

MIND MURALS



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Editors' Notes

Like the murals you see on the streets, I hope this year's edition of *Mind Murals* seamlessly weaves the landscape of our region's minds. I challenge you to see past the individual submissions and consider the community as a whole. Who are we in the Eastern Region of Sigma Tau Delta in 2015? What is the intellectual architecture here? How can we maintain it or change it?

While, of course, this is a small sample of the Eastern Region, we hope the creativity of each of these pieces help you to see your world, your community and yourself a little differently. We hope you, too, will be inspired to confront feelings and encourage others through the various victories and tribulations our community has faced over the course of the previous year.

Thank you to all who made it possible: the individuals who submitted and those who edited; those in the Central Office and of course, our Regent, Glen Brewster, who always gently encourages us through each step in the process, insuring that the journal survives each year.

Best of luck,

Crystal Stone

Student Representative of the Eastern Region, 2014-2015

First, thank you to the Eastern Region for the opportunity to serve as your Associate Student Representative for the 2014-2015 term. It has been a joy to get to know the vibrant members of the Eastern Region, and I look forward to watching the region continue to grow and challenge the expectations of this journal.

As a journal, it is significant to note the inclusion of so many genres, which represent in print the many varied voices of the Eastern community. Critical and creative, poetry and prose, all of these pieces combine to demonstrate the talent and potential of Sigma Tau Deltans, especially as we embark on our careers of expanding these literary perspectives.

I hope you enjoy this year's edition of *Mind Murals*, and that you continue to submit to the journal so it can grow and flourish. Thank you especially to our Eastern Regent, Glen Brewster, for his support, and for all those behind the scenes who are responsible for the journal's online publication.

Thank you again.

Best,

Jenny Schollaert

Associate Student Representative of the Eastern Region, 2014-2015

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I. FICTION

I'm the one who holds them down. I grab their necks and stretch them out, their impossibly small hearts pulsing beneath my fingers. I've killed so many this way that I have started to lose track.

- A litter of ten orange-striped kittens, approximately two months old. This means that they were about two pounds, their default blue eyes just giving way to patches of green or yellow. They tested positive for Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV), a retrovirus that commonly causes immune deficiency and cancer in infected cats. The virus is contagious, spread through saliva and other bodily fluids, and there is no cure. In most shelter systems, the small blue dot that indicates a positive FeLV test means — kitten or cat, one or twenty — certain, immediate death. With limited resources, finding the space to keep infected cats separated is nearly impossible and, with little chance that such cats will ever be adopted, is, simply put, not cost effective. I know this protocol. I understand it. But, for all of its logic, I still have to hold them down. I still had to walk from cage to exam table to freezer until all ten of them were dead.

They had the antibodies, yes, but none of the symptoms. Those wouldn't develop for another three or four years. They were playful, vibrant even. They clung to the bars of the cage as I passed by, paws tapping at my shirt. They wrestled in their litter pans, swatted at ping pong balls, and tore up the newsprint beneath their bedding. I had given all ten of them a bath just an hour before, so their fur was still damp and they smelled strongly of baby shampoo. I took them from the cage, one by one, and stretched them out on the exam table. A few of them screamed while they died, but most of them were quiet, trusting. I put their bodies in a black Hefty bag, three to a bag. When I got to my car that night, I started reciting their defining details, the little differences in fur color or eye color or personality. The chubby one. The one with the white feet. The one that loved the bath water. The one with the crinkled ear. The smallest one with the pure blue eyes. The one that purred while I held it down. I could feel them receding even as I mourned them.

- A black kitten not much larger than my thumb, crawling around the exam table like a grub. His two hind legs were paralyzed, probably since birth. They were twisted and knobby, and they dragged around behind him like extra tails. He would have survived, of course. He could even have thrived. But who would adopt him? As I watched him slide across the table — eyes closed, mouth open — I thought of how easy it would be to take him home. I looked at the vet (3 cats, 1 dog), at the president of the shelter (3 cats), at the shelter's medical director (10 cats, 2 dogs). I could see them contemplating the space in their homes, the room in their budgets. The vet sighed. Eyes moved to the floor. Better to end it now, then. Because he was so small, we had to stick the needle directly in his heart. He died nameless, too small to warrant a garbage bag. I put him in a Ziplock.
- Paprika. Eighteen years old. A mere five pounds, he was an amalgam of ribs and spine and crusted, orange fur. A middle aged couple dropped him off one night claiming that, after

seventeen years, they had suddenly started suffering from allergies. We killed him a week later. He was in kidney failure.

- A leopard-spotted kitten with a hole in his head. There were maggots crawling out. Maggots crawling around beneath his skin. When I stretched him out he tried to scream, but his breath only gurgled in his throat.
- Zane. A volunteer favorite. He had been at the shelter for nearly fifteen years. He developed diabetes and we couldn't afford his medication.
- Charlie. Twenty five pounds and declawed, he was left in front of the shelter in a cardboard box. Once he was placed in a room, he spent all of his time at the very top of a cat condo, standing up and meowing whenever a volunteer would come in to clean or feed. We all thought he was quirky, lazy. Two weeks later I noticed that the skin on his ears had turned a strange shade of yellow. When I brought him out to the table he collapsed, his tongue lolling against the cold steel. He had developed Hepatic Lipidosis, or Fatty Liver Disease. As a species, cats are unable to efficiently convert large amounts of fat through their livers. If an obese cat loses weight too quickly, fat inevitably accumulates in the overworked liver, leading to low liver function and, eventually, death. If left to progress, a fatty liver is rarely reversible. In short, Charlie had been starving himself. An indoor, unsocialized cat unaccustomed to the social hierarchy inherent in a large group of felines, he had probably been bullied by the more dominant cats in the room. Too afraid to climb down to the food bowls, he had simply stopped eating. What we all took for idiosyncrasy was actually distress. Everyone had laughed at how he had made the condo his own, had patted him on the head as he meowed and chirped, but no one had noticed that he wasn't eating. In the end, I barely had to hold him down. He looked up at me with newly yellowed eyes and died without a sound.
- Minnie. An all-black kitten, freshly returned from foster care, a program in which kittens under three pounds live with a family until they are old enough to be spayed or neutered and put up for adoption. She started having violent, cage-wrecking seizures. Epilepsy is treatable, but with another fifty apparently healthy kittens in the next room over, the chances of someone adopting a kitten in need of expensive, daily medication and biannual blood tests is slim. Her thin frame was still twitching while I stretched her out, her eyes wide and jerking. Once she was dead, I wrapped her body in a hand towel, noting the bruising around her lips and the sores at the base of her ears. She had been smacking her head against the steel bars so often that her skin had started to split. Her foster family came with a shoebox to pick her up; the kids wanted to bury her in their backyard.
- Five or six black and white kittens, about a week old. I got a call from the dog shelter next door one afternoon. One of the feral cats that live outside must have given birth in the rafters above the dog kennels and the kittens had started raining down. They were splattered and broken on the floor. The dogs were playing with them like squeak toys. When I got there, the burly man that works the desk was holding one in his palm. "I ran into Newton's kennel and grabbed her," he said. His outstretched hands were trembling. This man who grumbles reluctant good mornings when I walk out to the dumpster. This man who walks most of these dogs to their

deaths. "I think I was too late." The kitten was a pale white with lopsided black spots on her back and across her folded ears. Her nose was pink and freckled with black. But for the pool of bright red that had stained her lips and chin, she was perfect. The man rolled the kitten into my open hands, wiping bloodstained fingers on his thighs. I ran my knuckle over her back and noted her quivering, irregular breaths. I looked up. "The rest?" The man shook his head, pointing to a small box on the desk. "It's a mess," he said, coughing. I lifted my palm. The kitten exhaled, her nearly transparent chest falling heavily, and was still. We buried her beneath some impatiens with what was left of her siblings.



