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# NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Just four short months ago, we were surprised to be asked to be Editors-in-Chief of Loch Norse. We were thrilled, of course. But also terrified; we'd spent our two and a half previous years at NKU looking up to the leaders of Loch Norse, admiring their dedication and work ethic. We didn't think we knew the first thing about leading.

In the time since, we discovered that leadership wouldn't mean putting it all on us. We've had a fantastic crew behind us, and a fantastic pool of creators on campus submitting their work to the magazine. In this way, we realized our job wasn't very big at all, and have been more and more impressed by the people who submit, the people who edit, and the people who make this creative endeavor possible.

So from the bottom of our hearts, we'd like to thank everyone who has offered their talents and their time to this issue of Loch Norse Magazine.

Cheers,  
David & Charley Kalfas



Rachel Sizemore

*Blue*

It would be so easy to lie in the early tide  
and float away, following a large enough wave  
the salt and spray, the sand and heat,  
the melodic pulling and pushing  
pulling and pushing, pulling-  
it would be so easy to fall  
into the foam and be  
carried into the deep,  
that fragrant deep,  
where the water is the  
color of the heavens.  
I wonder if floating  
there, suspended, might  
be like standing at the end of time,  
watching the stars hang so delicately and  
the clouds move so lazily and the weight  
of being someone, being something, left behind  
so that you are weightless, a ghost, reflected in the  
sky and the sea.

Brittney Menefee

*I am missing a button on my coat and wondering if  
my other buttons feel lonely*

Our pond is frozen.  
I go there anyways  
and sometimes  
hope to run into you.

The ducks are gone  
and I think the fish may be dead.  
I wonder if you know.

Today I stepped onto the ice  
and I watched the tiny fracture 6126 frad.

Brittney Menefee

*Bones*

Knees streaked with watery blue,  
fingers dig into shoulders,  
shaking from gravity.

I am a wire coat rack  
collapsing from  
luxury wool and pocket change.





Melody Lindsey

*Drunken Thoughts in a Lonely House*

My sister, Alexis, is depressed - isn't that the way  
all poems begin? I think the house we live in

is filled with water and none of it has been  
touched by god. I almost ended my life.

I think suicide is like a metamorphosis.  
There, and then the body

becomes fruit in a heaven tree.  
Sometimes, a cocoon is dressed up in

the chambers of the basement. Nothing  
lives inside. It is a hollow house that

folds within itself from dust  
and that is that. Metaphors

are too obvious. Instead I will say

the music in the kitchen plays  
too loudly. My sister kisses my

hands like she is saying goodbye.  
My father is never home.

Alexandra Purdy

*Typography*

Times New Roman. Sophisticated. Formal. Classic. I wrote to you an invitation for dinner on Rodeo Drive, where you would dress in that silk red gown that I like so much. We would drink blood red wine and reminisce over the first time we met.

Curlz. Childish. Girly. Cute. I wrote our daughter's first birthday card, inviting our friends and family to gawk in envy at the wonderful creature we made together. You told me you loved the card, loved our daughter, and loved me. I never doubted you for a second.

Impact. Powerful. Demanding. Brash. I wrote to you once, and only once, a letter concerning my dissatisfaction with our marriage. Your lovely blue eyes filled with tears, your body crumbled under the pressure of my words. I didn't know what you were going through and I wish I could erase every word that settled, and remains, in your heart.

Century Gothic. Small. Quiet. Forgiving. Every post it  
note I stick in your lunch box mimics this style. Laying atop  
your simple sandwich - 2 ham slices with mayo and  
American cheese stuffed between two pieces of white  
bread -

Emily Coy

*Notes*

The therapist asks your name.  
Second session, nine AM,  
Thursday maybe?  
I look nicer today than last week,  
hair curled.

Forty minutes, one small strand after another,  
twisting around the iron,  
embrace after repetitive embrace,  
brainless and burning.

The therapist waits.  
The moment is celadon-glazed.  
I stare at the box of tissues,  
consider the lighting.

Dim, a single floor lamp,  
straining to illuminate the space,  
to send its faint beams  
four thousand miles away.

