere you want to go, and do just about anything you want to do!" But then I had to soften as I assured them sincerely, "And I hope someday when I teach I get a classroom full of girls just like you." Excited chatter and giggles accompanied their footsteps as they padded off to bed.

Tuesday—the beginning of another quarter. The alarm goes off and I stumble down the hall to the thermostat, pour a cup of coffee from the automatic coffee maker, and step into a nice warm shower. I pull on my Lee jeans and new sweater, grab hundreds of dollars worth of books, and head out the door for school.

But I am a poor person here unless I can give a child the ability to read, and learn, and grow—and most of all a sense that he or she is a valued human being. And it is not the material things that will bring me wealth someday, but the Anns, the Jennys, and the Charitys. Thanks, Charlie—the visit home was indeed full of riches.

Debbie Buckles

Boy in Ball Cap

Boy in ball cap

Red plaid shirt

Mild, southern Ohio accent

Went to New York as a junior

Exchange student.

Writes poetry.

New York winos.

"Those winos aren't dumb. . . naw, they're pretty smart characters, They know what they're doin'!"

"Hey buddy!" he said, "You've got your patch on the wrong side."

"I know," replied the veteran wino, "I can walk too."

Amy Hunnicutt



Second Thoughts by Michael Mann

Quiz and Quill

Spring, 1990

Mary Shelley's Inspiration

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley is best known as the author of *Frankenstein* and the wife of poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dr. Richard Garnett writes of Mary, "Nothing but the absolute magnetizing of her brain by Shelley's can account for her having risen so far above her usual self as in *Frankenstein*" (29). While perhaps too harsh upon Mary, Garnett does make a valid point; Mary Shelley could not have been the writer she was without the encouragement and influence of her husband.

Born on August 30, 1797, Shelley was the child of Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin. Her mother died a few days after her birth, leaving Shelley to be raised and educated by her father. He surrounded her with books and encouraged her to read (Nitchie 23). She made friends among her father's literary acquaintances, including Percy Shelley and his wife Harriet, whom she met for the first time in 1812. When she met Shelley again in 1814, he was amazed by the woman she had become. They soon fell in love, and on July 28, left England together to explore Europe, leaving Harriet behind. Elizabeth Nitchie attributes this "elopement" to Mary's intelligence and understanding of liberal ideas, as well as her physical charms (6). Shelley said his reason for choosing Mary over Harriet, was "every one who knows me must know that the partner of my life should be one who can feel poetry and understand philosophy. Harriet is a noble animal, but she can do neither" (White 350). Mary and Shelley lived together for two years and had two children before Harriet died on December 10, 1816. They married quietly nineteen days later (Garnett 29).

The birth of Mary's literary career was in the time with Shelley before her marriage, when she was 18. In her preface to the second edition of *Frankenstein*, she wrote, "incessant rain after confined us for days to the house" (viii), so Mary, Shelley, and Lord Byron spent time reading chilling ghost stories. "We will each write a ghost story," said Lord Byron; and his proposition was acceded to" (ix).

Mary's result was the story *Frankenstein*. However, the growth and development of the story was shaped by Shelley even as Mary wrote. "At first I thought but of a few pages—of a short tale; but Shelley urged me at greater length. . . but for his incitement, it would never have taken the form in which it was presented to the world" (xii). With Shelley's encourage-

ment, Mary went on to write five other novels, one novella, more than two dozen tales and stories, as well as a number of reviews and essays. She also edited and wrote notes for her husband's works. She speaks of his encouragement in her "Note on 'The Cenci'" for the first edition of *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*. "He conceived that I possessed some dramatic talent, and he was always most earnest and energetic that I should cultivate any talent I possessed, to the utmost" (331). When he discovered the story of the Cenci, he suggested the idea to his wife; however, "more than ever I felt my incompetence; but I entreated him to write it instead" (M. Shelley "Cenci" 331). He did write it, but he never ceased to encourage her to try writing other things.

After his death in 1822, Mary's life changed. The source of much of her trouble was her father-in-law, Sir Timothy Shelley. He refused to give her any allowance unless she gave custody of her son to someone of whom Sir Timothy approved (Luke ix). Naturally Mary refused; she was forced to support herself by writing stories for small journals. She also published a volume of *Posthumous Poems*, containing her husband's works, but Sir Timothy had it recalled almost at once. He eventually relented on his earlier position, allowing her a small allowance if she promised "that the name of Shelley was not to be brought before the public" (Nitchie 148). For this reason, her name did not appear on the title pages of the first editions of her later novels. He withdrew the allowance again when poor reviews of *The Last Man* referred to Mrs. Shelley, violating his injunction, but once again he was forced to relent. Shelley's son by Harriet died, leaving Mary's son Percy Florence as the heir to the baronetcy (Garnett 30).