When she brought him in, Sempi's owner was sobbing. I had watched her pull into the shelter's small parking lot, dented, rusted minivan scraping and bouncing off the high curb, and I steeled myself for a confrontation. The shelter was full. With well over 100 cats on the premises and at least another 150 kittens in foster care, there was simply no room for any more. But she didn't get out of the car. Her windows started to fog and the exhaust clouded in the chilled morning air. I went back to work.

Ten minutes later, on the phone with a man who was trying to place his dying mother's four cats, I heard a sharp knock on the door.

"We're open," I called out.

A woman with a flushed, tear-swollen face walked in clutching a large black cat, her fingers running through his fur absentmindedly. She had brown, oily dreadlocks piled high on her head and a knee length, flowing skirt. Her feet were bare and splotted with a dusty mud. She was followed by a police officer with a large, protruding gut and thin lips set in a grimace.

"Mr...uh...Donald? I'm going to put you on the waiting list. You can try calling back in a couple of weeks." I hung up quickly, Mr. Donald's droning voice still running through the receiver. I looked up. The woman had her face in the cat's back, her shoulders shaking silently. The police officer looked bored.

"Can I help you?"

"Yes, uh, we have an order here for this cat to be turned over." The police officer lifted a form from his shirt pocket.

The woman raised her head abruptly, sucking in her breath. "P-Pending a hearing!" She moved her redlined eyes to me. "You just have to hold him. Just for a little while."

"All right," I said, forcing a smile. I reached for the phone. "This isn't part of our normal procedure, so let me call the president of the shelter. Do you mind talking to her?"

With the officer on the phone, I left the desk and waved for the woman to follow. "Why don't we get him set up in the back?"

I walked the woman through the back hall, pointing to the four rooms that make up our main population of cats. "Each of these rooms have an outdoor enclosure," I said, pausing at a viewing window. "The cats can roam freely. Our cages are only for new or sick cats."

The woman nodded, her cheek pushed against the cat's head.

"What's his name?" I brushed my fingers against his paw.

"His name is Sempi," she said. "And I'm coming back for him."

Apparently the woman had been living in a rundown house with no indoor plumbing, no running water. Neighbors had called the police when they saw her and the two other women she lived with consistently defecating in the yard. When the police went to investigate, they had deemed the place dangerous and, since the woman had nowhere else to go, insisted on removing Sempi from the premises. The shelter agreed to harbor him until the appeal, and we set him up in an isolated room with access to a small outdoor run. For the first couple of weeks, the woman came in to visit him every few days. Despite her many eccentricities, Sempi was clearly well cared for. He was healthy, robust, and well socialized. He had bright yellow eyes and a deep, exaggerated purr. He chirped happily whenever someone walked by his enclosure, making him an immediate favorite among the volunteers. I used to take him into the office while I worked, happy to have him draped over my shoulder or curled up in my lap. I'll miss him when he goes, I thought.

Two weeks after Sempi arrived, I walked to the isolation run to greet him before my shift. He had spent most of his time outside since he had arrived, climbing and perching on the hollowed stumps and branches that line the chain link enclosure. Apart from a few scattered leaves sliding in the autumn breeze, though, the run was empty. I found him sleeping in a covered litter pan, clumps of clay litter stuck to his face. His body was hot to the touch. I prepared a warm washcloth and took him out to the exam table. As I cleared the litter from his face, I noticed a raw split in his nose and upper lip. I sighed, biting my lip, and moved to open his jaw. His mouth had the rotten, sweet smell of infection. His tongue was dappled with ulcers, and there was a large, bloody sore on the roof of his mouth. *Calicivirus. Shit.*

Feline Calicivirus is an upper respiratory infection prevalent in shelter systems and other multi cat facilities. It is marked by ulcerations of the mouth and nose, high fever, arthritis, and a loss of appetite. Cats infected with the virus are often in so much pain that they stop eating, stop drinking, stop moving altogether. It is extremely contagious and easily spread in a shelter environment. The virus can survive on clothes and bedding, and cats that appear healthy can harbor the virus for at least thirty days. Adult cats infected with the virus typically require hospitalization and IV fluids. Sometimes, though, they just give up. Even with our own vet on staff, our shelter is only able to save about fifty percent of the adults who contract it. I considered past failures. The two orange brothers, Seamus and Bear, eight years old and turned in when their family welcomed a new baby. They both caught the virus a few weeks after they came in. Seamus survived, Bear didn't. Seamus cried and pawed at the door for weeks. He stuffed his nose between the door and the tile, his desperate sniffing a quiet, persistent eulogy. Within a few days, he had stopped eating.

Sempi's labored breathing broke my reverie, and I gently lifted his drooping head. I looked into his tired, piercing yellow eyes. Not you, I thought. I'm not going to let that happen to you.

For the next week and a half, I went in every day to force feed him and administer subcutaneous fluids. I mixed calorie dense wet food with warm water and stuffed it into a large syringe. I wrapped him in a towel and slowly forced the food down his throat. He coughed and yowled and vomited. His tongue was so swollen that it hung from his mouth, his lips bloody and raw and crusted with a thick brown. His front paws were coated with the blood that dripped almost continuously from his nose. I wiped his cage with bleach and watched towel after towel come up a rusty, bloody orange. I cloaked him in swaddling blankets and held him in my lap, combing his blood-and-mucus-matted fur until he fell asleep. I bathed him, brought in tuna and boiled meats, and covered his cage with blankets and soft pillows. I drove him forty-five minutes to the vet each way for blood work and IV antibiotics.

It was the day after one such trip that I learned I had failed. I was working the shelter's office when the vet called.

"There's nothing more we can do, Heather. His organs are shutting down. I'm sorry. I know how hard you've tried." He paused, sighing. "We'll put him down after we see the fosters tonight."

I got the woman's number from Sempi's file and called her a few hours before we killed him. My fingers were trembling as I punched the numbers, my heart thumping in my chest as the phone rang once, twice, three times.

"Hello?" Her voice was higher than I remembered.

"Hey. Hi. This is Heather. From the Grateful Paw...I don't know if you remember."

There was a pause. My ear twitched.

"I do. Yes. H-how is my Sempi? I've been calling. They said he has a cold. They said I can't come in."

"Yes. Calicivirus. He caught a virus. He wasn't vaccinated. I've been trying...I tried." My voice broke. "I'm so sorry..."

The sound that came through the phone was gut and lungs and throat. It was a howling agony that was at once human and animal, carnal and alien. I pressed the phone to my ear with both hands. There was a loud thump and the line went dead. I kept the phone at my ear, my eyes fixed on the tree-lined parking lot. I felt the welling of warm tears, the orange and yellow and red of the trees blending to a dull brown.

"I'm sorry," I whispered to the static.

Sempi was asleep in my lap when the vet arrived, his face flushed from the cold. He motioned toward the back. "I'm going to set up."

Sempi was dying, his organs failing, but he still didn't want to be restrained. He fought my firm grip, his legs kicking weakly against my arms. He yowled through swollen, split lips and bucked his neck from side to side. I pushed harder, stretching his spine firmly against my forearm. The vet

looked into my eyes, syringe at the ready. I nodded. Sempì's low cry slowed in his throat, his legs growing limp. The vet put the stethoscope to his chest and waited.

"He's gone."

I wrapped him in a swaddling blanket and lifted him into the Hefty bag. I paused as I opened the freezer door. Sempiternal, I thought, clutching the bag to my chest. Her love for you is everlasting. You were one of the lucky ones.

