

Lemurian Revival



Spring 2024

COS Writers Club

Club Advisor: Sarah Kirby, English
Instructor

Co-Advisor: Emkay Sikora, Tutoring
Coordinator

President: Zach Brown

Vice President and Editor: Devon
Hansen

Secretary: Dustin Wood

Contact Writers Club:

Club Email: writers@siskiyous.edu

Find us on Instagram:

www.instagram.com/cos.writers.club

800 College Ave
Weed Ca, 96094



Kissing Sky

Oval wave-layered face of lake,
adorned with migrating snow geese
at least 1,000 of them create a clear
line,
a tiara of white,
a crown across the lake's head.

The rest of the flock,
another 10,000 or so,
are laced across the shore,
woven in the waters,
bejeweled in the pines
cascading over the lake's hair, shoulders,
spine.

They create a white veil that is almost
floor-length.
When the time is right, the snow geese
ascend.
I watch the lake's veil rise and float
toward the sky,
as the last bit of white lifts its webbed
feet from the water.

The snow geese squawk and squawk,
I hear in their echo the lake say,
"I do. I do."



She's been reflecting in her eyes her
lover,
the sky,
since she became this body of water
in a marriage of sunsets and sunrises,
of stars and moons.

- *Sarah Kirby*





My Weapon from Iraq

Oh, how my hands remember you, and feel you, and know your every detail. How my thumb will never forget the feel of pushing off your safety. How my finger feels on your trigger.

And how my very core has felt a darkness towards you. How my eyes seemingly see a dark world when I think of you. For so many years you've been this ominous being always with me in some bizarre spirit. Heavy and reeking of the scent of oil and gun powder. I've hated you.

Yet you were there for me when I needed you most. I'm alive because of you. Yet you've hurt people, yet your innocent.



You didn't ask to be in a war, nor did you ask to be a weapon. When you became a weapon, you were innocent, as the soldiers and marines, and other combatants who were born as babies into the world.

You are elements of the earth taken and forged into a weapon against your will. You could have been forged into a musical instrument, a garden tool, or anything else to enrich others or left as part of the earth.

You've served a long and hard life surrounded by death, even helping to create it, and you've never had any choice in it. I want to thank you and forgive you, and hope wherever you are your life is no longer a weapon.

- *Devon Hansen (Iraq 2004)*



Looking at Flowers

I look into these mirrors to see a
reflection,
Instead I get basal base insipid
dissection,
Purge the persecution,
Bathe in absolution,
Decay in putrefaction,
Revive the human action,
Becoming a part not apart,
In rhythm imparted by this one beating
heart,
We
All
Share
The broke choked joke,
Provoked by bespoke culture,
Creating individual identity, illusory
ignominy,
An imitative impatient illness
The barrier to soul
Baring the weight of sins,

Of losses and wins,
Holding on so tight until the heart
gives,

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And when it does, it burst forth in
coronas of love.
Still, afraid to discover itself,
Plant roots,
Shaken,
Grow.
Once no long afraid to draw outside
lines,
Because straight lines are not wrought
naturally
Because in order to be me authentically
I must expose those vulnerable parts of
me, bare roots;
And be the first person to not attack
them, or allow them to harm those in my
surroundings;
To see that this,
This me,
This kindness,

This rock,
This tree,
This you,
Is a part of me too.
One day, when those roots know they have
already stabilized enough,
Maelstroms will become breezes,
Freezes, a welcome period to rest,
West Summer sun more energy to grow,

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Sow the seeds and radiate out in loving
awareness

We are here, together, on this floating
speck,
Infinitesimally small in the scope of it
all,
Here's too looking at flowers.

- *Zach Brown*



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A Jump to Change

I jumped off a cliff into cold water today. I remember looking down into the dark depths and feeling my blood pump faster. My hands and feet began to sweat and I admitted my fears blatantly.

I reluctantly convinced myself I could do it- confidence crumbling every time I peered over the edge.

I noticed a smaller jump just down a bit, and chose to start there.

While fear continued to stew in my stomach, I decided to jump.

The quick thrill I felt as I flew through the air was terrifyingly rewarding, but the shock of the cold made me forget quickly. My whole body woke up in an instant as I started manually breathing.

Forcing my muscles to move and swim to the warm rocks was instinct, not choice.

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But the best part was bathing my skin in the sun post thrill. Pretending I was a lizard made for sunbathing..

But now for the second jump.

I've felt the way the world grows as I ascend on a plane. I've seen the ground as it gets so much smaller and wider, reminding myself of my important insignificance. As I fell towards the ground that day, strapped to a grown man, I screamed and cried- only to realize that it was more peaceful than I thought it would be.

After the realization another epiphany arrived: I am so alive.

