Progeny

Spring 2010

Poetry  Photos  Prose

Defiance College

Volume 6, Issue 1 of the Translucent Series
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Acknowledgments

*Progeny* would like to thank Writers Group of the Defiance County Arts Council for their generous support of the magazine. Each year Writers Group sponsors contests for poets, essayists, fiction writers, and playwrights.

This semester’s judges are Lorraine Andrews, Lynn Gilliland, Alton Myers, and Brenda Rau.

The Spring 2010 winners are . . .

- Sara Fleagle, first prize
- Leslie Wilson, second prize
- Amanda Moye, second prize
**Letter to My Cell Phone**

Cell phone,
Red, shiny
Sleek, slider
Full keyboard
Pocket computer
Digital camera
Life organizer
Message reliever

You complete me,
You numbed-
Fingers-
Texting-friend

Miles Byrne

**Sock Mates**

Where did you go?
This I’d like to know.
We were both clean,
On our way to a hip scene.

You fell off, now I’m alone.
No place now feels like home.
My red lover that hated dirt
Is done gone, now I am hurt.

I am now a matchless sock
That other pairs like to mock.
What good am I without a mate!
My sorry life now I hate!

A mateless sock has little use,
Clean up spills and polish boots.
Clean no more I’m doomed to be
My mate has done gone and left me.

Rebekah Stottlemyer
The Smallest Tree

What would you think if you saw just one tree left standing in the middle of a desecrated forest? Would you feel sorry for it? Well don’t! I am one such tree. I alone am still standing after people came and cut down the rest of my forest. Yes, only me! No longer am I the smallest tree in the forest . . . I am the only tree in the forest. I am the tallest tree here! Happy, happy day. Now I will get as much sun and rain as I want. It is so quiet too. It is so peaceful, unlike when all the other trees were here. They made so much noise. There is no chatter or shaking of branches from the other trees. The peace and quiet is all mine. Ha ha ha ha. Everything is mine! Everything I see belongs to me! I am king of this land! King of all I see . . . What? What is that? There, that sign over there, what does it say? Shoot, I knew I should have learned how to read. Hey you. Yeah you, the raccoon, what does that sign say? Dentist? It says Dentist? How strange. I wonder what a dentist is? Oh well, whatever it is it will belong to me too.

Bang, bang, bang . . . What is that noise? Humans surround me. Why have they come back? They are interrupting my sun bathing! What are they doing? That is strange. It looks almost as if they are building something . . . They cannot do that; this is my place. I am king here! You people cannot just come in and do whatever you want. Who do you humans think you are coming here, making a racket, and placing something on my kingdom! I only want some peace and quiet and you people have to come and wreck it. Thanks a lot. Just get done already, OK? I want some peace and quiet please!

What is this they are bringing in? The building is almost done and they are bringing something in. It is trees . . . What? No! I am the only tree here! I am king. They cannot enter my kingdom! This cannot be happening. They are planting three other trees in the ground around me. I will make them go away! They are not welcome in my kingdom. Hey you! Yes, all of you trees. Go away! You are not welcome here. Lets see what they say to that . . . WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE THEY EVEN SAYING? I don’t think they are speaking English! I cannot understand these trees. Here comes one of those humans. He is showing the trees to another of the humans . . . They are WHAT? These trees are foreign trees, Norwegian Pine, Japanese Maple, Chinese Elm! Are they crazy? If they had to stick me with some trees, couldn’t have at least stuck me with some English speaking ones?

They chatter all the time. They don’t care that I cannot understand them. They just like to talk! Also that building they put up, humans come and go in there. It is strange. They do not seem to be happy about going there, but still they do. At least I am admired here; some people come and take pictures of me. Also, I am big now in a forest of four. But I have no peace, no quiet. I have no kingdom. I am not me. I am a forest of four trees. Lost, but standing alone. They cannot understand me and I cannot understand them.

I cannot see the forest for the trees.

Rebekah Stottlemyer

Winter Walkway
Kelly Beard

The Smallest Tree

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I cannot see the forest for the trees.

Rebekah Stottlemyer
Back to You

Why do I feel bound to you?
Trapped to you?
Caught to you?

Why can’t I escape from you?
Leave from you?
Run from you?

I feel like all that is me is you
when really there’s more to me than you.
So why do I always come back to you?

Kayla Gawronski

Romantic Ride Around the City
Megan Dunn
One two.
One two.
The sound of the world marches one two.
No room to be you in the age of the few.
Just strap on your boots and march blind too.

Marcus Cabrera
The Visit

She speaks out to you from across the room, breaking the smothering silence, and you are surprised. You look up across the washed-gray room and notice that the young woman before you is quietly beautiful but wholly unkempt. Lifeless muddy brown hair masks her face and clings to her shoulders. You shudder and try to recall her words, but you can’t and her lips are locked once more. She shifts her weight and you resign yourself to watching the ticking clock directly above the rusty-barred window.

Time passes aimlessly. Your eyes and mind wander. You look back at the clock, and it is time to leave. You stand up and stretch for a minute, hesitant, before moving toward her. She is busily rocking her body back and forth, back and forth, although not seated in a rocking chair. As you approach her, the rocking intensifies and she begins moving her fingers on her lap, back and forth in a particular pattern that you know well. You walk up to her and gently brush the hair out of her eyes. You kiss her forehead and she smiles briefly as if she remembers you for a moment through the medication-induced fog.

A nurse knocks on the door, sternly reminding you that visiting time is now over. You leave the room slowly, expectantly, and you are rewarded when she looks up at you with recognition in her eyes. For that brief moment you can look past the hospital, the medication, and the annoying nurse. You can look into her eyes just far enough to see a glimpse of her soul. It’s then that you come to the realization that beauty and madness go brilliantly together.

