

VOLUME 39, SPRING 2022

NORTHERN LIGHTS

A LITERARY & ARTS JOURNAL PUBLISHED BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-GREEN BAY'S MARINETTE CAMPUS



From the editors .,,

Welcome, readers! We are very excited to share with you this year's issue of the *Northern Lights Literary & Arts Journal*, presented by the Practicum in Literary Publishing course at UW-Green Bay's Marinette Campus.

This year, our editorial team hails from all three branch campuses. To bridge geographic gaps, we met online to create the *Northern Lights* but also produce our bi-weekly campus newsletter, *The Driftwood*. This came with its fair share of technical challenges—poor internet service, anyone?—but our team's earnest dedication pulled through. We have been privileged to pour through such creative and amazing submissions, and it is this talent that has made making the *Northern Lights* a total joy. We hope these featured pieces, from our UWGB students and faculty, will inspire you as much as they've inspired us. Enjoy!

We'd like to thank the Marinette Campus Student Senate for funding, and all who made this year's journal possible.

Serenity Block and Shannon Ribich
Northern Lights Co-Editors-in-Chief

Exclusive Online Content!

The “digital bonus content” section of our website includes our editors' favorite submissions that didn't fit into these pages. Visit the *Northern Lights* website, uwgb.edu/northern-lights to view the following pieces:

- “Obdura” by Roshelle Amundson (poem)
- “The Man in the Woods” by Gabriel Guevara
- Untitled art by Marissa Helgesen
- “3-0-4” by Grace Kraniak (poem)
- “Scotty's Travel Guide to Life” by Verity Maeve Langan (digital story)
- “Remedy and Requiem” by Avalon A. Manly (short story)
- Untitled art by Mindy Mensen
- “The Bargain” by Jake Puestow (fiction)
- “Storge” by Sofia Terranova (poem)
- “Everlasting” by Ongnia Thao (poem)
- “The Dwindling Flame” by Conner Tuthill (poem)
- “Before Life, Before Death” by August Wiegman (poem)

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COVER IMAGE: "THE SPIRIT OF THE PHOENIX"
BY VERITY MAEVE LANGAN
Acrylic impasto on canvas
"18x24"

*Inspired by those who've earned their wings
in spite of wind and weather.*

BACK COVER PHOTO: "DONKERS" BY HALI SIMON



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SONG OF MOTHER

Sasha Freemind / Unsplash

POETRY

Mother is okay, just torn down the center
Mother is okay, the world just bent her
Dry your eyes because she's all better
Let her know you love her in a pretty crayon letter

Don't grow up to call her cray cray
You're just a little little bae-bay
You don't understand the damage
She's doing whatever she can to manage

Sure, her mind is all ravaged
And she can sound so savage
But understand please
Her moods come and go like a breeze

She keeps breathing
Watches you teething
Breaks down on the floor
Shaking inside her core

When Father comes home
 Says, in her, it's a chromosome
 Leaves her there all alone
 And this startles you to the bone

Mother is okay, just torn down the center
 Mother is okay, the world just bent her
 Dry your eyes because it can still get better
 Let her know you love her in a pretty crayon letter

All the other kids talk, and stare, and they gawk
 You just want to know if the hands will ever move on the clock
 Running home from school every day
 The same thing playing through your head so you pray

Lights flashing red and blue
 Feel your own face changing hue
 This time she's gone and done it
 You know she needs more than a med kit

See, Father had come home
 They say, he said he was off to roam
 She ran to the kitchen and dug desperately through the drawer
 Determined to keep him there if he could watch it pour

Mother is okay, just torn down the center
 Mother is okay, the world just bent her
 Dry your eyes because she's all better
 Tell her that you love her in pretty stone letters