Alive with the breath of the world, alive to breath it myself.

I had to relive the pain of the before so I may bask in the golden after.

And that's why I jumped today. The cold, dark water was a portal into a different timeline. To a different person.

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That's why I had to jump the bigger jump-

it was a terrifying leap into the person I
so strongly wish it be and love.

- *Elexcia D. Maldonado*

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Romeo the Goose

You made me love the color yellow
And you opened my heart
I am falling for your smile
And I hope you'll catch me when I land
There's so many reasons
Why I should fly away with you

We could swim far off the mainland
Where the sun shines so yellow
And I'd tell you all my reasons
Why I give you my whole heart
And I'd happily fly away with you

Our love may last but fades does my smile
For the other Geese wait on the island
Standing beside the Ducks so yellow
The Geese give me all the reasons
Why the Ducks must take you and break my
heart
While I am told why I cannot fly away with
you

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I finally ran out of reasons
To tell the Geese how you hold my heart
The world is so bleak without the yellow
That you brought alongside your smile
I refuse to stay on this island
If I cannot stay with you

We wrote out a letter of reasons
To leave behind, and we smile
They tried to stop the love in our hearts
I take you by the wing so yellow
As we finally leave this island
And I fly away with you

When you're old and not so yellow
And I have an aging smile
We'll tell the grandchildren of our secret
reasons
I will never feel regret in my heart
For flying away from the island
And living my life with you

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The Geese broke my heart
The Ducks stole your smile
And the letter of reasons
Lay on that island
But I fell in love with a yellow
Duck named you

- *Joicelyn Manson-Bailey* (Age10)

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18th Birthday

Delicate wisps of smoke fade away as the candles are extinguished. Eighteen candles atop of her favorite cake; plain ol' chocolate intertwined with cherries, smothered in coffee frosting. She waited for this day with child-like anticipation, thinking everything would be solved with age. She'd be able to do what she wanted, when she wanted. Finally, she could proudly boast, "I'm an adult. Swiftly the novelty faded away. Despite declaring herself an adult, she was still just a kid in this vast world, still reliant on her parents for support. Limits she had were still in place, and being the "baby" of the family was of no aid to the situation. She was simply on a longer leash. Days blended into weeks, and weeks into months. Eventually, nineteen candles adorned her cake. The leash became longer and longer, until it had faded away. Yet, she stayed. She'd come to realize that her life was a blessed one, she had a loving



family and friends supporting her. It was only through the realization of what she has, that she had truly grown into a young adult.

- *Kylie Bucher*



Streets of Hell

20 years ago
8000 miles away
Still tortured to this day
As if it was yesterday
Streets of war
Streets of hell
My mind forever trapped in war
Unimaginable streets of killing
Darkness comes
Only sleepless nights come
Terror comes in waking nightmares
Is this punishment and torture from the
universe?
Pain and despair
Can my body ever be repaired?
Lonely, yet united in our torture
High spirits unite us in our pride
We'd do it all again
Misery in battle
Bonded in our trauma
Hell to never be understood
Is Hell waiting for us in the next life?
For now I shall learn to live my life

- *Devon Hansen (Battle of Fallujah)*



Resilience of Life's Warmth

Complete silence except the rare animal call almost as a reminder of life.
Crunching of snow and branches under my foot.

The water freezing before my very eyes as the air crystallizes from my breath.
The heat of fire warming my gloved fingers as I boil water for pine tea.

Sun glowing through the clouds of the coming day, rays flowing through the leaves of the tall trees of the vast forest all around me.

Flames licking the frost from the sky melting the snow around it as if it was the very burning bush of god signaling life in a hostile cold, the aroma of pine fills the air flowing from the boiling water warming my lungs, relaxing the tension within myself like an old frog defrosting for the spring.



Looking closer, signs of life and perseverance are subtle but all around me, the trees and foliage hidden in snow determined to survive the harshness of the winter, the fluffy white birds and rodents hidden within burrows and scampering in the snow for hidden food.

The purity and beauty of such a land is contrasted with the harshness and terror of the whipping winds and freezing nights, blizzards lashing at anything alive or not as a test of our perseverance and preparedness.

The warmth of the sun peeking from the icy sky as a quiet and watchful symbol while chirps of a bird equaling the beauty of its very environment gives a spark of hope to the coming seasons of harvest and celebration.

~ Uriah Rhine Dalton



"Monster/Hunter"

I am Michael and I am a lot of things. I'm a Scorpio. I'm a male. I'm an orphan. But the thing that I truly am? The legacy that I leave behind will be as a monster hunter. I know what some of you are thinking: Monsters are not real. Well, you are wrong. Monsters are very real. They just know how to hide it better than most.

They act like chameleons. Blending in with the innocent and naive of the world. But losing my dad...