The therapist is patient.  
The ring on her left hand makes mine feel too light.  
I pull my legs closer to my chest.  
The box of tissues reaches out,

Soft, untouched, fragile,  
longing for someone's hands,



James Drury

*Playing Devil's Therapist*

It was a decently pleasant day when he strolled into town, that clean-cut, well dressed, raven-haired man. He looked up and down the street, and seemed pleased with what he saw: nothing but four-way streets all the way,

"Circumsta-- I vaporized your receptionist on the way in!" he cried, his voice filled with incredulity. "I've killed thousands, and taken the souls of more! I've beaten Paganini and Johnny at the fiddle, I've--"μ

"Mr. Fer," she interjected. "I'm noticing a pattern here. You keep talking about your achievements as though they are you, but we aren't here to discuss them. We are here to discuss you." She opened her notebook to a new page. "I fear that you may be substituting your own feelings for a list of victories as a defense mechanism."

Rachel Sizemore  
*And at Last, Rain;*

the city shrugs on her velvet dark coat and  
studs her ears with diamonds that  
shimmer when she dances on the wind to  
thunder like distant jazz, a drumbeat solo over  
the bruised sky, ripened like a fruit  
purple and grey and red and  
the clouds part, a smooth brushing,  
and from the streets there is rejoicing,  
shushing through the trees and  
aching in the sweet grass,  
the city splaying in fervor  
for a long-awaited reunion, to which  
the sky dips to meet her



Melody Lindsey

*Earth. Mother.*

Of course we lay flowers near a tombstone.

We try so hard to stay alive,  
to feel connected to the earth,  
our bodies swell with water  
like flowers do

before they rot away with the worms.

And of course I want to thank god  
for making you.

I tussle with memories

knotted in my hair,

pierce my fingertips

with swollen jellyfish

every time I write a name -

and of course it's your name -

just trying to thank you.

I see flowers in my backyard

and I want to thank you.

It is hard being a mother

and a dead mother all at once,

whispering to herself

late at night in the catacombs.

What is it with the earth

carving your name in silk

beads of dirt,

to which I can find no

other meaning but

to feel guilty?

We are always

trying to compile meaning

in the dead:

why else are we alive?

T. Isabel Winkleski

*There are things I cannot tell you*

There are things I cannot tell you  
I cannot tell you how it feels to fall asleep at a normal time  
I cannot tell you how it feels to hate reading  
I cannot tell you how it feels to be tall  
There are things I can tell you-  
But  
I won't  
I want you to suffer as I do  
All the not knowing?  
There are codes that people crack  
There are languages I don't understand  
There are signs that I cannot read  
Words are the clearest things for me  
Like diamonds  
Even then, there are diamonds through which I cannot see  
The blank space between the words- where you breathe and pause to look  
at me-  
I like those pauses  
They bring natural light into the room where she sits  
She's beautiful  
I love the way the light catches her eyes and brightens the flecks of gold in  
her hair  
When she's sad, her hair is black, but when she smiles, there is color and  
one can see it is brown  
Just like her right eye  
She prefers her green eye to the brown- her left eye.  
But she loves your brown eyes  
She's the first to notice them  
She's the first to notice many things  
Ironic, isn't it?  
She who notices cannot be noticed?  
Her walls are too strong  
Her guard too protective  
She wants to give you the password  
But  
There are things I cannot tell you

Monique Segar  
*I am a Holy Woman*

I am dripping in shame  
the stench of infidelity lingers on my colored skin.  
I am often fishing in troubled waters  
feeding the wicked spirit that holds love from me.  
I am drowning in you  
knowing that the only man I have ever loved cannot know.  
I am resentment  
because someday I will be the reason you despise the female form.  
I am regret  
because I too hide skeletons.  
I am damaged goods  
saturated in devil juice.

Meghan Moore  
*Holy Rules*

5. Honour thy father and thy mother

The man that slept with my mother and ran away calls a jail cell his home and sends a \$40 check each month in arrears. At 8 years old, I begged my mother to tell me about him. She dug through her closet filled with photo albums and dusted off an old Polaroid. I could barely make out his features under the dark lighting, but his middle finger in the air was easy to see. I couldn't show that to anyone. I cried myself to sleep and wished for a different mother and a loving father, but I knew I would always be a bastard child born out of wedlock.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain

It took two years before I could say goddamn it without cringing. Five years before Jesus Christ became part of my vocabulary in a way none of my grade school teachers could have imagined. Sometimes, when I think He's watching me, I'll curse to myself to get Him to go away. It doesn't work.