—Grace Kraniak-Desotell

PHOTOGRAPHY



photo by Amy M. Shaffer

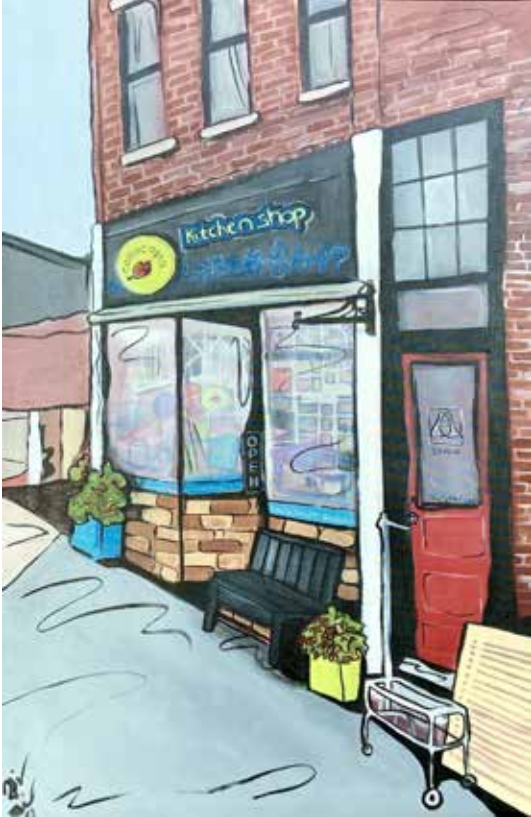
DISMAL DAYS AT THE CHURCH IN AUVERS-SUR-OISE

The dismal sky does not reflect
The brightness of the stony path.
A woman senses the hope within
And ambles slowly to embrace it.
Its withered look does not deter
Those who seek what lies in store.
The hope,
The faith,
The help,
The home.

The gloomy sky shows all the truth.
The shining structure feigning false security
And leading masses far astray.
A woman needs a guiding hand
And this is where she searches.
But what she'll find is just as bleak
As the foreboding sky above.
There is no hope,
Only hollow faith, a whiff of help.
A home to some: not all.
And not to those
Who need it most.

—Sofia Terranova

ART



“Cornucopia” by Hali Simon

ECHO

A white steeple against the blue sky,
Sunday morning,
a voice echoing,
Calling out the sins of others,
Calling out the sins of mine.

Every year I helped teach,
teach that dinosaur bones are young,
teach that my very existence was immoral.
That is what my grandmother thought.
My grandmother was wrong.

I cannot show her my rainbow pride,
nor the congregation who chants with the echoing voice.
This echo chamber is not the place for me,
but how can I leave
when my home itself becomes a cave?

—*Serenity Block*

POETRY

ART



art by Mindy Mensen

PLUTO'S MOON REMAINS

Our souls mingled sensually our first night.
We shared our love as one.
We were one.

She pulled you like Earth's moon pulls the ocean,
lust crashing, and receding against the shore.
She flirted with you,
but you loved me.

She called you more times than others.
However, you quit answering.

She lingered in your head, I lingered more.
I accepted she would still be a part of you.
I loved that part as well.

Her love and comfort for you were false.
She spoke of seductive language.
You again picked up the call.
I tried hanging up for you.

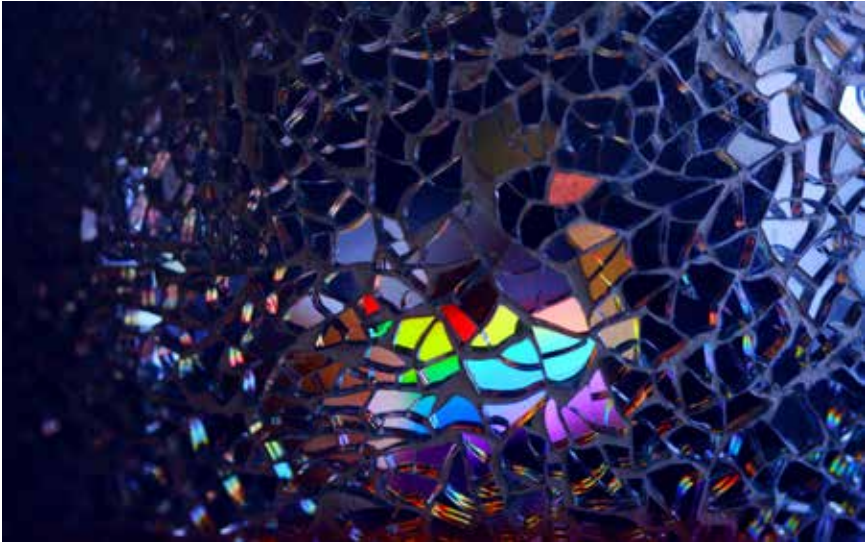
I was with you in your fight.
You battled heavy and hard.

You were grounded with me,
We were together in orbit.
You Pluto, I one of its moons.

She was the other moon.
Our gravity of love grew.
She almost threw us out of orbit,
but our gravity held strong.

We stayed in orbit until your very last day;
when she crashed into you.

She was a disease.
Pluto is sick no more,
But the gravity still pulls me.



Sharon McCutcheon / Unsplash

POETRY

SEE ME

When you look at me what do you see

Do you see your eyes
Do you see your freckles
Do you see your smile
Do you hear your laugh
Can you feel your fear
Can you feel your hatred
Can you see the bruises

How can you say love is unconditional
When you hate so freely
How can I trust in your love
When you hate what I am

You've never seen me
You see who you want me to be

Not a drug addict
Not an alcoholic
No drama
No fatherless babies
Not a whore
Not divorced

I couldn't tell you

My first love, a girl
My first heartbreak, a girl
A new love, a woman
A feeling of home, in her arms

She is all that I've been missing
From you
And what I never knew I needed
She is everything

I'll tell you
Goodbye
So you don't have to

Maybe one day
You'll miss who I am
Then we can say
Hello.

