

The Muse

Five Towns College Literary Journal



Spring 2011

Biographies

Thomas C. Mis is the editor of this edition of *The Muse*. He enjoys odd noises, the occasional gummy bear and is easily distracted by shiny objects.

Michael Dunne is the artist whose painting appears on this issue's cover of *The Muse*. Michael is a Childhood Education Major at FTC whose painting and sculpture encompasses nature and a sense of mystery. He has recently worked as a design specialist for www.guerrillashirt.com and is looking forward to teaching and continuing his passion for art.

John Vansteen is the Director of the Library at Five Towns College. His educational background is in literature and technology, and his lifelong interests are in music and film. He is very excited to be taking Film/Video classes at FTC. He would like to thank all of the students who submitted work for consideration to *The Muse* and to dedicate this issue to them.

Dawn A. Saliba teaches composition, poetry, fiction and drama at Five Towns College. She is also a published poet and essayist who holds an MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. She performs her poetry often and has produced several plays and musicals in and around New York City. She is currently pursuing a PhD with Binghamton University where she is working on her dissertation entitled, *Incantations: The (Re)Presentation of Witchcraft Upon the Jacobean Stage*. Dawn is always eager to collaborate with both students and faculty in the efforts to make Five Towns College a stimulating and enriching environment.

Please submit your poetry, memoirs, short stories, and scholarly essays to next year's *The Muse*. All poems should be under twenty lines and all stories should be less than 10 pages. Email submissions to dawn.saliba@ftc.edu.

All work submitted to *The Muse* is subject to editorial review and changes for content and length. Please bear in mind the academic nature of the publication and its intended audience.

The Muse: Five Towns College Poetry

Volume I

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Spring 2011

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Poetry

Cries in the dark wondering why,
but still no answer,
she calls his number several times,
but still no answer,
she bows on her knees all the time,
but still no answer,
she writes him a note with several questions,
but still no answer,
she questions herself for understanding
but still no answer,
she asks the only person in her life,
but still no answer,
she goes directly to the source,
but still no answer.

KATIE FLOWERS

Meh

I'm noticing something different
That I hope you'll understand
You see...things haven't been going as previously planned
Because although it might show on the outside my drive to survive
Inside...I've never quite felt so alive
Before you, it was fated, those stage lights
That stage
Before you, was this golden age of dreams
Before you, I saw nothing but hit albums
And Billboard charts celebrating the arts, so I could start this old
Musical heart and be bold and play every day for cash, make a living...

But now I'm finding myself content, suddenly content
Not with fame, but with you
Don't get me wrong, I still dream of my song on a radio station
In some far off location where my motivation is driving and I'm thriving
But now those dreams sometimes seem naught but dreams
And I mean, I still yearn for success but what's best is you

Before you there were tattered RVs filled with chicks from backstage
Empty bottles becoming a sea, and a tide washing over this ride as we drive
Through the night to the right sight, taking flight, the next sold out arena

But now, I'm more excited for dark nights on
Nearly empty cash pouches, and vouches of love
I still want that stage, but if that never comes, I want you
I want two little kittens asleep on our bed with my head next to yours
Under miles of covers, two lovers together

I want second-hand cars, even worse guitars
Movie nights spent with you watching *Rent* hell bent on the lyrics
While I sit beside you and try to remember the songs, but they're wrong
And you laugh and you smile and we kiss for a while during some TV
commercial

And then remember each word by our wedding rehearsal
I could trade hit CDs for those memories of you and me happily married
Two kids curled up tight on some Saturday night movie screen, a family
for you and me
And I swear, it's so corny, the biggest cliché, I know, but it feels like destiny

RYAN ANZALDI

Moments of this epic proportion
Make me see life's millions motions
See beauty in every aspect of life.

Pure: raw devotion.
Of fresh new emotions.

Sky's the limit,
Nature's ambience all up in it.

This is all in the palm of my hand.
Infinite intangible evidence
of why
I can stand.

KAY WEINTRAUB

Speak of Peace

So sweet, you're nice,
In the sun on the hill with the trees outside.
Tonight, hold tight. My soul and spine will soon align,
in time, for two. Align in time for you, to send me softly away.

