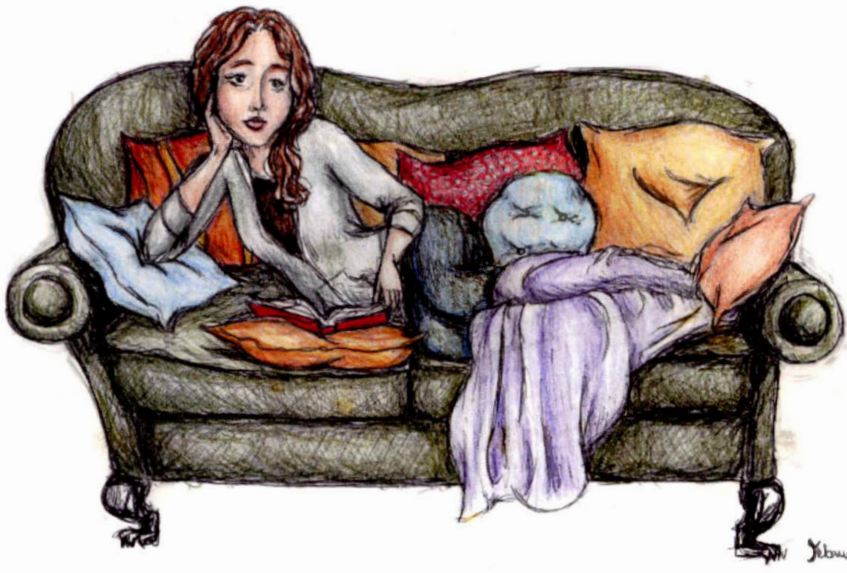


Milligan College's

The  
**Phoenix**

*Literary Magazine*  
2010



---

# Phoenix

2010



**A journal of contributions in the literary and  
visual arts from the students of  
Milligan College**

## **Staff**

**Executive Editor** Emily Arnold

Kara Patterson

**Faculty Advisor** Dr. Ruth McDowell

**Publisher** CopyNet

## Table of Contents

Poetry	
Meaning—Megg Rapp	4
Red Golden Morning—Ryan Sweeney	4
I was wearing Uganda today—Danielle Thomas	5
Song of the Valley—Tim Laurio	5
To Wait Like Winter—Heather Knudtsen	6
Ode to Wordsworth—Emily Arnold	8
Sonnet upon lines by Dylan Thomas—Tim Laurio	9
three observations—Aaron Jones	14
Truth is relative—Abby Banks	15
Childhood—Heather Knudtsen	18-19
The Tide—Kris Cunnigan	19
Istanbul—Abby Banks	20

## Table of Contents

Prose	
Rain—Kylie Gaulding	10-12
Biodiversity—Chelsea Farnam	16-17
Stopping in Shepherdstown—Lauren MacGrath	22-23
Visual Art	
Biltmore Fairytale—Kara Patterson	7
Untitled—Heather Knudtsen	13
Upper Level—Laura Stewart	21
*Cover Art—Untitled—Haylie Black*	

**meaning**  
**Megg Rapp**

i found meaning on the  
metro under the seat and  
wedged between two  
pennies old gum and  
a broken toothpick  
pretending to tie my  
shoe i scooped it  
up quickly so no one could  
see and become jealous  
excitedly i held it like  
a small yellow duckling  
tight enough so it wouldn't  
escape but loose enough  
so i wouldn't crush it  
i took it home and  
planted it in a small  
red pot and set it on  
the windowsill in the  
sunshine and i watered

it and loved it and smiled  
and when it grew too big  
for the small red pot i  
took it outside and made  
the earth its home and i  
watered it and loved it  
and smiled  
and now it grows  
over my house and with  
the rain it drips on my  
roof and keeps time for  
me when i play piano  
and with the wind it  
scratches my windows  
and i wish i could bring it  
back inside and set it on  
the windowsill like before  
and sometimes it taps on  
my window  
Just to say  
hello and how are you doing  
and i miss you

