Ampersand

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As the word which describes the symbol for “and,” Ampersand reflects the spirit of collaboration in the creative community at Carson-Newman College. It is also a nod toward the future, implying the fresh start of a new generation in a new millennium.

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**am • per • sand** (am’per • sand), n. the character &, meaning “and.”
[alter. of and per se = and, & by itself = and] Used chiefly in business correspondence and reference works. In addressing firms, use the form they habitually used (...and Company or ...& Company) and in quoting, follow your original carefully.
Dressed with sags
she wobble-bottoms
toward me
like a Mack truck:
slow like Lula like.
She paints
her eyelids blue
and laughs in rasp,
her head back:
a cigar-croaking
landslide.
Gaudy love
and water buffalo
earrings hang
in boob-like
droops.
Whose girl are you?
She curls her words
and neon fingernails
around
my neck,
and I comprehend
the feeling of
being completely
enveloped
by Lula-love.
The wardrobe crafter sounds a routine call:  
“As Thou has risen, raise us in Thy dawn.”

The faithful echo this sentiment of rapture  
into gold-sparkled heavens.  But cross me  
off the lists of your trendy crusades.  Stop  
shining my eyes with the light of your Son.  
Give me the night—that arcane ink veil  
where secrets whisper and pulses quicken,  
where predators share streets with whores,  
where knives tease blood from fevered skin,  
where sad, unclad angels writhe upon poles,  
where handcuffs, slick with sweat, smell  
lke sex.

Come to me, Mistress Magdalene.  Bind me  
in the black.  Choke me inside your wanton  
web.  Muddy me with the filth of the world.  
Cut me with the far edge of sin.

C.S. Lewis Does Not Speak for Me  
Travis Sharpe

His eyes were black leeches,  
sucking out my soul.  
His tongue was a sword with a hook,  
slicing and never letting go.  
His lips were red poison,  
turning my heart into stone.  
His smile was a serpent,  
waiting to cause my fall.  
His arms were tentacles,  
pulling me into the depths.  
His hair was black oil,  
smothering my heart to its death.  
His teeth were pearly fangs,  
waiting to demolish me.  
His hands were strong flames,  
threatening to burn me alive.  
His soul was kudzu,  
taking over my life.  
His charm was toxic,  
complicating my fighting emotions.  
His love was obsession,  
making me feel devoured and suffocated.

Devouring Love  
Kimberly Grace

His eyes were black leeches,  
sucking out my soul.  
His tongue was a sword with a hook,  
slicing and never letting go.  
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making me feel devoured and suffocated.
The thing that sticks out in my mind the most about that morning has absolutely nothing to do with what happened. It is not the smell of my grandmother or the sounds of them fighting. It’s that little blue shoe I never put away.

The two beds in our room were vivid, painful red. My sister and I shared the room, but we claimed Nanny did as well, as she was almost perpetually pinned to the seat of the old rocker in the right hand corner. The morning smell of our house mingled oddly with Nanny’s perfume, which did not cover up how old she was. You can always smell ancienity when it enters, let alone when it makes itself a regular on your stuffed, creiby old rocker. Sara and I played incessantly on the floor, in between our beds. The dolls laid around on the floor like they owned the place, when in reality we were all paying rent to the paper cut outs and paste, embedded as they were in the dirt colored carpet. It was Sara’s doll shoe, but I always used it. Twins have to share, so I took advantage. Later, when I was older and the color came in fashion, I would call it sapphire, or maybe even aquamarine, but whatever it was it stood out like a jewel on the floor, the only thing left after my Mother had flown into the room the previous evening and demanded the sty be cleaned. That strange shade of blue in childish form was the only thing to focus on as they screamed at each other. I suppose my parents loved at some point, and I know they did after. But by that time my eyes were enamored by that little blue shoe my parents had commenced screaming at one another on a regular basis. Sara usually insisted on playing through it, she being braver, and my Grandmother sat like a hawk, as if her presence in the corner prevented either of us from hearing:

“You are such a God-Damn liar!”

