

SCOPE 2013

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SCOPE 2013

SCOPE is the annual literary arts magazine of SIU School of Medicine, a showcase for the artistic talents and myriad voices of the medical school community. It is produced each year by an ever-changing group of medical students who volunteer to coordinate the magazine. The work published demonstrates how the SIU School of Medicine community embraces creative, empathetic, emotional and spiritual components of healthy lives.

SCOPE was first published in 1993 under the editorial leadership of Brad Clayton, James Davis, Molly Honegger, Manish Kohli, Andrea Lee, Robert Morrow and Una Shah. Medical students at SIU continue to support the vision of the publication that was brought to life 20 years ago.

FROM THE EDITOR

SCOPE is the annual literary arts magazine of SIU School of Medicine. While the sciences and humanities are oftentimes viewed in stark contrast, SCOPE proudly stands in the center of the Venn diagram where art meets academia in a celebration of the creativity of the medical school community. Since 1993, with the blessing of the University, SCOPE has been published by medical students who volunteer their time and energy for the arts they love. We welcome you to enjoy this latest installment as SCOPE celebrates 20 years of creativity, artistry and the passionate pursuit of the imagination.

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Thank you to all the students who reviewed the entries and helped create SCOPE 2013.

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Anatomy Lesson: The Body Part We Hate

Michael Pranzatelli, M.D.
Department of Neurology

... we hate so much,
we let it suffocate on chairs and sofas
everyone else has used;
we crush it with our body weight
for hours on end, it must bend
to a lifetime of suppression;
we splay it on the hard bike seat
to the point of numbness or pain
while we take in the scenery,
gain from greenery and lush breeze.
First, we nearly freeze it off,
then make it sweat so much,
our pants can't help but stick.
No one hesitates to spank it, slap it, pat it,
smack it, kick it,
play the bongos, prick it
with a hypo or tattoos,
pinch it, grope it,
moon it, ruin its complexion,
fatten it with confection,
make it the butt
of jokes. We hide it
from our sun-lit play,
its only utterance
the tasty meals of our day.
No doubt
who got the raw end of the deal.
And so it goes on
week by week.
What can it do
but turn the other cheek?
Life's so unfair
little derriere...



Outer Limits

Ashley Urish
Class of 2014





A Discussion on Bears

Amelia Frank

Class of 2013

Second Place, Prose

Like bears, who spend life encased in a thick layer of fat and hair – their hair as bristly as the stubble on a man’s cheek when he scratches it, sweaty, warm, against my forehead in our sleep, and the fat thick like the icing on glazed doughnuts, which, in hindsight, makes sense as the icing on glazed doughnuts has to be made up, primarily, of fat (in the form of sugar) – their hair pressing up in between their toes, keeping them warm even when they, as bears are wont to do, leap, with a kind of lumbering grace, into the cold and fresh water streams of North America (I am, of course, speaking mainly of the bears, then, that exist only in North America – brown bears, black bears, grizzlies, although this essay does not focus on the loveable, violent, awe-inspiring polar bear whose habit and habitats vary somewhat from its darker cousins) to catch the scaly, muscular prize that darts below the surface (of course, I speak here of the salmon that swim, famously, upstream to spawn) – and their fat (it should be noted here that their fat is an absolute necessity for survival, especially when taken into consideration with the jumps into the cold and fresh water streams of North America hunting the aforementioned scaly and muscular spawning salmon) layering over their every body part, the fat pouring itself around their legs and haunches like a plaster mold, their fat and hair making them into something greater than that they already are, that something whose teeth and claws and bright small eyes – shaped like the nuts they so love to eat once they have fallen from the tree (the nuts, not the bears) and dot the ground in dark patterns against the green – are enclosed and protected – for the fat and hair gives them a shelter, helping to keep out enemies with its seemingly delicate strength, and shielding them from the rain with warmth (their coats are waterproofed with the oil that seeps from the fat into the hair), like a security blanket, similar to the one I once had – yellow with smiling suns shining down on happy flowers even though the satin edges were rubbed off and the knit middle was fraying – surrounding them and fluffing them up, (the hair puffed like cats frightened by a fast-moving shadow, the fat – perhaps – jostling and molding itself closer to the muscles and bones and tendons and ligaments and, underneath it all, the precious, precious organs) as if





they are bigger than they are—although under no uncertain terms would I—or anyone—claim that a bear is not large and formidable enough on its own, but that the hair and the fat might make it seem more so, as a wet bear is far less impressive than a dry one—bushing out and, all of a sudden, one (the bear) who was a shocking something—the animals of the forest shrinking in fear when they smell on the wind the scent of its fat oozing out in oil onto its hair—beforehand (including the aforementioned teeth and claws and small, bright eyes) becomes, with its hair and its fat a being far more than it could have been alone—I’m huge.



Stairway to Heaven

Anni Ala
Community





Premonition

Writtten by John Paul Baluh
Submitted by Hope Baluh, M.D.
Class of 1983

It seems small and insignificant, tools that I am to use to bend and harness the wasteland that will be left of my life. What do I seek to create—the same as all people—an Eden, a tamed forest, one that sustains life but does not rob it of all its secrets, one that is harsh and beautiful because it is harsh. This is what I seek as I start to end this life—as I set the fire and blow on it to fuel life. I know that if I am to have this Eden then my childhood innocence must be part of the pyre. I must pay. Without death, life would be meaningless. We set fire to our life in the hope it will bring forth a richer and more vibrant life.

My lovely loving son, John Paul, died in October. I found this entry in his journal.





Two Dozen Walkers

John Grace, M.D.
Class of 2000
First Place, Prose

January 2112, basement of Questronics laboratory, the first human mind transplant occurred, allowing John Young to briefly gain control of Aaron Grave's body.

Both patients died within a day.

Mind transplants improved. By the latter half of the 2130's, it was an outpatient procedure.