10. Thou shalt not covet.

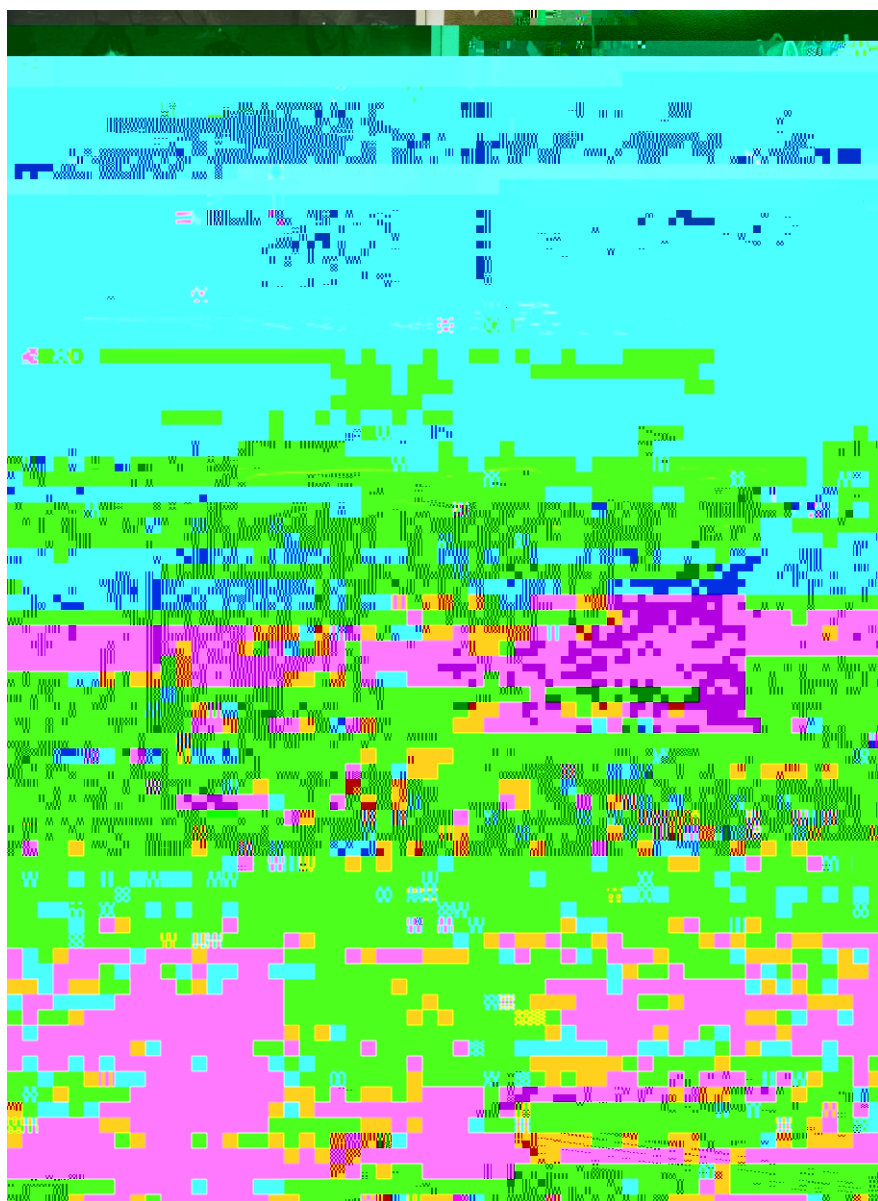
On my 13th birthday, my only friend invited me to his house. I ate cake and watched him play video games on a new, HDTV. I wondered why he never wanted to come to my single-wide mobile home to play, but I already knew the answer. The three-story home with stain glass window nBT/4(5901