Or my favorite variety:

“Well if you hate me so much why don’t you go down and stay with those shit-faced friends of yours!”

---

She’s Leaving Home, Bye-Bye

Hannah Oliver
My Grandmother’s grip on the chair increased as she clicked violently.

A dam to the bedroom door, followed quickly by another, told me He was chasing her out. The blue shoe shook a little, Sara and I looked briefly at each other as the footsteps reached the front door. We didn't know what we'd done that was wrong, so we couldn't say we were sorry, even though that always made mom quiet. Our eyes focused on the still, hurt blue shoe, small in the waves of dirt colored carpet. Left alone, all the dolls back in their homes.

Remembering now, I do believe I was crying. I must have been because Nanny suddenly spoke “Hush now Kenzie, never mind it.” But I didn't hush, and Sara began to swear and mumble like Mom when she gets scared and Nanny spoke again (never before so soon together) “Well, look at this.” And she heaved herself from her guardian post, the cushions on the old rocker indented still, she clicked and walked out of the room. A deeper thud followed. I am not certain, but I am fairly sure my grandmother's smell began to fade from the house even then.

My feet recoiled from the cold ground when they left the carpet of my room for the wood of the hallways and I gripped my little blue shoe as Nanny lay, clearly not awake, in the hall between my parents, who were frozen mid-argument.

Two hours later we left the hospital, having said “bye- bye to Nanny now girls.” I did not believe the doctors then, and I do not now. Rationality had nothing to do with our lives, so what ruling would it have in death? I know Nanny left home so that my Mother would not. Why they fought we never guessed, but we always knew when it would happen, as Mom would demand cleanliness and dad would take of his shoes, sit down, and watch the game. Which game it was, didn't matter. They were all more important than whatever had just sent my Mother into a polishing frenzy. Sara and I would sit in our room, my hands shaking and pigtailed head bowed, her blond ponytail and posture equally erect, eyes narrowed as she played.

Then came the awful moment, when the house seemed to shake, yet everything was quiet.

Then Sara's lips would curl in anger and she played fiercely, passionately. Like the dolls had something they really needed to communicate. I actually never understood the message, but I knew it was meant for me.

Nanny, never of many words, would click when it got to loud. “Never mind.” She’d say if I managed to steal a look at the door that separated the family room from ours. I don't remember much of Nanny, aside from her smell, her clicks and her seat clenched to the chair- on guard.

Wednesday morning, too early for me to know, the house grew so still that it woke me up. Nanny was in our rocking chair, gripping its soft arms. "Kenzie, let’s play dolls.” The shaking house had woken Sara too.

The clothes had been gotten when Mom began to yell as a dull thud shook our boxes of dolls and the blue shoe bounced to the middle of our play world, between our dull red beds with peeling paint. Sara and I went meekly back to our beds, listening as Mom crawled into the attic and out again, another thud. ”Kenzie, stay in bed.” I did as instructed. Sara was born ten minutes before me, but she seemed to have picked up critical survival skills in those few moments that I was lacking in. So I lay there, eyes caught on that little blue shoe as my mother packed her drawers and told Him it was over.

Why they fought we never guessed, but we always knew when it would happen, as Mom would demand cleanliness and dad would take of his shoes, sit down, and watch the game. Which game it was, didn't matter. They were all more important than whatever had just sent my Mother into a polishing frenzy. Sara and I would sit in our room, my hands shaking and pigtailed head bowed, her blond ponytail and posture equally erect, eyes narrowed as she played.

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Inspiration

Jamie Collins

I write poetry in my sleep
deep in indefinite dreams
reaching for repressed emotions
unknown desires, my deepest
insanities.

I write poetry when I’m awake
make mental notes of every
interaction, observed intimate
moment, conversation heard
secretly.

I write poetry as I stand in the sun
run in the rain, dance in the
breeze, listening for that lost
language—sound waves in a pitch
only I hear.

I write poetry with every breath
death one syllable closer
as my words are born, penciled
into place, measuring minutes with
existence.