GRANDFATHER CLOCKS

Katherine Thomas

My front hall when I was a kid was dominated by a great grandfather clock, reminding us every second of every day that it was time. Time to go to school, to soccer, to work, to dinner, to bed. It used to chime every fifteen minutes and let out a huge dong every hour to warn us just how late we were, the situation worsening with every ticking second. At night, you could still hear it as the pendulum reached into the future and swung those seconds into the distant past. The house ticked, the walls ticked, the space behind my eyelids ticked. Never enough time.

There's never enough time. All my clocks are digital these days, my microwave, the top right corner of my computer screen, my phone, but I still feel the inexorable slide of time. Now my phone buzzes every fifteen minutes to remind me about that thing I scheduled on Google Calendar. And I check my email every hour to see what I've missed. My life is so regulated that the guys at Starbucks have my order ready for me when I arrive at 8:02 every morning.

"Vente latte, skim milk, double shot of espresso, hold the sugar," the man behind the counter recites with a smile. He has an asymmetrical haircut and a nose ring. He's been working here for two years now, but I can never remember his name. I think it changes. Today the name tag says Darius.

"That's me," I say and hand over my Starbucks card. The steaming vat of coffee is waiting for me at the pick-up window. I slip a cardboard safety sleeve around it and buy a New York Times. I always read the business section while I sit at the corner table right above the heating vent farthest from the door.

Today though, I freeze right in the middle of the shop because there's someone sitting at my table. *My* table, the one I've been sitting at every morning for the past three years. I don't know what to do. I can't ask management to move her. This isn't middle school with assigned seating. It's a public Starbucks. So I reluctantly sit at another table. It's wobbly. The chair squeaks when I shift my weight. And there's a draft. To make things even worse, she's there again when I come back the next day. And the next day. I try getting up a half hour earlier to beat her to the table, but she's still here, sipping her coffee and leafing through a newspaper.

Because I got here early, the baristas don't have my order ready. In their panic, one of them screws up and uses whole milk, throwing off the balance of the whole latte, and my morning! I'm so distracted, I rip the last New York Times pulling it from the rack. Good thing, I don't care about the first page anyway.

I march across the Starbucks to *my* corner table to give this lady a piece of my mind. She glances up at my red face and then goes back to reading what looks like the Classifieds. Her complete indifference takes the wind out of my sails. After a moment's hesitation, I sit down across from her, resting my feet on the warm heat vent.

Her hair is light brown and she looks gaunt with dark shadows circling her eyes. She's wearing a snowflake pendant and swinging it back and forth between her fingers.

"Looking for a new car?" I mutter.

She looks at me. Her eyes are the color of mud. "What?"

I tap the newspaper. "You're reading the Classifieds."

"Oh," she laughs. "No, I'm not shopping for anything actually. Just passing the time. It's fascinating what people are willing to sell. One guy is pimping himself out for prom season. \$300 per dance." She sees my mutilated Times and gasps. "Oh no, the front page. Here, read mine."

I take the single sheet of newsprint from her but at the same time say, "It's fine. I usually just read the business section anyway."

She scrunches her eyebrows. "Why? That's like the most boring section of the entire paper."

I shrug and blow on my coffee. "I don't usually have time."

She frowns. "Want some of mine?"

I stare at this woman, sitting in my seat at my table, and I ask, "Is that a come-on?"

She blushes. "No, I didn't mean it like that. I meant that I have a lot of time, sometimes it seems like too much."

I grunt, "I wish I had that problem."

She stares at me for a minute and then goes back to reading the Classifieds. I'm still holding her front page, so I start reading it. Airstrikes, politics, Kim Jong Un being Kim Jong Un. There is an article about piecing Lombardo's statue of David back together. Apparently, somebody dropped him and now all the king's horses and all the king's men have to fix it. That's got to be a tedious job requiring a lot of patience and time.

The woman laughs at something.

"What?" I ask.

She shows me an ad. Apparently three days before, someone rolled through a stop sign and was now sorry. It's kind of humorous, so I kind of chuckle. The woman yawns.

I comment, "Must be an early bird to be here at this time of the morning."

"Why? What time is it?"

I glance at my watch. "7:45?"

She folds up her newspaper. "That's pretty late. I should be getting to bed." She drains the last drop of her coffee.

"Bed? But you just had coffee," I say, flabbergasted.

She winks. "Decaf." She tosses her cup into the trash can several feet away and punches the air when she hears it hit the bottom. "Three points! Well, thanks for the chat. See you tomorrow."

And I do. She's sitting in the same spot as if she never left. I sit down without any hesitation and begin reading the business section.

She looks up and smiles. "It's you."

I nod. "Up a bit late, aren't you? It's almost eight o'clock."

"What can I say? Insomnia's a butthole."

"Is that why you plague the barristas at seven in the morning?"

"That and a burning desire to read the Classifieds."

I chuckle. She swings her snowflake pendant back and forth between her fingers. And then, we're chatting, about coffee, the barristas, the news. She reads me some of the more unbelievable ads from the Times. We both laugh. She reads another. Suddenly, the phone in my pocket buzzes. I pull it out to look at the screen. I jump out of my seat.

"Someone dying?" she asks wryly.

"No, just a calendar reminder. I have a meeting," I explain. I leave off the part where it starts in five minutes, and I'm already late.

"Oh, you're one of those people," she says

"What people?"

"The people whose phones tell them what to do, who with, and what's the best route through traffic to get there."

I roll my eyes. "I can think for myself, thanks."

She smirks over the lid of her coffee. "Sure you can. Prove it. Sit down and finish your coffee." Her pendant swings.

I realize I haven't touched my cup since I sat down. I take a gulp. It's cold. Time is back, and it is passing. I snap on the lid and stand up.

I ask, "See you tomorrow?"

She frowns. "Maybe, maybe not."

I stop wrapping the scarf around my neck. "Do you have somewhere else you have to be tomorrow?"

She answers a little testily. "I don't have to be anywhere. *I* choose where I go."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

She raises her cup to her lips. "It means you won't finish your coffee with me."

I hesitate. I'm late. I don't want to be later, but I'm also already late so what's it matter. But it does matter. I can see only one solution. Looking her straight in the eye, I down my beverage in two gulps.

When I step back into the world, a church bell clangs, and my legs automatically keep rhythm with the grandfather clock in my head. There's never enough time.

She isn't there the next day. My familiar spot is empty. I sit down with my latte and New York Times. I immediately flip to the business section, but then, I stop. I take a sip of coffee and turn to the classifieds. Someone's actually written in "I like Pina Coladas and gettin' caught in the rain." Someone has too much time on their hands.

I feel the table shift. I fold the paper in half and see her sitting across from me, her brown eyes half-closed with sleep.

"You're late," I say, trying to force a fake noted of severity into my voice.

"I'm never late. You're just early."

I roll my eyes. "Oh, okay, I see." I continue reading ridiculous advertisements.

I hear her unfold her paper. "My name's Alexis, by the way."

"I'm John," I blurt out. We both realize we crossed a Rubicon and look up from our papers. We stare at each other, and I can hear the seconds ticking away in my head. I want to say something witty and charming, but my phone vibrates to remind me there's a marathon today so some of the roads are closed and I really need to be going.

Alexis doesn't challenge me today, doesn't tell me to finish my coffee, doesn't try to stop my leaving. She just goes back to reading the paper. I glance down. She's reading the business section.

The next day, she's late again, but this time I wait for her so we can order together. She gets here a few minutes after me and orders a tall Chai latte.

"No decaf?" I ask.