Dave Orewiler

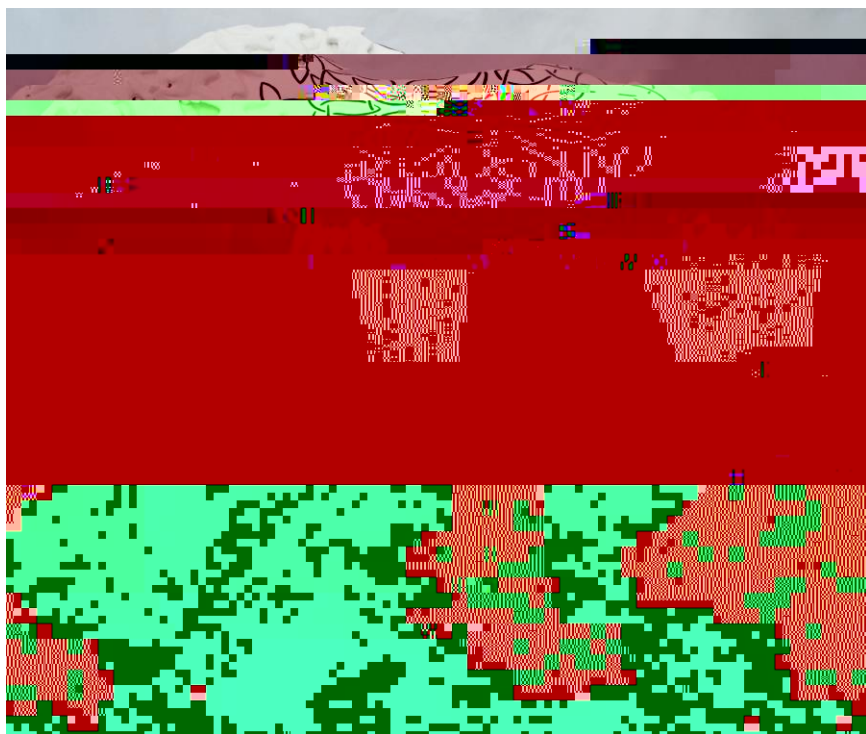
*Perfect*

When you said I made you feel like seventeen again  
I was happy  
So with your head on my shoulder  
We drove through the night  
Smiling at life



Fabio Souza: *Dues Baxio*

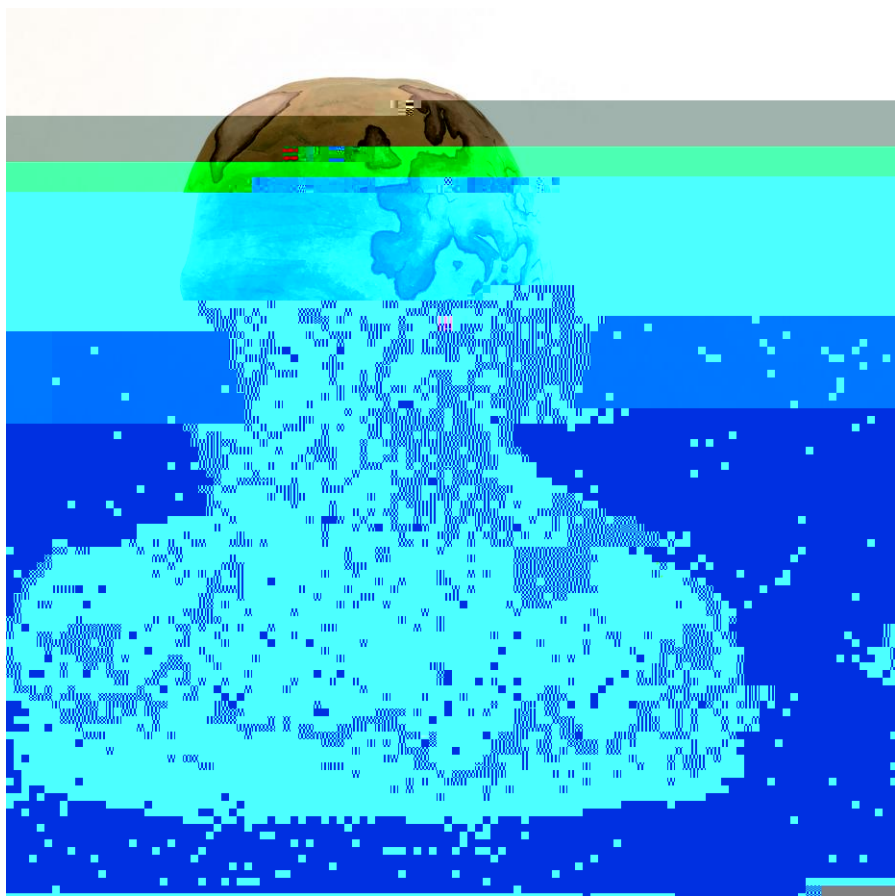
Scanography, family photos and flatbed scanner