Shelley's death was also painful for Mary on a private level. Garnett quotes her as saying, "Alas! having lived day by day with one of the wisest, best, and most affectionate of spirits, how void, bare, and drear is the scene of life" (30). Fifteen years later, she said almost the same thing in her Preface to the first edition of his *Poetical Works*.

Her personal journal also reflects the effects of his death on her life. While he was alive, her journal covered daily notes about life with her husband. "After her husband's death in 1822, her diaries for years to come are full of involuntary lamentations" (Garnett 30).

Mary was able to "show the world what she believed to be the true Shelley: man, poet, and lover of beauty and mankind" (Nitchie 81). Her notes to his works in *The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, which

the man. Her novels and tales use him and his characteristics in many ways. Nitchie writes, "In all her work there were brief glimpses of him" (75). He appears as minor characters, including Horace Beville in "The Mourner" and Marcott Alleyn in "The Bride of Modern Italy" (Robinson xv). She drew him into the stories by using his traits and little bits of description. "She attempted only two full-length portraits of Shelley, Woodville, in "Mathilda" (a novella) and Adrian in *The Last Man* (Nitchie 57). The Shelley of "Matilda" is virtually perfect. This is the Shelley she saw in 1819: noble, unselfish, and idealistic (Nitchie 58). The Shelley of *The Last Man* is her view of him after his death, the man to whom she was "too intensely loyal to expose all her feelings to the public, [while] she was quite aware of [his] faults" (Luke xvi).

Hugh J. Luke, Jr., writes in his introduction to *The Last Man*, "It is clear that Mary conceived *The Last Man* as a monument to the life and ideas of her husband" (xi). The characters in the story are drawn from their social circle. Shelley appears as Adrian, the Duke of Windsor; Mary is Lionel Verney; and Lord Byron becomes Lord Raymond. The minor characters seem to be a mix of people from her life (Luke xii-xiii). It gives her the opportunity to show her husband without breaking her promise to Sir Timothy. In Adrian "is incarnated the ideal Shelley, the wise, kind, loving Shelley to whom Mary dedicated not just *The Last Man* but her entire life" (Luke xiii). She also shows his meaning to her in Adrian's meaning to Lionel. Nitchie quotes: "'All that I possessed,'" said Mary-Lionel, '. . . I owed to him'" (15). However, the complexity of the relationship made it difficult for Mary to show only one side. Shelley is also represented by other characters in the story, those who show some of the human faults from which Adrian does not suffer. He is the astronomer Merrival, a man treated generally with affection but touched by bitterness "when Mary describes him as a 'visionary who had not seen starvation in the wasted forms of his wife and children'" (Luke xiv). He also appears as Idris, Lionel's wife. Shelley's influence is also apparent in Mary's style: "She was capable of appropriating some of the techniques of the poet in order to enrich the texture and structure of the novel" (Luke viii).

Nitchie describes the effect of Percy Shelley on his wife's career in this way: "Her first three novels are her best. Two of them [*Frankenstein* and *Valperga*] were written while Shelley was still alive to hold her to a higher intellectual and creative standard than she could long maintain

alone. The third [*The Last Man*] is informed with her memories of him" (xiii). Without his encouragement, the story of Victor Frankenstein would have stayed the short story which began "It was on a dreary night of November..." (M. Shelley "Preface to *Frankenstein*" xi); without his memory, *The Last Man* would have been simply a story which suffered from an "apparent disjointedness of plot" (Luke viii). Luckily Shelley was in Mary's life to inspire her. The result of his presence is two great stories which "move two figures whose loneliness is final and irreparable" (Nitchie 15). Charles Robinson suggests that Mary's recognition as the "wife and widow of Percy Bysshe Shelley . . . [comes] . . . at the expense of her literary reputation" (xi). This may or may not be true. It is true, however, that Mary Shelley owes her literary reputation to the fact that she was the wife and widow of Percy Bysshe Shelley and thus came under his influence.

Kristen Gregerson

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Why Not?

When my father
 and his fiancée
Left the room,

Nanna told me her secret.
Fred sits in that tree.
Sits and watches
From outside the window.

My father
 who is not one
You could call a believer,

Had a dream the night his dad died.
He saw him through a window
And yelled and pounded and yelled.
But the old man continued on his journey.

