

Spring
2009

APPETITE

Voices



The Literary Magazine of Rock Valley College Brought to you by the Journalism 139 class at RVC.

Voices staff brings you the best submissions from our community. If you are, or know of, an aspiring writer, artist, or photographer, please do not hesitate to shamelessly harass them until they submit their work to *Voices*. We hope to widen our audience of readers by getting a great variety of submissions, including a venture into music. Musicians should submit an MP3 and sheet music, if available.

Voices' fall issue will be advertising for submissions starting around the second week of the fall semester at RVC. You can pick up submission forms in the Faculty Support Office in CLI (classroom building 1, east of the library on the south side of the creek). One person may submit multiple works in multiple categories - in fact, we encourage it! Please don't be bashful. If you think, "Gosh, I can do that," when you read *Voices*, then DO IT!

Voices staff began a creative writing workshop, in coordination with the Writing Center, that has been well attended. If you would be interested in taking some of your work and developing it further before submitting for publication, please contact *Voices* at RVCVoices@ednet.rvc.cc.il.us.

The staff of the Spring 2009 *Voices* edition thanks you for picking up a copy!

Stephanie Edge, **Editor**

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Special thanks to our advisor, Molly Sides, who was working on her own new addition this spring, and layout and design consultant extraordinaire, Scott Fustin. Without your help this magazine would not be complete.

Voices

The Literary Magazine of Rock Valley College Brought to you by the Journalism 139 class at RVC.

Rock Valley College Journalism 139 produces two issues of the literary magazine *Voices* every school year, coinciding with the completion of the new issue at the end of each semester. RVC's *Voices* is a creative endeavor that engages journalism students in the promotion of the magazine, soliciting submissions within the college and the greater Rockford community, and impartial evaluation of submissions. Students complete the editorial process through design and layout.

For the Spring 2009 Semester, the *Voices* staff responsible for prose and poetry hosted a new student creative writing workshop, "Will Write for Food," at the RVC Writing Center. This workshop is a means for students who would like to submit their writing to *Voices*, or who are looking to improve their writing in general, an opportunity for a peer review of their work in a comfortable setting.

Each semester, *Voices* is proud to select winners in each submission category for top recognition, as well as a cash award for winning that category. The winners for Spring 2009 are:

Artwork

Lorena Gonzalez, *The Three Graces*

Photography

Danielle Bunch, *We all have places to hide*

Poetry

Justin Saichek, *Found it in Your Eyes*

Prose

Carissa Kampmeier, *I wish I could quit you*

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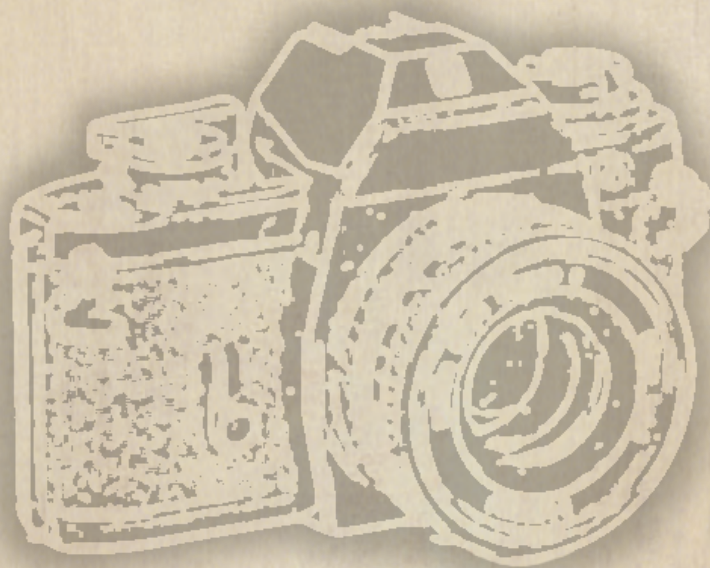
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Photography