So calmly you tell me, live each minute like it's your last.
So clearly, the world I see, slows down from spinning way too fast.
And as the time passed.

All life's troubles and all the world's problems were gone.
All my worries and doubts have moved on. Yeah, we move on.

You speak of peace like it has two feet that can play on the words we say.
You speak of peace like it has a beat and can take all my trouble,
take it, take it, all away.

As we play all day, not a thing can get in our way.
We play all day, like trumpets playin' in the parade we play, we play, we
play.

Believe me, please, the power that exists within us all.
It's free, and it's seen, this world is as gentle as a crystal ball.
It's stalled out high. Like birds we're free to fly, want to touch the sky?

All life's troubles and all the world's problems are gone.
All my worries and doubt have moved on. Yeah, we move on.

You speak of peace like it has two feet that can play on the words we say.
You speak of peace like it has a beet, and can take all my trouble,
take it, take it, all away.

LOGAN WHALEY

A Goodnight Thought

Like a warm spring day you blossom in my mind
My thoughts colored by your smile
Your voice is the sweet music to my ears
And your touch warms my skin
Like a breeze you wash over me
Engulfing me in your presence
Your sweet smell filling my nostrils
While your luscious tickles my face
The sweet tease as our lips meet
Yours being the texture of the finest silk
You grasp, reassuring, as your hand slips around my waist to hold me tight
I'll place my arms around you as we lay there
Basking in each others presence
Lost in that single moment in time
That is where I want to be
Frozen in time just you and me

TIMOTHY DALTON

Who Are You?

Who are you, stranger in my way?
You say you know me by the way you speak,
But who are you when you tell me you love me?
No more than the strange shadow of my dreams.
Who are you to scream at me?
Nobody too important for me.

The day I found out about you I wasn't that impressed.
Who are you, long lost thief?
The day of darkness I looked for you,
The stranger in my life,
Because I finally thought I knew you.

But you were gone so quickly, my stranger.
My father, the stranger, how do I say good-bye,
If you didn't even gave me the chance?
Just who are you, stranger in my way?

BRIANDA RAMIREZ

Unspoken

This isn't sadness.
This isn't joy.
This is just a general state.
Don't take this so literally,
But I'm done.
Or at least I wish I were.
Or I was.
Or I will be.
Can't you call this bluff?
Nothing has ever sounded
So sweet and melodic
As that laugh.
Hypnotic as Ibsen's harmonics,
Masking the words unspoken.
I understand, breathe deep and move on.
Move forward.
Out of this mind numbing moment of warped reality.
Carve it, make it new.

KATHARINE FARNELL

Lately as My Dream

A dream she had
Of one day becoming
The next--

The next one
To achieve success and become
The one to host
In which it is mandatory to boast
About celebrities.

Sitting at the round table
With other known names,
Chuy not far away.

Built a media platform
Bestselling author
Comedian
Talk show host
“Borderline Amazing,” if you will.

I seek the truth from
The Lies That Chelsea Handler Told Me
Lately, I find her jokes to never be aging.

As pure as the driven snow,
she is not.
As bold as brass,
she is.

I dream of building
My very own--
A media platform
Just like Chelsea Handler’s

Lately as my dream.

JOANN VAGLICA

Breeze's Dream Episode I

Biology, psychology—
Well, I'm more philosophy
Because, obviously,
There are a million trillion possibilities.
Don't bother me
With politics and salary
I'd rather be
Cruising through the galaxy—
Not stressing over strategies
For B.S.. I have allergies,
And lust for abnormalities;
I miss the time of the majesties,
Because it was magnifique.
F.D.A.