Mind transplant was based on a simple notion. "You don't have to understand something to record it and play it back." Dr. Tom Jensen, a pioneer of mind transplant, once said. Simply monitor the frequency and intensity of electrical impulses coming from the brain and project identical impulses onto the corresponding areas of a different nervous system.

There were tweaks of course. A few deaths here and there. Patients with compatibility issues. But by 2132, most people's minds could be moved to others' bodies simply by changing where the electrical impulses were coming from. You could control any body set to receive your brain's frequency.

By 2161, it was required by law . . . everyone had to "be of compatible health." This meant your spinal cord and cranial nerves had to have impulse distributors on them so that "in the unlikely event of brain inactivity your physique may be used in your own best interest." In other words, you could work even while in a coma.

While borrowed bodies worked, it was never like the original.

Movements were slow, jerky, and there was a fair amount of pain. In a final insult, the genitalia never functioned.

It wasn't fun. Nobody volunteered.

Except the "walkers."

"Walkers" were people who would take over your body for a time if you had to go through something unpleasant. Two months of chemo? Get a walker. Need to lose twenty pounds? Enroll a walker in boot camp. Scared of getting married?

You get the idea.

Walkers did the crap jobs of the twenty-second century. The name derived from the old practice of walking dogs when owners were busy. In the modern world, people walked other people's bodies.





Max Mosey was a walker.

Max was born in 2132 to Rita and Richard Mosey, proud 3rd generation Chicago Polish immigrants. A cripple at birth, Max limped through life in constant pain, struggling to catch his breath with the slightest exertion. "Child-onset emphysema" they called it, just one of Max's many ailments which included legal blindness, diabetes, cerebral palsy, and polyneuropathy. Max was physically a mess. Walking another body was an improvement.

Max limped into the Schaumburg Questronic franchise for his latest assignment. After signing the usual disclaimers, he was led down a familiar hall to the transplant room. Dr. Roger Davis was waiting.

"Looks like you've got an executive lined up, Max. Big one. Due for five weeks of chemo." Davis said as he prepared Max for the procedure.

"Chemo or not, I've never been in a body that hurts more than mine, Doc."

Davis looked at Max with a glance of sympathy asking, "Max. Do you like your life?"

"No," Max answered.

"How would you like to wake up a new man?"

"What are you talking about doc?" Max asked.

"Nothing. Just an old man dreaming." Dr. Davis ran his fingers through Max's hair gently. "Sweet dreams. And good-bye."

Max sensed an odd finality to the sentence.

A walker needed a day of sleep to adjust to a new physique. Max woke in an extravagant penthouse, overlooking Michigan drive. Max walked for a few high profile clients, but never anything like this. He jerkily got out of bed and stumbled into the kitchen.

"Good morning, Mr. Mosey. You are walking Mr. Thadder's body through his chemotherapy?" The teleprompter buzzed.

"Uh...yes. That's true." Max rubbed his face trying to squeeze the sleep out of his features. The teleprompter continued.

Continued next page





Two Dozen Walkers (cont.)

"My name is Rosemary. I'll be managing your schedule for chemotherapy. I ordered breakfast. You should eat as much as you can. Once the nausea starts, it will be hard to maintain your weight."

"Thank you, Rosemary. I'm not hungry."

"Very well." Her voice droned out.

Over the next days, Max stumbled through Tom Thadder's chemo regimen while appreciating the opulence of his life. Doors opened for him. People smiled at him. Thadder was a powerful man.

"Rollers," high paying clients, usually had specific walkers for their needs. It seemed odd that Max had received a contract of this magnitude.

On the third day a small parcel arrived strangely addressed to Max Mosey. Walker mail was usually delivered to the lab.

Max briefly examined the parcel then opened it. Inside were three items: a small remote and code pad, a mini-televiewer to play a message, and a handwritten note.

"IMPORTANT! PLAY IN SECURE LOCATION"

Intrigued, Max took the package into the bathroom, started the shower, draped a blanket over his head, sat on the floor, and turned on the viewer.

Max was shocked to see Dr. Davis's face.

"Good morning Max. I'm not sure if you're ready to hear this." Dr. Davis whispered, looking around like a scared child.

"Bear with me. This isn't easy." Davis took another pause before beginning the most important conversation of his life.

"Max, after Questronics developed mind transplant forty years ago, they quickly perfected it. It's better than most people realize. We achieved total control almost two decades ago."

Total control was a rumor that floated around walker circles for years. During total control there was no awkward pauses. No uncomfortable pain. Just a normal body. There were rumors of walkers who had total control during assignments but most people discounted them as urban myth.

Sensing Max's thoughts, Davis continued.

"Total control isn't a myth, Max. It's a reality. More than anyone realizes. In fact, you could have total control over that physique. Just type in the appropriate code and hit "engage" on that remote. The jerkiness,



the pain, the awkwardness...it will all disappear. You'll control that body like your own...if you actually had a body that is."

Davis paused. Another deep breath.

"Which brings me to the next point. I know this is a lot but we have to move quickly. Your body, that broken down, emphysema-filled scrap you walk around in, isn't really yours. For a number of years now, the affluent have been stealing decent physiques from infants and giving them rejects in return. You got some broken physique while a trust fund kid is out there with your healthy skin and organs.

The truth is I have no idea where your original body is. But more importantly...I do know where your brain is. We'll get to that." Davis paused, trying to soothe the impact.

"I know. It's all perfectly legal but completely horrific. And I've been a part of it." Davis shook his head, lost in introspective guilt.

"Now for the good part. I'm going to give you total control over Tom Thadder's body. Five weeks in one of the most powerful men in the world. Release the inhibitor switch using that remote and everyone will think you're Tom.

Don't worry. His cancer has a 98% cure rate. Chemo won't be easy though.

The way I see it you have several options.

You can run. Plan your escape for the next five weeks, using all of Tom's resources. The hounds are scary but they've never had to catch someone like you, a smart walker with a lot of money, five weeks head start, and total control."