And even I,
 in the shower at age thirteen,
Heard the voice of a friend's

Recently deceased grandfather.
Tell Theresa I want to talk to her.
And I did.
And she said, "I know."

So yesterday,
 when my grandmother sat
In her hospital bed,

With her lungs being eaten alive
By some unnameable thing,
And told me
That Uncle Fred watches from that tree,

I said
 why not?
And I grinned

At the vision of that bony,
Cantankerous,
Old Angel
Watching over us.

Lydia J. Wren

Faded Blue

Faded Blue beaches in summer's whitewash
 Scour my skin with sand
And salt is raw on my lips

My eyes Blue too and Fading
 As the Blue leaks out of the corners
To make more Blue beaches
Before, before the canvas empties and disappears

Virginia Caum-Lake

White

Dylan's singing about Reuben Carter—
"And don't forget that you are white"
How could I forget?
White equals purity, white equals cleanliness
White equals truth, white equals honor
More like white equals corruption, white equals pollution
More like white equals lies, white equals disgrace.
But white does equal power—
Power to hold others back.
King Dead, X Dead, Is Farrakhan Next?
They say Civil Rights were declared 25 years ago—
Then why is white still all around me?
Sitting in class, surrounded by white
Working at office, surrounded by white
Walking through 'Ville, surrounded by white.
White does equal Power
But now white equals Scared
Of the truth that I, an ashamed white,
already know—
White does not equal Right.

Tony Keefer

Renovations

First Place, Roy Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

You hand me an antique scraper,
and point me toward the wobbly fence.
I assault the horse-gnawed boards
with rusty worn-down wire bristles.
Ten-year-old glossy white paint falls in tendrils
atop thick, green grass that has eluded
the nefarious weed whacker.
I start peeling off old layers,
smoothing out rough areas.
I slave to expose the bare wood
Brushing off earwigs as I go.
“Perfectionist!” someone cries.
Paint will cover the blemishes.
Why do old habits die hard?
I could scrape for years,
and it would never come clean.
Still, I attack the weary boards,
uncovering their hidden wounds,
opening their sores,
soothing them with sweet talk.
But it takes time to heal.
You get painted, I tell them,
when you’re good and ready.

Vickie Kayati

The Courtship of Miss Pirrip

a ghost chapter for *Great Expectations*
Third Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

"I remember the day," Joe said looking into the fire. "T'was how I got acquainted with your sister. My mother were just dead and I were lonely by myself. Worked with Mr. Hounkleton, I did, learned the smith trade, but a young man needs a family of his own. Someday you'll understand. I were in to town for some things when I heard. . .

"Where's that rascal!" from a loud unseen voice that shot through the deafening sounds of hoof beats and wheels splashing through the muddy streets. A tiny figure I come to know as Pip, skillfully ran between the horses with a sureness that showed he'd been chased before.

"Come back here!" A young woman appeared moments after the boy, huffing and muttering to herself." At this Joe's face contorted to show my sister's rage and I laughed at seeing the imitation of her so well done. Joe smiled and I could tell he was enjoying himself so I settled down for what I knew would be an interesting tale.

"I'll teach you to stay where you're told, ain't got appreciation for what's been given to you, and me, a poor single girl got to raise you up by hand, teach you manners proper.' She'd almost got you by now and was trying to drag you back into the shop, reaching for your collar with one hand, and holding stuff in the other.

"A small crowd gathered nearby watching the scene with amusement and pity. 'That poor girl,' they whispered between themselves, 'such kindness to raise that child, and her parents barely in the grave.' Slowly I, but a young man at the time, came out from the group.

"Stay here miss,' I said to her. 'I'll catch him.' You ran like the very devil Pip, but I didn't have trouble catching up with you.

"There now young fellow,' I said to you, 'I ain't gonna hurt you.' You swirled and wiggled like a hooked whale trying to get away, but I held on to you, not more than a couple years old, muddy and mangled.

"You got quite a handful here,' I said as I returned you to her. She stared back at me and I was struck by her hardness."

Joe paused for a moment and became serious as he gazed solemnly into the flames illuminating his face, suddenly highlighting the deep lines of age and shadowing the rest. He seemed to move back through time as he spoke; then a slight curve came to the corners of his lips, breaking the wrinkles into delightful little patterns, as he continued.

"She was not of great beauty, but kind of pretty with a sweet face, grown hard over the years. I knew of her situation, but never saw her until that afternoon.

