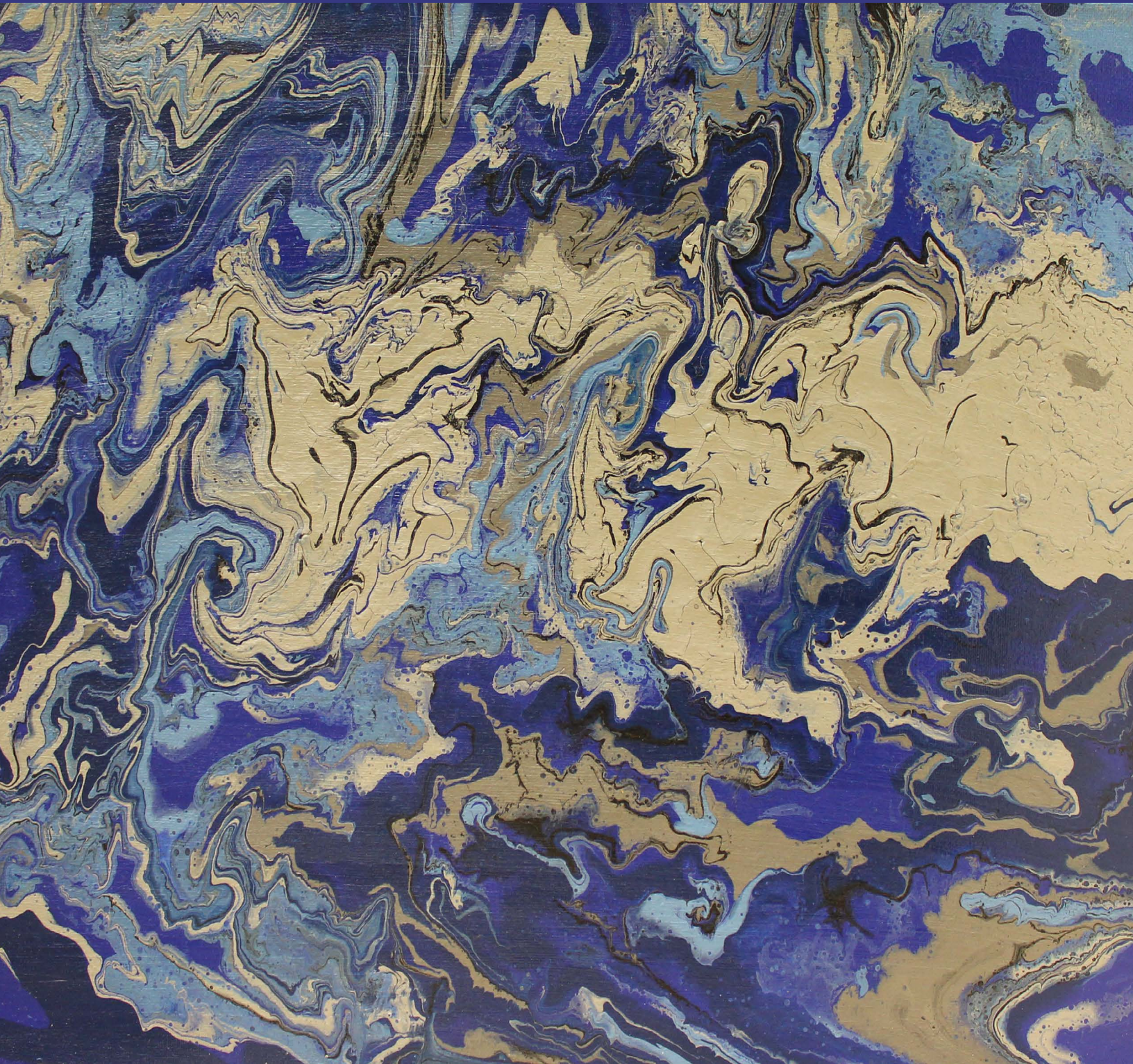


EXPLORATIONS

Fine Arts Magazine • 2018
A Publication of Mountain Empire Community College



Drawing • Painting • Poetry • Short Story

WELCOME

to Mountain Empire Community College's 2018 arts magazine, *Explorations*. In these pages you will find the photographs, paintings and writing of some of our very talented students and alumni. The artistic style and vision that produce each piece may vary greatly, but all the works represent an artist who's creative, inspired, engaged with the world, full of curiosity and energy, and eager to reach an audience.