"Hounds" referred to the subdivision of the military responsible for tracking down rogue walkers that absconded with their clients' bodies. The awkwardness of the control made it pretty easy. The hounds weren't nearly as capable as their moniker would suggest. Max had a chance.

"Now option number two," Davis continued.

"Revolution."

The word hung in the small bubble of air beneath the blanket. Max was afraid to say the word aloud...revolution.

"Twenty-four. I was able to line up twenty-four walkers on high profile assignments. Good people. Dedicated walkers. Smart. Strong.

I arranged to put those twenty-four minds into some of the most

Continued next page



Two Dozen Walkers (cont.)

powerful people on the planet for the next five weeks. There's a senator. A general. Some doctors. A few lawyers. Weapon specialist. Technology guru. Even a president in the mix.

It's a long shot. But if you work together... you could do something." Davis' voice grew soft.

"Max, total control is just the beginning. The military has been doing stuff you wouldn't believe. Enhancing physical performance units. Disruption pulses to stop transmissions. Even mass control where one mind works a thousand bodies all at once. It's incredible. And some of you have access to that kind of technology."

Max paused the unit. Looked out from beneath the blanket. The steam from the shower had drenched the room with humidity. He stared down at the innocuous looking button. Could it be that simple? One button. He restarted the video.

"I've done what I can to help you. If you run, they will try to catch you. Jot around the globe. Disappear for a year. Live out your days in a comfortable body. You can make it.

Or plan B.

Tear the whole system down. Expose it. A long shot. But the twenty-four of you have incredible power.

Whatever option, first you need to secure your brain. It won't take them long to requisition it. Your brain is stored in Questronics Lab #4 downtown Chicago. Lot number #18371, which is the code to give you full control over that body as well.

Go to Questronics, tell them you're changing your account to Overronics, their competitor. It's not unusual for high-level walkers have control of their own brains. Since your in Tom Thadder's body, nobody will question you. Then...keep it safe.

There is a meeting in three days for those who want to work together. Green Tower, 131st floor 10am. Room 18.

Be careful. If any Walkers turn traitor, it could be a trap. That's why I can't tell you who the other walkers are. Go in disguise. Stay in disguise. Trust no one. All it takes is one traitor.

Whatever you do, I won't be able to see. This is good-bye. I need to blow the lab. It needs to look like an accident. My distraction will buy you time. Hopefully, no one will know what's happened until your assignment expires.

Good luck Max. I don't begrudge your decision. It's your choice.





Live your life in peace and comfort or if you choose...revolution.

You can engage and disengage total control whenever you like. Use that. I have to tell you, total control will feel better than anything you've ever felt."

The screen went blank.

Max looked at the small remote.

Set the number to 18371.

Then...pressed the button.

"Wow." Max whispered.



Autumn in Arrington

Linda Allison, M.D.
Class of 1981





The Brown Tree

Thalia Köhler, age 7
Community

The afternoon is
coming. The field
is swaying where
the brown tree is.
It is still - everything
is still and peaceful.
No birds come
to sing. Everything
is still where
the brown tree is.





Illinois Winter

Cindy Strong

Community

Snow dappled fields of corn stubble yawn at daybreak.
Whipping winds leave orphaned leaves on skeleton branches.

Blankets of clouds surround the morning sun.

Like sentinel guards, weathered fence posts patrol abandoned
fields while
Iron jaws sleep behind clapboard sheds.

The afternoon sun momentarily escapes the prison of clouds
to glisten on

Patches of frosted grass framing muted ponds.
Peppered skies of migrating fowl shatter the silence.

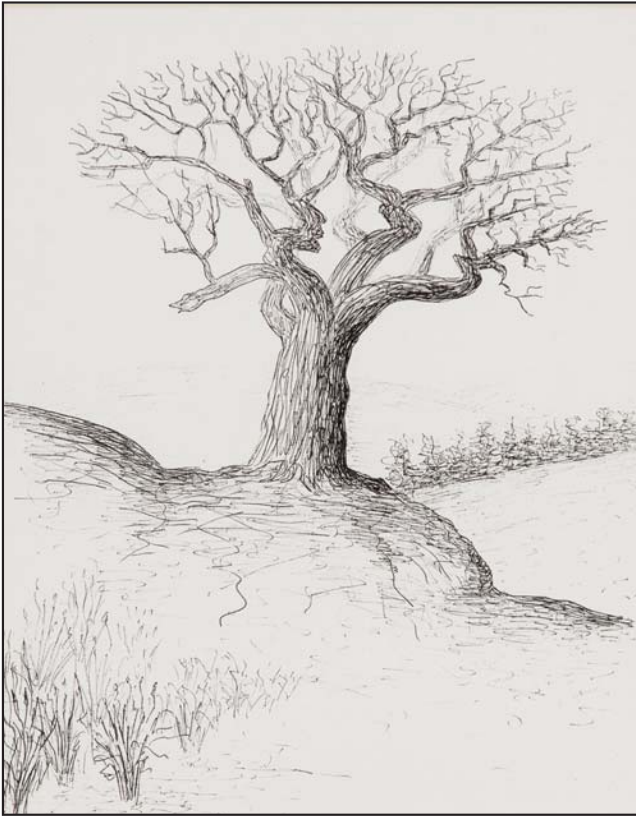
The sun surrenders as bolts of violet shoot across the horizon.

Diamond dotted evening skies canopy the countryside.



Oak Tree

Andrzej Bartke, Ph.D.
Internal Medicine



Eagle Owl

Kelsey Gordon
Community





Midwest Spring

Cindy Strong

Community

Second Place, Poetry

Morning mist hangs heavy on budding branches.
The April sun blinks from under a blanket of clouds.

Farm fields yawn and shake off orphaned patches of snow
while a lone deer scavenges among stubbled corn stalks.