She smiles and shakes her head. I notice the circles around her eyes are lighter. "Not today. I'm on a normal-people schedule today."

"But I thought you hated schedules," I comment as we move to our table. I notice one of its legs is short. The janitor must have accidentally switched the table while cleaning.

I wobble the table a little for emphasis. "Uh, do you mind if we move to that table?" I motion to the one next to us that has four equal-length legs.

"No, I like this spot. Let's stay here." She takes the lid off her coffee and spreads out her newspaper.

Okay, I think. I fold my newspaper in half and shove it under the short leg to minimize the distraction.

"You never answered my question," I say.

She looks up from the business section. "I wasn't aware you asked one."

"I thought you hated schedules," I repeat.

She smirks. "That's technically not a question." She starts swinging the snowflake pendant between her fingers. "All right, I'm not on a schedule. Let's say, rather, I'm back in rhythm."

"Your insomnia's gone?" I ask with a smile.

She nods. "Yep."

I take a sip. "Any idea what caused it?"

She shrugs. "Sometimes I don't sleep. Sometimes I do." The snowflake misses a beat. Then, it's swinging back in time with the grandfather clock in my ear.

The conversation falters, but then, I remember, "Oh, hey, Alexis, I forgot to tell you yesterday someone took out an ad proclaiming their love for Pina Coladas."

"And getting caught in the rain?"

I nod, and we start tearing through the classifieds to see if it's still there. Soon, we're chatting again, about the city, the weather, which Starbucks holiday drink is better.

Then, she asks me, "Hey, what's the time?"

I glance at my phone. "8:25, why?"

She jumps out of her seat. "Shiz, I'm late."

"For what?" I ask, but she's too busy stuffing herself into her winter gear to hear me before she runs out. I sigh. Never enough time.

Today's a Saturday, but I get up anyway. Who knows? Maybe she still goes on the weekends. I'm running a little late, but I can see Alexis in line in front of me. She seems frazzled. After I pick up my coffee, I go over to the extra sugar bar where Alexis is dumping fistfuls of packets in her Chai. She snaps on a lid, spins around, and almost collides with me.

"Oh, John!" she exclaims. She looks at the watch on her wrist. I do a double-take. There's a watch on her wrist. And she's not wearing her pendant.

"I'm so sorry," she says. "I can't chat today. Maybe tomorrow." And with that, she's gone, no explanations, no excuses, just like a ghost. I stand at the sugar bar for a very long moment. Then, I take my coffee to go. Outside, I slowly sip it as I walk down the street. I know I'm surrounded by clocks. The city has thousands of them, alternatively displaying the time and the freezing temperature. But I notice none of them. There's never enough time, so why bother with it anyway?

The cold starts leaching feeling from my fingers, so I stuff my hand in my pocket. Something sharp jabs me. I pull out Alexis' snowflake pendant. I stare at it trying to comprehend how it ended up in my pocket. She must've had it in her hand when she bumped into me and then dropped it. She dropped her pendant.

I take off running. Back to the coffee shop. I slide through the door and completely ignore the line. One man yells at me, but I don't have time. I shout at the barista.

"Hey! Alexis, the dark-haired girl, usually orders a decaf Chai latte, you know her?"

The barista doesn't stop filling orders. "Yeah, usually comes in before eight. Reads the paper. I know her."

"Do you know where she lives?"

The barista looks at me like I've grown a third nipple in the middle of my forehead. "Why would I know that?"

I sigh. "Look, I need to find her. I don't have a lot of time."

The barista raises his eyebrows and points over his shoulder to the growing list of orders. "Nobody has time, bub."

I slap a hand on the counter. "I know! Just-. Do you know anything about her that could help me? Please, I really need to find her."

"Dude, you're the one who's always hitting on her. What do you know?"

I stop to think. I know-I know- what do I know? I know she likes winter and people-watching and Chai and she doesn't always sleep well. I know she likes the barista who works on Tuesdays because he usually gives her an extra shot of espresso on the house. I know she thinks the business section of the paper is boring, but she reads it anyway. I know she doesn't like cars or tea or hipsters.

I know she was wearing a watch today and she wasn't wearing her pendant. And she was wearing something else, too. I start to remember. She had a purple square pinned to her shirt, a badge. What did the badge say? I close my eyes trying to picture it. Amsterdam Nursing Home. Yeah, Amsterdam Nursing Home. That's nearby. I know where that is. I run.

There's a subway station around the corner. I check the time on my phone. 9:03. The next train will be along any moment. I run down the escalator and through the gate, the whole world pulsing like a clock. I manage to slide through the train doors just before they cut me in half and I hold up everyone's morning.

The ride is only a few stops long. Thank heavens. I'm smushed in the middle of a tour group all dressed in identical neon green shirts. When I finally get out, I feel like a pea being squeezed from its pod, slimy and small. But I'm running out of time.

I run up the escalators, trying to get back to the surface quickly as possible. The daylight is cold and blinding, but I don't stop. I keep running. Around a corner. Down a block. Until I'm finally standing in front of it, Amsterdam Nursing Home, a tall red-brick building. With white crenellations. And a dark-haired girl who usually orders a decaf Chai latte sitting on a bench, crying.

I sit beside her. I hold out the pendant, swinging it a little. "You dropped this back at Starbucks."

She wipes the snot from her nose on her sleeve. "How? How did you-?"

"The badge." I point to the plastic rectangle clipped to her chest. I see now that it's a volunteer badge. "Do you volunteer here every week?"

She nods. "Well, usually. I missed last week." She sniffles.

"Because you weren't sleeping?"

"Yeah." A few more tears leak out of her eyes.

I ask, "Why are you crying?"

She waves a hand at the home. "My mother has Alzheimer's. That's why I volunteer here. To spend the day with her and help out a little."

"Okay," I say, quietly urging her to continue.

Alexis' shoulders shudder as a sob passes through her. "She doesn't remember me. She doesn't know who I am. Two weeks ago she knew. But now she doesn't." Tears are streaming down her face again. And suddenly her arms are wrapped around my waist, and she's crying into my shoulder. I quietly drop the pendant in her coat pocket and place my hands on her back, rubbing in small circles.

“Shh,” I soothe. “It’s okay. It’s okay to cry. Take your time. We’ve got loads of time.”

We’ve got loads of time.

II. POETRY & ART

A LESSER FINITUDE

Caitlin Clancy

The life of man
In verse encapsulated –
And can this be?
No, no more
Than into a hole
A child can pour the sea.

BUDAPEST

Courtney Goodridge



TO THE FATHER

Caitlin Clancy

Come,
Willow-weaver,
Speak to your children –
The heavens broil
With your fragrant fume

As the deeps yet boil
Still loyal,
Still loyal,
As the deeps yet boil
With wild white spume

Freshets gurgle forth
Your silent name
Icicles hold
Your truth
The same

Fast in the world
Fast in the world

Words spoken
Wrongly
About you
Burn and blemish
Their artisans

Mis-and-disuse
Alike offend you

Though to ignorance
You are compassion –
Yea,
Even the most knowing dust
You cherish

By all
Are you
Willing

Or unwillingly
Willed

Water cleanses –
Makes new again –
The heavens and deeps
Freshets and ice
Mountains and men
Planets and mice

And nothing,
Nothing,
Escapes you

So –
Come,
Willow-weaver,
Speak to your children
You are the weaver
Of worlds
And of men.

TREE SONGS

Brandon Sherbo

Red-brick arms
Wrap around the playground.
The building is an artificial mother
Constructed to teach her children
And keep them safe outside.

Her playground was once
made of wood
Like trees had been
Sung into their shapes
by a forest nymph or a dryad,
a creature that used its magic
good magic
to bend wood and snap it together
for excited children and then
let them grow with it.