On behalf of the entire campus community, we would especially like to thank all the contributors for their willingness to share their talents with all of us. Also, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the very talented judges, all distinguished in their respective fields, who agreed to judge the entries for us. Finally, we appreciate the support of the college administration, Student Services, the Arts and Sciences Division, Printing Services, and the Office of Community Relations for their financial support and technical expertise.

Explorations Faculty Sponsors:

Brandi Martinez
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**Mountain Empire
Community College**

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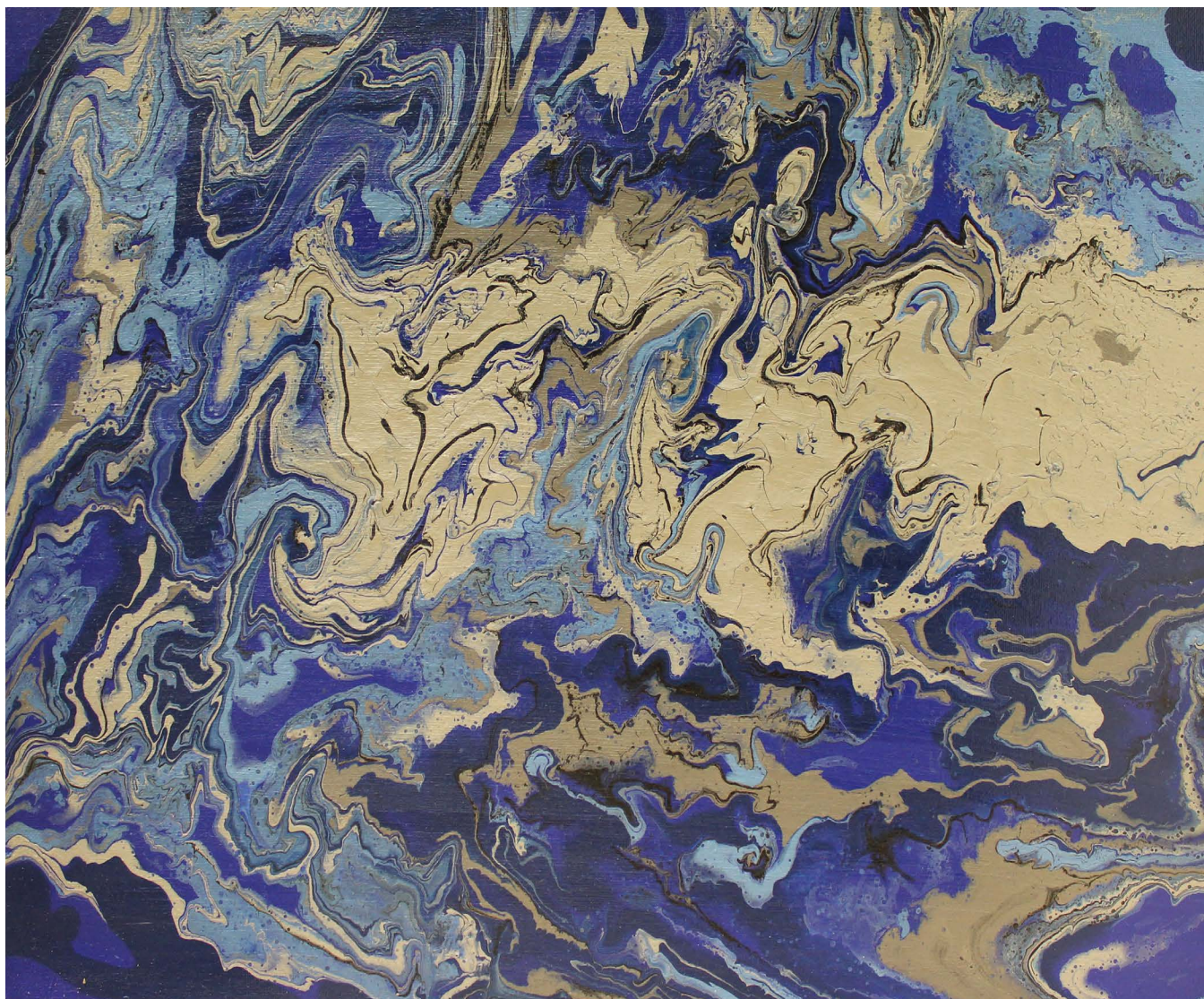
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Explorations First Place 2018 - Painting