Like security guards, country mailboxes salute winding roads
of leaf-littered gravel.

Above gnarled shrubs laden with brittle leaves
vagrant birds congregate on telephone wires like black pearls.

Golden kite tails dance through whipping winds.

Mid day drizzle scatters diamond drops as
the sun refuses to surrender to winter clouds but
lingers
on

porches laden with muddy sneakers.

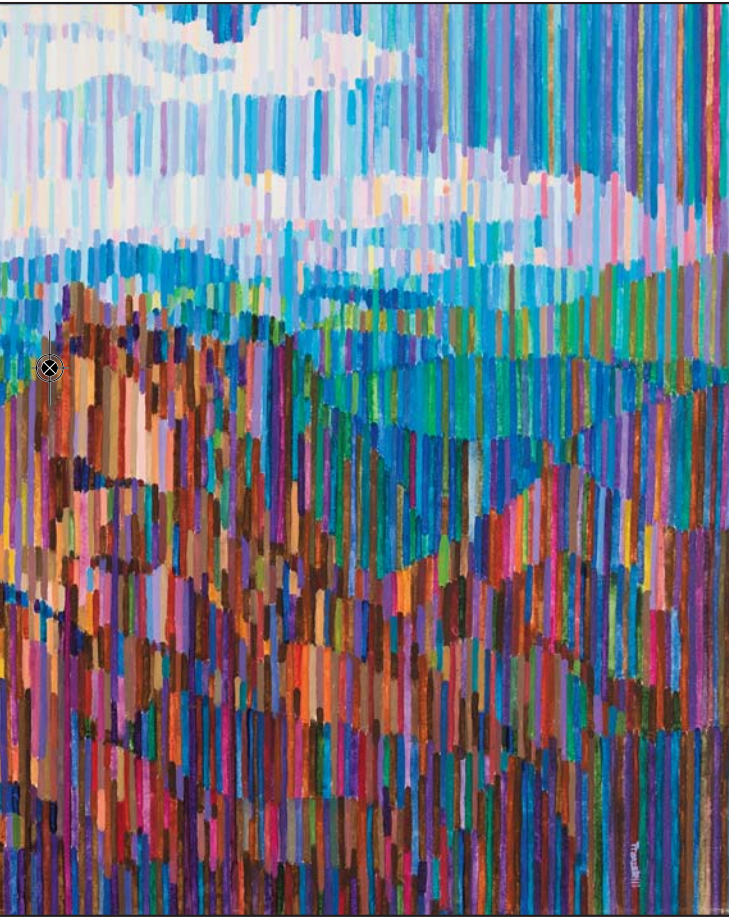




The Storm Approaching

Michael Pranzatelli, M.D.
Department of Neurology
Third Place, Art







Spring

Cindy Strong
Community

Drizzling April morn
Ominous rolling thunder
A lone crocus blooms



Marina

Linda Allison, M.D.

Class of 1981

Second Place, Art



Catching up on Zs

Michael Pranzatelli, M.D.
Department of Neurology
First Place, Poetry

Zig and zag on a zephyr,
somewhere between Zeitgeist and Zen,
a zeppelin advertizes sleep aids,
of all things, pills like zinnia seeds
sprinkled at zero gravity, zoom, zip
to Zeta Centauri—There! No, there!—

Ziggy? Zoro?
—Don't you recognize?
Zeus??
—Please pass the white zinfandel:
zita with zucchini must be chased
as quickly as the Zulu speak Bantu

...Some days, like a zombie, zoned out
in the zebra crossing, in a zoo
of insomniacs. Zip code?
—it's on the tip of my tongue...
Zola, Zeno, Zeffirelli—
why do I sleep walk?

—What's your doctor say?
Only this: how did you like
your new sleeping pill, Mrs. Z.
—What do you reply?

...Here one moment, zowie the next.
At the party, surprised by the insect zapper,
didn't care for Hera's zingers
or the mortals zinged over the fence,
or the zaftig belly dancer clapping zills...

...Petted whales eating zooplankton,
dogging zealots, zany zygotes and Z particles;
computed the Z score but came up with zilch.



This time of year, I've heard the
z-zoological gardens are at their z-z-zenith,
quite z-z-z-zippy and z-z-z-z-zingy... and...
z-z-z-z-z-z z-z-z-z-z-z....





What Lies Within

Juliet Bradley, M.D.

Class of 1997

Third Place, Prose

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

It's been twelve years now since I finished residency, and I thought that by this time I would be getting out of clinic on time.

I see my colleagues walking out the door pretty much right on time; sometimes they see the pile of charts of the patients I have yet to see and ask half-heartedly if I need any help. "No, thanks!" I counter brightly, wondering how much I will have to pay the nanny in overtime this week.

I collaborated recently with two other women physicians, good friends, on a qualitative research project: mentoring female family practice physicians around work-life balance. We talked about burnout. No, I'm not burned out; burned-out physicians are emotionally exhausted, depersonalized; they feel like they are not really accomplishing anything. I love this work; it's just hard to leave clinic on time.

I feel like I would have a better sense of work-life balance if I were able to go home when everyone else does, maybe go for a run or squeeze in a yoga class, but instead I'm still here, despite the fact that my "lunch hour" was a hasty affair of cold leftovers joylessly chewed while reviewing the results and requests that crowd my inbox. Maybe that explains those extra pounds; maybe I can blame them on how conscientious I am with following up on patient issues. Libby might look fabulous in those skinny jeans, but I bet that her patients are not all up to date on their colon cancer screening.