The arms are still there
But there is no nymph,
No sorceress among the trees nearby.
There are only iron ribs
Reaching out of mulch
And steel slides that shine
In bright sunlight
but can't drink any of it,
can't grow,
can't wither away like the wood did.

ENLIGHTENMENT

Caitlin Clancy



THE WARLOCK

Brandon Sherbo

Across the drop-off and the ravine
Between the crab-apple tree,
The warehouse looms
Like a haunted castle
On a Pennsylvania hill,
A rural stronghold
Of an ancient evil
“and the KKK,” so she said
Before she started making
plans to break in
And shouting dares at us
to enter its doors.

Mother Nature tries to block
the view of it
From my wide, wall-length window.
The crab-apple titan
that stood before it
was once
Glorious
a king of flora.
And now its limbs lie in slotted
Piles in a muddy yard that is drowned in rain,
perhaps punished by the malevolent witch-king
for its attempt
At hiding darkness from the eyesight
Of something good.

The place is empty now
Empty of evil I think,
But not of The Dark.
All I see through its glass is gloom
And the graffiti on its walls
Make it lawless and dangerous.

Look away if you are running past it
Take a glance while you drive
But never enter, never touch it or think about it.

There is something forbidden
In empty warehouses,

In broken windows
That have rumors of racism and black magic
On the tops of these Pennsylvania hills.

KICKSTAND

Courtney Goodridge



DUCHESS FOR A DAY

Arielle Tipa

I'm in your room, Marie Antoinette,
and you won't be back 'till noon.
So I'll just stay and wait for you,
and feast on macaroons.

UNTITLED

Courtney Goodridge



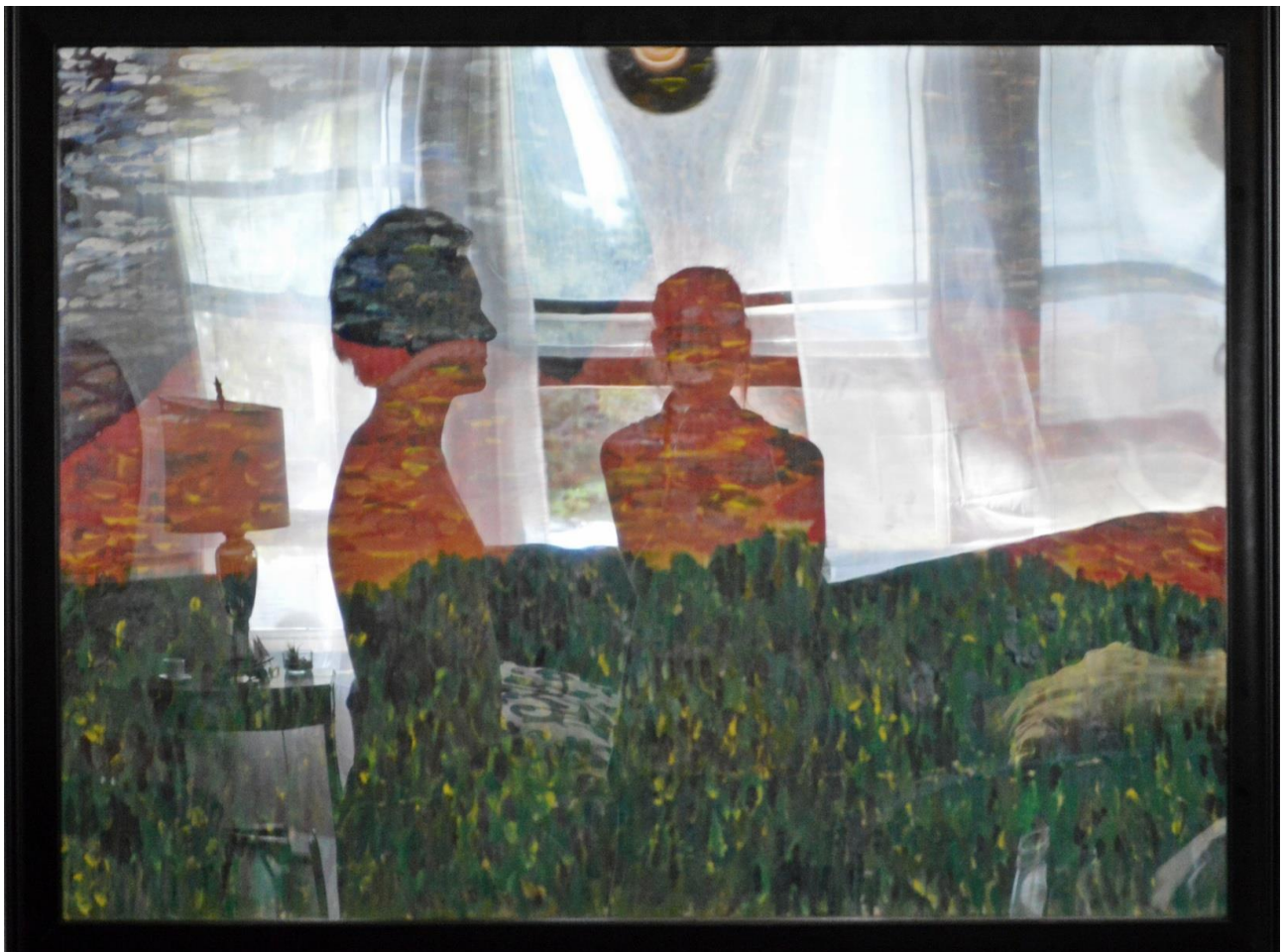
I KILLED THE KING

Arielle Tipa

I killed the king,
the mightiest of kings,
and I'm sitting beneath his head.
His head is mounted upon my wall,
t'is plastered above my bed.

SILHOUETTES

Blanche Helbling



IV. DRAMA

THE OPPOSITION

Courtney Dunn

CHARACTERS

Dr. Gerald Packer, 52 Philosophy Professor, Chair of Bloomsburg University's Philosophy Department

Dr. Andrew Reinhardt, 35 Philosophy Professor

TIME AND PLACE

May 6, 1970. Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Gerald Packer's office in the philosophy department.

(At Rise: Dr. Packer sits at a large, wooden desk reading a paper. He balances a pen between his teeth. On his desk are two stacks of papers. Packer flips the page of the paper in his hands and lies it down on the smaller of the two stacks. He picks up another from the larger stack and begins to read.

There is a harsh knock at the door, and Dr. Packer looks up from his reading.)

PACKER

(with pen in mouth)

Come in!

(REINHARDT enters. PACKER removes pen from mouth, and returns the paper to its stack. He fiddles with the pen.)

PACKER

Dr. Reinhardt. How are you?

(REINHARDT storms over to the chair in front of PACKER'S desk and throws himself into it.)

PACKER

Take a seat--

REINHARDT

--I received a letter today from President Nossen. It says that I can no longer talk about the war in my classes.

PACKER

It is a touchy topic these days.

REINHARDT

It also mentions you, Gerry. It says that you are the one who informed Nossen of my lectures.

PACKER

That would be correct.

REINHARDT

Well Nossen will be here in ten minutes. I have called a meeting between the three of us.

PACKER

It was generous of you to inform me of this meeting.

REINHARDT

I wanted to talk to you first.

PACKER

And what is it that you would like to talk to me about?

REINHARDT

I want to continue teaching my classes the way I see fit. You and I are both scholarly enough to understand the importance of instilling current trends in our classes.

PACKER

Yes, Andrew, but I do not believe the war is an appropriate topic.