◆  
**Red Golden Morning**  
**Ryan Sweeney**

Wisp of dormant morning  
Clinging to the grass  
Burn in red-gold glory  
And rise upon the Ash

Take our still hearts with you  
Fly above the clash  
Of blasts of red-gold glory  
That burn us down at last

**I was wearing Uganda today**  
**Danielle Thomas**

I was wearing Uganda today  
Long skirt, beaded necklace, earrings, sandals  
Walking down the road like a colorful hippie  
My feet were on hot pavement but my mind was  
Traversing red dirt paths, matoke fields, rocky hills  
Places where hippy women never wear short shorts  
But breasts are handed to children like bottles  
The village where white skin shines against black like the moon at night  
I was wearing Uganda today, but no one noticed  
Because all they know are the latest styles, movies, magazines  
Paved interstates that bypass civilization, distant untouchable landscapes  
Places where thin spray-tanned women wear bikinis  
But all the rest are embarrassed by their bodies  
The town where white skin blends like a grain of sand on the beach



**Song of the Valley**  
**Tim Laurio**

*(To be sung in the manner of Chesterton)*

Splendid rides the sunset o'er the garden of the Lord  
Where summer spreads its colors on the hills like emerald wine  
And the mowers raise the incense of the grass and of the soil  
And the ponds and trees and houses gleam like grapes upon the vine  
In the sun that smites the valley with the brightness of a sword:  
In this cool and quiet garden in the center of the world  
Where the people's death and living makes a song of righteous toil  
In this precious piece of nowhere in a corner of the world;  
In this garden of the people which is sacred to the Lord.

## To Wait Like Winter

Heather Knudtsen

Wintery and weather-beaten  
barren branches  
stand still and stark  
against cool grey sky.  
Waiting.

Empty of green finery,  
they become jagged  
dark-brown lightning streaks,  
striking into impassive cloud-cover,  
like upside-down roots,  
they draw life from plain grey,  
from cold air,  
from the big emptiness arcing above them.

In the silence of migration-gone companions,  
they wait.

Life, hidden away like a squirrel's meal,  
nestles softly in the cold,  
nestles crisply in a caterpillar's shell.  
Life  
nestles,  
waiting.

Sustaining life they know will come,  
anticipating sun returned with bloom,  
the trees speak not their buds in months of frozen branches.

It is not their time.  
Patience  
is their virtue.



**Biltmore Fairytale**  
**Kara Patterson**  
Photograph

## Ode to Wordsworth

Emily Arnold

Dearest old boy,  
you were quite the charmer.  
With you  
I would gladly wander.  
All round Tintern  
and over to Paris,  
no burden so big  
that Nature couldn't spare us.  
Your verse my soul  
drinks up like sweet nectar,  
to love dear word and water (like you)  
will I ever.

Revolutionary, you may have been,  
reflective ever, from what I have seen.  
Despite all the burdens and trials that come,  
you and I will not be undone.  
Peace and joy, your words to me bring,  
too bad you're not here  
to give me a ring.  
(423.957.0406)

## Sonnet upon lines by Dylan Thomas

Tim Laurio

*(For all sons of fathers)*

I sat upon a high green hill beside  
A grey-haired man, a lantern in his hand.  
The night was at our backs, the rain-dimmed land  
Stretched out before us dusk and cool and wide.  
We sat together long and did not speak,  
But watched the darkness grow. He stood upright  
Without a word and handed me the light,  
Then, turning, walked beyond my unturned back  
Into the night. His way I did not mark.  
I gripped the lamp and tried to stanch the dark.  
But oh my friend, were you then standing by  
You would have shouted mutely, as did I:  
Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

## Rain

### Kylie Gaulding

I hate the rain. Understand, it is not the magical spring showers that make cheery, yellow narcissus grow and the bullfrogs sing for joy that I hate. Likewise, I love the fierce summer torrents that accompany the volatile friends, thunder and lightening. I hate the rain that will not simply be. I cannot abide stubborn, rebellious rain that refuses to be the strong shower that the farmers need, the violent, entertaining thunderstorm, or simply slow enough to stop altogether. The obstinate precipitation that glazes the blue sky to a dull gray, ruins morning moods, and mists just enough to make traversing newly mown lawns treacherous annoys me to no end. This being said, I find in it a trait that I harbor. It is a trait that I polished over a decade ago.