I'm still at clinic; Juan the security guard pops by "to see how I'm doing." I see my next patient, a 30 year old woman in outdated thrift-store stonewash and gym shoes, coming in for her pap smear. I know her face, but I've forgotten her name and must surreptitiously peek at her chart. Idalia. "Have you lost weight?" I ask smilingly. I am always heartened when someone notices my own efforts at weight loss. "I guess it was all that time wandering in the desert," she said with a shrug. "The desert?" I echo in surprise. Turns out she'd been working,



undocumented, at a dog food factory in Chicago for some time; she had returned to Mexico to see if she could convince her children to move to the US with her. They were frightened, or Idalia's parents were frightened, of leaving the small rancho in Michoacán for a basement apartment in a gangland neighborhood, so her children remained with her parents. Idalia returned to the job that supported everyone, crossing the border illegally, overland. The coyote she'd paid to guide her abandoned her in the desert; she wandered for days, drinking from muddy puddles, chewing on desert plants. Eventually she found her way to safety, and now back to my clinic for her pap smear. If I hadn't commented on her weight loss, she would have been just another patient, waiting her turn at the clinic to see a doctor who was chronically behind schedule. Yet just beneath the surface was a story of great courage, sadness, and loss.

And of course her story does not unfold succinctly; I apologize to Juan the security guard for making him late, again. I am moved by Idalia's story, suddenly grateful for many things.

La bella figura

Anni Ala
Community



Nefertiti in the Nile

Keith Jacobs
Class of 2015





cicatrization

Brian Glaezer

Class of 2013

Third Place, Poetry

twenty one hour call
brotherhood of common pain
ancient ritual

somnicillorum

Brian Glaezer

Class of 2013

NICU morning rounds
delicate gliding eyelids
of what do they dream?

21yo M NDH IF LF

Brian Glaezer

Class of 2013

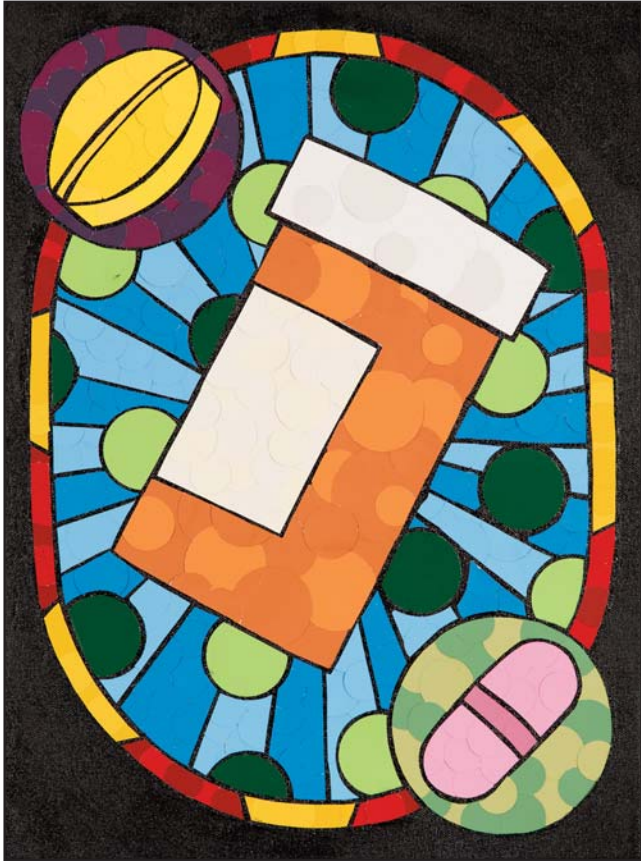
a little farther
rotary industrial
tip amputation

Editor's note: The title, "21yo M NDH IF LF" is a surgical code for 21-year-old male, non-dominant hand, index finger, long finger.



Refill Stain Glass

James T. Elliott
Community



Bare

Amelia Frank
Class of 2013

The harsh chemicals landed on every surface in the room as light as mist. Jen felt, uncomfortably, as if they settled on her like dew and she itched to be rid of them.

“Coming through,” announced Todd, clutching one of the bone saws like a father holding his baby for the first time, awkward. As he moved past her to get to his group’s body Todd stirred up the air around her and Jen’s nostrils stung from the preservative in every breath. The smell of it lingered in her hair, her clothes, and it stayed with her for hours after she left at night. It made her nauseous for days. She wondered if it mixed in with the paint on the bare white walls, or if it sunk into her pores to mingle with the oil on her skin.

At the next tank over Todd plugged in the bone saw and high-pitched whining drowned out any chance of conversation throughout the room until the blade sank into the muscles of his body’s back, and the noise deepened. A scalpel – delicate as frost – rested on top of Jen’s body’s meaty hip and she picked it up, started to cut. Sighing with discontent she used tweezers to grab a bit of purple and yellow muscle and fat and made a small motion through it with her knife. A tear as long as her finger and half as deep appeared in an instant in the cold flesh. Jim, a group mate, standing across the body, sliced along the back as confident as a butcher, but Jen worked slow. She didn’t want to hurt anything.

She leaned further over to get a better purchase on the hunk of muscle she had in her left hand. For a few minutes she was engrossed in her task: sliced back the thick muscle over and next to the vertebrae, and made a window in the thinner serratus posterior inferior muscle. Jen peeled it off the lower ribs like an orange rind; it made the same satisfying noise. Her nose grew stuffy and started to run, but she kept on cutting. The sooner she was done, the sooner she could leave. The noise in the background increased, as other groups started up other bone saws, and people chattered, fought, discussed, over the cold hard limbs of people who once were. Jen’s eyes stung and grew grainy from the



waves of chemicals wafting up out of the body like spirits. But it was only when her lungs started to burn and she felt her chest tighten that she backed away. Taking deep, slow breaths, trying to talk herself out of an asthma attack, she surveyed. Only one layer to go to get to the kidney, she guessed, and the muscle above the spine on her side was completely cut away. Jim, who had more fat to work through, was nearly done with his as well.

He looked up at her and she saw his eyes take in her measured breathing.

“Holy Jeez, Jen,” he said, his slight southern accent growing more pronounced with the exclamation. “Take a break! You keep at it the way you’ve been going, we won’t have anything left to dissect.” She was about to protest and took a deep breath in to do so, but her lungs squeezed. Wheezing into the crook of her elbow she nodded and sat down on a stool at the edge of the room.