I write poetry without choice
voice for the next generation
of poets and peacemakers,
who act because they cannot do
otherwise.

Soaking Other’s Memories

Sarah Bennett
It Was More Than Just a Game to Us, and Still We Lost...

Anna Cannada

I was thrown into this arena, completely bewildered by my surroundings and unaware of the task at hand. Sweat and blood were shed within the first five minutes of this game. The other team plays dirty. They sink one basket after another; Temptation takes the assist to their every goal. My team hardly ever scores. We long for a home court advantage, struggling to survive this deadly game. I watch as number 15 on my team takes another dive across the floor. I listen as his skin sticks to the floor, but his body continues to slide, leaving a streak of blood and yet another portion of flesh. (The floor remains forever a taker; even the court is against us.)

The lights beat down hard on my flesh; I’m burning. The other team isn’t affected. They’ve become accustomed to the heat. I watch as another one of my teammates goes sliding across the floor. I listen for a whistle, but none comes. While most referees would stop the game at the first sight of blood, these don’t seem phased by it. Out of the corner of my eye, I actually catch one smirking while he watches an opponent deliberately thrust his elbow into my abdomen. His smirk widens into a smile as I double over and begin to cough up blood. I am starting to wonder where his loyalties lay.

The gym resonates with the sounds of the other team’s rebellious fans. I can’t hear anyone cheering for my team, but I look out in the stands to see our fans slowly devoured by theirs. I watch as a young girl, about fifteen, is taken by Lust, never to be seen again. It seems like every time the other team scores, another one of our fans is consumed by the crowd. I’m amazed at the other team. Not only have they maintained their energy levels, but they seem to be growing stronger with every small victory they achieve. I watch helplessly as number 6 on the other team targets one of our weakest. Instead of going outright for the kill, he takes on another form and feigns a love offering. But then, just as my teammate reaches out for his hand, number 6 pulls away with laughter and allows my

Dusty pink-bottomed feet pat the matted dirt circle around the warm spastic flames.
Natural as breath, the hunter men scrape their giant hands across hide stretched over wet jet wood.
Metronome of heart clicks calloused hands to grip the hard hollow waste and move in smooth formation.
Commune, one of pulse and boom and ring sounds a deep wailing howl over burning night and shade.

Djembe Circle
M. Holland Cheney

I was thrown into this arena, completely bewildered by my surroundings and unaware of the task at hand. Sweat and blood were shed within the first five minutes of this game. The other team plays dirty. They sink one basket after another; Temptation takes the assist to their every goal. My team hardly ever scores. We long for a home court advantage, struggling to survive this deadly game. I watch as number 15 on my team takes another dive across the floor. I listen as his skin sticks to the floor, but his body continues to slide, leaving a streak of blood and yet another portion of flesh. (The floor remains forever a taker; even the court is against us.)

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Metronome of heart clicks calloused hands to grip the hard hollow waste and move in smooth formation.
Commune, one of pulse and boom and ring sounds a deep wailing howl over burning night and shade.
You're too still in Mom's flowerbed.
Flies buzz over feather-pillow fur.
Putrefaction spoils the playful innocence of breezy yesterday
when you pounced tracks in my mud pies.
Hesitant tobacco-stick sword prods
your leg, and thickened flesh moves
as one mass, rolling over, revealing—
where your eyes, ears, and whiskers
should be—only the bloody stump
of your neck.  Turn away—turn away from this first hint of end.
I make my report to Dad, who says,
"Don't bawl over a goddamn cat."

Across the yard, the border collie grins.

It Was More Than Just a Game to Us, and Still We Lost...
(continued)

Anna Cannada

You're too still in Mom's flowerbed.
Flies buzz over feather-pillow fur.
Putrefaction spoils the playful innocence of breezy yesterday
when you pounced tracks in my mud pies.
Hesitant tobacco-stick sword prods
your leg, and thickened flesh moves
as one mass, rolling over, revealing—
where your eyes, ears, and whiskers
should be—only the bloody stump
of your neck.  Turn away—run away from this first hint of end.
I make my report to Dad, who says,
"Don't bawl over a goddamn cat."