REINHARDT

Why?! *(with growing frustration.)* You know as much as I do that the war is a significant part of today's society. It creates numerous philosophical questions and debates. It is not only ideal to discuss it, but ignorant not to!

PACKER

It's not the topic of war that's causing problems, Andrew. It's the opposition that you have been instilling in your lectures that causes concern.

(PACKER leans forward putting the pen down, resting both elbows on the desk.)

REINHARDT

I'm just teaching my students that there's more than one answer. There's more than one solution!

PACKER

Yes, and that's fine. But you cannot push anti-war thoughts on students.

REINHARDT

I am not pushing--

PACKER

--Your students have been complaining, Andrew. They come into my office every other day and tell me about your lectures. The way you stress anti-war propaganda. The way you talk about nothing else.

(REINHARDT leans forward in the chair, gripping the arms.)

REINHARDT

That is not the whole story!

PACKER

One student even informed me that you told them it was the only way. That pro-war goes against everything moral.

(REINHARDT slouches back in chair.)

PACKER

Now tell me how that's approaching both sides of the debate.

REINHARDT

It's not that simple. *(Leans forward in chair.)* You know as much as I do that this war is pure bullshit. We just went into Cambodia! Fuckin' *neutral* Cambodia! This war is spreading like a virus. If Americans don't begin to protest, nothing will stop it! Nixon is uncontrollable until the population puts a foot down.

(REINHARDT stomps his foot against the tiled floor.)

PACKER

But your opinion is only one side of the issue. You know that. You're a goddamn philosophy professor. You can't go pushing your moral ideas and opinions on students. Students that are trying to learn how to think strategically with an open mind. What you're doing goes against everything that we try to instill in this academic field.

REINHARDT

But —

(PACKER leans against the back of his seat.)

PACKER

--And what about Kent State? You saw what happened two days ago. Four kids *(holds up four fingers)* were shot dead. Dead. And nine more were wounded. Do you want that to happen here? Do you really want our students protesting right now?

REINHARDT

Not every protest turns out that way. You know that.

PACKER

What I know, Andrew. Is that things have taken a drastic turn in these past few weeks. Protests aren't small and peaceful. Not anymore. I can not risk that with our students. I *will not* risk that.

REINHARDT

....

(PACKER leans forward again, folding his hands together on top of his desk. He looks REINHARDT in the eyes.)

PACKER

I cannot. Let you. Teach. Your side.

REINHARDT

This goes against my rights. This goes against my rights as an educator and as a human being. I have a voice. Students have a voice! They need to know this, and they need to be able to use it!

PACKER

Let me ask you, Professor Reinhardt. Where is this coming from? Why are you so opposed to this war?

REINHARDT

(REINHARDT leans back into his chair.)

I am against this war because it goes against everything I believe in. *(counts off on his fingers.)* Violence over piece. Dragging out our problems. Dragging out the problems of others. *Instinct over intellect!* *(Throws hands in air.)* This war has done nothing but demonstrate the government's power over us. Nixon is out of control. We, the citizens of the United States, need to take back that control.

PACKER

Is that all?

REINHARDT

(With increasing anger)

No, that's not all. Men, our own men, have to return from missions in secret. Ditch their uniforms. Change their clothes. They have to sneak off of airplanes in the middle of the night. Why? Because the citizens of this country oppose this war. Is it right that they attack our troops for it? No. But does it prove a point? Yes.

(REINHARDT stands up, leaning into the desk, pointing one finger at PACKER.)

It proves that the government isn't listening. *(Jabs finger at PACKER.)* It proves that there are long-term psychological implications of this war for both sides. *(Jabs finger again.)* It proves that there is something wrong!

PACKER

Sit down, Andrew. Are you done?

REINHARDT

Oh don't ask that, as if my opinion doesn't matter from the moment it leaves my mouth.

(REINHARDT sits down in the chair, arms crossed. PACKER stands up and moves towards the door. He casually leans his back against it. REINHARDT continues to look forward, glaring at the spot PACKER previously occupied. There is a moment of silence between the two.)

PACKER

It's not that your opinion doesn't matter, Andrew. You know that. But, look. These students do not need this. Some of them have fathers, brothers, and lifelong friends who are fighting right now. Some are questioning their duties here, while their loved ones fight in some foreign country. How do you think it makes them feel when they hear that you oppose what their loved ones are doing? What they themselves are contemplating with mixed feelings? You're just confusing them, Andrew. This campus is for learning. Not protesting. Students come to get an education. Let the news do the rest--

REINHARDT

--Let the *news do the rest*? What is wrong with you, Gerry? Since when do we let the *news* teach for us?....Let me ask you. Why are you so against my position?....Do you support the war?

PACKER

Yes. I do.

REINHARDT

Why?

(From his place at the door, PACKER turns to face REINHARDT.)

PACKER

That is not important in this matter.

REINHARDT

Oh. Oh I'm sure it is of the utmost importance.

(REINHARDT turns his chair to face PACKER.)

This is about you as much as it is about me, isn't it Gerry? This is about your feelings towards the war. Your *pro-war* feelings.

PACKER

I said. This is of no importance.

REINHARDT

AND I SAY IT IS!!

(A moment of silence follows REINHARDT'S exclamation.)

You support this war. I don't. You don't like that I am teaching *the opposition*. That I am teaching students *the alternative*. That I am teaching them what is RIGHT!

PACKER

RIGHT TO YOU!! Right to you, Andrew.

(Another moment of silence passes between the two. PACKER returns to his seat behind the desk. REINHARDT turns his chair back to face the desk.)

I come from a family of veterans. My great-grandfather. My grandfather. My own father, uncles, and brother. Soldiers! Four of them died for the cause! And my nephew is in the war now. There is no way in hell I will let you preach against what my family has done. What they are still doing!

REINHARDT

Ah ha. That's what I thought. There's the truth of the matter. *(Folds hands over chest, relaxing.)* So what about you, Gerry? Why aren't you fighting this war--

PACKER

--My job is here! *(Leans forward in direction of REINHARDT)* My job is here making sure that people like you *(points finger at REINHARDT)* are teaching what you are supposed to be teaching!

REINHARDT

(Smugly.)

Oh, Gerry. You're just as opinionated as I am. We're just two sides of one war.

PACKER

Maybe that's true. But I have the support that you lack, and I will not allow you to preach the opposition anymore.

REINHARDT

So what do you teach in your classes?

(REINHARDT picks up a paper off of the larger stack on PACKER'S DESK. He skims each page, flipping through the pages quickly.)

REINHARDT

Applied Logic. Hmmm.

PACKER

I don't teach the war in my classes.

REINHARDT

Well no wonder. War and logic don't exactly go together.

(REINHARDT stops flipping through the paper, and places it back on the pile. He looks PACKER in the eyes.)

PACKER

I will not discuss this with you anymore. Not until Nossen gets here.

REINHARDT

You said your nephew is in the war right now?

PACKER

....

REINHARDT

Don't you worry about him? Don't you care enough to see that he is risking his life for nothing?

(Beat.)

Or is that what makes you all so proud?

PACKER

Why are you doing this?

REINHARDT

Why?

(REINHARDT leans forward, grabbing another paper off of a stack.)

Because I was proud too. Until my brother died. One week into his mission. And for what?

(REINHARDT slowly tears paper into pieces.)

Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

(REINHARDT tosses the pieces of paper in the air.)

(Beat.)

PACKER

I'm sorry, Andrew....But I still can't let you teach this way. It's not appropriate for class.

REINHARDT

You mean not appropriate for your standards?

PACKER

I mean not appropriate for students. This isn't the place for you to retaliate against your brother's death.