LORENZO JACKSON

Don't tell me that when you look at me
you don't see truth
cause I know fresh fruits when I see them
for I AM the Truman
and though I may not be from the South
I too can paint pictures
flowing deep like rivers
parading my mouth
don't tell me that you don't see truth when you look at me
I am not a perfect picture
I am the Serengeti
and though these "palms get sweaty, knees weak, arms get heavy,"
these arms are ready to be free....
like Willy
though really, Willy never was free
cause that two timed scheming son of a gun was reeling in poverty
Which, by the way, is not my destiny
so instead should we lay dead like corpses
while armed armies draw forces to save the life of me
or should we do it ourselves, whole soul full of stealth
more than any riches could borrow
no more hearts full of sorrow
there is hope for tomorrow
as we lay away the past from yesterday and look into today
and visualize the prize that was left on that Sheepshead Bay
so what more can I say?
have we forgotten the works of our own history?
that we can't blissfully see if we walk casually
are there no mouths to feed?
like starving artists don't have hardships
while misfits, sink ships with the clash of their fists
so tell me...
when you open the door
will you be happy with what you get?
or will your head sink so low
that you are left with nothing but regret?

SARAH RIVERA

A Friendship Lost

Betrayal as thick as smoke,
It's eating you up and I'm glad.

I even smile when I know you're sad.
I feel no remorse.

You thought you could get away with what you did,
But you didn't account for the fact that I fight back.

I came like a thief in the night;
I knocked you down;

I removed your smug look,
Replacing it with one of shock and regret.

There are no more chances,
It's best to just go on without me in your life.

MELISSA MARINI

The Battle of Ignorance

Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender,
Who is to decipher
Where equality begins and ends?
Deadly decisions do no justice.

Souls seem frail and eager to bail,
Wishful they are of having feet with wings
To fly above all things—

He jumped off the bridge,
Not knowing how to swim
And scared of heights,
But he wasn't scared of ending his life.

Swung open was the door to room 316
In the junior dormitory,
And there he was—Hung.

A parent's worst nightmare,
But someone's wish come true.
Someone who believes they're due
To end their life.

It's a torturous tragedy
For someone to live in disguise of who they want to be
Because of the persistent bully.

The Golden Gate Bridge
Where a suicide happens once every two weeks
Had a jumper who survived—
Could have easily ended in catastrophe.

Each individual has a purpose in life,
But there's a confused love out there;
It's the battle of ignorance--it's bitter, but it gets better.

JOANN VAGLICA

Unconventional Convention

I am not like you.
I am proud to be different.
I love being surrounded by others like me.
Those who love being who they are and don't care what other people think.

Society has labeled us by many names.
Geeks, Dorks, Nerds, Losers, Freaks, Weeaboos and Otakus.
Does it bother us? No. Why should it?
There's no reason to be ashamed for having passion in your interests.

We often go overboard with what we define as cosplaying.
To us, it's competitive.
You can have your sports, Jocks, but to us freaks, Cosplay Contests is our
World Cup.

Difference is, not one word is mentioned badly about the loser.

We geeks are family. We bond together. We befriend each other almost
instantly,
Even when we barely know each other.
Strength through Unity.
Conventions are fun, cheap, and great way to make friends instantly.

Several times during the year, we flood the location
With our crazy fandom and our ability to stand out from the crowd.
We get looks and insults from people that don't understand us.
We get compliments from the few people that do.

We are not like you.
We don't conform to the rules of society.
We don't blend in.
We are trendsetters.
We live to love and love to live.

We, the people that stand out, already realized that being different is better
than...

Looking like everyone else and doing what people tell you to do.
Gaming, Anime/Manga, Sci-Fi, to name a few
Are just some of our passions.

To normal people, it may be unconventional to do what we do
But realize this:
We. Aren't. Normal. And, we don't care.
And to us, that's completely ok.
Normal is overrated. This is 2011. Weird is the new normal.
Be and love who you are, because "baby, you were born this way."

Dare to Be Different

How can you be noticed, if you can't stand out in a crowd?
How can you be heard, if you have no voice?
I...am one of the few.
One of the few people that dare to challenge the norm.
Call me what you will: gay, fag, metro, misfit, loser; I'm not offended...
Because I refuse to walk the streets,
a mindless copy of what society deems "acceptable."
Because I'm no action figure.
I'm no piece of artwork hanging on your wall, society,
next to every other countless photocopy that
you call "acceptable."
I dare to be different.