Across the yard, the border collie grins.

Fluffy White Kitten

Travis Sharpe
Dear America

Jamie Collins

I am ashamed of you. My shame grows stronger every time I watch the news. You hide your mass destruction in the closet with your love for the Contras, Pinochet, and your distaste for all things progressive. How many skeletons are there in that closet where you hide the truth about your lies? Aside from the bodies coming home under that flag of yours, you kill children, mothers—innocent people who have never wronged you. Decades later, we still mourn for Vietnam, yet the millions who died did not teach you. You hide behind the fallacy of democracy, as though democracy alone can cure the world. It has not saved you, you wretched whore of a country. America, you have abandoned your children, your future. You give us nothing—but expect us to be fed by our First Amendment rights. You denigrate those who do not meet your standards—the indigenous, the forced. You hose down your own in the streets when they call you out for your hypocrisy. Your elderly are forced to push french fries to pay their bills, and your middle class is shrinking because we cannot afford you, but you call yourself successful. I think I wanted to be a communist when I was a kid and I’m not sorry. Now I want to be free of all of this, of all you stand for underneath those stars and stripes. I want you to be something I am proud of.
Inside, we scurry in an opium daze. Our ears are yellow-plugged against the perpetual moans of ramshackle machines. Drowsy eyes, behind synthetic protection, strain to see ahead in the artificial light. Nets screen the sleeping world from our hair infestation.

Inside, we speak a foreign language: of carpal tunnels and twelve-hour shifts, of quotas and overtime impressments, of the red clock stealing life for scant cash, of marking time until the next ten-minute pause. Within the break room, our gossip idles.

Inside, we hunch over and carry on, filling spaces between assembly lines. Our hands press, fit, push, and twist to round the edges and edge the rounds, birthing the Products, the future abortions of common affluence, sacrifices to the landfill’s maw.
Outside I am the neat, colorful contours of any continent on this small plastic globe,
Inside I am the sprawling lands of Africa, unbound by manmade buildings, crops, lines.

Outside I am the tigers (which Do Not live in Africa) of exemplary and controlling perfection,
Inside I am Hartebeest, Kudu, a Zebra brought down by a Hyena. I am unexpected, messy.

Outside I’m the Dark Continent, lacking in the sparkle of dynamic personality that people want,
Inside I’m the radiant flash of a watering hole, the sanctuary of an acacia on an equator day.

Outside I’ve got the plastic beads, dusty land rovers and camcorders of the classic safari,
Inside I’ve a warrior’s heart, throbbing under those beads as I plunge a spear in my first lion.

Outside, if aggressive sun, blazing stars, moon that shines like God’s voice, ever color me like
Inside, will I break to bits or will I cease trying to hide extravagant continents in my little being?
& it was then I remembered my fingers / Burning with thorns among berries too ripe to touch.
From “Blackberries” by Yusef Komunyakaa

Back, and further in until sky is dust between veins of humming leaves.

We roll up our jeans because protecting our ankles isn’t worth the drag of hungry-cotton snags.

Arrows lead us to the tomb of thorns: chaos-bent in a hapless love affair.

They arch from weighty berries that hang in pregnant inclination.

We test the limits of our desire for riper lovers that scratch our greedy arms.

They stain our fingers and lips with glory-ink from love-letters kissed.

I will forget time that broods beyond the leaves, and think only of the way my skin is humming now.
She was little and brown and bursting. Quite literally bursting, her miniscule braids stood on end all over her head as if from electronic shock, the baubles on the end not weighty enough to stop her momentum as she sunnily blew through the reference section of the library. “And then the elephant jumped! And down ball—woo!” she read eloquently from a red, leather bound encyclopedia of ancient Hebrew. Her mother bade her be quiet and valiantly tried to study, pondering all sorts of real life threats while watching her baby girl and over analyzing Plato.