Photography



We all have places to hide (Award Winner)
Danielle Bunch

Photography



Tombstone

Misty Sturtevant

Photography

Where we leave

Danielle Bunch



Photography



Untitled

Britta Nelson

Photography

Excavations

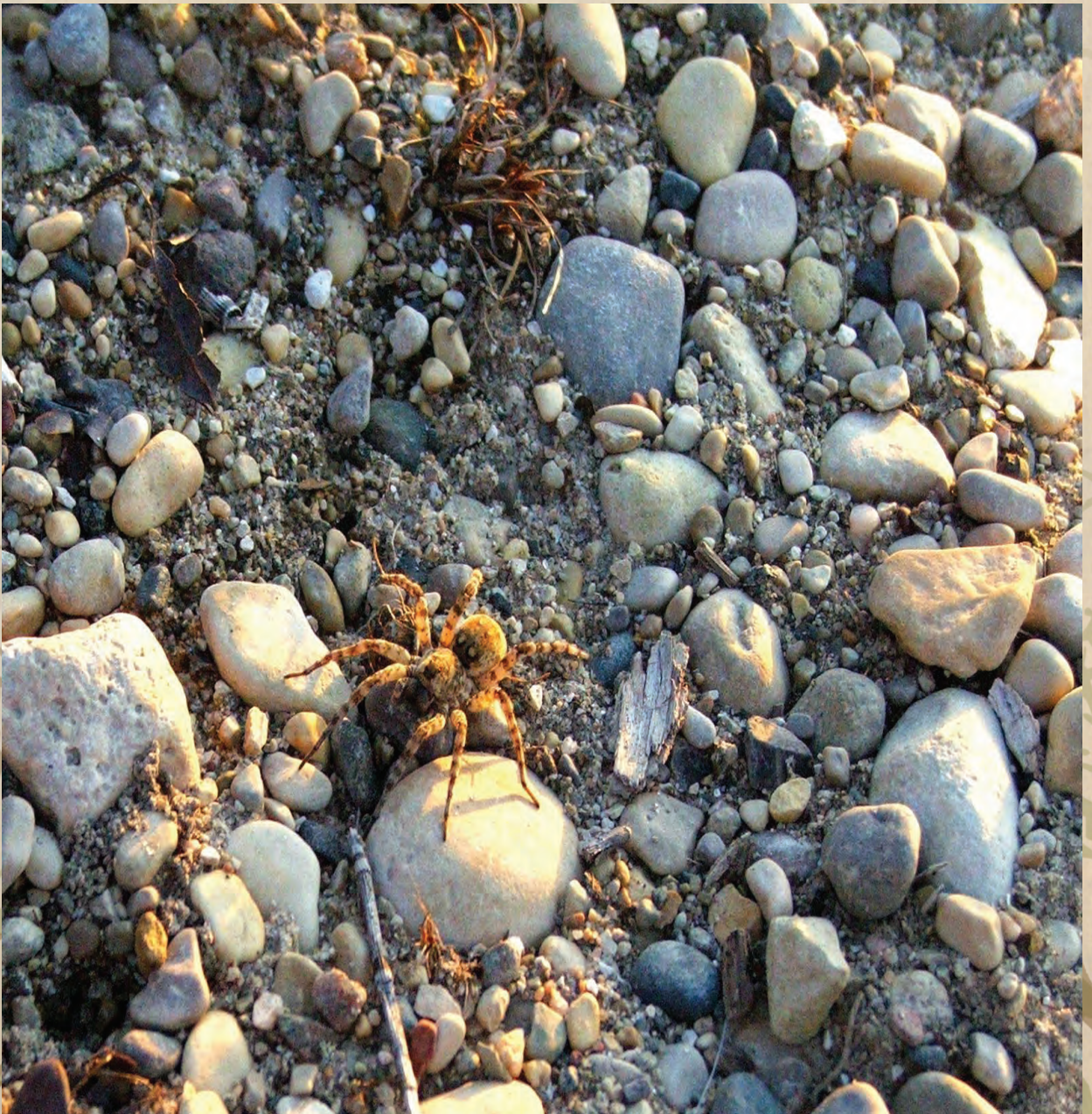
Tina Little



Photography

Evening Stroll

Tina Little



Photography



Beautiful Skies
Misty Sturtevant





Found it in Your Eyes (Award Winner)