Flat Earth

Alexis Barker

P A I N T I N G



Explorations Second Place 2018 - Painting

Gaga in Watercolor

Connor Bolling



Explorations Third Place 2018 - Painting

Gotham

Chelsey Stapleton

P A I N T I N G



Explorations Honorable Mention 2018 - Painting

Nostalgia

Cassandra Cole

P A I N T I N G



Explorations First Place 2018 - Drawing

Matty Healy

Connor Bolling

DRAWING



Explorations Second Place 2018 - Drawing

The Hinkles

Chelsey Stapleton



Explorations Third Place 2018 - Drawing

Acid

Chelsey Stapleton

D R A W I N G



Explorations Honorable Mention 2018 - Drawing

Herman

Courtney Hay

D R A W I N G

L.A.S.

Anthony P. Swindall

I.

Times will come when the winds of change,
Will once again, come rearrange,
All of the things you thought you knew,
And all such things you held as true.
When such times come by day or night,
And such sorrows become your plight.
I may be found among the dead,
So, just recall these words you've read:

Life's what you make it in the end,
So, don't go chasing the wind.
Be a good, kind and honest man,
But should you fall as angels can. . .
Let go the anchored cross you bare,
Cast aside the thorn-crown you wear,
Dream of times when there wasn't pain,
Somewhere lost down memory lane.

Thus, go with lyre and lore,
Break the seal and open the door.
Where as a child, you learned to smile,
In those now long, lost times of old.
When damned without a soul to save,
Dance upon the devil's grave.
Be not leery nor grow weary
Of this world, even when times grow cold.

P O E T R Y

II.

Times will pass just as flowers wilt,
But you'll rejoice in legacies built.
Though my sins may fall upon you,
Just as my father's – fell me too.
There's gains to lose and joys to grieve,
But don't shave the heart from your sleeve.
For you'll find love and settle down,
Somewhere in a forgotten town.

Life's not just making a living,
It's about a life worth living.
So, don't build a house – build a home,
And pen what you've learned in a tome.
For should you have a son of your own,
He should know all who've come and gone,
And not to sell his youth for gold,
As he'll pay for it back – thrice fold

Be strong, but have no heart of steel,
And know your place in life's great wheel.
Be clear as day, and never stray,
From the path our forefathers laid.
Whatever you do, do your best,
And do not follow all the rest.
Come off the shelf and be yourself,
For your time's long since been delayed.

P O E T R Y

The Different Boy

Kristy Hood-Pickell

I look and see the child I created,
The Monster.
The kid who bites himself,
The one who screams like a banshee when he is in a vehicle,
The one who never sleeps.
I look and see the child I created,
The one everyone stares at when we go to the store,
The one who is screaming to the top of his lungs,
The one who is running out the door.
I look and see the child I created,
The one they told me would never talk,
The one they told me was different,
The one they told me was genetically wronged.
I look and see the child I created,
The one who looks at me and says, "up...mom-my",
The one whose laugh lights up the room,
The one who first said I love you by signing in his own special way.
I look and see the child I created,
The one I love with every ounce of my being,
My Special Son.

P O E T R Y

I Also Have A Dream

Mekyah Davis

I have a dream, a conquest, while I live upon this Earth.

Not a conquest of money, power, greed or any likes of such things.

I have a dream that one day we can all hold hands walking down the street.

Without anyone so much as batting an eye.

What a magnificent sight that would be.

I have a dream my brothers and sisters can feel free to be who they truly are.

No hate, no malice, no prejudices, no ugly yellow stars.

I have a dream that there will cease to be all this violence in the streets.

Sharing common goals, solving the problems of the world will keep us far too busy to beef.

I have a dream that the law of the land will extend to every woman and man, despite any social quo.

I hope to plant this seed in the world and watch it grow.

I have a dream of a world without war, a world of love and peace.

Although this world may seem so far away I hope you also have this dream.