Looking back, I fail to remember exactly how I was inspired by the idea. I believe my mother was fixing lunch, and I sensed a gap in her attention. As a seven year old big sister to two girls, I was hungry for the spotlight, which I so often had to share. This time, I used our antique piano to gain the attention I craved. Mom could only endure a few bars of my newest discordant magnum opus. Gently she coaxed me from the wooden piano stool and suggested that I take up piano lessons. This was something I had never considered. I was sure that I could not possibly take my flawless musical talent any further, but I considered her suggestion anyway. When my father came home for dinner, I climbed into his lap to inform him of my interest in lessons. Always my greatest fan, he immediately envisioned a child prodigy, college scholarships and duets with Liberace, and subsequently grabbed a phone book. Under the heading "Piano Lessons" was a single name: Ms. Croom.

The next Monday, my father drove me to town for my first lesson. Ms. Croom gave lessons from her house; it was a petite, white building in a neighborhood that I had not even known existed. Even at seven, I raised my chin and stepped out of my father's blue Ford pickup truck, not waiting for him to open my door and help me to the ground. In a stark contrast to my mood, the sky was spitting rain, but I was too excited to notice. Up the concrete walk and onto the cement steps I skipped, throwing open the metal screen door which stuck comfortably to the doorframe. I closed my eyes as I stepped inside. Opening my eyes, I smiled and simultaneously took a deep breath, wanting to use all of my senses to take in every possible detail. I soon regretted this decision.

A small, poorly lit front room greeted me. To my right proudly stood a hulking, wooden china cupboard filled with porcelain dinner ware. Men and women in black and white photographs glared disapprovingly at me from the four stained walls. A small, multicolored rag rug covered the middle of the floor as if it were terrified of the newspapers, plastic grocery bags and sheet music that overflowed the rickety tables and desks which lined the perimeter of the room. My deep breath

had filled my lungs with the pungent odor of licorice and Hall's cough drops, and the strong tang of kerosene from the large white space heater in the far corner of the room. On the back wall, piled high with music books and newspapers, slumped an ancient piano, and on the left side of an exhausted, wooden piano bench sat an equally tired-looking woman.

Ms. Croom was in her seventies when I walked into her front room. Her wispy, white hair was pinned up, revealing skeptical blue eyes. She might have reminded me of an overweight Aunt Bea from "The Andy Griffith Show" reruns that my father loved had it not been for those eyes, which kept darting from me to her front door. Dad had caught up with me and was now standing in the doorway, explaining my sudden appearance. I was indeed seven years old, he reassured her, and though I was small for my age, I was a voracious reader, one of Ms. Croom's requirements for prospective students. Still, those eyes continued to look me up and down, gradually robbing me of any excitement that I had previously possessed. Already doubting my new hobby, I kissed my father goodbye, and reluctantly walked to the piano. The distinct smell of the Hall's cough drops, which had always made me nauseous, got stronger as I neared the woman. I would be there on a trial basis, she informed me. Should I prove to be impossible to teach, I would be sent home until I was properly educated enough. I murmured polite agreement and lowered my eyes to the floor, greeted by the startling sight of her painfully swollen ankles wrapped in sagging, brown hosiery. I quickly looked up, but the scenery there wasn't much better. Decades of piano playing had not been kind to her blue-veined hands which now resembled bird claws. When I noticed an engagement ring and wedding band standing out against her translucent skin, alluding to happier days gone by, I resolved to be kind to the old widow. Grasping *The Beginning Pianist's Hymn Book*, which my new teacher had shoved at me, I gathered my courage and took a seat on the unoccupied side of the piano bench.