Justin Saichek

A prayer to the holy trinity of affinity, Three's the perfect number multiplied by infinity.
Mind, body, and spirit. Man, woman, and child.
Any action divine if the result will make you smile.
And then where we are becomes a temple, a slow and easy tempo.
Treat your body like it's sacred, tabernacle for your mental.
A walk in the park that's not so simple in the place where God resides, Your hand
intertwined in mine to feel the spirit that's inside.
A dinner as a sacrament. A movie as a prayer.
I feel you when you're far away, it's sort of like you're there.

A blessing with holy water every time I hold your hand, Baptism through your
presence, try to be a better man.
And I sure hope that I can and I know you know I'll try.
I found Heaven in your eyes while they're still looking at the skies.



Gatekeeper
Justin Saichek

No more than a man, by these gates here I stand.
Hate and prejudice I'm trying to shake if I can.
Maybe when God comes my way then I'll say I can't stay.
Taught judgement is black and white, but my perception is gray.
Dizzy as I look down from the height of these stakes.
Sick to my stomach at the thought of determining fate.
Eyes wide open for the snakes and the fakes,
But I want to fill my heart with love so I don't make a mistake.
They say I'll recognize real, but can I really relate?
Trying to make sense of all the suggestions they make
Like, "Keep out the Muslims!" "The Christians!" "The Jews!"
But how do I choose which group is right and which group to exclude
And when I do, how do I break the news?
Imagine tears welling up in eyes and streaming down faces
As I proclaim, "Jesus was the right choice, I'm sorry you didn't make it."
Or, "Muhammad had all the answers, but you didn't take heed
So to you the gates remained locked. I can give you no key."
They say, "Keep out the Daoists, the Buddhists, and Hindus.
Only Westerners can patronize this venue,
Unless you reject your own and accept our beliefs
And then you can enjoy true spiritual peace."
And what if that proposition were presented to me?
And what if an atheist is also a good person?
Should I turn them away, or try to convert them
If they live in a holy manner but minus the worship?
And what is the cost of conversion?
The risk of limitation to one perspective.
Ignoring the others that we have been blessed with.
Analyzing with bias rather than being objective.
I could be wrong, but I prefer a view more eclectic.
And what about sin, where can I begin?
Who has to stay out and who gets to come in?
They say I'll recognize real, but can I really relate
To the single mother whose living a life she can't take?
'Cause she thought he'd always be there so with him she would lay,
Until she was late and then he skipped and he left her with pain.
How can I judge the actions of one with so much on her plate?
Or to the extremist in the hills overflowing with hate



Who's seen his sister, his mother, his country get raped,
For the sake of progression in places he can't touch.
The destruction brought by hunger for power too much.
And so they feed his confusion until it's delusion
Claiming, "Allah would rather see these devilish cities as ruins."
But there's a much brighter truth and what if he knew it,
Could reread the Qur'an without mental pollution
And find out Allah prescribed love the solution.
Or the child with no guidance other than violence.
The streets can be loud, but his parents are silent.
Survival his focus when life became hopeless.
No intervention, stray bullets the only cause to take notice.
And so they lock him in a cell 'til they can send him to Hell.
But what if I don't? Do you think they'll rebel?
Maybe if he could see peace the violence would cease.
Maybe this place could offer his soul some relief.
What if you'd rather pay for your meal but you don't have a way,
Or you're sick so you inject medicine into your vein,
Because the doctors never could get rid of the pain.
Or maybe guns and alcohol were all that you knew as you grew,
While others were disciplined and educated to throw stones at you.
Or maybe I don't feel right in church because of the hurt.
Feeling sort of like I've been lied to since birth,
But I still talk to God and try to put love first
In everything I do as I walk on this earth.
And if I don't let them in then where do they go?
Some say forever in a raging inferno below.
Instead can I place them in fertile soil to grow?
Because maybe the first time they were sown they fell among stone.
What about reincarnation into more preparation
And lessons to learn because this place is sacred.
More joy and more hurt to be felt on this earth.
Not perfection all at once but progress through rebirth.
And when compared to eternity it might not take long.
Don't worry, the rooms will be kept while you're gone.
The gates will be open and the lights will be on,
Until you can find your way home.
And whenever you're ready you can come in
And if you're back before I am, ask God how I did.