—*Kaylieph Williams*

PHOTOGRAPHY



photo by Kira Ashbeck

THE VOID, IT ALWAYS REMAINS

Condemnation and desolation,
No domain for a single sensation.
The illusion a single dream,
Nothing is as it really seems.
Run, run as fast as you can,
But you will never outrun your shadow.
Between the lines of reality and fantasy,
The soul is ultimately hollow.
Condemnation and desolation,
But you always have a friend.
Sympathetic hearts surround you,
And your life never truly ends.

—*Conner Tuthill*

ART



art by Mindy Mensen

APOCALYPTIC LESSONS

from Molly Brodak

If a thing is alive it is weak.
If a thing is weeping, may it silence.

The mercy she gave to the dog came back to bite,
locked away in a shed. Dead girl walking.

Inches turn to miles underneath the wax sun.
Thunderbirds sing out in white hot flashes.

Dive and eat reddened flesh of a weasel. Dive
and the burning shock of ice becomes home.

In the glass, she is painted gold and singing.
Spinning like all hell, never meeting a gaze.

Suffocated in thin gold leaf to cover
the ugly bits. To cover the eyes.

Dead girl walking. Dead girl weeping.
May she silence.

—August Wiegman

ART



art by *Katelyn Rusk*

THE BOMB

I just stood there
 Frozen in the wreckage
 Assessing the damage
 I want to go back in time
 Just one minute

A live bomb
 Strapped to my daughter's chest
 Her father and siblings beside her

BOOM!
 Detonation.

I watched them fall
 Dominos to the ground.
 Helpless
 Unable to stop it.
 My brain struggling to comprehend
 What is happening?

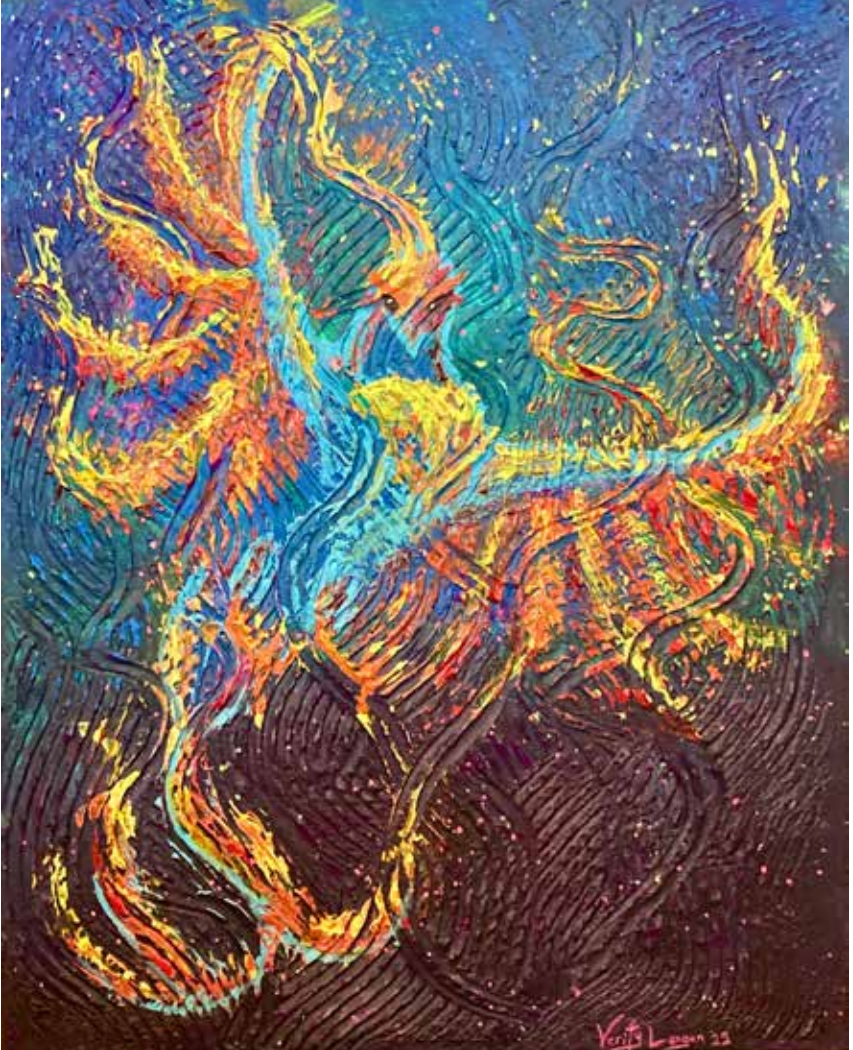
Too late.
 It already happened.