I quickly learned that this was apparently illegal by the way that Ms. Croom scowled at me. I was told that I must stand to properly play the instrument - a technique that has puzzled all of my later piano teachers - and should still be able to reach the sustain pedal located on the floor underneath the keyboard. Though pumping the pedal with my right foot, standing on my left foot, and playing with both hands put me terribly off-balance, I strove to please my dubious teacher. It was to no avail. My shoulders were apparently too slumped, my elbows too high, my wrists too loose, and my fingers too rigid. I believe that half hour was the longest period of time in my entire life, and by the time my mother came to pick me up, I was fighting back tears. Did I have a good time? How can I disappoint Mom's expectant smile? I swallowed the painful lump in the back of my throat and forced excitement about treble clefs and quarter rests. A half hour later, we were home and I had made up my mind. I would learn to play the piano. It was not a matter of pleasing Ms. Croom. I would become a virtuoso just to spite my teacher.

Over the next four years, I gritted my teeth for a half hour, twice a week.

Whether the sky spit rain, graced the earth with snow, or bathed my town in sunbeams, to me, it always seemed overcast on lesson days. After that first maddening lesson, I began to notice the cracks in the cement, the moss growing on the concrete steps, and the dead grass that masqueraded as Ms. Croom's lawn. The appeal of the sticking screen door was soon upstaged by its tortured shriek as it scraped along the concrete doorframe. By the time I had discovered Mrs. Croom's laundry hanging in the bathroom, the novelty of piano lessons had officially worn off.

To be fair, some days were better than others. I had proved my education to her the first time she asked me read a practice assignment. I relished the astonishment in my teacher's eyes, and the slight tightening of her facial muscles that betrayed her struggle to fight a smile, when I flew over three syllable words and Italian musical phrases. Rarely, a completed musical piece would bring a precious compliment, but more often my teacher favored expressing her confusion as to why I could not just play the song. The seven-year old Kylie took that to heart, certain that Ms. Croom hated her and wanted her to die. The adult Kylie recognizes that not all adults relate well to children. Because my teacher, to my knowledge, had no children of her own, she projected adult sized expectations onto a child without realizing her error.

Looking back, I realize that those four years profoundly changed my life. Though I could not see it then, piano lessons brought out the rebel in me. I had been called hard-headed for my entire life, but proving my piano teacher wrong had finally given me an outlet to productively use that obstinate trait. I had not realized it, but I worked harder under others' expectations of my immanent failure. This not only propelled me to succeed, but to accomplish my goals with more pizzazz than ever before. When a school subject proved to be infuriatingly difficult and my teacher would predict a failing grade, I would ace the next test just to prove her wrong. My church elders said I was too young to teach a child's Sunday School class. I would increase the class's attendance.

Progressively, I learned to stifle the just-you-watch attitude and merely raise my performance level. People are impressed by those who can prove doubters wrong. I learned, however, that people respect those who can do it without insolent discourse or a disrespectful attitude. This realization proved especially helpful with my last piano teacher, a near Ms. Croom clone in a younger form. This time, though, I was better prepared to protect myself from the barrage of thoughtless, hurtful comments. I was better prepared, a little more stubborn, and a lot more educated because of a skeptical widow living in a hidden neighborhood where it was always raining.



**Untitled**  
**Heather Knudtsen**  
Photograph



### three observations

Aaron Jones

I

I know not the time-  
only that the sky is gray  
and I am walking.  
And brownly the day boils  
like a soft, still patch of grass  
and is all the more lovely  
for that.

II

How embarrassing it is  
to be walking up a hill  
and disturb a bird-  
unseen until it starts-  
meditating.  
I know it is meditating  
because it too is embarrassed  
and does not look at me  
as it flits away, disquieted.

III

I sit and wet my pen upon my lips  
a third time, though I notice  
nothing of much consequence.  
And it is, in this, my hope-  
that I might see at once  
nothing, and so everything.

### Truth is relative

Abby Banks

We came home after a long month away  
only to find the pipes had burst and the gas had been turned off,  
but it didn't matter too much because it was late and we were tired.

That night, there was a thunderstorm.  
Rain beat at the windows, lightning killed the satellite signal.  
We woke in hazy confusion; it hadn't rained in months.