Most of the bone saws had quieted now; they were removing just a small section of the spine. Todd, however, still had his saw switched on, angled deep into the processes between ribs and spine. His goatee, a facial hair choice Jen had wondered about since she first met him, moved down with his mouth in a frown of concentration, and made the beard even more ridiculous. Her asthma attack under control, for the moment, she swallowed a giggle. All of his group members, bored watching a one-man job, had moved off to study radiographs and CT scans and body sections around the room.

He switched off his saw then, and sighed in frustration, wiped his forehead awkwardly against the bottom of his scrubs sleeve and his upper arm. He saw her and his frown deepened. “This sucks.”

She waited and after a minute’s pause while he looked into the back of his body, he continued. “I swear it, this guy’s spine is made out of steel cables. I can’t cut through it.”

Continued next page



Bare (cont.)

Jen hopped off her stool and stood next to him, over the body. The man was relatively young, it seemed, his skin still fairly tight, no liver spots, and his back was beautiful. Thick muscles, strong and confident. Even now they hadn't lost their meaning, though they were reflected back and cut away, bare to curious eyes.

"I'm jealous. Our body – you could rip through her muscles with a Q-tip. It's a waste of our time even working on her." Jen peered down again into the man's back, and Todd rested the saw for a moment on the body's scapula. He cracked his knuckles, still gloved.

"What did he die of?" Jen asked. There was a paper posted on each tank giving the cadaver's age and cause of death. Jen's body had been 89 when she died of congestive heart failure and COPD. She was a mess.

"Brain aneurysm. He was like 56." Todd said this without regret, matter-of-factly. He was moving his neck now, side to side, trying to work the kinks out of it.

"That doesn't make you sad?"

"What?"

"He was only 56. That's like the prime of life."

Todd raised an eyebrow at her, cocked his head to one side. "Really? The prime of life?"

Jen glared up, surprised by the anger and disappointment she felt in that tiny moment. "Yeah, well, compare him to our lady. You saw her lungs when we took them out a few weeks ago – all tiny and shriveled up like raisins, and here this guy is, in perfect health, except for the fact that he's dead."

"Why should that make me sad?" Todd asked, taking off his gloves and throwing them with an athlete's grace into the nearest trash bin.

"Think about it this way: he never had to go through the hardship of watching his body fail and get weak and sick. He was a man, strong and proud, right through that last second."

Jen took off her gloves, slick with fat and peppered with dried clots of blood, and her hands, clammy from the latex, were wet in the cold air of the room. Her face blushed and her voice rose in spite of her. "Todd, he only got half a life."



"Jen, it wasn't until recently that people started living to their 80s and 90s. A hundred years ago he would have been considered pretty old. Why are you getting so upset about this?"

"Can't I be sad for the life he didn't get to have?" she countered and stared down into muscle and blood and bone, fat and skin and ligament and all the things that made the man a man, and the smell of the formaldehyde that coated his every cell made her throat close.

"Yes," said Todd, and leaned down to look her in the eye. "But why?" He rested his forearm on top of her shoulder – a fellow's embrace, a somewhat bolstering presence. Jen realized right then how long it had been since she'd been touched by someone. Her throat grew tighter. She cleared it.

"Haven't you noticed?" she asked, her voice quiet against the grinding of the occasional saw and the voices of their classmates. Despite the background noise she felt exposed and naked. "It's starting to speed up. And –and we're in here, using all our time to look at people – I wonder, if they could talk, would they tell us to stay and keep working or to go out and do...something?"

Todd blinked. Straightened up and took his arm off her shoulder. Jen blushed harder. He hadn't expected that, she knew. Shaking her head, she grabbed a fresh pair of gloves from the box in their tank and snapped them on professionally. With the bone saw he had made a deep cut into the vertebrae, but she could see that the angle he was taking was too sharp. He would cut around the spinal cord rather than into it. She pressed her thumb against the knobby side of a vertebra, not very hard. She heard a sharp snap, like a knuckle cracking, and then the tension in the bone gave way. She almost felt horror rise up in her throat – she hadn't even been trying. Even this perfection of person was so very delicate...

"Please stop mutilating my body, Jen," Todd's voice laughed. "Just cause you're jealous doesn't mean you have to resort to sabotage." He was standing next to and a little behind her now, and she could feel his short laugh through her skin. When she looked up at him she saw his

Continued next page



**Bare (cont.)**

goatee and mouth smiling. "God – try and not make anatomy lab such a sober place next time, okay? It's hard enough to get through this without having to constantly contemplate our own mortality."

He leaned around her then, and grabbed a pair of gloves from the box and as he did so anchored himself with a hand on her back, his fingers just brushing the bottom line of a shoulder blade.

His hand still reaching for gloves he stopped and his face was right in front of hers. "For the record, though, I think they would tell us to do both. Life and work can happen at the same time, you know." His voice was quiet. She was surprised by how comfortable she felt, even though they were strangers. One of his hands was on her back and the other reached across her and it felt like an embrace. She sunk into it without moving, and she was sure he could feel her muscles relax because he smiled with one half of his mouth and goatee.

"There are a lot of hours in the day," she agreed, and he fished for a pair of gloves and drew away, although his hand stayed cupped on her back for another instant and she shivered when his fingertips brushed her spine as his hand, slowly, left.

"There are a lot of hours in the day," he said, nodding.

"Todd!" a voice called out, startling them both. "What the hell is up with our spine? You done with it or are we going to have to excavate this guy with pick-axes?"

"If you're so impatient, Jeff, why don't you come here and do it yourself?" Todd called over Jen's head. "I was taking a break. My arms feel like I've been jackhammering through concrete."

"Try a different angle," Jen suggested. "I think you're going too deep."