MICHAEL HALLIDAY

Friendship Like No Other

Rare, unusual, random—
Slither, run, and make noise,
It's what they do together all the time.
A bond so strong; the predator-prey game,
Demolished, crushed, obsolete—

They are like salt on wound,
Oil and water too, but
They gel so well. Furry, yet fierce, big and small,
These animals are friends; it's a wonder
So why can't we get along?

A snake and a hamster,
A cat and a dog,
A monkey and a tiger; they get along!
Where did we go wrong? Why can't we be friends?
If these natural enemies—

Can be, we could rise up too.
Animals of all kinds—
They are showing us up with tight-knit bonds.
Are we really not capable? Let's try.
Put aside race and religion.

If we tried, we could be
Like these other unlikely pairs—
The hamster and snake that live in the same cage,
A cat grabbing a ride from a dog.
Please tell me we can try this.

Let's put peace on our minds.
Like the tiger and monkey,
Napping together so fondly; it's sweet.
These animals are like you and me;
So let's take the time and try.

We're different, yet we
Can make it work out.
I am like silk and you are like rocks
Smooth and edgy, yet our collision is key.
Our friendship can make an impact.

We can be those animals:
Opposite, yet alike—
Us as free as the wind in the sky.
Our differences making us stronger
A friendship like no other.

MELISSA MARINI

Timid is the light peering through my shades,
I'm feeling fog rise and pass in waves.
Still haven't slept,
It's 5:16.
Hours pass quick,
It's too obscene.

The glow of the red makes silence break,
speeding with drinks was the mistake.
Cars crash with disaster,
people shed tears.
A car rams a tree,
phone lines disappear.

Actions speak louder than words people say,
But how loud's an action on a cold winter day.
To me it was seeing a friend leave his car,
stumbling and fumbling staring up at the stars.

He seemed to regain feeling,
and rushed to her side.
She was hunched over,
not breathing.
He cried and said bye...

JD DELVENO II

I looked up
to see gray clouds
thunder roar out loud
the wind's howls
made it hard to hear
the rain's tears
fell on my skin
making me cold
while the scent
of the sea's aroma
overflowed
leaving me
a taste
of what to behold
the beauty
of life
too bad
you can't hold
or even capture
rejoice and enjoy
for this moment...is yours

DERLIS CHAVARRIA

She laid on the rock
With her back facing me
Waves crashing repeatedly

Blowing water in the air
Lifting her hair
She showed no care

Turned to me
To reveal a cheek
Eyes hidden, I read her lips

Panic and fear is all I could feel
As she began to swim away
I ran yelling for her to stay

Picking pace I fell on my face
Planted my feet and hands in the sand
Pushed off to rush in

Fighting the current
To be near her side
Her fin waved bye bye

I struggled and tried
Falling unconscious
To memories of her and I

Next is a blur
How I ended up alive
On the beach with the night sky

No concern why I'm alive or how I survived
Just thoughts of question
Whether it was the sea
Or a tear she cried

DERLIS CHAVARRIA

The lines she writes, yeah, they're never good enough.
Her thoughts give way to the unspoken words.
The constant pain leads to a threshold of regret.
How many times must she be saved to understand?
The world works in mysterious ways.
Just how many times?

REBECCA KRAUSS

The Stage

For the nights that you find yourself staring up high
With barely any clouds in the sky
A moment's peace
Gleaming from the moon
Bouncing off the serene water view
Leaving a spotlight shining on you

DERLIS CHAVARRIA

Beware of the Storm

Gusts of wind rushing by,
Darkness swarms, pushing away the sunshine.
The cold and dreary overtake the warmth of the those golden rays.

A storm is upon us!
Will we survive?
It's as strong as a bamboo stick.