Their pain is palpable
 A thick fog hanging in the air
 I must help them
 Rush to their side
 No use!
 For, now I see

I, too, have fallen
 And I have no idea
 How to even begin
 To get back up.

—*Verity Maeve Langan*

ART



"The Spirit of the Phoenix" by Verity Maeve Langan

THE RHINO

Feet of great boulders, heavy and loud.
 Stomping and scuffling, angry and proud.
 Taunting, tormenter. Tranquility thief.
 Diabolical devil. There is no relief.

Ornery and plotting, Eager to charge.
 Driven to trample, a dastardly march.
 Skin made of armor, so callous her hide.
 Weight like a freight train, a stumbling glide.

Nothing to stop it, nowhere to go.
 Brace for the impact! Hurts more than you know.
 My heart is in tatters, maiming of mind.
 Unspeakable cruelty, actions unkind.

Impaled on her ivory, betrayal supreme.
 No air left inside me, I can't even scream.
 The face of a loved one, the eyes of a shark.
 No justification, I'm lost in the dark.

She tramples right through me, leaves me for dead.
 She's gone in an instant, so much left unsaid.
 A soft little baby, once held in my arms.
 No one could have warned me, her treacherous charm.

You see, she's my baby, forever will be.
 I can't walk away, won't toss out the key.
 So I stand in this place with arms open wide.
 Motherly longing. Burning inside.

Waiting in silence, relieved that she's gone.
 Is this my penance, some horrible wrong?
 My breath trapped in stasis, is she alright?
 Has she damaged another? My soul shakes with fright.

In the distance a rumble rolls over the hills.
 A moment of happy, followed by chills.
 My heart's torn asunder, my gut filled with dread.
 Self-loathing, I ask, "Is she better off dead?"



crsp media / Freepik

FAMILIAR

Her name was Rhea, and I was in love with her. The goldfish disagreed, but it shouldn't have doubted me.

Her name was Rhea, and she was a part-time witch. Most days, running the bakery filled her hours—but her souffles never collapsed, and her pastries were so perfect that there may have been some magic in her cooking, too.

Her name was Rhea, but I called her Ri, and I was in love with her.

The goldfish disagreed.

"You don't know her," it reminded me while I sorted porcelain thimbles onto a display.

Swishing its tail, it added, "And you're running out of time."

A thimble shattered, and I hissed as I bent to gather the shards.

"Yeah," I grumbled. "Yeah, I know."

A chiming from the front door interrupted us. I smelled sandalwood and rising dough—Ri was there, holding a tray of coffee cakes and tea, smiling like the sun.

I smiled, too, but it felt like I had forgotten how to work my face, and I sort of stuck my tongue out, instead.

"I brought you day-old pastry breakfast!" she proclaimed.

"Oh—oh?" I stammered, mouth suddenly very dry. "What's—what's the occasion?"

Ri settled the tray on the counter and started pouring tea. "I think it's very nice, what you've done for Mr. Steinman—taking over the antique shop so he can retire."

"Erm," I replied.

"How'd you inherit the shop, again?" she asked as she lifted cake onto plates.

"Mm," I answered. Then, shaking my head, "Um, nephew."

Ri offered up some tea and cake, eyeing me in her careful way: shrewd, playful, intelligent. "It's Sam, right? You don't look very much like him," she noted, sipping her tea.

I swallowed a mouthful of tea so large it felt solid. "Erm," I said again.

Behind us, I heard the goldfish sigh.

Every day that week, Ri came by with breakfast. Her laugh was a liqueur, and I was drunk on it. The lines around her eyes and the silver in her hair made her shine, not like the glow of youth, but like the warmth of a hearth fire, banked, not undangerous, but purposeful. Ruddy and undying in the face of a cold night outside.

My own hair, graying at the temples, grew flyaway as my nervous hands ran through it again and again. I was a poor conversationalist, but she came anyway; she told stories about which crystals helped dough rise, about clients who came to her for pastries or palm-readings, about the stray cat who sometimes perched on her windowsill, watching her work. Over coffee cake and chai, she told me about

her life, and I was spellbound.

Each morning she left, the goldfish's pointed silence hung in the air.

Six days in, as Ri left, I felt like she had taken a piece of me with her.

The chime of the bell died above the door, and, still watching Ri, I said, "Say it, then."

"It's the last day," he said, not urgently. "You knew the conditions of the spell when you cast it. Seven days."

There were tears in my eyes. "Then what do I *do*?"

The goldfish made a motion that, in a creature with shoulders, could have been a shrug. "Tell her?"

There wasn't time for deliberation. Strangling the anguished growl that rose in my throat, I stalked out the front door.