But Bursting Ball of Energy went unaware of her mother’s keen gaze and from a guide to Mass Media our energetic storyteller discovered “Poof! No shoes!” From a hefty, intimidating pink volume bolted “Feminism” she appropriately gained the knowledge “Fairies, red, doggy!” Other students smiled and chuckled deprecatingly as the little Energy-Burst waddled around, explicated the virtues of the universe from various books in the reference section. Her mother, both a student and a full time cashier, fretted and typed, seeming to lose her slim foothold on stability while Ball of Energy recited Anglo-Saxon verse, such as “Ouch-erg!” and “Ugh-ohb!”

To go along with her new Nordic language, she reenacted The Battle of Hastings on a computer keyboard, which began to violently beep as if a Viking had Blood-Eagled it.

“Hush! Now!” her mother snapped. The surrounding students seemed mildly disturbed at the harsh reprimand to the evidently well meaning child, but she was awfully loud. Who were they to look closely into someone else’s life? An uncomfortable situation was the only result of butting into what was surely a healthy situation. Studying continued as Bursting Energy Ball contained herself slightly and settled down with a misleadingly sparse book called “Women: History Retold,” and librarian onlookers turned back to their work.

Quietly, as many great orators have been known to do, Ball-of-Energy spoke her most important verse yet in a whisper, “Says my mama... she cries yells and.... Quiet!... blue shoes... he comes... I hide.”

And if anyone had been watching, they would have noticed Ball-of-Energy lose her momentum for a moment, tiredly rubbing her eyes. And, if they had been truly keen, they would have seen her mother nervously glance at the large, purple mark on her child’s leg. They also might have asked why a mother’s eyes and nostrils had flared upon sight of a young man turning towards the row of computers and trying to begin a conversation with her.

If anyone had been watching they might have asked why the former Bursting Ball of energy was quickly scooped up with books and paper by her mother and buckled into the back of a coughing Chevy. And finally, if someone had been thoughtful they might have asked what the correlation was and why Ball of Energy had only begun crying after she was lifted up and out of the warmth of the library.

But on this cold winter day in December, students were alternatively in hibernation and survival mode as the wind blew and exams loomed. Who can blame them for not stopping to consider how a child who could not read the most tragic of novels was able to convey their meaning in one trembling glance.
“Saying nothing...sometimes says the most.”

Emily Dickinson

Her silence explains it all.
There are no tears
or looks of regret,
long lectures,
or gloats,
unnecessary laughter,
or condemnation.
Just a breath—
a break in the conversation.

I breathe—

Antiseptic air beneath dimmed fluorescents.
Hushed voices pierce your room, their
Familial murmurs careless and discordant.
Plastic machines, once so forthcoming,
Now stand mute; their role is done.
Your coming absence sways before me
Like the shadow of a long-promised noose.
Murdered from within, scalpel tortured,
You rest beneath starched bed sheets
As under a crisp blanket of snow.
Too soon, warmth slips, your skin falls chill.
How long ago did my hand fit within yours?
But now your hands are all bones.
If only I could see your playful olive eyes,
But they’re hidden by soft, eternal curtains,
Your grip’s weakness whispers goodbye.
You sigh—
The tunnels crumble together, Colony wiped out by a careless movement from an omnipotent child playing.

That indifferent god crushing workers and queen, good as well as bad, assuming there is such among ants. Survivors fleeing from the almighty.

How is the child to be judged?
As an ant; a tyrant.
As a god; the survivors say merciful.