Untitled

Patrina Williams

As I sit here and unwind,

Not just of this morning,

Also my circumstances trapped all in my mind.

Pull out some paper and here I go. Take a breath in for a few seconds, and let it go.

All of my life's pain only resembles cloudy days yet will always bring sunshine after the rain.

A brand new day opens up opportunity for a brand new way.

Only one way to pray.

Only one way to start.

Any time you have trouble on your mind.

And you're ready to untwine, Get down on your knees and pray.

Shout for Joy!

Shout for Hope!

Remember always God is the one who will Help You Cope!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Untitled

Eric Steiner

Sweet darkness carries me away Into the depths of the infinite My soul descends
The walls of this prison close Consuming the space of life Tighter and tighter
Her grip contains me
The pain, the fear Separates body from mind And at last the walls are broken
And the light bears warmth That of which I have never felt And I am free



Artwork



Artwork



The Three Graces (Award Winner)

Clay

Lorena Gonzalez

Artwork



Bambirella

Clay, engobe, underglaze & stain

Jaclyn Maxwell

Artwork



Braaaains... It's what's for dinner

Ceramic

Bruce Corona



My Heart Won't Stay Entirely In This Rib Caging
Clay & Glaze
Carissa Kampmeier

Artwork



Sacred Dance of Gaia

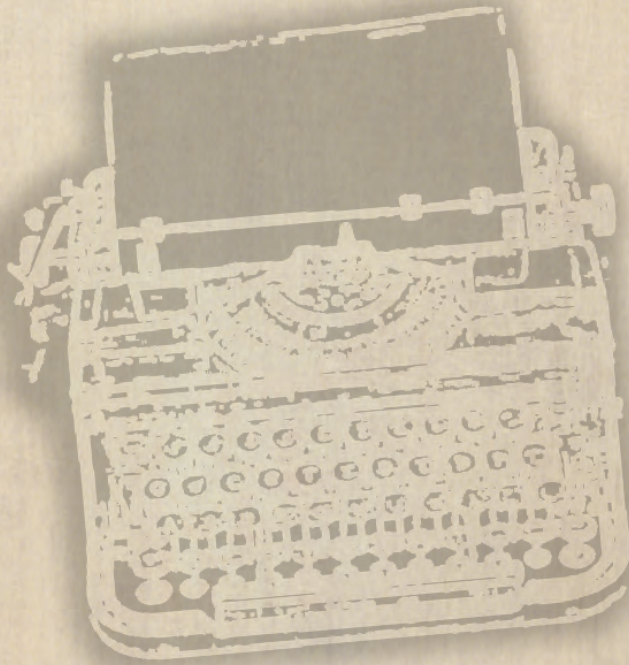
Ceramic, Stain & Watercolor

Nicole Landreth



Vessel
Clay & Glaze
Rebecca Meyer

Prose





Prose

I wish I could quit you (Award Winner)

Carissa Kampmeier

The two of them sat at the table across from each other. He sat straight, the slight darkening of his features the only sign of his inner turmoil. She slumped, defeated, in her chair, making no effort to hide her misery.