In the apartment above the bakery, Ri sat cross-legged, bathed in sunlight. I stood there a while, watching her, two thoughts at war in my mind: *How?*, and, *No time.*

I cleared my throat, and she turned, a smile carving dimples in her cheeks.

"Sam! What brings you by? Did I leave something at the shop?"

I could feel the edges of the spell chafing against my skin like ropes. Fraying. Tearing. Wringing my hands, I faltered. "Erm. Um, see, Ri—see, the t-thing is—"

That was all I could manage. The spell was wearing off, and speech went first.

My vision telescoped, and the world rose up around me. My clothes collapsed around me as I fell, and there was only darkness and the pounding of my heart.

Ri lifted the collar of the shirt to find me inside. Her eyes were huge with wonder, and as she lifted me out of the clothes, all she said was, "How did you *do* that?"

With a sigh and nothing left to lose, I walked to the doorway and waited. She followed me across the street to the shop until the door chimed above us and we were inside, our eyes adjusting to the dimness.

On the floor was broken glass and water, and wet footprints leading to the chair where Steinman sat, wrapped in a towel.

"You're back, I see," he said to me, pressing water out of his beard.

I let out a mournful sound, curling my tail across my feet.

Ri stared for a long moment. Then, "How?"

Steinman shrugged. "It wasn't me. It was him." He pointed a crooked finger at me, and I flinched.

Ri picked me up and set me on the counter, her gaze intense. "You're the stray who comes by sometimes, aren't you?"

I blinked once, long and slow.

"And you cast a spell to take a human shape? But it needed an exchange?"

Another blink.

"So you turned Steinman into—a goldfish?"

"Mrow." I couldn't look at Steinman.

"Don't be too hard on the little guy," Steinman said, walking over to pat my head. I sank under his heavy hand. "I think he just wanted to be close to you."

Ri looked at me a for a time before her face broke into a warm grin. "Then why didn't you say so? Come on. I don't have any cat food; let's go buy some."

She opened the door, looking back at me. "Well? Sam?"

I looked at Steinman. He was smiling. "Go on. Don't waste your time."

I blinked at him. Jumping down from the counter, I ran between Ri's ankles and out into the sun.

PHOTOGRAPHY



photo by *Serenity Block*

THREADS

Like a piece of thread with a needle
I choose to sew myself together again
With the brightest red thread I could find
hoping someone would notice

The struggle and pain I've been
through just so I could smile again
But no one does
Because I have given all my
Threads away

—*Ongnia Thao*



THAT GIRL

Jack Redgate / Unsplash

POETRY

Seventeen steps

north
south
north

passing

the bus stop
the clinic
the bus stop

empty gallon milk jug swinging out before her

right
left
right

Baristas and patrons stare through the
 safety
 of neighborhood coffee house windows
It's her— chortling.
Did you see that?— laughing.

*That girl, Miss Mocha Latte Junior says,
 does that all day*

That girl— Sylvia;
 tattooed arms, legs—
 face. Tribal patterns connect her eyes in a uni-brow,
 an appeal to keep them securely on her face

Blaze orange crew-cut
 manic-panic dress; pinned and duct taped like anarchy—
 you'd think her steampunk or mod, except
she's off her meds, again, —sardonically.

Misunderstood,
 Sylvia and her plastic companion
 march seventeen
 up and down Mental Health Avenue.

—Roshelle Amundson

PHOTOGRAPHY



“Through the Fog” by *Roshelle Amundson*

NIGHT

Hushed stillness where
hidden depths of life
just under the dark surface
exist.

The soundless night settles in
when a rippling occurs, a moment
so fast it's gone before the motion
registers.

A fish, disturbing the peace checks in
then leaves quietly
as if it had not been there at
all.

—*Michelle Rowell*

PLAYING YOUR INSTRUMENT

FICTION

"Now, if there is something a professional is never without, it is their instrument," John the storyteller said while covertly glancing around the tavern. *I swear, I just had it*, John thought as he hopped up onto the bar to get a better look around the place. The tavern was in a rough shape. The wind blew right through it, filling the bar with the chill air of the night. With numerous holes in the walls and ceiling, it was probably one good storm away from collapsing in on itself. However, it was surprisingly clean and tidy on the inside, especially compared to most taverns on the Sun's Path this close to the capital. Whoever the barkeeper was, they clearly cared about the place. Perhaps they just didn't have enough coin to fix it up. There was clearly some attempt at a repair job with planks of wood nailed over a broken window. *The barred window certainly did not give it an appealing look from the outside*, he thought. Unfortunately for him, John was in desperate need of some food and had spent all of his money at the last tavern a few days' back.