(A lie. We had six days straight of nothing but rain and pool halls  
and karaoke bars and Starbucks and fireworks.  
It was a good six days.)

When we woke the next morning, there was blood in the streets,  
blood on the roof next door,  
blood spilling down the steps and onto the sidewalks and into the drains.  
(A holiday we'd never heard of, celebrating a different version of a familiar  
story.)

We went out anyway, picking our familiar path  
past the pieces of broken glass, the rotting guavas and pomegranates,  
over broken branches and around mountains of trash.  
We relished the copper tang of blood mixed with the crisp taste of rain  
as we walked the ten blocks to the coffee shop in Mohandiseen.

## Biodiversity

### Chelsea Farnam

The thick odor of blood rose from the pavement. Dan left his car running, angled in the middle of the suburban street. The scream of the tires still in his ears, he slammed the door shut as the road met the soles of his shiny black shoes. The stiff leather laces tapped to the rhythm of his rushed footsteps.

Eyes wide, Dan approached the animal cautiously, almost fearing that it would retaliate. Irrational. Its leg was obviously broken, the body cavity carved open by the bumper of his Land Rover. The back hooves struggled against the asphalt, scraping against the sidewalk curb.

Dan, an accountant, had never thought about the color of a deer's hooves. Hoofs? Hooves. Black and ridged like obsidian. The thought of geology sent Dan back to construction paper and science projects. Fool's gold. Iron pyrrhite. White-tailed deer. *Odocoileus virginianus*, densely populated in south Texas.

The deer made a noise that could only be described as groaning. Its whole head was strained — ears erect, eyes bulging, mouth stretched. Anything to make that noise stop. The trees rustled; half a mile outside the neighborhood, the highway traffic droned. No signs of life except him and the deer, nothing to drown out that sound. Dan soon would be alone.

He rushed to the Land Rover. Four-wheel drive with terrain response to better facilitate skilled maneuvering on rocks, snow, gravel, grass, and sand. With Bluetooth technology. "At home in nature," the billboard had read. The vehicle was strategically positioned in a sylvan setting among evergreens and a mountain stream. The waxed exterior glinted in the sunlight. There was no mud on the tires.

Blood was smeared across the left headlight and patches of fur clinging to the bumper and brand emblem. Dan's stuttering fingers disconnected the phone from its handleless adapter. 911? Don't want an ambulance. Forest... police? Park ranger? Dan could hear rush hour building up on the highway outside the neighborhood. Horns honking, brakes squeaking. The groans were growing higher pitched. The hooves stopped scraping. Dan felt like a child trying to clean up broken glass before the grown-ups got home. He decided on 911.

Yes, yes. Hollywood Park, off 281. Fleetwood Street. I've hit a deer. Yes, yes I'm fine. It's still alive, but it, it — he's badly hurt. Ok, thank you.

Alone again. Sweat rolled down Dan's spine as the sun's heat beamed off the road. The groaning stopped, but the deer's mouth still hung open as its gored chest heaved. Dan untucked his silk woven Ralph Lauren shirt, put his

cuff links in his pocket and rolled up his sleeves. He knelt down near the animal, still a safe distance from the growing pool of blood. Dan had never heard a deer until that day. Never smelled its breath. Never examined the texture of its fur. Never looked him in the eye.

The back leg twitched and the hoof clacked against the sidewalk again. Dan quickly rose and stepped back nearer the car. He smelled the unfamiliar scent of his own body odor and considered sitting in the car with the air conditioning on. He chose to sit on the sidewalk instead. To sit there until he died. To watch him die.

Dan flicked his phone in his palm instinctively, nervously. The animal lay still. Cars began to filter into the neighborhood, chatting on cell phones about dinner plans, singing to the radio. One driver saw the scene in a glance — the flashing red hazard lights, the tawny fur flayed open, the glistening forehead of a man with a cell phone. Under control, I'm sure. Shame.