"You're one to talk," he grumbled, but smiled that half smile again, and Jen giggled as she walked away. She knew he was watching. She felt her toes in her shoes, and she felt the soft cotton of her scrub pants shift against her legs as she moved, and she felt the blood surge in her veins, and the sun slanted in the windows to tell them how long the day yet was.



Master Your Mind

Brant Dumford
MEDPREP, MPH, Class of 2014

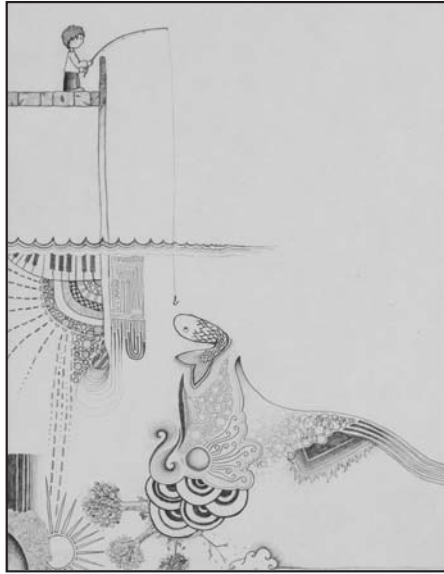
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Two Dreamers

Carolyn Roloff
Class of 2014







Strength Is More Than Muscle

Tony Miksanek, M.D.

Class of 1980

I don't know why I'm telling you any of this. I'm not really sure why you're bothering to listen. You're a stranger. And I'm just an ordinary 17-year-old kid. Could be you're just curious. Perhaps you even care. Maybe I need someone to talk to.

My dad is dead.

He's been gone almost a year now. It started out with his skin wiggling. Like worms were moving underneath it. They called it twitching. They said it was his muscles dying. It looked weird. Something bad was happening to his nerves. Then he got extra tired and real weak. Pretty soon, his legs got puny. Useless. It was my job to push him around in a wheelchair. Before long, it was up to me to pretty much take care of him. I didn't mind.

Mom was freaked out. Crying all the time. My little brother was spooked too. Who could blame them? The man was wasting away. Sure, it was sad. What bothered me most was that Dad knew he was a goner. And that it wouldn't be long. I could see it in his eyes.

It's not like he was a perfect father. He used to yell at Mom. A lot. They'd argue all the time. And he was tough on me and my brother. Mostly me. Said it was for my own good. Sometimes, he hit me. Even when I wasn't sure why. Even when I didn't do anything wrong. One time, he slapped me so hard it left a big red mark on the left side of my face. I was ashamed to go to school looking like that. Finger marks tattooed across my cheek. So I skipped school.

My dad wasn't exactly mean. He used to work hard - when he was still able to - 6 days a week underground in the coal mine. I doubt he grew up as a kid dreaming that one day he would be a coal miner. It's dangerous and dirty work. Screws up your lungs and breathing too.

Mom said he had an anger problem but that it wasn't his fault. That's just the way he was made. He wasn't a happy man. And he liked to drink. Maybe a little too much. We knew when to keep our distance. My brother and I knew when to disappear.

They call it Lou Gehrig's disease. They don't know what causes it. They don't have a cure for it either. They also give it some other long





medical name that I can't remember right now. Most people just say Lou Gehrig's or sometimes ALS. Gehrig was some ancient baseball player. He played about 100 years ago. Sounds like he was a good guy. I don't much care for baseball. Boring. Dad wanted me to play football, but I'm kinda scrawny. Besides, I didn't exactly look forward to getting my head bashed in. Funny how Dad watched a lot of football games on TV but never got around to throwing a football with me. Or playing catch with a baseball.

I tried lifting weights to bulk up, but it never did much good. Besides, it's boring. A lot of my friends are obsessed with their muscles. And their bodies. Not me. I weigh about a buck forty. Doesn't matter how much I eat or how much I lift. I'm always 140 pounds.

Even though I'm on the skinny side, my friends will tell you I'm sneaky strong. No kidding. I'm flexible too. Plus I can take a beating. I'm on the high school wrestling team. I don't want to brag, but I'm pretty good. It doesn't matter in wrestling how big or strong you are. It only matters that you are committed to working crazy hard. And that you're willing to suffer more than the other guy. More than all the other guys.

Senior year was a big year for me. I got a girlfriend. She's cool. I'm a good student but not great. Of course at our town's public school, if you just show up to class everyday, you're guaranteed a B. If you hand in your homework and don't cause any trouble, we're talking B plus, A minus territory. High honor roll looked doable. I made it to the high school state wrestling championships - small school division. Awesome. And of course, Dad was dying. Horrible.

They said Dad couldn't last long enough to watch me wrestle in the Finals. They were wrong. Between you and me, I think the only reason he hung on so long was to see me make it there. As for me, I didn't exactly need any extra motivation, but I won't lie. Deep down, I had some deranged belief that if I could win the championship, then maybe Dad could somehow pull through and recover. Looking back, it sounds

Continued next page





Strength Is More Than Muscle (cont.)

so Hollywood. Except, this time there's no happy ending. The guy still dies.

Wrestling is a lonely sport. It's also sweaty and smelly. If I didn't love it so much, I'd have to agree with you that it sounds disgusting. I haven't even mentioned how we wrestlers live with ringworm all season. As soon as we spot a round rash anywhere on our body, we immediately slap a ton of fungus cream on it. Lotrimin. Lamisil. I know all the different brands. One of my buddies had a skin infection which sounded kind of worrisome. It was called herpes gladiatorum. What a rockin' name for a wrestler's rash!

My opponent in the Finals match was a brick. Really, he looked like he was chiseled from stone. What's that real hard stone? Granite maybe? This kid's muscles rippled. His body was perfect. I don't mean that in a homosexual way. I already told you I have a steady girlfriend. There was something funny about him though. He already had a hint of a receding hairline and the worst case of facial acne I've ever seen. And trust me, I've seen a ton of terrible acne. You don't have to be House, MD to tell that this kid was on steroids. Big time.