P O E T R Y

The End of Innocence

Anthony P. Swindall

It was in the summer of 1998 in a charming, little-known town called Stedman, North Carolina, that for the first time in my young, sprightly, life my fraternal-twin brother would take me hunting with him. Prior to this event our father had recently taught us how to craft wooden bows, arrows, stone-knives, and a number of other primitive “survival” tools by hand – which in his youth, he had learned to do for himself.

For the most part, my brother and I enjoyed using these tools; thrillingly competing to see who could launch the arrow the furthest or fashion the sharpest blade. Because we could only use them when we were supervised by our father, who often had to work late into the evenings, we quickly tired of pacifying our time in such drab ways, preferring instead to spend our hot, humid days inside the house, watching the newly imported anime which was just beginning to be dubbed and aired for Toonami on Cartoon Network or collecting as many Pokemon on our Gameboy Pockets as we could possibly could.

Being in the heart of summer, with a freshly mowed yard outside and a clear, Carolina blue sky at our backs all day, he decided to purchase us both our own BB guns; a pistol for me and a rifle for my brother. In retrospect, I suppose he wanted to create an incentive for us to invest our time in something practical, which he likely found useful while growing up on a farm or during his days traveling the country, attempting to emulate Thoreau by living off the land in some of the more remote parts of the country such as the Southwest, but also to motivate us to go outside among the pines and white sands– where our imaginations could truly spirit us away.

A fortnight later, when our father had gone to work and our mother was still in bed, I noticed my brother was at the other end of the house getting dressed and loading a backpack full of supplies. It was very cloudy outside that morning with a strong scent of misty dew lingering through the kitchen window. It piqued my interest as to know what could lay beyond the threshold of the front door that he was so curious to see.

I approached him, managing to con him into forfeiting his hand. He knew that nobody could stop him from getting our BB guns and prevent him from trying his hand at hunting now, even though it likely wouldn't have been discouraged anyway. The only thing that would have peeved our parents is having done so behind their backs, especially when we were not allowed to use our BB guns without our father's permission or supervision.

But he didn't care, he knew that our father put them in our deceased brother's rifle cabinet with the door unlocked; assuming he wouldn't be gone long enough for anyone to notice.

“How will they know unless you tattle?” he chimed.

I told him I'd go wake our mother up right then and there if he didn't take me with him. When put in such absolute terms of “deal or no deal” it didn't take him long to capitulate – reluctantly – but, capitulate he did. Apparently, he had already packed both of our guns, in case he needed mine, in the event that some kind of technical issue would spring up where he needed to exchange guns rather than reload his own.

SHORT STORY

I got dressed and head out the door before he left me standing there wallowing in self-pity for “moving as slow as an old lady.” I did so in such haste that I should have been placed in the “Guinness Book of World Records”. At first, he still didn’t consent to me following him around the yard. I guess, he figured I’d cross the fence in the backyard, where the trees were few and far between and head off to the lake. Arriving back at the house, empty handed for whatever reason suited my fancy. I didn’t. It must have irked him because he took a few shots at me. I told him if he didn’t stop I’d rat on him. He stopped.

The sun was starting to break through the cloud cover as we headed down the path and into the woods where we had made a hangout, complete with a broken television-set that we had busted to pieces with a baseball bat and an old sofa situated at the hearth of our fire-pit. The woods were eerily silent and still. There wasn’t even the slightest birdsong or brush of wind to swing the trees to and fro. It almost felt like the world had ended and nobody had bothered to tell us about it.

Every now and again, I would step on a twig and it would make a loud crack! Like a door with rusted hinges being opened too fast. Of course, this would make my brother pause, grimace towards me and shush the demons out of me. I found it amusing to know how easily he could be annoyed.

Lately, he was always in such a bad mood due to reoccurring migraines from having poor eyesight. At the time, I was unaware of this and assumed that he was being pretentious and trying to pantomime the disdain worn by adults. While his expression appeared natural, when I tried my hand at sulking in maturity, I either gave the impression of being spoiled or constipated. Obviously, neither of the two were desirable for me.

“So, what’re you thinking about?” I whispered.

“The troll from Ernest’s Halloween movie.”

“Oh. . . okay, cool.”