MELISSA MARINI

DEEP OCEAN CAVERN
The unknown lies beneath
Danger is what I seek
Be strong in my desire
To believe in the Fire
DEEP OCEAN CAVERN
Black and blue so true
The swell will brew
I won't hesitate
The soul knows my Fate
DEEP OCEAN CAVERN
DEEP OCEAN CAVERN
Winter warmth will grow
Deep from below
The quiet pause of time
I seek the Shine
DEEP OCEAN CAVERN
The shade is dark
I have made my mark
I will roar
To break the surface and soar
DEEP OCEAN CAVERN

MICHAEL DUNNE

Princess in Progress

Stepping on rainbows
Tiptoeing on clouds
She has that perfect glow
I can't wait to hear the very first sounds

The fireworks on July 4th, 2011
Will burst with different meaning
The princess in progress will be sent from Heaven
Approximately nine months after the first screening

Eagerly we await your arrival
You'll be the first of many—
Grandchild, daughter, niece, and godchild
The amount of love for you, plenty.

JOANN VAGLICA

The Other One

The sky is red this hour,
But nothing's as it seems.
Our hopes and dreams devoured,
In empty rooms of silent screams.

Let me out.

The Other One has left us,
As we pretend to drown.
No father now will bless us,
As the cross is crashing down.

Let me out.

These blinded eyes have led us,
Unto a sacred ground.
Our spears and chains have bled us,
Thoughts consumed by thorns and crowns.

Let me... out.

THOMAS MIS

Frail

Just like a rose,
each petal falls,
each one comes down
with a story for all.
Starts out as a seed,
begins to grow,
stands so beautiful,
dies so slow.
Each petal so frail,
so dark and cold,
there it lies,
lifeless rose.

ANDREA HERNANDEZ

Distance

200 miles stand between us
I'd run the distance if it made a difference
But would you be there at the end?
Waiting for the moment when
Our eyes meet and the moment is instant
And all of a sudden it doesn't matter that we live so distant.
For your eyes light a spark in my heart
That burns for you, and you alone
I could stay in your arms forever and never go home
But would you return the feeling
Or would 200 miles still stand between us
When the physical distance is significantly less?
And what if I stayed here
Would you run to see me
Hoping that in your arms I'll always be?
Because distance means nothing in my mind.
We could run away and leave the world behind.
Just say the word and I'll be there.
I'll diminish the miles from me to you.
Get rid of this distance and be there soon.
Because all I need is you.

ALYSSA LELIEVRE

Memoirs

My Dad the Soldier

My dad was a soldier. For as far back as I can remember, once a month he'd put on his fatigues, pack his foot locker and leave for the weekend. Looking back on it now, it doesn't seem like that big of a deal. He left for a few days but he always came back. As a kid though, it was different. I remember helping him pack and watching him leave. I remember the nights I spent sleeping in the living room, waiting for him to come home. I think there was a part of me that was afraid he wouldn't come home. It's just practice. It's just practice. I would tell myself that over and over again until he came home. But what if he hadn't? What if he went off one weekend and didn't come back? I worried about that a lot. He left the military shortly before 9/11. He said he had a feeling something bad was going to happen. I think about that sometimes, about how he would have been to Iraq four or five times by now, but that's what it's like as a military brat. You never know.

ALYSSA LELIEVRE

Puppy Love

Early in the morning, on my way to the animal shelter, I think to myself what interesting characters I'll meet. As I enter the facility, I gather materials to take the dogs out: baggies, treats, and a leash. As I pass each kennel, I look at their log to see what dog hasn't been walked in a while. Every time I enter the room, all the dogs can hear my footsteps and they all start to bark or jump around in their kennel. When I choose the dog to walk, I wait for them to calm down a little and carefully open the door to allow my hand fit inside to put on their leash. As they get out of the cage, they jump on me and try to lick me all over. Not many dogs in the shelter have the opportunity to be taken out for a walk, so when they do get taken out, they are very hyper and excited to be out.

On our way out, most dogs can't wait to exit the building without relieving themselves. One dog I walked, urinated, pooped, and threw up, all at the same time. I was amazed to see that happened one after the other. I can't blame him, since he wasn't walked for a couple of days. I made sure to clean the floor by using one of the mops on the floor of the shelter while holding the dog by the leash. I usually have to watch out for my surroundings, because at any moment another dog might come by and one of the many rules of working in a shelter is to not have any dogs come close together. Sometimes, the shelter can get a little crazy and one has to be prepared for anything.