A man sitting at the bar cleared his throat, looking at John with anticipation in his eyes. *Right, right, gotta find it*, he thought. He was a lanky man closest to John and was quite red in the face, clearly very drunk and looking excited at the prospect of hearing a story from John. Just behind him was a large burly man who was laying face down on the bar, empty glasses piled on top of one another next to him. There was a foul smell coming from them, the kind that made you wanna hold your breath and bolt. Their faces certainly didn't help in that regard either.

Damn, truly the perfect customers, John thought annoyed. *If only I could find that blasted thing.*

As a traveling storyteller, he made his money by performing for people. Sometimes for tips but mostly by request. The tavern was sparse except for the two men and John at the bar, along with one other gruff-looking man eating alone in the back, shooting annoyed glances at them. He looked exhausted and had a metal helm resting next to his meal on the table. *Soldier on break from guard patrol, maybe?* John wasn't certain. Clearly unhappy about having his meal disturbed. It was well past the height of the night and into the depressing low that was really only an hour or so away from being called morning. The barkeep was nowhere to be seen. They were probably resting in the back. Not an uncommon occurrence for a tavern, open this late at night.

They would probably come running if someone called for them.

"So, if a professional is never without their instrument, you must not be one," the portly man sitting at the bar bellowed, with his face still pressed firmly on the bar. John glanced over to his right, but before could interject, the lanky man sitting closer to John spoke up.

"Nah, ya see, I bet his voice is the instrument." He gave John an inquisitive look, one eyebrow raised higher than the other. "Ya sing, right?"

John was not a very good singer; he usually just told stories while strumming his instrument as an accompaniment, but perhaps if they were drunk enough, they wouldn't notice. *No, stupid idea. If they heard me singing, they definitely wouldn't*

give me some coin. He really needed the money. He hadn't eaten in what, three days maybe. Not completely sure, too long.

"Singing..." John said, trailing off trying to think of something to say. The soldier-looking fellow sitting alone at a table audibly groaned and gripped his utensils tighter, as he tore more violently into his food. He was clearly not amused by the thought of singing breaking out in the quiet tavern.

"Well..." John replied as he covertly leaned back, checking behind the bar. *Where was it?* he thought to himself. Surely he had brought it with him. Had he left it somewhere? Was he that starved for food he would forget on the road? He had been traveling very far, trying to make it to the capital. He was only a day's journey away from his destination. But without earnings to buy some food, he feared he would not last the rest of his journey. *No, singing won't work, but perhaps...* An idea started to formulate in his mind, a terrible idea that would probably get him thrown out for sure, left to starve out in the woods. But he always did perform best under pressure.

"...a clever thought," John continued, projecting his voice and beginning his performance. He pulled himself up onto his feet on top of the bar. The lonely man sitting away from them quickly snapped his head toward their direction, even more annoyed, still gripping his knife and fork. "However, my lanky friend, my voice is not my instrument." The lanky man stared back intently, not even looking the least bit perturbed at being called lanky. *Ugh, off my game. A rookie mistake. Good thing he's drunk. Probably should have asked for their names.* "My instrument is the same as most. For it is my mind."

The burly man let out a chuckle. "Ha, your head ain't no instrument. Not unless ye pound on it," he replied, turning his head to look at him though he still had the side of his head down firmly attached to the bar.

"Oh, on the contrary, for everyone needs their mind or you won't accomplish anything, will you?" John said, projecting in his storyteller voice. *I just need to build suspense. Get that soldier-looking fellow annoyed. He definitely looks like he has money.* The two men at the bar both seemed like the type who would have already spent all they had. *Not that you're any different,* he thought. Regardless, getting food was certainly a requirement for living another day.

He continued, "Can you teach people if you have no knowledge of the subject? I think not. Can a physician heal with no knowledge on how? I think not. For the instrument they play is not scapples or bandages, nor words or books, but their mind and their knowledge within. Without their mind, they cannot teach nor heal. And without my mind, I cannot tell stories and perform. For without my head and the things inside, I'm no storyteller." *Just a man who isn't as clever as he tries to appear,* he thought. "So I play my instrument and strum the knowledge within."

Behind the bar, a door to the back room creaked open slightly. A young girl peered through the crack. She looked about ten or eleven summers old. Probably the daughter of the tavern owner checking in on the commotion, seeing if she needed to wake them up or not.

"That doesn't make any sense," the lanky man called out, though he still had a drunken grin streaking across his face "But can ya head play me a song? Do ye know the ballad about the sailor and his estranged wife? I like that one".

"Ya always talk about that one, Dalet," The burly man said.

That has to be the most generic description of a ballad I've ever heard, John thought to himself. *I just need to push a little farther, let's hope this works and I don't get killed or, worse, I actually have to try and sing.*

"Ahh, yes, the ballad about the sailor and his estranged wife, of course, a classic. It is quite a lengthy and repetitive song though. I'll take your payment after." The man frowned at the word payment but didn't interject. *Well, here goes nothing.* He cleared his throat, then started to take a deep long breath getting ready to sing.