The silence stretched over their unhappiness, prolonging it, sharpening it into something lethal and vindictive. This is what it had come to.

"You can keep the pity," he said finally, the despair leaking through his voice and his expression.

She looked up, a faint touch of disbelief clouding her features.

"What would I do with it?" her voice was more than slightly incredulous, but it faded quickly back into misery. No escape.

"I'm trying to be generous here." He frowned in disapproval.

"Well, you can keep your false generosity," she said disdainfully. "And your pity."

"And you can have my patience," he snapped back. "And my compassion. You've already taken that."

She was silent, her head down, and after a moment, one of the lawyers

spoke up, with a hesitant clearing of his throat.

"And the tolerance?"

He waved his hand impatiently. "Hers, hers. She might as well have it. Along with the lack of attention, and the wasted effort. And I'll take the blame, as usual."

"Along with the self-pity," she sneered. "And the immaturity, the contempt, and all the failed expectations."

He opened his mouth to retort, but the lawyer beat him to it with another clearing of his throat.

"How about the broken dreams? There's a potential for an even split on that one, if you're both willing--"

"Mine," she interrupted hoarsely. "Those are mine. So is the failure."

"And the loneliness," he agreed tiredly.

"The potential for happiness?" she began dryly. "I suppose you'll want that for her?"

"Yes," he tried his best to sound airy and unconcerned. "And the hope, if you don't mind."

"Actually," she countered, beginning to frown. "I'd like to keep a



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little of that. You can take most of it, of course, but--"

"Fine, fine," he sighed, eager for this to be finished. "The dignity?" the other lawyer questioned.

She looked down at her lap, picking at a loose thread, and avoiding his gaze. "He can have it. I don't have much use for that anymore."

"The late nights, the pleasant mornings, and the secret smiles?" the lawyer asked quickly, obviously as anxious as they were to be through with this.

"His. All his," her eyes filled with tears. "And the special bonding?"

For a moment, they simply looked at each other, and then at the same time, both looked away.

"Me either," she agreed, crying softly now. "Is there anything you can do with it?"

"We'll take care of it, ma'am," the lawyer assured her gently.

"And the agreement was that Ms. Walker will live in despair, while you still support your half of it?" the lawyer turned his gaze on the man.

"Yes, yes, of course," he agreed quickly.

"In that case," the lawyer said quietly, with a glance at the other as they both gathered papers. "You'll each take your own freedom, and the divorce is complete."

Eden Sophronia is Not a Gym Class Hero

Carissa Kampmeier and Jeanine Crowe

Ian Zimmerman was slumped against the bleachers at what felt like the crack of dawn, waiting for this gym class to get on its feet. Since it was only the first day of school, that wasn't likely to happen any time soon.

They'd been forced to leave all of their stuff at their lockers, and his fingers were already itching for a pen, or even a book. Anything to help him survive the next forty-five minutes without choking somebody. He fell back to simply watching people, studying them while they weren't paying attention. Oftentimes, he made up stories about them; their lives and personalities. It was a game he'd played often with his twin, back when it was just the two of them, but Erin's gym period wasn't until later. Anyway, it was only for entertainment. Never anything he wrote down, which Erin always said was a shame, because they were often funny and eerily accurate. You could tell a lot about a person just by looking at them, or at least, Ian could.

Midnight blue eyes traveled around the gym, skipping over the large groups of laughing teenagers, who were more interested in each other today, on the first day of school, than they would be all year. As far as Ian was concerned, they were all the

same, and he'd told that story far too many times.

After a few minutes of searching, his gaze fell on a small, dark-haired girl skulking in a corner. She was chewing nervously on her bottom lip, and looked intensely self-conscious in her pink shorts and CBH gym tee shirt. It was mildly interesting that he'd never seen her before, but he chalked that up to her being new to the area. What was more interesting to Ian was that, although she wasn't familiar, it was almost as though he had seen her before, every single day for almost sixteen years. She looked like Erin.