REINHARDT

But it is the place to support it, huh?

(Beat.)

PACKER

I don't want to punish you for your actions, Andrew. This is the easiest way to avoid more problems. Just leave the war. Out of the classroom.

REINHARDT

I can't do that, Gerry. My students deserve to know what's going on.

(Beat.)

PACKER

Ok.

(PACKER picks up a fragment of the paper from his desk. He straightens it out on one of the piles. He picks up his pen and fiddles with it in his hand.)

I respect your ambition. I respect your desire to teach. I always have.

REINHARDT

Thank you —

PACKER

--But if you continue to teach war opposition. You're teaching contract will not be renewed in the fall.

(Beat.)

REINHARDT

You can't do that. You wouldn't.

PARKER

I can. And I will. I've already asked the president, and he agrees with this decision. I'm sure that's what he believes this meeting is about.

REINHARDT

This job is all I have, Gerry. You know that.

PACKER

Then I guess you'll have to do whatever it takes not to lose it.

(Beat.)

REINHARDT

(Softly) I have a voice.

(A soft knock is heard at the door.)

PACKER

Yes. You do. And you better use it wisely.

(Another knock at the door.)

PARKER

I really am sorry, Andrew. About your loss.

(Beat.)

REINHARDT

Yea. And I'm sorry that you're so proud of yours.

END OF PLAY

IV. LITERARY CRITICISM

"THE WAR OF EXISTENCE": REPRESENTING ARTISTIC STRUGGLE IN RADCLYFFE HALL'S *THE WELL OF LONELINESS* AND JAMES JOYCE'S *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*

Brian Mazeski

It would appear that Stephen Dedalus and Stephen Gordon, the protagonist-artists of *The Well of Loneliness*ⁱ (1928) and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*ⁱⁱ (1916), share the same first name and not much else. For while Stephen Gordon—"a rich, independent woman"—is seen buying cars and villas, Stephen Dedalus is seen "drain[ing] his third cup of watery tea" and packing "secondhand clothes" for his trip to Paris (Hall 129, Joyce 138, 275). Moreover, where Stephen Gordon, supporting England's "national endeavor" in World War I, exclaims—"good God, one must do something!"—Stephen Dedalus feels no such national obligations, remarking (in)famously, "I will not serve"ⁱⁱⁱ (Hall 267, Joyce 268). Despite the markedly different financial situations, degrees of nationalism, and sexualities of their novels' protagonist-artists, however, Hall and Joyce agree on—and so represent in their texts—one crucial aspect of the *künstlerroman* genre: the struggle of the artist. Both authors present this artistic struggle in military terms and as a kind of hostile encounter—a "war of existence" (Hall 334)—in which the artist must either carve out a space or be carved out; must silence the stifling voices of society, nation, and religion or be silenced. By using warlike language and imagery to describe Stephen Dedalus's efforts to "elu[de] social and religious orders" and Stephen Gordon's endeavor to "make the world respect her [the artist-invert]," Hall and Joyce illuminate the hostile struggle artists must engage in (with society, with their country, even with their family) to establish and express their artistic identity and vocation (Joyce 175, Hall 339).

In both novels warlike language and imagery first appears while Stephen Dedalus and Stephen Gordon are still in the process of realizing their artistic vocation and, as a result, vulnerable to whatever "nets" society, nation, and family might launch at them (Joyce 220). In an early scene in *Portrait*, for instance, after the Dedalus family has just arrived in Dublin, Stephen Dedalus feels as though he is being "enlisted" for a forthcoming battle involving his father (Joyce 68). By presenting young Stephen Dedalus's possible allegiance to his father with the language of military recruitment and conflict, Joyce demonstrates the way in which artists struggle to resist being co-opted to serve various "social orders" (Joyce 175). Stephen Dedalus, acting as audience for his father, "became aware that his father had enemies and that some fight was going to take place [...]. He felt too that he was being enlisted for the fight, that some duty was being laid upon his shoulders" (Joyce 68). Joyce's word choice here—"enemies," "fight," "enlisted," "duty"—illustrates how the demands of society and family bear heavily on artists and their attempts to form an identity that falls outside of the boundaries of social orders. To be an artist, Joyce suggests, is to struggle with and against "duty," be it national or familial, public or domestic. In staging this moment in which Stephen Dedalus becomes aware of and "feels" how he is being enlisted to fulfill a "duty"—dim as that duty may appear to the young Dedalus—Joyce figures family as something with which artists must often struggle in order to establish their artistic identity and vocation.

In *The Well*, on the other hand, Stephen Gordon's artistic struggle is not with her father but with her mother, Lady Anna Gordon. At the same time, where Stephen Dedalus struggles to establish his artistic identity, Stephen Gordon struggles to establish her identity as an artist *and* an invert; as Hall makes clear throughout the novel, artistry and inversion are inter-animating and inseparable points of identity for Stephen Gordon. Hall describes Stephen Gordon's "clash" with her mother on

“the subject of clothes” with combative, military language in order to point out how artists – and in this case, artist-inverts – must struggle to express their identity even on the level of “apparel” (Hall 73). Describing the conflict between Stephen Gordon and Lady Anna, the narrator explains:

These days there was *constant warfare* between them on the subject of clothes; quite a *seemly warfare* [...] Nevertheless it was *open warfare*, the inevitable *clash* of two *opposing* natures who sought to express themselves in apparel, since clothes, after all, are a form of self-expression. The *victory* would be now on this side [...] Sometimes Anna would *triumph* [...] Anna got her own way at this time, for Stephen would suddenly give up the *contest*, reduced to *submission* by Anna’s disappointment [...] (Hall 73, emphasis mine)

Hall here employs and repeats combative language and imagery to demonstrate the way in which familial and societal notions of propriety threaten to foreclose the possibility of artistic-inverted expression. As Hall’s many iterations of “warfare” point out, when Stephen Gordon and Lady Anna are shopping for clothes they are actually engaging in a “seemly” but nonetheless “open” warfare over “a form of self-expression”; thus Stephen Gordon and Lady Anna cease to be mother and daughter and become instead “two opposing natures” that “clash” over how (and if) Stephen Gordon should express her identity. “Victory,” “triumph,” “contest,” “submission” – through these dialectical and hostile terms Hall emphasizes how artists and artistic self-expression (by way of apparel) run the risk of being “reduced to submission” by the “disappointment” of either society or their family.

In a similar moment of warfare in *Portrait*, Stephen Dedalus, deferring the responsibilities of his role as farcical pedagogue in the play, stands outside a shed near the theater, talking to Heron. By using military language to describe Stephen Dedalus’ aversion to “hollowsounding voices” (Heron’s included) that “seduce” and demand service, Joyce reveals the various societal and national forces that act on artists in an attempt to stifle and reshape their artistic identity. During Stephen Dedalus’ conversation with Heron, the narrator remarks:

This spirit of quarrelsome comradeship which [Stephen] had observed lately in [Heron] had not seduced Stephen from his habits of quiet obedience. He [...] doubted the sincerity of such comradeship which seemed to him a sorry anticipation of manhood [...] he had heard [...] the constant voices of his father and of his masters, urging him to be a gentleman above all things [...] he had heard another voice urging him to be strong and manly and healthy [...] yet another voice had bidden him to be true to his country [...] the voice of his school comrades urged him to be a decent fellow [...] He gave [these voices] ear only for a time but he was happy only when he was far from them, beyond their call [...] (Joyce 88)