Afterwards, I take them out of the craziness at the shelter to the park close by to let them breathe in the clean air. Some of the dogs I take out love to pull on the leash, even when I tell them to stop. Sometimes I feel like they are walking me instead of me walking them. The dogs I walk love to scare the pigeons by jumping in front of them; they get so excited to see them fly away. When we walk back to the shelter, their behavior is more cheerful than when I first saw them. When we wait for the light to change, they sometimes look at me all happy and rub against me and they sometimes like to sit on my feet. It's like they feel comfortable with me and safe. This makes feel really happy and I love to see their tails sway back and fourth in the air when they walk.

As all good things must come to an end, I have to return the dog back into their kennel so I can walk another. As I return them, I can see their happy faces turn into a frown; sometimes I have a hard time putting them back inside. They usually lie on the floor and start whimpering. I feel really guilty having to put them back into some miserable place that they hate. When I close the door to their kennel, I try to stay with them and praise them on how good they did on their walk. I give them treats and pet them through the bars. This lifts their spirits and I can see them happy again and their tail starts to sway against the metal wall, which makes a loud sound filled with happiness and joy as they lick my hand all over.

JACQUELINE RAMIREZ

Baton Twirling

If someone were to ask me, what is one thing that represents or sums me up as a person, I would have to answer, my baton. Most people that know me know that I've been doing baton twirling for eleven years. Baton twirling is a way of life and without it I'm lost.

It's hard to understand my obsession with this sport. Most people have never actually witnessed a true baton twirling performance. If you think dance is creative, you should watch a devoted baton twirler! You'll be shocked.

When the baton rolls over my body or I catch a big trick in a routine, I begin to be at ease. I'm normally a very uptight person who is constantly finding something to stress out about. Whenever that thinly carved piece of metal is in my hand, it's like the world stops and I can take a breathe of fresh air from everything frantic around me.

It's my time. Not time for homework, chores, work or even friends. It's my time.

Money and transportation have always been the major problems with my baton obsession. It's, without a doubt, one of the most expensive sports, especially when you're involved in it as much as I was. While not living in the most financially stable household, it created major tension.

The only reason my parents have allowed me to continue with baton for all these years is because I'm their only child and seeing me miserable would probably break them.

I love everything that comes with the baton. The baton helped mold me as a person. It brought me strength when I thought I lost all hope.

Whenever I slip on my jazz shoes, I know it's time to practice my heart out. My costumes represent my drive to perform my best and go out and win.

Then, of course the music. In freestyle, which is definitely my favorite, you have the opportunity to choose your own music. Hitting every accent and moving to music, it's like my form of heaven.

To my misfortune, last April I inconveniently broke my thumb at work. It was the quarter of the twirling season, when all the important competitions were coming up. It was the first year I saved up enough money to go to nationals.

When I found out that I broke my thumb so badly that I needed surgery, all I could do was cry. Not cause of the pain—screw the pain—I couldn't twirl and it felt like my life was falling apart.

The next four months were the most mentally straining time of my life. It was like I didn't know who I was anymore. Constantly at doctors, physical therapists and even compensation hearings.

It was just too much to stand.

July was when things started to look up. No pins in my thumbs, everything bent properly and there wasn't much pain. I could finally pick up my baton and that's all I had been waiting to do since the incident. I practiced day in and day out until I was back to normal or until I was as normal as I could get. My coaches worked with me and I was finally back on track.

As my first year of college started and the work piled on, I started to feel stress. Even baton felt like a hassle at this point. For the first time in my life, I realized I need to give up baton, if I want to fulfill my dreams. It was the hardest choice I had to make, I spent the night crying by myself. I never cry, that's how you know it's a big deal.

If I stopped twirling years ago, I wouldn't have any idea what my life would be like now. Maybe I would have had more friends or I would have been in all AP classes during high school. In reality, those things really don't matter to me. As long as I'm enjoying what I love, I'll be satisfied. Baton has helped me discover who I am and has gotten me through many hardships. Without it over the course of the last eleven years, I don't think I would have survived.

REBECCA KRAUSS

Untitled

“Sweetie, don’t worry you will go to school. I’ll make sure of that.”