Everybody would look at Momma funny and talk about how it weren’t natural for her to sing and clap like she did. Momma would dance on Sundays, and I don’t suppose anyone liked it. I know I didn’t. I hated to listen to those damn gossips sit around and talk about how God should put her in her place. Daddy just sat and thought about how the pews hurt his back so much. That, and smiled at the little old ladies scorning Momma. I suppose Daddy thought we couldn’t control their actions nor do anything about them. And Momma always said she would worship how she pleased, but I figured that none of it was right for any of us. The way I saw it, those damn ladies was hurting my worship, the way they went on about Momma like they did. And poor Momma, maybe she was hurting theirs, but that’s not how I saw things. I figured that Momma never really bothered them. They just had to turn their eyes and stare at the preacher until a halo of light formed around his head. That’s what I did. I just laid my cheek against Daddy’s scratchy wool coat, and stared at the preacher. Sometimes, if I was lucky, I would fall asleep, but then the preacher would start his yelling, and everybody would just start scribbling faster, putting down everything he said like they wouldn’t forget it if only he would stop yelling. I wonder if Momma liked the yelling or if she just went for the dancing. One time I told Momma that I didn’t like the preaching because I couldn’t understand half of those words the preacher would yell at us. She scorned me right nicely, and asked what words I was talking about. I told her, “Salivation,” and asked what was an E-van, and why was it named Gellical? I thought that was a right funny name for a van.

One day, the preacher pulled Momma and Daddy aside and said that her dancing just weren’t right. He said that it was like the Devil took hold of her, the way she clapped and sang. Well, I marched right up to him. I told him if that were so, then I’d much rather dance with the Devil than sit around and listen to those old ladies. The preacher got this face on him like there weren’t nothing he could do for nobody and he told us that he’d
best be on our way. We ain’t been back since then to church, but every Sunday Momma, Daddy, and I gather around and sing. I don’t guess we sing to the Devil, because I reckon he’d getting pretty mad, us calling him Jesus, and all. But I wonder about those old ladies, and who they’re singing to. I can hear them church bells in the background of our singing every Sunday, and it’s like the Devil himself is banging on a pot and telling his family and friends to come to dinner with him. I’ve been to dinner with the Devil, I tell you, and the food ain’t nearly as good as Momma makes at home.

Pristine grand piano with a sound system to broadcast throughout the sanctuary. Towering stained glass, chandelier with fifty-eight electric candles. A multitude of padded pews worshipers sitting quietly, checking the clock. While outside somewhere in the warm sun a man sits in the welcoming grass singing accompanied only by his guitar.
We all sat at the bar, reminiscing about the good old times and kicking back a few. I sat next to my cousin, Larry, and the two of us started telling all these crazy stories about our childhood—like when Larry thought it would be a great idea to ski behind the go cart. We rigged him up in water skis, gave him the end of the rope that wasn't tied to the go cart, and I hit the gas as my sister, Sally, stood by with a video camera. Looking back, I’m thinking maybe we should have cut the rudders off of those skis before putting them on him, but hey, that gives us opportunity for improvement upon next year...or maybe next generation. He told a few good ones on me, too, but nothing all that bad—just about how I tried to blow up Aunt Nettie’s cat with a pipe bomb and how I shot some firework squirrels over the neighbor’s lawn. You know, the usual kid stuff. Anyway, when we were done telling stories about our childhood, we moved on to our more adult lives. Basically, that means we started talking about the women—all of the women. Well, all of the women that we could remember, at least. We started in our adolescent years, and worked our way up, calling each other out on the greatest and grossest of our love affairs. This list went all the way from Pimple-faced Patty to Chlamydia Lydia. It’s amazing how the names always seemed to fit. Well, maybe not always. I tend to think that Stan the Man was a bit of a stretch because her real name was Nikki.

The karaoke kicked off at about nine, but I didn’t want to sign up until I’d had a chance to settle in a little. Uncle Eddie was the first up...and the second, and the third. It looked like he had started the celebration and inebriation before the rest of us had a chance to catch up. Eddie’s first song was “Picture,” by Sheryl Crow and Kidd Rock—typical karaoke song. I took another swig from my beer, and knew that things would liven up after everyone had a few rounds.