The police car turned onto Fleetwood a few long minutes later. Dan rose and explained the situation. Was coming home from work, thinking about this new account... Just out of nowhere. Tried to stop but — Dan glanced at the creature's watery black eyes. Still, lifeless, cold.

"This type of thing's been happening all over the neighborhood," the policeman said as he scribbled on a clipboard. There's always a clipboard. "People think they're being kind by feeding them, but it only draws the animals into more danger. No worries, though. We'll get a ranger out here. They've got this program now where they process the meat and give it to food pantries. So he'll be put to good use."

The policeman marched back to his car, once again leaving Dan alone with the deer.

"You're free to go whenever you like," said the policeman from behind the open car door. "I'm just going to radio in for the pickup and we'll get this all cleared out."

Dan nodded with a friendly smile and walked back to the Land Rover. He shut the door and wiped his forehead with an extra fast-food napkin. All cleared out. He pushed a button to start the ignition and cool air blasted from the sterile, chrome vents. Dan shivered and felt his body tingle from the backs of his arms to the bottoms of his feet. He drove away.



## Childhood

Heather Knudtsen

When the midday heat was always silent.  
When the heat made the silence sticky  
A sweet sticky silence in the middle of the day  
A sleepy siesta silence, like a shouting quiet,  
all for the fly buzzing against the square-grid of the screen door.

Childhood.

Many hours spent in the rooms of older girls  
Hours ticking away talking  
To the girls  
The girls who told stories  
The girls who put coconut oil in their hair that smelled so good you wanted to eat it.

Childhood.

When the friends came in from other villages  
The empty big outside echoing with their shouts  
Swinging on the swings  
Sweaty hands smelling like metal chains  
The swings squeaked under our weight and wished we weren't there.

Childhood.

When the guava trees were ripe for climbing.  
The lithe boughs bending under our small hard bodies  
Small hands reaching for sweet seedy fruit  
The pink, seedy, sticky fruit the bats had beat us to  
We couldn't wait for hardened green to become soft yellow.

## Childhood

Many hours spent thinking of things to come  
Of what to be  
Of where to go  
Too often we forgot what we were then  
And still do now.



## The Tide

Kris Cunigan

*for Amanda Brooke*

The tide that creeps on every shore  
And leaves a trail on ocean's door  
Never recedes a day or more  
Always returning evermore.

Just as wave falls on sand  
A certainty of earth and land  
Never to cease or fail to stand  
So does love make this demand

After every swell makes its way  
To bid the land again today  
A heart does beat and ebb and stay  
Ever stronger. never ceasing. day by day.

Despite the uncertainty of the sea  
A wave never fails to reach the sand  
Storms release their rage  
Winds ravish the ocean plain  
No heart calms this fury  
But after the perfect storm  
The tranquility always returns again

The water recedes to remind us  
Life will always be a struggle  
And love is life to the fullest  
The world will know the broken  
The ones who loved and lost  
But as the wave of an ocean  
Never fails to kiss the shore again  
So will love never fail to come again

## Istanbul

### Abby Banks

The city is a blue hotel room and soggy shoes  
and sweet sweet coffee served  
by tall dark and handsome baristas  
grey-blue water on the Bosphorus  
and long walks across the bridges  
where old men cast their lines in hopes of fish.

Boots and raincoats in all the windows of all the stores  
roasted chestnuts and corn on the cob and pretzels  
for sale on the street  
you find a hole-in-the-wall café  
with fresh-made soup and crusty grilled cheese sandwiches  
lemonade with mint and Tabu in Turkish.

The spires of the Aya Sofia point toward God  
as the trolley glides into the station  
and men hawk star and crescent earrings  
five lira for a pair or eight for two  
because you are beautiful  
and the earrings make you more so.

You laugh because it's expected  
and blush because you don't take compliments well  
and even though you know it's not actually a steal  
you buy the earrings  
because you don't know if you'll ever be back  
and you don't have time for regrets.