"As to you," Joe pursued with a countenance expressive of seeing something very nasty indeed: "if you could have been aware of how small and flabby and mean you was, dear me, you'd have formed the most contemptible opinions of yourself."

Then he went on with his story. I said, 'A young one like this must be hard to keep under thumb. Turn your back and he's gone.'

"He's an ungrateful brat,' she screamed into your grimy face.

"It's kind of you to take on such a task, a girl so young as yourself.'

"Do what you have to,' she said and grabbed your hand. She was waiting outside the shop, with heavy bags resting at her feet. I picked up the bags, started to walk along beside her.

"Joe Gargery,' I finally introduced myself.

"I know who you are,' she said matter-of-factly. We reached her home and I took the things inside. I remember how she stood looking at me. I stood in front of her an unimpressive man, so powerfully steady she was."

As he spoke, I began to form a picture of Joe standing next to my large sister, smaller but with shoulders that showed the strength developed by working daily with the harsh heat and raw metal required of a blacksmith, his clothes grimy enough to match a small child's dirty face. She staring at him thinking of his kindness, but not appreciating any of it because kindness was weakness to her and only the strong and bold that stabbed first managed to make it.

He continued, breaking into my thoughts, unaware of my observations. "Walked her all the way home, I did, then with a tip of my hat I left her with you still wiggling in her arms. 'Must be getting back,' I said with a cheery grin. 'The master's expecting me with some things.'"

I think he loved her then in spite of her harshness. Then as if sensing my puzzlement he said, "She just needed some kind caring. Of my poor mother she did remind me. Beaten and bitter with a bad man who drank and abused her sweetness. Your sister so beaten by life, her whole family dead with the wind and rain beginning to wear away their graves and she with you struggling to get by."

Joe looked up from the fire and rumbled my hair.

"Whatever family opinions, or whatever the world's opinions, on that subject may be, Pip, your sister is," Joe tapped the top bar with the poker after every word following, "a—fine—figure—of—a—woman!"

"And did my sister love you too?" I asked. He warmed the room

with a wise laugh, the sort children do not fully understand.

"Oh not at first. It took a bit of cleverness to get her to accept my offer to keep her company and stand in front of the church taking you and her into my care."

After a moment of thoughtful silence, he continued.

"Sometime later she dropped off some things for fixin' at Hounkleton's. When they were finished, I returned them to her. The night was dark and cold, but I was eager to see her again. By that time I was nearly ready, as one day you'll be, to leave my master and begin on my own. When I arrived she looked so tired and worn. I watched her carry a large load of logs from the back.

"'A young woman such as yourself shouldn't have to fetch everything by herself,' I said. Her mouth tightened.

"'Ain't nobody else here,' she said in a flat voice.

"'You need someone to help you out,' I said. 'Maybe someone to do some chores, chop some wood a couple days a week.'

"Don't know nobody like that either,' she quipped. 'Unless,' she began to relax her clinched jaw. 'Unless you'd like to make yourself useful.'

"So, Pip that's how it started. I began to come by a couple of days a week and help you and your sister with odd stuff—chopped wood, repaired some things, same as now. After a bit she began to ask me to stay for dinner, and what a cook she was. I looked forward to those meals, and started to spend more and more time with the both of you and you was a rascal as a young one. Sometimes I watched you while she went to town. Into everything you were. I'd let you help me in the barn and around the house, my shadow I called you.

"Then one summer day I asked to her to go for a walk after dinner. We walked along the shores, and it were a peaceful evenin'. The wind were warm and the water lapped gently ove' the rocks. Your sister so beautiful under the stars in the moonlight. 'Ah' I thought to myself. 'What a lucky chap I'd be if she'd let me take care of her always and help with raisin' the boy.' I included you in my thoughts Pip. I said to myself there'd always be a place for you at my fire. Loved you as much as your sister. I looked over and caught a bit of a gleam in her eye.

"'Miss Pirrip,' I says to her 'You and the boy can't go on forever like you are now. The boy needs a man around and you could use a protector.'

"'I can take care of myself,' she smiled slowly. 'But the boy does need a man's upbringing' and I rather like havin' you around.' She paused, then added sternly, 'Providing you can do your part. I won't

stand for unproductive men around my house.'

"She continued with her speech that you and I knew well by now, but—" Joe leaned closer and whispered—"I didn't let her finish."

My eyes grew wide and I inched closer. "What'd you do Joe?" I asked impatiently.

He grinned showing all his teeth and a twinkle in his eyes as he replied, "I kissed her."