CRASH!

Oh thank goodness.

The chair that the now furious soldier was sitting on flew away from him as he jumped to his feet, eyes stabbing John with their intense anger. He stomped toward the bar, dead set on him.

John tried to keep his fists from clenching and his arms from shaking as the man stomped closer and closer, the flood boards straining and creaking underneath his rage. He could see the sword hanging from his belt now, swaying with his angered steps.

"Ah, good sir, do you have a request?" John called out weary, trying to keep the fear out of his voice. He sat down onto the top of the bar to hide how badly his legs were starting to shake. As the man stalked closer and closer, he could see the numerous scars across his face and arms, perhaps not a soldier but a mercenary.

Perhaps I miscalculated, John thought. *This guy might just kill me to shut me up. Maybe I should run for the door while I still can.* But he swallowed down his nervousness. He wouldn't let his work go unfinished. He would see it through.

"Now I warn you, I charge three coins if you have a specific ballad you'd want to hear," John said warily.

"Three whole coins?" The lanky man at the bar said, sounding disappointed, "I ain't got that much." The imposing man thrust his arm out as he reached the bar, grabbing John by the wrist and pulling him down from his seat. The young girl peeking through the door yelped and retreated back, probably going to grab the barkeeper. *Maybe I won't be killed after all.* The battle-ridden man pulled John in closer, still only by the wrist, his fingers sinking into his skin like knives. The man pulled something from his belt and slammed it into John's palm. It was a small bag of coins.

"Here's 20," the man spat. "Now shut it, or else".

After his nice hot meal, and a lot of ale, John felt much better. He stumbled out of the tavern trying to keep his balance. *Welp, now that was quite the performance, John,* he thought. The bartender had quite the selection of alcohol and he felt the need to try a few he hadn't tasted before. She was quite cross when she heard that he had been walking on top of her polished bar. She got over it after he started spending all of his newly earned gold. Money well spent. *I'll have to earn more when I make it to the capital,* which was the goal. After all, he was too well known in the outer villages; most wouldn't even tolerate him anymore. He did have a nasty habit of pissing people off. But the capital filled with thousands, and, well, he could probably find a different crowd every day for the rest of his life. The sun was just starting to rise, and he'd have to make camp somewhere off the trail and pass out. Better to sleep during the day anyway, fewer predators out and about, and less chance of getting robbed. *Which is also a good reason to never carry money on you. No point if it just gets stolen while I sleep.*

As he steadied himself to continue on his journey, he glanced to his right. And there he saw it, leaning against the outside of the tavern, wet with the morning dew, his lost, almost forgotten instrument. He sighed, rubbing his wrist, bruised and still seething in pain, and picked it up. He headed on his way, strumming it as he went off into the woods to pass out.

—Ethan Craft



ART

art by Marissa Helgesen



photo by Kaitlyn O'Claire

CONTRIBUTORS

Roshelle Amundson (pp. 24-25, 26) is an English/Humanities professor at UWGB-Marquette. In her spare time, she may be found with windows-down, moonroof open, and loud rock music on her to way to refuel in the quiet; foraging in the woods or walking the shores of Lake Superior or Lake Michigan; her pockets full of rocks and fossils.

Kira Ashbeck (p. 12) says, "My love for photography began when I got my first digital camera at six. Since then, I have tried an additional medium: film. If you are interested in seeing more of my work, you can follow me on Instagram @photography_bykira." She attends the Green Bay campus.

Serenity Block (pp. 7, 22) is a junior studying Writing and Applied Arts. In her spare time, she loves to travel and explore nature, which often inspires her writing.

Sirene Borowczyk (p. 9) says, "I am 21 years old. I'm majoring in Animal Science to be a Veterinarian, or something in that field. In case no one has said it recently, I love you. You're doing great. Take care."

Ethan Craft (pp. 28-30) is an undergraduate at UWGB majoring in English. He was born in Emporia, Kansas, but has lived most of his life in Green Bay. He is pursuing a career as a novelist, and it's his first time contributing to *Northern Lights*.

Marissa Helgesen (p. 31) says, "I'm a biology major, but I also love drawing and painting. I primarily use India Ink, but I also use colored pencil, watercolor, and marker." She attends the Green Bay campus.

Grace Kraniak-Desotell (pp. 2-3) is a junior in Writing and Applied Arts. When not working toward her education, she enjoys writing, walking wildlife trails, and hanging out with her husband and cats. She attends the Marinette campus.