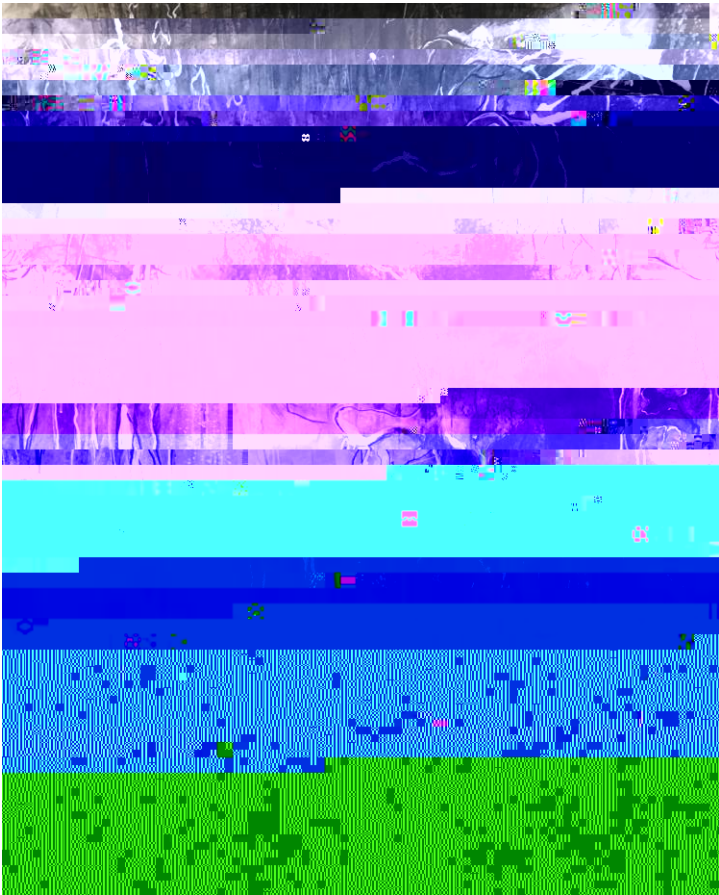
Kaitlin Peed: *Untitled*  
Ceramic, Oil paint, and Basswood







Kaitlin Peed: *Voyager*  
Ceramic, 18" x 9½" x 14"



Chloe Collins: *Milk Tears*  
Mixed media, charcoal and acrylic gesso





pockets, realizing that I want to keep them safe and away from Linda. Not a natural hugger, I don't trust myself to reach out and express my attraction to her.

"Let's join the others." BJ resumes his host role and leads us back

squeeze. Trapper displays his uniform: a red and black plaid shirt, sans sleeves; cream colored cowboy hat with sweat stains and fingerprints just below the brim (and more than likely on top as well). Well-washed black jeans sport small blotches of gray and are lopped over the top of snakeskin boots. Real snakeskin, not fake, I conclude. His exaggerated belt buckle is smoky-gray pewter with an embossed American flag. I draw my eyes away so as not to stare at his midsection. I think the buckle reads 'G od Bless Vets.'

"Dexter Davis, Honeysuckles." I offer. The clue is intended to avoid another age-based comment as I did with Linda.

"Up and Ready? Wasn't that the name of your disc back a few years? Had it. Loved it!"

I think. Trapper Stanton, the biggest—in both size and image—country music star in the past decade knows my work? I'm leery, but he'd done his prep work. Sign of a great entertainer. Know when and where to flatter your audience. But again, though I never felt comfortable accepting BJ's invitation, I deserve to be here. I qualified.

"Thanks, Mr. Stanton. I've been a huge fan of yours. I'm flattered that you've heard my music." Nice, Dexter. Play it modest. This guy sold one-point-two and hit platinum his first year alone. Gold is for amateurs. Our initial release, 'Up and Ready' was gold, and that only meant half a million in sales. Trapper was double platinum several years running.

"Crunchin' country, Mr. Stanton, is what I call it. Rough, good, and powerful crunchin' country." Hopefully, my intimidation is hidden but not my admiration.