I didn’t really care for that movie. He knew as much, which is why he mentioned it. He wanted me to shut my trap. But I was getting bored and he was still being so mysterious about everything and if I hadn’t known better, I would have imagined he were on a quest to find the Ark of the Covenant. But just as I was thinking of turning back home, he put his hand up for me to halt and motioned his hand for me to quietly, walk forward behind him.

When I stood so close to his back that I could taste the scent of Old Spice from his hair, he whispered for me to look between a clearing in the branches of a large pine tree overhead where the foliage was less dense than the others. I looked up but all I could see were patches of sunlight streaming through the grey sky overhead.

“Do you see that?” he asked.

“What?”

“The bird stupid. The bird!”

I looked carefully where he was pointing and then I saw it. It was just the faintest flicker of motion above a branch. I could barely make out eyes and a feathered crest.

“Here,” he grunted, “take this.”

He reached at his side and took my pistol out of its holster, turned around and handed it to me.

“I want you to shoot it.”

“But I don’t want to use this, let me use your rifle instead.”

“Heck no!” he stammered, “you’re not wasting my ammo.”

“Well, then why do I have to do it?”

“Because I want to see if you’re man enough.”

SHORT STORY

Suddenly, this all became a matter of one-upping the other. It was like a chapter out of Lord of the Flies and I unfortunately was on the wrong side of Jack. A part of me suspected that maybe, it was he who was the one afraid and needed some kind of mental reinforcement to do it himself. I didn't really want to do it, but he kept nagging me and as they say: it's impossible to reason with dictators.

"Fine, mamma's boy, if you're not going to do it then just go home."

"But I suck at shooting this thing."

"I don't care" he hissed "I said do it."

"I don't want to!"

I tried to hand him back the pistol, but he wouldn't take it. He turned his back to me and stood motionless; staring off into the distance in front of us.

"Go home, loser."

I didn't protest this, I just dropped the pistol on the ground and began marching my way back to the edge of the woods. I glanced behind me, searching for a change in his behavior, but he was still standing there like an immovable monolith. I probably cursed a thousand curses to the wind, resenting the fact that he thought I was less of a man than him. I was nearly out of the brush when my pride got the best of me and I turned on my heel, heading back to where I left him among the cedars and pines. I knew he'd never let me live it down just as he never let me live down anything, I did. When I returned, I found him with a sardonic smile on his face.

"See."

He gestured up towards the bird, "It's still there."

"Well, then why didn't you shoot it?"

"Because I knew you'd come back."

He cupped his mouth so the bird wouldn't hear him laughing.

"So, how are you ever going to join the military if you won't even shoot a lousy bird? I've already shot plenty of them before," he cajoled, "Enough to fill up my pillow case for 'Trick or Treat' early this year."

He went on making love to his ego, to show the contrast between us, condescending me with innuendos. A surge of anger coursed through my blood.

"I'll shoot it and won't think nothin' of it either," I proclaimed.

Unknown to him, it wasn't just anger that began pulsating through every fiber of my limbs because unlike him, the thrill of the hunt didn't mesmerize me. But thinking me a coward, I snatched the pistol out of the wet, bed of moss beneath me, and taking aim at the dark figure on the branch above us, I squeezed my eyes so tight I thought they would bleed. As my forefinger trembled over the trigger and with each second breezing by like a film sped up, I lost myself in a momentary lapse of reason.

Psh!

A screech the filled the air as leaves and pinecones rustled, fell and hit the ground with a hard thump. Slowly, I relaxed the muscles in my face and peaked at my brother, who stood wearing an expression of bafflement which told me that the dirty deed had finally been done.

"Where'd it fall?"

"I don't know," scared out of my wits, "I wasn't looking."

"We've got to find it."

He searched along the ground for the bird while I stood dazed and confused. The racing thoughts in my head were being drowned out by the fluttering, beat in my chest.

"Aha!"

My brother gestured to a place in the ground, motioning me towards him.

"Come here! Come here! check this out."

I sheepishly walked over to him.

"What a number you did on it! Look, you got it right in the neck!"

I looked down at the bird – a robin, laying under a pool of sunlight. I watched as each breath caused a bubble to balloon in its beak while its wings tremored violently. The taste of lead filled my mouth as a lump in my throat made it hard for me to disguise the feeling of regret, remorse and a thousand other painful emotions beginning to surface. My eyes began to deceive me for in that moment, I felt as though I had fallen from grace and my hands were forever stained with murder.