In this scene – a kind of prefiguration of Stephen Dedalus’ later speech about the “nets” flung by nationality, language, and religion – Joyce calls attention to the various “hollowsounding voices” of father, fatherland, and fraternity that “urge” artists not only to conform to and fulfill certain roles but to do so “above all things,” which is to say, above being an artist. As Joyce points out, moreover, what Stephen Dedalus is particularly wary of is “comradeship” – yet another warlike term – and the way in which it attempts to coerce artists to abide by societal and national ideals of “manhood,”

nationalism, and “decency.” The struggle of the artist, as Joyce’s representation here suggests, includes overcoming these “hollowsounding voices” – moving “far from them,” as Stephen Dedalus does – in order to establish an artistic identity outside of their range, “beyond their call.” In the same way Hall presents apparel and familial “disappointment” as a kind of warfare that hems in on the formation of artistic identity, Joyce situates manhood, nationalism, and “being a decent fellow” as social orders that “urge” and “call” on artists – much like a “call of duty” would – to participate in a “comradeship” instead of realizing their artistic identity and vocation.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this imagery of “comradeship” also appears in *The Well*, especially during the scenes in which Stephen Gordon is with Valérie Seymour’s coterie of invert-artists. Hall saturates her descriptions of Valérie Seymour’s circle of artist-inverts (Stephen Gordon included) with hostile and warlike language in order to accurately represent the struggles artists face in “hack[ing] out” for themselves “a niche in existence” (Hall 349). The “poetess” Margaret Roland, for instance, is “the staunchest of allies,” and Adolphe Blanc, the designer, encourages Stephen Gordon – whose “work’s [her] only weapon” – to “never stop fighting” (Hall 351, 352). Valérie Seymour, moreover, is said to create in her apartment “an atmosphere of courage” in which the artist-invert coterie – described as a “strange company” – feels “brave” (Hall 352). Strands of this warlike imagery and language converge in Hall’s description of Pat, the moth and beetle collector, who “seemed haunted by General Custer [...] ‘It’s Custer’s last ride, all the time,’ she would say [...] the whole damned world’s out to scalp us!” (Hall 356). Taken together, then, Valérie Seymour’s artistic circle emerges as a (military) “company” made up of “allies” who feel “brave” in Valérie’s “atmosphere of courage” and are advised to “never stop fighting,” especially when, as Pat – who is haunted by a general, no less – points out, the experience of being an artist-invert is like “Custer’s last ride, all the time.” Hall here infuses her descriptions of the Parisian artistic crowd with military terms – as well as with what are often understood to be military values (“courage” and “bravery”) – in order to illuminate the way in which artists and artist-inverts must struggle with a “whole damned world” that is out to “scalp” them, using their “work” – their artistry – as their “only weapon” (or their “only arms,”^{iv} as Stephen Dedalus might say). At the same time, by situating Valérie Seymour’s “company” – complete with their own “weapons” and “allies” – alongside the famous chasing-down of General Custer in the Great Sioux War of 1876, Hall figures artists as having to contend with a “whole damned world” in order to establish their artistic identity, much in the same way Joyce presents Stephen Dedalus as having to overcome various “hollowsounding voices.”

In *Portrait*, however, companies and squads are precisely what Stephen Dedalus must avoid in order to successfully establish his artistic identity. To this end Joyce stages moments in the text where the formation of Stephen Dedalus’ artistic identity is contingent upon his evading the many “squads” of Ireland’s Catholic Church. Arriving at the university, Stephen Dedalus acknowledges that he “had passed beyond the challenge of the sentries who had stood as guardians of his boyhood and had sought to keep him among them that he might be subject to them and serve their ends” (Joyce 178). Having apparently summoned these “sentries” and “guardians,” Stephen then encounters a “squad of Christian brothers [...] on its way back from the Bull and [...] beg[inning] to pass, two by two, across the bridge,” paying particular attention to the “uncouth faces [that] passed two by two” (Joyce 179). Joyce here recuperates the warlike language and imagery he previously uses to describe Stephen Dedalus’ relationship with his father and repurposes it to delineate the way in which the “squads,” “guardians,” and “sentries” of religion seek to “subject” artists to “serv[ing] their ends.” Had Stephen Dedalus not “passed beyond the challenge” of these religious “sentries,” Joyce points out, his artistic identity would have been compromised (if not erased) and he would have been “kept

among them" as just another "uncouth face" in the "squad of Christian brothers," marching "two by two." By opting to use this military language and imagery—"guardians," "sentries," "squads" passing "two by two"—to represent Stephen Dedalus's struggle to avoid a subsuming Christian "squad" and establish his own artistic identity, Joyce demonstrates how artistic struggle involves "pass[ing beyond the challenge[s]]" of religious orders and stating plainly, as Stephen Dedalus himself says, "I will not serve."

Stephen Gordon and the Parisian circle of artist-inverts, however, *will* serve, especially when it comes to "hack[ing] out a niche in existence" for themselves. Hall presents this process of "hack[ing] out" and establishing artistic-inverted identity as a kind of warlike advance, thus illustrating the way in which artists must struggle to stake a claim to existence in the face of national and societal constraints. Describing Valérie Seymour's coterie of artist-inverts, the narrator remarks:

[They] were writers, painters, musicians and scholars [...] who [...] had determined to hack out a niche in existence. Many of them had already arrived, while some were still rather painfully hacking; not a few would fall by the way, it is true, but as they fell others would take their places. Over the bodies of prostrate comrades those others must fall in their turn or go on hacking [...] (Hall 349)

Hall's description of the battle artist-inverts must fight in order to carve out a space in existence strongly resembles a military advance or charge, in which soldiers "fall by the way" and others, stepping "over the bodies of prostrate comrades," "take their places." For Hall, however, the "comrades" are not soldiers but artists—"writers, painters, musicians and scholars"—and the conflict in which they engage is not a physical war but a "war of existence," wherein artists must struggle to form and legitimize their artistic identity. In staging this scene in which the local artistic struggle of the Parisian artist-inverts maps out onto a hostile—and familiar—image of soldiers pressing forth (with some seemingly ending up as cannon fodder), Hall sheds light on the relentless struggle—the "painful hacking"—artists must negotiate in order to establish and express their artistic identity.

It becomes increasingly clear, then, that Radclyffe Hall and James Joyce were two authors for whom the task of accurately representing the struggle of the artist was paramount. For it is not the "air raids" and "bombs" of World War I, after all, that Hall has Stephen Gordon cite as beleaguering the artist-invert but rather "that terrible silent bombardment from the batteries of God's good people" (Hall 271). Indeed, as Hall and Joyce suggest, the bombardment of the artist is silent, the voices that seek to co-opt him or her are "hollowsounding" (Joyce 88), and the struggle for artistic identity—between artist and family, artist and nation, artist and religion—is not a kinetic, physical war but an ontological war, "a war of existence," one that Hall and Joyce believe is most accurately represented with warlike language and imagery. Both authors, acknowledging the struggle for artistic identity's "semblance" of war and its "distance from it" (Joyce 171), present hostility and conflict as the dialectical imagery through which they delineate artistic struggle. Different as the protagonist-artists of their novels may be, Hall and Joyce both illuminate—not through the identification of war but through the war of identification—how the process of establishing and expressing artistic identity and vocation becomes a kind of "constant warfare," a shrugging off of the nets flung at artists to hold them back from flight.

Works Cited

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ⁱ Hereafter abbreviated to *The Well*.

ⁱⁱ Hereafter abbreviated to *Portrait*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Stephen Dedalus says this when Cranly asks if he will make his Easter duty. His declaration, however, anticipates and resonates with what he later tells Cranly: "Look here, Cranly, he said. You had asked me what I would do and what I would not do. I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my deference the only arms I allow myself to use — silence, exile, and cunning" (268).

^{iv} (Joyce 268).