**Upper Level**  
**Laura Stewart**  
Photograph

## Stopping in Shepherdstown

Lauren MacGrath

Windows down, windows up, music soft, music blaring, talking, sleeping, snacking, navigating, and looking out the window. All road trip standard protocol. The uniqueness of this trip was sewn in the fibers of bandanas serving the strict purpose of neckerchiefs. It was required that I fasten mine around my neck upon entering the car.

The four of us, classmates with a similar destination, remove our neckerchiefs and step out of the cramped sedan, stretching dormant legs, shaking out imaginary pins and needles. We park our California-plated car in Shepherdstown, West Virginia on our way to my home in New Hampshire from our home in Tennessee. Three days we spend in the car and out of the car in different places along the east coast Routes 81 and 95.

This is day two.

Parallel parked. Standing under the high noon sun in the beginning of March. Waiting for Alex's brother, Craig, to meet us in the said spot at the said time. Waiting. I look around an unknown town at cobblestone and concrete, scraggly enormous beards and swooping skirts, tie-die tank tops and Birkenstocks. All the time knowing that West Virginia is "Wild and Wonderful."

Craig, almost skipping at the sight of his brother, speeds up to meet us. Leading the four of us to climb the winding back bakery stairs to the yellow apartment building three floors up, warmly lit by the windows that open to the building's roof. Craig turns the aging iron doorknob and pushes the solid oak door to introduce three of us to his fiancé, Lucy, her three roommates, and three cats, cats with names closely resembling the names of Japanese-made cars.

From the high-ceilinged kitchen, smells of cinnamon, eggplant, tomato sauce, parsley, and thyme drifted around the apartment. These ingredients would be combined in an authentic recipe for moussaka, a Greek version of eggplant parmesan, which one of the roommates got while visiting Greece, and that they all share around a too-small dinner table. A recipe I would find on foodnetwork.com, but that would never taste the same to me as the moussaka did this day.

The kitchen is crowded with friends. Over everything I can hear the giggling between brothers who don't bear the burden of completing their sentences, repeating enough of their jokes to understand, but consumed by laughter and unable to finish.

Thumbing through an engagement photo album, seemingly shy, I sit entertaining myself in the living room, biding time before venturing into town, listening to familiar music streaming from Lucy's laptop. On the coffee table sit

favorite novels. Even the cats seem familiar, softly purring to the scratching of chins, cats squinting their eyes in the natural warmth of sunlight. Though perhaps not as much as cold-blooded creatures, I think cats appreciate solar heat.

While the residents of Shepherdstown cook, we visitors explore. Quaint breakfast nooks frame the life I imagine living in five, ten years. Storefronts display amethyst geodes and out of doorways linger the spicy smells of incense. It's a Wiccan wonderland.

Soup's on.

Nine of us crowded around Lucy's kitchen table on a conglomerate of stools and chairs, unable to leave the table once situated, drinking fruit juice out of recycled glasses, but not drinking enough to have to pee. I serve a jokingly small portion to Alex, telling him he should really be watching his weight. Laughing, he looks down at his protruding ribs and scrawny legs covered by jeans, legs without enough surface area to accommodate the amount of hair. Old friends merge with new friends over the eating of moussaka, the re-pouring of glasses, and the cleaning of dishes.

The apartment remains bright even now without sun streaming through its windows. Lit by floor lamps, stovetop lights, table lamps, anything but overhead fluorescent lights.

Again crowding, we all fill the kitchen, measuring the height of the ceiling, waiting for the tin espresso maker to percolate, providing robust caffeine for the next stretch of our trip. Four of us leave, I for one with false hopes of meeting these people again.

We get into the car, wave to the Shepherdstown residents, and adjust our neckerchiefs. Driving on back roads to our next stop in Maryland, cool air rushing through the window cracks, we harmonize to old favorite folk artists. Music we learned the melodies to even before knowing each other. My tired eyes absorb the elongated headlights of other cars rushing past, eyes with the memory of this day burned into their retinas, eyes getting heavy, eyes closing, not to reopen until the car jerks to a halt, parking in another driveway.



to the... Even the car seat familiar, soft...  
drink, car seat... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...  
... I think car seat...