So, this is what it meant to be a man, I mused. To hold the power of life over death, to kill without reason, for even if it were just one bird out of billions, it was a living thing that I had destroyed. I was the one who came along, ruining its chance of living another day. I was a thief. Me – a little boy.

"I'm sorry. . ."

My voice trailed off into nothingness, but in my mind, I chanted those words repeatedly like a priestly incantation in hopes that time would rewind and undo my actions. I didn't know what my brother thought about any of this. I just watched the last shimmers of light in the robin's eyes until its chest no longer inflated with the breath of life. I kneeled down and cradled it in my hands. I must've held it for eons, unaware of the world around me because the only thing I remembered next was the darkening of the woods around me and my father's thunderous voice breaking the silence which had engulfed me with endless grief and guilt.

When the day gave way to night, I found myself in the backyard beside of an old dogwood tree, digging a hole for the robin. My father and brother stood to my left, looking on with candles. Soon, the hole was finished, so I placed the robin in a shoebox and buried it in the earth. When the soil covered the lid of the box, I took a knee, bowed my head and said a private eulogy.

When all was said and done, I went inside the house and didn't come out again for several days. My father gave up on me and chose to spend his time with my brother instead, who continued to hunt, though he had been scorned for disobeying the rules. I suppose my father didn't see a need to punish me, considering that I had experienced something that was punishment enough.

Occasionally, I would secretly accompany my brother in the woods, being a nuisance and preventing him from killing anything. But there were always those times, when he managed to succeed, and I would take what he killed and bury it alongside the robin and my childhood innocence.

SHORT STORY

The Burrowers

Dylan Mabe

The sun, which bore down on us in such a fashion that the representative's head wraps did nothing to shield them from the heat, was high in what would be mid-day on this planet whose name no human tongue could pronounce and was only known as EN-256. They sat in a circle in a primitive hut. Half of the circle was made up of humans, the other half, one of the many tribes on this desert world. There was a long silence after they all found themselves a place on the floor. The chieftain of the tribe made no move until everyone was in their place. He was completely still, as if someone had taken the sand around them and made him into glass.

Both groups were covered in wrappings. The humans, led by Captain Jacob Bloomberg, wore a thin cloth over their heads that protruded slightly over their eyes. Their light gray suits, made to let the body breathe, were simple, as to not offend or surprise the natives.

Across from them, the aliens whose species was only known as, "Burrowers" were humanoid beings who wore large black panels over their eyes and thick wrappings over their entire face; a necessity to defend against constant exposure to the harsh elements of their barren world. While their faces and bodies were fully covered, their incredibly dark arms—almost like leather from sun exposure—were completely bare revealing sacred markings that Captain Bloomberg guessed were some type of brandings.

On either side of the circle, standing idly behind each group, were two robot translators. The human's translator, an android commissioned from Falcon Corporations, stood around six feet tall. Its metal casing was made to look even more new and magnificent by the intense light that reflected off of it. Its bright yellow photoreceptors seemed to smolder in the sun. The chrome head swiveled and his body constantly moved as it took in its surroundings. The droid waited patiently for orders.

Behind the Burrowers, a metal cylinder reaching only three feet tall. Many probes, antennae, and metal arms bulged outward, looking to be replacements for the original parts. This rusty droid served as their translator. It stood silently, seeming to be deactivated. Bloomberg and his colleagues had guessed that the translator had most likely been salvaged by the Burrowers, possibly from another company that had tried to set up operations here.

The captain shifted anxiously. Their translator, recently programmed with basic information about the species whose language it had just downloaded on the ship beforehand, gave them only a brief rundown of the culture of the Burrowers. One of the main points of the briefing was that the chieftain was supposed to initiate the start of any type of meeting. The tension in the hut was heavy as the silence dragged on. Finally, after many of them began to believe that they had already upset the chieftain and that this meeting had failed before it started, he began the meeting.