"Good choice of words. And I'm just Trapper to everyone. Started out as Tommy. Trapper had a ring to it."

His biceps have a masculine strength to them, as do the scars marking his forearms. The image of his now-damaged arm is not repugnant, but it is alarming. The etchings on his forearms are a mix of tainted purple burn marks and healed incisions that vein up and down as if made by a drunken tattoo artist. His cheeks look scuffed, as if he had shaved with a steel wool pad. The story of the crash was spewed nationally within an instant. Homemade videos, some distasteful, showing the burning wreckage, were in millions of mobile phone boxes moments after Trapper's classic car caromed off Tennessee's Highway 44. The rare Jaguar convertible was original to the core, with no airbags or safety belts, leaving Trapper unprotected. The singer, though sober, was projected onto the dry, rolling landscape. The fiery crash shattered the calmness of the wooded countryside.

Following Linda, BJ, Trapper, and I saunter through the aged-stained hallway. We pass by a partially opened pocket door that shed

filtered lamplight into the living room. Peeling flowered wallpaper is the backdrop for dozens of musical monuments and awards. Gold-colored discs of assorted sizes hang in the balance among plaques and other honors. Tributes to artists from various decades, like the bluesy Robert Johnson, hang on the walls.

One string of awards on the back wall is eerie: Malcolm Hale, Brian Jones, Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison in annual and sequential order. I didn't intend to zero in on the plaques. More so, the display jumped out at me. A Spanky, a Stone, a Pearl and a Door one year after the next; a string of stars who fell like dominos.











Ariel Yisrael

*Jinx*

I wish that I didn't have siblings

Why did my mom have to have so many kids?

Doesn't she know...?

I'm scared voicing my fears might put them into the air and make them so

It's something I've always believed



Rachel Sizemore

*Sunset Across a Foreign Plane*

At dusk the air is  
sweet lavender, sprigs  
of wheat that dance in  
fading light, that flutter  
along lily-white calves that  
chew the yellowed grass,  
unbothered,  
their eyes dip, fanning  
ink-dark lashes on  
an unblemished cheek  
the clouds search for the horizon  
and reach reach reach  
their purpling fingers there  
and cowed, the sun winks  
out of existence, quick,  
sweeping,  
serene as the morning return

Emily Coy

*Glow*

It's harder to notice things in the daylight than at night. This seems like a fallacy; however, the night in its stillness often provides a sense of clarity that cannot be attained during the morning rush and the afternoon schlep. Take, for example, the passive action of sitting by the lake with a friend. During the day, the sun shines harshly on the water and the passersby are boisterous and ever trekking onward toward their next journey. Once evening approaches, around seven at night, the area enters a state of repose which allows one to see and hear and feel those elements hidden by the glare of the sunlight and allows all senses to come together simultaneously in an explosion of feeling.

The weather surrounding our 7 pm rendezvous starts out fair (a sweater is not necessary at this point), but grows colder as the sun begins its descent. The sky is cotton candy, blue mostly, with wisps of pink. We sit on a rough wooden bench facing a building with ivy draped over it like strings of expensive pearls, the kind handed down from one matriarch to the next, beautiful and solemn. The lake stretches out in front of us, a daunting teal that will evolve suddenly into a satin navy blue. Fish sputter about the water in a frenzy, searching for food, finding some, but not enough to sustain themselves. They move, like one body with many hungry heads, to a new, unexplored region of the lake. Crickets singing out unabashedly provide the soundtrack for the evening. They are heard but not seen, like the cool wind blowing our hair, like a heartbeat.

The sun continues its swan dive; mos



still thinking about intention. Their tires whir as if calling out for us to join them. Those too we

laughs harmonize and ring across the water like a hymn; there is something sacred there.

The sky is black like the way he takes his coffee, and the syllables I am swallowing taste the same. There are trees and flowers and bushes encasing us in a cage of flora and safety, and it's all lovely, but the chill in

The sky is black, but everything is glowing. We are drenched in shadow, but we are so much brighter in the dark.