One look at this mini Hulk made me nervous. I could understand how some guys who were supposed to wrestle him might just think, "Forget it." Or fake an injury before mini Hulk put the real hurt on them. He looked like a killer. No kidding. But I waited a long time for that day. We even got a specially-equipped handicap van to bring Dad to the stadium. There was no turning back now.

Nine thousand people were in the arena to watch a bunch of high school boys wrestle 6 minute matches. The place was wild. I saw Dad in his wheelchair parked in the handicapped seating section. Mom was propping up his chin so he could see the wrestling mat.

Mini Hulk was undefeated. I already had two losses that season. For the first four minutes of the match, he throws me around pretty good. He nearly pins me twice. He's not just beating me. He's crushing me. After two periods, the score is 9-0. But like I said, I'm unusually flexible. And I can take a beating. In the final period of the match, mini Hulk was gassing. He spent like a jigowatt of energy wiping the mat with my face. He's not used to going this deep into a match. He's breathing hard





and his technique becomes sloppy. He gets lazy. I get lucky. I catch him with a slick takedown. With less than a minute left in the match, I pin him. Unbelievable.

Even now, I don't know how I pinned that monster. For sure, it wasn't brute strength or an adrenaline rush. No way. It was something else. Something I can't give a name to. The folks in the stands are going nuts. They're all standing on their feet, yelling and applauding. Except of course, my dad. I find my father's face and I imagine he is smiling. Not your normal big happy kind of smile but a little crooked grin. Good enough though. I couldn't remember the last time I saw my dad smile.

There's no doubt in my mind that this is the absolute best day in my life. Maybe the best day I'll ever have in my life. Suddenly my body is flying through the air. I land hard against some folding chairs. Mini Hulk has effortlessly tossed my body 20 feet. He is enraged at his loss. I can't blame him. His hometown newspaper is probably preparing a humiliating sports section headline: Perfect season spoiled by skinny kid from the middle of nowhere.

He rushes toward me as if going to gore me with his head. Like that Minotaur dude we learned about in Literature class. And at that instant, I honestly believe he's about to kill me. I'm not exaggerating. Then two coaches and a referee gang tackle the fuming 140 pound mini Hulk and save my life. I told you that kid was taking steroids, didn't I?

Three weeks later, Dad died in his sleep at home. They called it a good death. Are you kidding me? There was nothing good about Dad's year with Gehrig's. Nothing. My mother still cries a lot. And my brother's a little messed up too. Both of them go to a counselor. Not me.

I was surprised at how few people showed up at Dad's funeral. Almost everyone who came up to me said how sorry they were. Many told me that life is unfair - but I had already figured that part out on my own. A few folks said I was now the man of the family - whatever that means. Anyway, it's not a job I really want. Or feel ready for.

I'm enrolled in junior college now. The college has a wrestling team. As high school State Champion at 140 pounds, I'm a pretty big deal

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Strength Is More Than Muscle (cont.)

there. The coaches want us to lift weights everyday to get stronger. Like I said before, I'm not a big believer in weightlifting. Strength comes from more than just muscles. What do you think?

I'm still not sure why I've told you all these things. Up to now, I've never said most of this stuff - private stuff - to anyone. And I still don't have a clue why you wanted to listen. All I know is that I really miss my father. I think about him all the time. And I'll never forget that he put off dying to be there on the most important day of my life. And as hard as it was for him to smile, he did it. For me.





Educated Evans

Sandra Shea, Ph.D.
Department of Family and Community Medicine

Educated Evans died today.
7 year old bay gelding
Named after a lost movie.
His life stands lost now too.
Winner of some £20,000.
Thoroughbred.
National Hunt.
Hurdler.
Chaser.
Racer.
Irish.

He heard the "Cheltenham Roar" as the tapes lifted
That last race
On the first day
Of the Cheltenham Festival.
They fly, these thoroughbreds.
They soar over gorse and wood.
They tug to be off – "let me run, let me go."
They jump on off days if you let them.
Their hearts pulse, their ears pin.
They paw front hooves, they look down on the humans.
They grunt with effort, they snort with pride.
Sometimes they crash.
Sometimes they walk away.
Sometimes...

He rose to the hurdles as he'd always done
He ran 'cross the turf as ever before
Toward the back of the pack
As they rose to the next to last
3 miles gone,
Almost home.

But something went wrong.





Educated Evans (cont.)

Did another racer cross his path?
Sadly wrong.
Did he hesitate and lunge mid-stride?
Horribly wrong.
Did a hind leg slip?
Irretrievably wrong.
Did he catch in the fence?
Deadly wrong.

You could spot him toward the back of the pack
Catching, falling, rolling.
His regular jockey, Sam, wasn't there, maybe he would have known.
His locum, Wayne, tossed free, rolled even farther.
And Educated Evans tried to get up, as they always do.
Spot him there,
Just at the edge of the TV screen.

His hind leg
Or pelvis
Had to have broken
He pulled his front end up and tossed his head.
But could not rise.
The others headed for home. He wanted to go.
But could not rise.
Did he nicker at being left?
Hunt Ball took the wire by daylight.

Who got to his bridle first?
Who whispered "whoa" in his ear?
Who put a hand on his neck, stroking,
a last soft touch of humanity?
Who patted the white diamond
between his eyes?
Who put their weight to his shoulder
And eased him over onto the grass?
Who calmed him and repeated "good lad"
As the vet came with the needle?
To put out the pain.
To put out the light.





They quoted the odds on the winner.
They switched video to the next track.
Not a word was spoken on air.
The "Sporting Life" chart stated succinctly:
"sadly took a fatal fall two out."
A stall stands empty at Cheltenham.
A bridle needs to be cleaned.
Twiston-Davies has 1 less to train.
Educated Evans died today.



Mustang

Mark Gordon
Community