No.

Not losing.

Stolen.

When my father was stolen from me it equipped me with an evolved form of vision. Vision that can see through the charade

they hide behind. I see the scales, the forked tongues and the evil serpent eyes that lie beneath the surface of real monsters.

I'm looking at one now.

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Ask anybody in this town and they will say I am looking at David Heatly. Respected 3rd grade teacher at Rain Fall Springs Elementary school. Cub scout leader. President of the board game club. But I see the true David. The monster.

I see the man responsible for the anguish and pain that Miguel Sanchez's parents are dealing with. The pain and helplessness that comes with having a missing child. A child that he murdered 4 days ago in a small trapper shack on David's property.

Most would look at David and see a grieving teacher who was a part of the search committee for young Miguel. On the news,

standing next to Miguel's swollen-eyed parents. Pleading for anybody with information to come forward, knowing full well he has all the information himself.

Chameleon.

I wish I could bring that boy back. I wish I could. I wish I could bring them all back. My Dad...

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I cannot. But I can get rid of the disease that took them away.

That is what David is. A virus that chews through innocence and trust.

Who knows, maybe David feels bad about all of this? Maybe it's an impulse that he cannot fight? Maybe he doesn't want to be a disease?

Well worry not David the disease.

You are about to meet me.

The Cure.

~ *Dustin Wood*

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Child

Grandmothers are there for you
when
mothers are busy—
with the business of living,

working, taking care of the younger
children,
cooking dinner, partying, playing bingo and
other important things.

When I was in the hospital

recovering from a suicide attempt—
It was my grandmother
that came to see me.

Poor mom—
she really didn't have a clue.

My mother—
often so busy
keeping busy—
that life passed by.

She was not there when I needed her—
there is an empty,
painful place
that will not be filled.

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It's sad when parents
don't give their children
the love and support,
they need
But,
We can.
Love ourselves—
the inner child
who feels sad—

Give her
the support, attention and love

that she deserves.

~ Cheryl Hiller

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The End

All the things you loved has ended
Eating lunch alone
Grasp for ways to stay connected
Don't fit in at home
You can't relate to kids your age
When you're ten you're so mature
But now your seventeen
Filled with fear you can't ignore

Focus on the lives of people

You have never met
Apocalypse outside your window
A year you won't forget
Victims keep on screaming
The rich are leaving, we're out of time
Forgetting all the numbers
Of the friends I left behind

~ *Joicelyn Manson-Bailey* (Age 17)

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Alpha & Omega

The Sun never dies—
Alpha and Omega—
the beginning and the end,
male and female.

Many and the One—
tiny and infinitesimal.

Dark and light—
absence.
Night.

A thousand ways to say
I love you
Yet only one
is needed.

A thousand sperm swimming
competition.
Yet only one
Wins.

I see clearer
with my eyes shut-
light inside
the brightest.

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Is love ever done?
Where is the beginning
and the end-
Alpha and Omega.

Do you remember your first love?
School girl crush.
Innocent.
Why does it always end
different
than it begins?

~ Cheryl Hiller

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Q&A interview with our esteemed Dr. Andrea Craddock

Joicelyn Manson

1. Introduce yourself! (Name, Career, Years at COS, etc.)

My name is Dr. Andrea Craddock. I have been the full-time Psychology and Sociology Instructor at COS for the last eight years.

2. Why did you choose Psychology?

I fell in love with psychology when I took my first General Psychology class at Fresno City College. After I took a Biological Psychology course at Fresno State, I decided to focus on that vein of psychology when I went to graduate school.

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3. Why did you decide to start teaching?

I actually fell into teaching by accident. I was working on my Ph.D. in Biological Psychology at the University of Oklahoma when I was given the opportunity to teach at a local community college. I took the job to earn a little extra money but ended up really liking it. It was then

that I decided to pursue teaching instead of therapy or research.

4. What is 'emotional growth,' in your words?

Emotional growth is the ability to identify and regulate your own emotions and understand the emotions of those around you. It's similar to having emotional intelligence. I often tell my students that it's as (or more) important to have high-

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emotional intelligence than regular intelligence for a successful life.

5. What would you recommend to someone attempting to grow emotionally or in maturity level?

Emotionally immature people tend to spend a lot of time ruminating about their negative emotions. Sometimes the best way to break this negative spiral is to get outside of yourself and help those around you. If you volunteer at your local soup kitchen or help your elderly neighbor, you get out of your negative rut, and it helps you develop empathy. Helping others also makes us feel good. In addition, it's important to take responsibility for your actions and set boundaries with others.

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6. Any send off advice or quotes?

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."

- Dr. Seuss, *Oh, The Places You'll Go*

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With enjoyment and unity as
a group, we did this
together.