“But mom, how is that going to happen? You heard dad, he doesn’t have money. I’m the only girl of the family so it is only fair for the guys to go to school. Anyway, I’m a girl, and I’ll soon find a guy to take care of me.”

“Do you want to have an adventure?”

All of a sudden this girl finds herself with nothing more than a book bag full of liquids and energizers. No food. She is in front of the line, right after the male guide, because she is the youngest and the only girl in the group. She is only 17. Everyone else is older. She is paired up with a young guy named Orlando. There are at least fifteen pairs of both female and male. She doesn’t ask why she has a male partner; she knows that he is there to protect her. Either way, she knows she is strong and energetic enough, so she won’t need his help. She loves running and exercising, so walking for hours won’t be that bad. She is not worried like everyone else.

Her eyes glow with all the beauty she sees from nature. She has never seen so many rocks, hills or cactuses with such beautiful flowers growing out of it. She is able to see the gorgeous sky painted in orange and purple from the sundown. This is all she dreams of seeing because everywhere where she had lived before was close to the city. It's even funny to say that she likes using the bathroom in front of nature because it is all new to her.

All of a sudden, darkness takes over the woods and she keeps walking behind the guide. She is impressed with how nature is on their side. There is a beautiful full moon that glows with so much purity and innocence. The stars make her happier because she knows that many other people are seeing them the way she is. The stars help her feel loved by God. The sounds of coyotes, rattlesnakes, crickets, and many other beautiful sounds make her night. She had never expected to hear these out-of-the-television sounds. It is her dream come true.

All of a sudden, she hears helicopters coming to her direction and she fears. She no longer wants to be there. Reality hits her. She quickly hides at the bottom of some bushes. After a few minutes the helicopter finally leaves.

The guide leaves the whole group after finally walking 13 hours. It is daylight and she knows they are in danger even if no one said anything.

The next step is passing through a place that has no bushes or trees to hide. There is a lot of sand. This is the biggest risk.

After waiting for two hours for the guides (under small bushes and trees with a bunch of big fat worms) it is time to keep walking. Even though she isn't as tired as the older people, she fears a bit more than everyone else. But of course she doesn't say anything. After half an hour walk, she gets to this place where everyone has to throw away their book bags and pass under a fence. She is rebellious and she doesn't do it. The guide gets mad at her, but she says, "I only have my Bible here and if wasn't for God we wouldn't be this far." The guide doesn't want to keep arguing so he just keeps walking.

The final step in the adventure her mother put her through isn't over. The worst is yet to come. A pick-up truck comes to pick them up and she stays at the bottom of the human pile. She is so little that she is running out of breath. She doesn't feel human anymore. She feels like an animal. She begins to cry but that didn't help.

The 20 minutes that passes are the longest 20 minutes of her life.

When she gets to America, the American dream is done as soon as they are caught.

They are deported.

This is my story but it doesn't end here. Things only got worse...

Fiction

Incantatis Exorcise

In I walked to the gym of lost childhood dreams where long ago laughter rang as games were played in the most innocent of manners; yet now it remained empty, tainted by a corrupt soul that belonged to a man that these children looked up to, their principal. My friends and I, in triangular form, advanced into the wrecked corpse of lost dreams. Scanning the area, I noticed that the basketball hoops remained tethered far above our heads collecting dust. There was no sound whatsoever, within this room nor within the hallways. There was no music, no laughter, only the exacerbated echoes coming from our boot heels. This was strange for an elementary school, even though classes were in session, especially only for another minute when children should be going crazy with anticipation for the bell.

I stood in the middle of the gymnasium, sucking in the silence and grounding myself. I uttered a prayer for my soul, the souls of my comrades, and for the children. Most of all, I uttered a prayer for the principal whose soul I was sent to save.

“Where is he Michael?” Mitchell asked. He, like my brother Christian, were here as strongmen, to help me physically control the man’s body while I wrestled the demon from his soul.