Physically, their only similarities were that they were both pale and petite. After that, nobody would ever mistake them for the other. Erin's hair was shoulder length and dark red, whereas this girl's was longer and much, much darker. A brown so dark that it was almost black. Her eyes were the same color, as far as he could tell from this distance, and set beneath dark eyebrows that only accentuated the loveliness of her face.

However, though he noted her physical features out of habit, Ian was more interested in her body language. It told him more about the girl than her hair color ever would. The slightly



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curved way she held herself clearly said that she was trying to hide in plain sight. Her gaze, cast down at her pink, high top sneakers, almost begged nobody to notice her. After a moment, she slid down the wall and hugged her knees to her chest, looking very small and petrified.

Ian was caught between amusement and sympathy. He didn't often spare feelings for complete strangers, but this girl was practically a darker version of his twin. He'd watched Erin's painful shyness for years, and only seen it end the previous year with the creation of the Losers Club (a group of their friends who, despite calling themselves Losers, were actually pretty talented).

He watched the girl for the rest of the period; she was by far the most interesting person in the gym. Every time she moved, it was a shadow of the old, pre-Losers Erin; something Ian had never thought to see again. Toward the end of the class, she seemed to realize he was watching her, and even from a distance he could see her blush deeply and stare intently at the floor, at which point Ian merely smirked and looked away.

He hoped she made friends, and quickly, or he didn't imagine she'd survive long in high school. Even so, as their gym teacher dismissed them at the end of the period, he had to remind himself that it wasn't

his problem either way. He wasn't responsible for babysitting the new kids.

The next morning, Ian's resolution to not get involved was put to the test. Even he had to admit that he failed miserably.

Their teacher was having them divide up into pairs to practice passing, setting, and serving for their first activity: volleyball.

For Ian, this was no sweat. Though he preferred the title of writer over athlete, he was in shape well enough from track, and had that innate, average ability for sports that most boys seemed to have.

This girl, on the other hand, if she was anything like Erin (and Ian was almost certain that she was) would be horrific at sports, and terrified of both the ball and the players. His certainty about this increased when, as everyone else broke into chatter and began partnering up, she stood rooted to the spot, looking petrified.

"Partner?" he offered lightly, a brow quirking. She appeared caught between relief and further terror, but she nodded, and he went to get a ball.

"How about a name?" he inquired. She looked frightened, and didn't answer, so he nodded agreeably.

"Okay then, I'll guess. Good idea," he added, as though he hadn't just made it up himself. "Erin?" he tried, unable to help it. It would simply be



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uncanny if that were the case, but she shook her head no, and Ian grinned. Nodding some, he tossed her the ball, satisfied that she wasn't a complete copy of his sister.

"Umm. Rebecca?"

She shook her head again, promptly cringing away from the ball as it came toward her.

Ian shrugged, unconcerned, and motioned toward it. She cautiously picked it up, and tossed it back.

"Laura?" He hit it neatly back to her, and she literally ducked this time, letting out a squeak of terror.

He chuckled lightly as she slowly straightened, giving another emphatic shake of her head before she turned away to retrieve the ball again.

"Let's see. How about Abby?"

She shook her head again and threw the ball. Ian bumped it back to her, and she raised her hands to shield her face, the ball glancing harmlessly off her palms and rolling across the floor back toward him.

Ian picked it up, a brow furrowing in thought. "Ah ... Samantha?"

She shook her head, and for the first time, a faint, timid smile quirked at the corners of her mouth. Ian pondered this smile for a moment, and then suddenly understood. He would never guess her name; it must have been a really bizarre one.

"Ariel?" he chuckled, and she

actually gave a soft laugh, shaking her head no.

It went on like that for the rest of the period, the two of them failing to hit the ball back and forth, and Ian trying to guess her name. He must have gone through a hundred of them without success.