A little after my fourth beer, we decided to throw a Christmas party after listening to Larry tell us that he’d hit a deer with his tractor earlier in the week. Eddie accused him of being a Rudolph-killer, but we calmed Eddie down and reminded him of the forgiveness of Jesus. From there, I put my arm around Larry and Eddie and led them up on the stage as we sang “Because He Forgives,” to a crowd of Friday night regulars. That’s what evangelism is really about, if you ask me. Go to the people, where the people are. You’re not going to drag old Eddie to a Sunday morning pew. No, sir. Not even Aunt Nettie could get him there, and we all know she tried. As long as our speech isn’t so slurred as to be misunderstood, we’re still getting the message across. That’s what Christianity is about—getting the message out there. God’s kingdom isn’t going to expand if we sit on our rumps all day, waiting for the broken to come to us. We have to go to them, and God gave us the opportunity for it that night.

We swayed drunken on the stage for hours, singing slurred Christmas carols and thanking Jesus for turning beer into a tap, just like he did with that wine a long time ago. The rest of the night was filled with wings, drinks, and Uncle Eddie’s notoriously bad singing. Needless to say, he did not win the karaoke contest—not with my good looks around the bar, anyway. I won, but I gave all the glory to the Lord. I wouldn’t have been up there singing if it wasn’t for his grace and mercy. We gave up all our applause to Jesus, and even put together a skit to get God’s message out to all of the sinners in that place. We used an old beer crate for the manger, rags for the clothing, and pretended that good old Jack Daniels was baby Jesus. We acted out the nativity story, and everyone in the bar went wild. I couldn’t have been more proud of Larry for pointing out that the wise men didn’t come until a year later, but that we shouldn’t be exclusive to anyone. We had the full party—Mary, three wise men, the angels, livestock, and all. Carl, the bartender, was God because he had the beard for it, and we acted the story our right nicely, if you ask me.

At least eight men came to know Jesus that night. They cried, confessed, and lifted their arms to the Lord. It was just like one of those Baptist revivals with snot, tears, and beers flying everywhere. Carl didn’t...
mind, though, because we were overcome with the spirit. I figure we should send in our numbers to the Southern Baptist Convention and see if they’ll sponsor a beer fest next year. I really think they could use a few fellows like Larry and me—sincere, dedicated Christians that just want to spread God’s word.

Brain-ringing alarm clocks at 7:45 a.m. Frigidly cold showers sending shock through half-asleep, drowsy bodies. Boring, habitual, mindless, dormitory life style.

Tick—Tick screams time as the race to due dates and test days paces unwilling, procrastinating students. It is all about the grade, never about the knowledge.

Alma mater greets the graduating class as they stand together for the last time. Promises are made to keep in touch but are forgotten later. Life takes a new turn.

Marriage, babies, new jobs, houses, divorces, finances, family loss, accidents.

Aching joints, shriveling bodies reminisce about the past. Wishes of going back to the “good-ole days” when life was easy and all one thought of was papers and tests. Now all that is left is a search for the life that once was there.

That is why one must enjoy the great gift being given today.

That is a chance at what we call...
In Celebration of My Testicles

Matt Cheney

Sometimes,
I wish we were like monkeys.

Then,
When we hold hands,
We could hold feet, too.

To the Memory of Anne Sexton

Someday.
Some may say your two hanging
bulbous cells will do more than
hang.

Should we not take you out of
your kangaroo pouch and
milk you for your little swimmers?
Resilient little SOBs.

When you get hit by knees
and squeezed by sharp-nailed hands
you feel unappreciated. Cold.

Two stand two-hundred-and-fifty stories above Manhattan spraying Windex.
Two wear crisp suit coats and speak to Congress from long microphones.
Two wear hard hats and shoot steel into cracked cedar and oak.
Two face East and press their foreheads into the gravel ground.
Two slip on skateboards in the driveway at 5:45 PM.
Two wear translucent goggles and smack blue balls in resounding rooms.
Two sit in chilled chair-backs watching people their age hit each other for money.

You are powerful, yet disgusting.
You house nothing but stupid creatures
who spend their 78 hours of life either
really pissed off or racing their three
hundred million closest friends to the celebrated uterus.