I can't tell him, that his older brother once thought that the edge of a knife

Emily Coy  
*Infiltration*

You are the anarchy that fell from God's smile

Crash-landing onto my brainstem and helping yourself to the attic behind  
my irises

Twisting and shifting my thoughts with bright bare hands thin fingers

Swirling my perceptions of this and that and now I can only see green the  
way that you do

Mariah Jones  
*The Golden Period*

The Neue Galerie sat on the corner of 86th Street on Fifth Avenue in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, in a tall brick building lined with rows upon rows of windows. It was nothing spectacular, and Penelope huffed begrudgingly as she trudged towards it, feet crunching in the deep snow beneath her boots. She could see the air that escaped her lungs. Her cheeks prickled as the cold wind beat across her face, eyes and nose watering in its wake. She stuffed her bare hands deeply in the pockets of her coat, wishing she had brought mittens- and more so, wishing she had not enrolled in an art class this semester to begin with.

She had avoided taking the class for a while, having always been more of an analytical thinker. She saw things as they were, and thought herself quite intelligent because of this. To her, and her family of accountants, objects and images had a singular use or meaning, and Penelope had accepted this long ago. Plus, there was no money in the field, which caused her to shutter more so than the cold surrounding her. To pay thousands to improve upon a skill for nothing? She could not comprehend the appeal. Nevertheless, she vowed to push through the course, and maintain at least a C. On the path to becoming an accountant, this university-required art course was simply a bump in the road.

"An extremely unnecessary bump in the road," She mumbled under her breath as she walked the remaining distance, now standing at the entryway.

Penelope opened the door, and it creaked loudly beneath her hand. From what she had read, this museum had only just opened in 2001. Her eyebrows drew tight in confusion, should the door be this creaky? Was it some artistic choice, to add an air of 'age and refinement'? She chuckled at her own joke, knowing this ridiculous thought to be untrue, but funny nonetheless.

She shuffled through the threshold and into the gallery, where a small wrinkled man sat at an obscenely large desk, dozing peacefully. His nose whistled with every haggard breath he took. A bell sat before him, and Penelope could not seem to find the nerve to press it. She cleared her throat instead, which did nothing to rouse the tiny man. She did so again, louder, adding a bit of force to it, to which his eyelids fluttered. She muttered a greeting, and he simply grunted. Rolling her eyes, she pressed the golden bell, the shrill rrrrrrr bringing the man to the world of the living.

He blushed a bright cherry red, eyes going wide in panic. "Oh, here  
old Malcolm goes again, sleeping on the job! My apologies, ma'am, these  
tired eyes just can't seem to stay open on days as slow M T



offered an awkward smile, tilting her head towards the painting, " Pretty picture. It's got nice colors." She said awkwardly, stuffing her hands in her pockets and craning her neck over the large man's shoulder.

It was indeed a beautiful piece. The label beneath read, " by G ustav K limt." The painting shone bright gold, with fluorescent whites, yellows, and reds surrounding the frail form a pale faced



"Oh, ya' know it I felt sooooo smooth," nostalgia coated his laughter.

He laughed for a few more moments, before continuing his story. "And then this guy, he just smiled and smiled and looked at me with those big dopey eyes like I said something worth something, y'know?" His chuckle faded, eyebrows drawn tight, "Made me feel real good. Made me feel like maybe I was something worth something."

Penelope could see the sorrow in his eyes, the stress in every age line, and the regret in the way his hands shook. The gaps between his story grew longer and longer, but Penelope was quite invested now, and sat patiently. The silence was comfortable.

A long moment passed. The two stared at the Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I for a long while, one with longing and the other with newfound interest. Malcolm could be heard snoring from the other room, the sound echoing throughout the gallery.

Curly cleared his throat a couple of times, searching for words he had probably swallowed down long ago. He spoke softly, deep voice strained, "He went to Vienna. He begged me to come with him, but I just couldn't I stayed. Born and raised in Long Island, a sick Ma' to take care of.... I had to let him go. I couldn't keep him stuck in the slums."

"Poor thing bawled his pretty blue eyes out. I didn't let him see me cry, figured it'd be easier for him if he thought I didn't care." Tears welled up in Curly's eyes, "He called me his muse. I told him he'd find another. He probably did. I hope he did." The man's head hung low, regret coating every word.

Curly took a few breaths, collecting himself.

He looked up at Penelope, and smiled again we

now looked to the billboards and graffiti surrounding her in a new light. Perhaps, she thought, this was the beginning of her own Golden Period.