At the end of the period, he gave her a nod, and a salute of surrender. "Again tomorrow?"

She nodded, and he returned the ball to the gym teacher, a light sigh escaping his lips as he joined the crowd surging toward the locker rooms.

They hit the hallway, and the mob thinned out, so he was surprised when a shoulder bumped his. He looked over and there she was, closer than she'd ever been to him; he'd been right about the color of her eyes.

"E-E-Eden," she stammered out, and he raised his brows, impressed. "Eden. That's nice. Ian Zimmerman. How about a last name?"

To his surprise, she laughed again; the second time in as many days.

"G-guess. "

Ian chuckled lightly as she disappeared into the girls' locker room.

"Are you ever going to hit the ball?" Ian demanded, amused rather than aggravated as his partner shied away for the sixth time in a row from the volleyball they were supposed to be bumping back and forth.



Prose

Eden mumbled something unintelligible, ducking her head behind the fall of her long, dark hair. Ian was forcibly reminded of Erin.

"Didn't quite catch that," he smirked, bending down to retrieve the ball from where it had rolled under the bleachers.

"I'm s-scared of it," she repeated, in a stronger voice, looking strangely defiant, as though he might laugh at her, or tell her that was silly. Ian did neither of those things, merely looking thoughtful as he took his place across from her. In any case, it had been painfully obvious without her saying so. Again, Eden was eerily like his sister in that sense. Being afraid of the ball was something Ian had never been able to cure her of. He finally just shrugged, and prepared to toss the ball to her again. It didn't bother him if they never managed to hit it back and forth.

Some time later, their teacher had divided the class up into teams to play the gym class version of miniature tournaments. Eden continued to freeze and wince every time the ball came close to her, and though it didn't particularly bother Ian, the rest of the team was starting to get annoyed.

"At least try to hit it," someone complained, amid scattered grumbling. The next time the ball came to him, Ian narrowed his eyes and hit it hard in the other boy's direction. It bounced painfully off the side of his head, and the kid turned around to glare. He saw Eden offer a weak smile, and Ian smirked in response.

When it was his turn to serve, he paused upon receiving the ball, studying the lineup.

Eden was almost directly in front of him. He tossed the ball up into the air, hand drawing back to hit it.

Wham! It bounced off the back of Eden's dark head. She turned around, rubbing the spot with a mixture of shock and anger on her face. Ian shrugged without apology; it could have been an accident.

It was only the third day of class; his mishap was chalked up to not enough practice, and the ball was tossed back to him. Again, Ian aimed for Eden rather than the net, and this time, it glanced off her shoulder. She cast him a pleading glance, and he smiled reassuringly.

The third time it hit her, Eden whirled on the spot, anger making red spots on her cheeks. "Would you



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quit it!" she demanded, hands on her hips. Ian smirked.

"Why?" he asked, amused. "Does it hurt?"

"Yes, it hurts!" she snapped. He simply raised his eyebrows, and Eden was forced to reconsider her statement. It didn't actually hurt that much, but it was the principle of the thing.

"Well, not really, but--" she spluttered, and Ian interrupted. "Then why are you so afraid of it?" He quirked a brow.

Eden didn't answer, and he smirked, catching the ball again. This time, it sailed perfectly over the net.

The next time the ball came to her, Eden slid across the floor to hit it. The screech of her bare knees against the linoleum made Ian wince, but the ball went over the net.

Grimacing in pain as she stood up, she limped over to where Ian was standing. Without breaking stride, she smacked him squarely on the back of the head.

"What the hell!" he protested.

"That hurt," Eden growled, glaring as she chanced a look down at her legs. There was an angry red floor burn on each knee.

"There's a way to slide without hurting yourself," he pointed out.

"And what's that?" she demanded, crossing arms over her chest.

"No idea," he shrugged, and Eden went to smack him again. This time he was ready for it, and he caught her hand before it could make contact.