Friends, do not think for a second that you could survive
without the manipulation of beings via gaze and violence and
status quo quo quo.
Daniel Aisenbrey is still here, still a photography and graphic design major, and still from Africa. But now he's a sophomore or a junior or something fancy like that.

Rachel Allen is a freshman Photography major from Knoxville, Tennessee.

David Austin is currently a sophomore at Carson-Newman, majoring in English with creative writing emphasis. This is his first publication.

Jana Barrett is a senior and avid graphic design and art lover. She enjoys design so much she often finds herself looking at designs of restaurant menus rather than deciding on what food she wants to order. Jana’s favorite artists are Kandinsky and Beardsley… and her favorite restaurant menu design, as of yet, is Outback Steakhouse.

Sarah Bennett is a sophomore musician from Nashville. She is a young woman who hopes to govern her life with poetry, campaign her dreams in prose, and leave a legacy of peace. Her aspiration in life is to change the world in the eyes of others. She was given life to make other's lives worth living.

Bethany Brown grew up in Africa as an MK, which has a significant impact on her writing. She is a sophomore English and Communications major and hopes to use her writing to touch others and “Open your mouth for the speechless” Prov. 31:8 which she feels God has called her to do. Her relationship with Him is another thing she wants to be visible in her writing.

Anna Cannada is much too busy planning a writing, paddling, and hiking junket with her beloved teacup poodle, Max, to spend time writing a silly biography.
Often referred to as “Matt,” M. Holland Cheney enjoys Chicago Cubs baseball, playing music, riding his bike, reading and teaching literature, discussing spirituality, and exploring the wonders of the Nintendo Wii. Inspired by the work of Carl Sandburg, Seamus Heaney, Maxine Kumin, and Stanley Kunitz, Matt hopes to continue to grow as a poet while in graduate school. He lives a profoundly happy life somewhere with his wife Ashley.

Destry Cloud is a sophomore English/Theater dual major. He is from Rutledge, TN and he really likes to eat Superman flavored ice cream.

Jamie Collins believes in changing the world...one poem at a time.

Kimberly Grace is a sophomore English major. A lover of all things creative; photography is her eyes, music is her song, and stories are her soul. She is a novelist at heart floundering around in the world of short stories and poetry.

Matthew Gibson is a senior graphic designer in CNC’s Art Dept. He can never keep his mind on one thing for very long. Because of this, he is the leader in helping class discussion transition from one off-topic to the next, which is both a curse and a blessing.

Megan Huddleston is a junior Photography major from Sevierville, Tennessee.

Sara Kwasnicki is a senior photography major. Sara’s artwork consists of unique, vibrant color nature shots. Some of these are done in alternative photographic processes such as platinum and palladium.

Kourtney Kelley is a sophomore photography major. Kourtney’s work consists of an assortment of subjects in which her goal is to evoke an emotional connection between the viewer and the artwork.

Hannah a.m. Oliver is a girl with a pen, a stage, and a whole lot of books. She has no lineage and every culture. She dreams of learning pinochle and aspires to one day tell the difference between Miles and Coltrane. In her spare time she hunts for the Holy Grail. She wishes that someday, someone else will write her biography in a delightfully inaccurate manner.

Chastidy Parrott is a 24-year-old graphic design student who attended 2435 colleges (or so it seems) before finally settling on Carson Newman College where she hopes to graduate before her outrageous pile of student loans catches up with her.

Travis Sharpe writes fiction and poetry. He (still) does not write biographies.

Allison Smith is a recent transfer to Carson-Newman from the frozen tundra that is Illinois.

Susie Sweitzer is a senior art major, emphasis in graphic design. She likes typography, abstract art, all animals, her new MacBook Pro, and spending time with friends and family. She especially likes the thought of sleep, and wonders if there is any job out there that starts at noon.

Olivia Wood is an amateur poet and lover of the Earth and trees and Moon. She is a freshman creative writing major. This is her first attempt at publication—the time has come to kick her timid words out of their preverbal nest.