Verity Maeve Langan (front cover, pp. 17-19) is a fine artist in visual arts, painting, sculpting, sewing, and creative nonfiction writing and poetry. She says, "For me, life began at 40. I'm pursuing a degree in writing and enjoying the tranquility of my little cabin in the woods up north." She attends the Green Bay campus.

Avalon A. Manly (pp. 20-21) lives and teaches high school English in Colorado. She is an adjunct with UWBG while she works on her Ph.D.; she specializes in Gothic and horror narratives. When she's not writing or working, she enjoys hiking with her dog or watching the latest streaming horror anthology with her cats.

Mindy Mensen (pp. 8, 14) says, "I'm currently a senior at the Green Bay campus, though I should be graduating this May with my BFA in the Writing and Applied Arts program. I have loved writing for as long as I can remember and have amassed quite a collection of poems and short stories that I've written over the years. My favorite genre is fantasy—the more magic the better. I also enjoy drawing and using graphic design to illustrate my stories and dabbling in nature photography."

Michelle Rowell (p. 27) graduated from UW-Green Bay (Green Bay campus) in 1999 with a bachelor's degree in English Education. She has been teaching English at Marinette High school since that time.

Katelyn Rusk (p.16) attends the Marinette campus and is a psychology major with an art minor. She loves to draw and to go on adventures with her dog. She also loves to hang out with friends and see what kind of mischief they can get into.

Amy M. Shaffer (p.4) says, "I am a 1991 graduate of Marinette High School, and this is my first semester of college (Marinette campus). I love hiking, photography, and encouraging others to live their dreams!"

Hali Simon (p.6, back cover) attends the Green Bay campus and is part of the Class of 2025. She says, "I am an avid, optimistic creator of all things art. My love for travel, nostalgia, cheer, and family is what drives me to create building + travel art pieces. To me, creativity is a way to discover myself, new art ideas, and what the world has to offer."

Sofia Terranova (p.5) says, "I am a student at the Green Bay campus working towards my BA in English - Creative Writing and my BFA in Writing and Applied Arts. I am close to graduating and plan to move towards a Master's with the ultimate goal of becoming a literature professor."

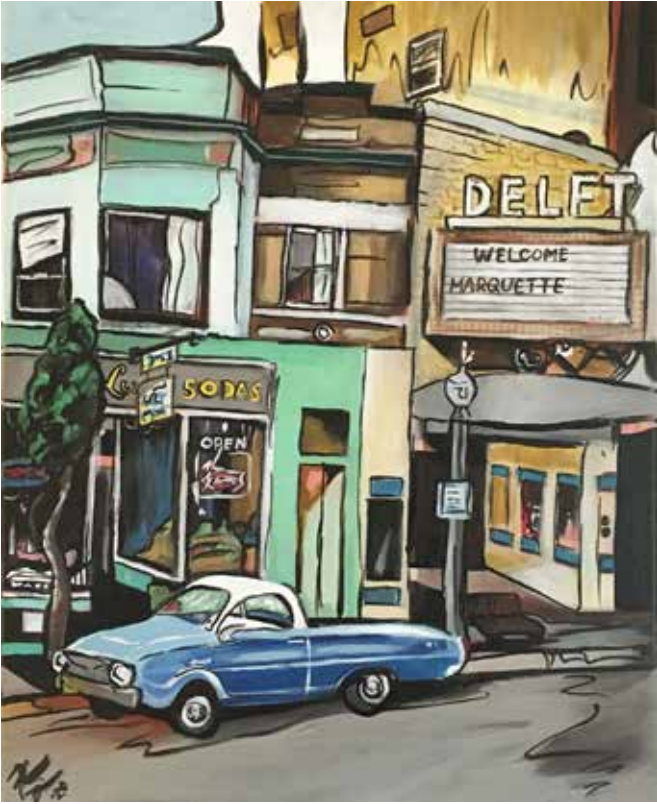
Ongnia Thao (p. 23) says, "I've always been too shy to show off my poetry, and I decided to take a chance. I hope someone out there can find comfort in my poetry like I do." She attends the Sheboygan campus.

Conner Tuthill (p. 13) says, "I am a junior Phoenix (Marinette campus) who is seeking to attain an AAS degree. I enjoy studying nature and am often found foraging and hiking during the summer. I also enjoy learning about other cultures, philosophies, and religions, and I am a bit hippyish."

August Wiegman (p. 15) (they/them) is a recent graduate from UWGB. During their time at the UWGB-Marinette and Green Bay campuses, they helped revive *Northern Lights* and worked as Editor-in-Chief on *Sheepshead Review*.

Kaylieph Williams (pp. 10-11) spends her free time reading, painting, and creating. She enjoys the winter months the most as she hadn't had experienced a true winter growing up in California. She attends the Green Bay campus.

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“Donkers” by Hali Simon



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