"Don't," he smirked.

"Why? Does it hurt?" she glared, yanking her hand out of his grip and stalking back to her place on the makeshift court, followed by the sounds of Ian's quiet chuckling.



Prose

Perpetual Miscommunication

Kelsey A. Williams

Most of the people who passed by the cafe in the heart of the city didn't look at its patrons. Some did, and that's when Tina turned away and either looked back at Isaac or somewhere else.

"Well, I guess you could go to the bookstore. I used to go there with John- did you know John? No, you weren't very close-and he would always talk about writing the Great American novel. I think he's a lawyer now, which might be even better..."

Tina fidgeted in her seat and politely looked like she was listening until she got a chance to interject.

"Oh, I've always wanted to write a novel, too! Not the Great American one, but something about philosophies. Not mine ... well, yes, mine, but I don't want it to be too preachy or..."

"Oh, yeah, not like a book of advice but more like a book about your beliefs based on your own personal experiences, right? I..."

"No, no, not really, not exactly. It would be would be like a Science Fiction story with a woman who has to create a Utopia because"

"Ooh, I love Sci-Fi-! No, go ahead, you finish what you were saying."

"Oh you first."

"Alright, so I recently updated my

cable package to include the Sci-Fi station..."

Isaac's story went on for an appropriate length with meager replies made by Tina until the get together luncheon drew to a close. It had been as much as either party had hoped it would be and they parted as friends, promising to not wait so long to hang out next time. Tina doubted the originality of her story anyway.

When Tina got home she kicked off her shoes and shuffled up the stairs, waiting for Dan to say hello.

"Hey, the Wheel's on," he called out from the family room as she entered, "and the topic is 'Books by Female Authors.' How oddly specific."

"Mm-hm."

How was your lunch? Yeah, it was good? Good, good. It's nice to meet up with old friends."

"Yeah."

"La ... lo ... leh ... li-lib, lit. .. Little Women! If this guy asks for a vowel, he's an idiot. T, go for t. Awwwh, no! What a goddamned idiot. He could lose the game over that. I bet his 'little woman' will be mad."

Tina feigned indignance at his use of the phrase "little woman". It was a moderately hostile argument, with both players using just enough logic



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to sound rational and just enough bullshit to create conflict. She tried to end it with a dramatic speech which outlined the correctness and progressiveness of her points while simultaneously reasoning him into submission first, and apology second. As her words passed as half-formed thoughts through her lips, they lost their impact as she increasingly resented her preachy-ness. Her significant other took this opportunity to hurl her weak argument back at her, resulting in some fizzled out comebacks and passive aggressive personal attacks on her part. She put on her grey coat unsuccessfully as she had already put her purse over her shoulder. She eventually got it on and zipped it up about three-quarters of the way, still revealing the red sweater that clung a bit too tightly to her chest.

Tina called her closest friend Jen to see if she was doing anything. Being that she was busy, she tried a few more, less-close friends and ended up organizing an impromptu girl's night. They met up at a local bar and talked about general things until someone brought up the subject of men. Tina was willing to speak on it, recognizing that she slightly misconstrued his and her argument to make herself look better. She didn't really enjoy the stereotypical girl talk, but she wanted to segue into a conversation about how difficult it was to trust in

one's statements being right or even reasonable. Before this, however, the other girls concluded and continued to conclude after drinks that "men are pigs." Tina agreed in monosyllabic affirmatives.

After waking up silently before Dan and heading to work, Tina decided to take a walk through the park for her lunch break. The sky was blue, the grass was green; all was as it should be. Suddenly a man came bounding down the path and stopped in front of her.

"Shout! Shout at the top of your lungs! Whatever it is you have to say, say it! Now is your chance!"

Birds stopping chirping, children stopped laughing, and all of time and that which is important seemed to converge on this moment and this man.

Her eyes seemed to beg for an answer.

Tina smiled and whispered a soft, "No."