I immediately started to laugh and jumped up to hug good old Joe. To think of that hard, large woman, hushed by a kiss. "What'd she do?" I asked.

"Why, she kissed me back," he replied with a wink.

I sat stunned. It could not be the same woman, but Joe said it was.

"Ah, your sister has her soft side," he read my thoughts, "but she'd be furious if she knew I was tellin' you. She wants the best for you Pip. I ain't no scholar and she likes it that way, but you can go far with your schooling. She loves you Pip. I know she does. You get mad at her and hate her, I know you do, but don't stay that way." Joe sat back while I pondered for a moment. I was hearing words I could not believe. I loved Joe so I wanted to agree with him, but I couldn't. I was so small when they married. I could picture the tables laid out, the large wedding cake with frosting piled high and several meat pies, fruit, and wine. I remember the people from town milling about everywhere, waiting to see my sister join with Joe to become Mrs. Joe Gargery.

"Tell me about the wedding Joe," I said suddenly.

"You was there," he answered.

"Yes, but I was so small."

"Your sister was a beautiful bride, Pip."

It was late now. I hadn't realized how long I'd been sitting there, but Joe seemed pleased to have told me his story and I was pleased to learn it. In thinking of that night now I see how nice it was, sitting and staring into the bright flames that warmed the room, letting time go by and listening to Joe's calm, steady voice recite the important moments in his life. I felt warm and loved and needed, but didn't know it, although it was something I would remember later, not in a heavy way, but more in a small comforting way.

"Yes, Pip," he smiled at me, "I am a happy man, lucky to have such a fine figure of a woman, lucky to have a chap such as you. I work hard, but it's worth it 'cause life is good, Pip. Don't forget that Joe told you life is good."

Cyndi Miller

Fading Images

Pale
no dimension
a prayer dangles on her lips
and a twisted playful piano calls her name
nearly six souls have been lost
since we grasped hands
cleansed our minds
and proved that love is power; power is love

Gray
naked children
a black and white taste of reality
and an ancient mind expander shows me the way
only a fading liquid image
since the forever rain
stole my eyes
and showed them that nothing is forever
and forever
is nothing

Jacob Snodgrass

Contributors

Kathryn Barnhardt, a senior theatre major, thinks that if we're all on this planet together—the least we can do is help each other through it as best we can.

Debbie Buckles, a continuing education student majoring in elementary education, recently ran 25 miles in the Boston Marathon.

Virginia Caum-Lake, a continuing education student majoring in English, likes the New Jersey Shore and artists who paint beach-and-ocean canvasses.

Kelvin Carter, a junior chemistry major, is a Christian who likes helping people solve daily problems.

John Deeever, a senior English major, will join the ranks of Philip, Josephine, John, Louise, David, Sara, Mervyn, Martha, Tom, Brenda, Beth, Ed, Barb, Jake, Kathryn, Fred, and especially Mara (and soon Brian) when he graduates from Otterbein in June.

Kristen Gregerson is a senior theatre major, terrified about graduation. She works at both WOBN and WOCC, having recently discovered a love for broadcasting.

Amy Hunnicutt is a sophomore English major who thinks Ohio is great, but next years tuition should send her south for sun, fun, poetry, and inspiration.

Bill Hunter is a junior majoring in history. His timeless tale grew out of the embers of a Canadian campfire inspired by an American friend.

Vickie Kayati is a senior English writing major who has started working on her play "Greenspace."

Contributors

Tony Keefer is a junior elementary education major who lives for Dr. Peeper and Bazooka Gum. He also likes Public Enemy, Sinead O'Conner, Bob Dylan, and coffee that is black as a moonless night.

Michael Mann is a junior English major who enjoys college here at Otterbein more and more every day.

Cyndi Miller is a junior International Studies/English writing major. "The Body" is one of the first poems she has written about the death of her father ten years ago.

Tina Payne is a junior continuing education student. She thanks Dr. Gray for her encouragement with "The Great White Hunter."

Diane Schleppi, a junior philosophy major, cannot wait until this summer when she can have the library all to herself.

Jacob Snodgrass, a sophomore art major is a vegetarian with many animal friends. He listens to The Beatles and Peppers and Jane.

Anna Stanley is a sophomore psychology major who believes in the redemptive qualities of ice cream and folk music.

Aaron J. Thompson, a junior English literature major, thinks, "We should do to MLA what we did to AT&T."

Lydia J. Wren is a graduate student majoring in English and theatre education. This is her first submission to the *Quiz and Quill*.