Even sitting down, it was obvious that he was well past 7 feet tall. He was the tallest of the Burrowers present by a head. When he leaned to speak, his shadow reached all the way to the other side of the circle, right in front of the Captain. He started spewing unintelligible gurgles and growls. It sounded as if he had no tongue, as if he was funneling air through his windpipe. Bloomberg and his colleagues waited until the thunderous howling of the Chieftain was over, to turn to their droid for a translation.

"Abraham, if you would." Captain Bloomberg motioned toward the chieftain. Abraham's photoreceptors retracted and blinked a number of times. He straightened his torso and turned toward the group.

"Certainly, Captain," He said, in a mechanical mimicking of a human male. "He said that he would like to get this meeting underway, and that he hopes that you will not try to deceive him or his people, for your sake." The droid turned, again facing the Burrowers, seemingly proud of his work. Bloomberg sighed. He wiped the sweat from his forehead and faced the chieftain.

"We would never think to try to deceive you or your people, chieftain. We only wish to advance both of our goals, and make life easier for both of our people." He said, his voice shaking. He was sweating and his eyes were squinting in the sun. He looked to the men on both sides of him, both looked equally concerned as the Burrower's translator whistled and whirred as it attempted to make the translation. Suddenly, it projected many variations of groans and growls that they could recognize as similar to that of the chieftain's dialect. The chieftain responded, and instantly, Abraham stood at attention again, turning toward the captain.

"He says that he will hear your proposal. He hopes that you are sincere in your hopes to help him and his people." The droid waited for a response

"Tell him we want only small operations. We would like to take oil and ore out of the ground with minimal damage to their territory. They will not be made to move, or participate in any type of mining. In exchange for letting us his resources, trade will be open between our people and we will pay by the mile. I believe this bond between us can be very beneficial for us both" Captain Bloomberg felt like an idiot. He could see why these people may want open trade. They needed resources just as much as his team wanted the ore and oil, but why did they need money?

Damn conservationists pushed and pleaded for the planetary government to give some payment, or restitutions to the natives of this world. If they couldn't save the damn sand, they wanted to at least give something to the natives. Bloomberg was now bargaining with a savage and he did not like it. Abraham chimed in and started translating his phony niceties back to the chieftain, sending another wave of unintelligible screams through his speakers.

It was then, while he was thinking, that a malicious noise erupted, seeming to shake the very ground beneath them. The chieftain, rearing back his body, had let out a cascading howl that made all of his colleagues, including himself grasp at his ears. Before he knew anything, the Burrowers were on their feet. They had, hidden under their robes, knives and other hunting tools and they rushed toward the humans still on the ground. As Bloomberg threw up his arms, shielding his face, a flash of light lit up the hut.

Bloomberg heard a tortured howl. He opened his eyes to find one of the Burrowers, the Chieftain, laying at his feet, a gaping hole through his torso. It was smoldering. He looked up, only to find Abraham, his eyes glowing red, and both of his fingers pointed out. The natives were falling faster than he could lay eyes on them, and then, it was over. Abraham stood at attention again, smoke billowing out of the holes in both of his index fingers.

"What happened?" The Captain's voice was shaky as he spoke. He pulled himself up from the ground.

"I believe that there was some miscommunication in the translation, sir. Though I am fluent in their language as a whole, these Burrowers use a lesser studied dialect. In certain tribes, the word for "bond" is very close to a word for a sexual engagement. I am sure you know a proposition like that would be very offensive, sir. That, or he just did not like your plan. Both scenarios are quite possible." Abraham

spoke as if he had not just slaughtered an entire tribe of natives. Bloomberg jerked his body toward the bulk of the carnage.

"Dammit!" He cried out. He threw his head wrap on the ground. His hair was dripping with sweat.

"I am sorry, sir, but are you angry that the meeting didn't go well, or are you experiencing a symptom of heat stroke? Hysteria can be one of the symptoms, you know?" Bloomberg moved to shove the droid into the sand, but before he could, a scream interrupted his rage.

"Lorna!" Someone shouted, bringing Bloomberg back from his trance. He turned and saw one of the Burrowers laying, dead, on top of one of the members of his team. He raced toward her with Abraham in tow. The others had already crowded around her. Blood was pooling around her head.

"It seems she was struck with a blunt instrument. I have basic medical training, however I can do nothing without the proper equipment. We should get her back to the ship." Abraham shoved the massive dead Burrower off and scooped her up without order. Then, he began carrying her out of the compound. The rest of them followed.