“The woman told us that at 11 o’clock AM, he would be marching children through the gym to their next class as a painful reminder of what they no longer could cherish,” I replied. I know the man is coming, I can feel the demon inside of him, etching closer and itching to fight me. And then, as clocks often work, the bell rang. Still, as though someone had died, there was no childish laughter, no chatter, nothing, only footsteps could be heard coming from the hallways. After waiting for what seemed another eternity, the principal walked through the door with his cadre of eight year-olds behind him. They were marching, side-by-side, heads faced forward, hands by their sides, little soldiers who only wanted freedom but could never have it.

“Time to fight, brothers,” I said. They came up to both sides of me. I raised my hands and prayed to St. Michael, my guardian angel and teacher.

“In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, I command you to stop and face me, demon!”

The principal, having been on the other side, stopped midstride and looked to me with fiery eyes that told me the demon had complete control. "And why should I listen to a slave of God? Why not have him come down and smite me?" he said with a twisted tongue and slithering voice akin to that of a snake.

"He does not waste time with mere pests," I replied. My hands started to glow bright blue with holy energy. The principal rushed at me and jumped tackling me to the ground. We wrestled until, finally, I was on top of him.

"Grab his arms and pin him down! Quickly!" I shouted. My brothers came to my side and pinned the evil soul to the ground. I then started the *Incantatis Exorcise*, the Rite of Exorcism. When spoken properly, and with the knowledge of the demon's name, it was a matter of chanting and channeling the holy energy.

"Et nomine patris et filius et spiritu sancti! Et nomine patris et filius et spiritu sancti!" I chanted. My eyes glowed with blue fire as my hands erupted in flame. I drew a cross on his forehead and shouted the same Latin phrase until I was in complete holy fire.

"In the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, I expel you from this body and back into the fiery hell from whence you came Beelzebub! You no longer hold dominion here or over this man's soul! I COMMAND YOU!" and with the last phrase, I exploded backwards into the wall with my brothers. I gained my footing again and saw smoke coming from the man's body. Silence followed suit as the children, frozen with terror, did not move or speak or even utter a cry.

The body on the ground started to move and rose to its feet. I could feel that my job was done correctly and the man standing was indeed the lost principal, returned to his body.

"Where am I?" he spoke finally.

"At school sir, you fell and hit your head while you were speaking to my friends and me," I replied.

"Who are you?"

"We are just men looking for jobs, but you had recently filled the janitor positions, so we were leaving." With that, my brothers and I walked out and left the children wondering what happened. Though they will not understand, they at least will never doubt their faith in God or the holy word.

BRANDON FRASER

Endnotes

I wish to thank everyone who was involved with this process. Much gratitude goes out to all of the talented Five Towns College students who have submitted their creative writing. I wish we could have published you all; if you didn't get into this volume, we'll hopefully get you into the next!

Many thanks go to Michael Dunne, the artist and poet who specially designed this year's cover. Another huge thank you goes to Tom Mis, the student editor of *The Muse* who has contributed countless hours towards the formation of this volume. An incredible debt is also owed to John Vansteen (our Five Towns College Library Director) whose logistic, editorial and artistic help was essential for the publication.

I urge everyone who is interested in creative writing to send in their submissions of poetry and prose for next year's issue (faculty and staff are welcome to submit as well!) Those of you who are interested in spoken word may also want to join The Five Towns College Poetry Club, which will give you a chance to sharpen both your performing and writing skills.

Next year's Poetry Club *Wordz on Stage* performance will be a fundraiser for the Invisible Children organization. Several Five Towns College students have been collaborating with Invisible Children to spread awareness here. I commend their efforts and The Poetry Club is eager to help with their goals. If you would also like to become more active in this worthy cause, please visit their website at www.invisiblechildren.com

I hope you enjoyed this volume of *The Muse*. We are always looking for more student editorial staff. If you can contribute some hours next year, Tom could really use your help! (It's also a great way to earn community service hours and it will look fabulous on your resume!)

See you next year!

Dawn A. Saliba

Toys
Classrooms
Mom
Dad
Learning
Pets
Safety
Reading
Bed
Imagination
Love

Machetes
Streets
Massacres
Screams
Hiding
Blood
Frenzy
Mud
Fear
Pain
Death

Two Children
Two Worlds
One Cause