Captain Bloomberg and his crew began running to the ship. Lorna would not make it. She only had a few hours left to live. She should never regain consciousness. However, it was of no consequence. The negotiations were over, even if the Captain and his team did not realize it. They would return to Falcon Corporation, condolences would be sent out to Lorna's family, and the operations would begin. Abraham would be seized by the corporation. The recording of the incident in the hut would be taken, to prove the natives were only savages, and then his memory would be wiped, along with his programming that allowed for the catastrophic translation error. Falcon Corp would have no problem proving that these monsters should be eradicated. The voices of the conservationists would be drowned out by the rage over Lorna's death.

The faulty translations would be lost, and the company would have free access to all the resources of this planet. However, for now, Captain Bloomberg, Abraham, and his team, one of them not quite dead, walked the desert. They did not know, that soon, the sand they walked on would be the site of planet-wide xenocide.

At the End of the World

Skye Mullins

3am is not a time for people to be awake. However if you've ever known insomnia then you would know the feeling of ending up there whether you like it or not. No matter what you take or drink or do you always end up staring at the ceiling hoping that you could get at least an hour of rest that night, before giving up and getting up and doing something to keep your tired mind busy until morning comes. It's a horrible cycle, really. One that you can't help but relive over and over and over. Tonight seems to be the last night of that, for me at least. Because when I got out of bed after a fruitless night of sleep and turned on the TV at exactly 3:03 AM, the most chilling emergency alert sound that I'd ever heard played.

It wasn't just any emergency alert. It wasn't an alert for a storm headed towards the city, or a hurricane or a tornado or anything else. It was the Nuclear threat alert. Someone, Iran maybe, possibly North Korea, honestly did it even matter at this point? Someone had shot off an intercontinental missile that was heading straight for New York, which is where I was living. I could hear the noise outside, I thought it was just the bustle of the city that never sleeps, but looking out my window now I could see people running, cars backed up for miles. No one was getting out of here. It was thirty minutes until it hit, and there were others coming behind it. They weren't quite sure where they were heading yet. Honestly I didn't care.

There's a certain peace that comes over you when you know you're going to die. I can't explain it. There's a certain resolution. I knew I wasn't getting out of the city. I wasn't even going to try and leave the apartment. The roads were too clogged, too many people on the streets. You were just as likely to die from being run over as from the actual missile itself. It vaguely occurred to me that I should probably try and get in touch with my parents. They were in Florida, or my partner, they were in Britain for study abroad. But my parents were probably asleep, unaware of what was going on, and my phone was dead so there wasn't any point in trying to call anyone anyway. The charger was fried. I was supposed to go get another one today.

Twenty minutes until impact and I realize I should at least leave a note, but what with? Paper will burn and anything I type up would fry with my computer's hard drive. So I find a sharpie, and I find a knife, and cut a square out of the apartment wall. It wasn't like the landlord would give a shit at this point, after all. I wrote a short note, very simple, telling everyone who needed to know I loved them and then carefully put it down on the table writing side down. It was an attempt to preserve it, at least. I didn't know how well it would do. Someone would find it, maybe, when they were digging through the ash years after this place had become decontaminated.

At ten minutes to impact I make myself a cup of tea from the Keurig, that never takes long. I won't have time to drink it all down, but I settle in watching the window as I breathe in pumpkin spice.

I can see a red dot in the sky, slowly getting bigger as the seconds pass.

Five minutes to Impact: I take a deep breath, it briefly crosses my mind that I ought to pray or something. It wouldn't do any good now, though. There was no time for God and their mysterious ways to work.

Four minutes to impact: I think about my mom and dad and if they're awake watching the TV like I am, seeing the dot get bigger through a television screen rather than a window pane like I am.

Three minutes to impact: My cat hops up on my lap and meows at me. She knows what's going on, and there's nothing I can do but pull her close to my chest.

Two minutes to impact: Everything hits at once and I feel tears in my eyes. I'm scared. I don't want to go, not like this, not now.

One minute to impact: There's nothing I can do now. I close my eyes and pet the soft little kitten in my arms as I can see the thing in the sky, it's over.

So this is what the end of the world is like.

SHORT STORY



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