Sara K. Fleagle

First-prize winner of the Progeny contest sponsored by Writers Group of the Defiance County Arts Council

Wall of Reflection, Toul Sleng Prison, Cambodia
Tyler Dunham
Sweaty man hands!
Holding, squeezing me
Bastard thinks he
can control me

I am my own—
markings and all

People place
words on me
Attempt to
define me
restrain me

My internal markings
show “Business Institute”

Sweaty man hands,
You cannot
begone of me

Shred me, rip me
apart! But I
will maintain
I remain paper

Grrd! of the
shredder

Miles Byrne
Not All Roses Are Red

Not all roses are red,
Not all violets are blue.
A lot has been left unsaid,
Three words hold the truth.

The three word phrase
Is a binding vow of
One’s love, one’s hurt,
Damage done, no doubt.

Life has two sides,
A light and a dark.
Love has two sides,
Together, apart.

A rose has two sides,
Dead and alive,
A rose can’t live
Unless it dies.

There is heaven, there is hell,
There is white rose and a black rose.
A wedding bell, a death bell,
The highs and the lows.

Until your heart’s been broken,
Maybe once, maybe twice,
Will you truly know
What love signifies?

Not all roses are red,
Not all violets are blue.
Not all loves last forever,
Not all loves are true.

Cherie Locker
Your Touch Is a Lie

I’m broken, but you didn’t even touch me.
Like an ancient machine, covered in dust.

Solitude, left alone to hear the memories.
Fear paints a picture, I don’t want to believe.

Forever gone, forever blinded by invisible light.
I’m not here, and you are never near.

Who are we, what have we become?
Oceans away, suns apart.

Why can’t we go back?
When love meant more.

Your touch is a lie.
And I’m the liar.

Amanda Moye

Lone Floater
Miles Byrne
Rain

Falling slowly down,
Pitter patter on the ground.
Wet and clear,
A beauty you can hear.
Putting life into place
With a few drops of grace.
Time seems to stop
As the rain slows its drop.
Rainbows in the air,
Flashing glory everywhere.

Rebekah Stottlemyer

River

Life is like a river
flowing so free.
Compared to love,
it is like you and me.
Love flows endlessly,
ever beginning to stop.
No matter what comes,
we make it to the top.

Never stopping for rocks
nor grains nor pebbles,
pushing through full force . . .
you and me . . . enables
us to live life
no doubt in mind.

Searching through life
allowed me to find
unconditional love,
ever changing or ceasing.
Our love will last,
throughout every season.

I love you now,
before and forever.
No matter what happens,
no matter the weather.

Marcus Cabrera
A glass rose.
Like a feather
or a porcelain doll.

So pretty,
yes you are,
but so fragile.

If I look at you
will you break?
Or will it just be my heart?

Placed upon an altar
to be worshipped.
My life to you
the greatest offering.

Will I be blessed?
Or will you turn the other way?
So many devotions,
how could you even notice?

But I am here and I’m not leaving.
And maybe one day
when all else is nothing,
your eyes will fall on me.

Amanda Moye

Second-prize winner of the Progeny contest sponsored by Writers Group of the Defiance County Arts Council
Skewed Images

Blur, spot, smear, line.
Ink spots.

White, gray, gray, gray, more gray.
10% gray, 25% gray, smear, 50% gray, 75% gray.

One black dot.
White bodies among the gray.
Death. Life.

This smudge?
Terrible disaster
or wonderful carnival?

Meaning is fuzzy
through the lens
of a Dana Lab printer.

Miles Byrne

City Lights
Megan Dunn
When a Door Slams Shut

My ears vibrated with the slam of the door
My body shook like never before
The world had turned over with nothing the same
My identity lost, my being, my name
Total devastation enveloped my soul
My life was drowning without any hope
Numbness overwhelmed me, it crept and it hummed
The throbbing in my head pulsated and drummed
I remembered a saying, a small glimmer of hope
It kept me going and helped me to cope
That’s when I saw it, that small speck of light
So far away, nearly swallowed by night
The door that had slammed was left slightly ajar
A window of new life, yet it seemed very far
As I fought for life, it grew larger with will
Until finally I reached it and clung to the sill
As I thrust it open, I breathed a deep breath
Felt the grip loosen, the hands of hope’s death.

Chasta Schneider

Realize
Becky Young
Bright girl, bright future.
Dark night, dark outcome.
Crashing cars, crashing bodies.
Loss of control, loss of life.
Breaking bones, breaking hearts.
Blur of pain, blur of processions.
Fake people, fake pity.
Avoiding stares, avoiding whispers.
Uncontrollable pain, uncontrollable anger.
Difficult breathing, difficult pretending.
Pretending to breath, pretending to be whole.

Erin Cartwright
Psalm

Help me through the storms,
comfort your child and make him warm.
Lead me down the path,
so I may love and fear your wrath.
Step back into my life,
keep me safe and hold me tight.

Cleanse me of my sins I hate,
so when I die I’ll see you at the gate.
Build your temple deep in me,
so no matter what comes it will always be.
Open my eyes so that I may see,
the evils that are lurking inside of me.

Wash my soul and make me clean,
because in the end all I have is a dream.
A dream that one day I’ll live in the sky,
standing by your side watching time go by.

Marcus Cabrera
Running

I’m still
in hiding
They have
not yet found me
No one watches
when you don’t matter

The sirens were wailing lights flashing
I sat under the skyline and knew
I got away with murder

Christina-Marie Drake

Center of Orneriness
Miles Byrne
While Reading Austen

I sit
alone on a park bench
reading Jane Austen
as a man in a suit
fondles my breasts
in his mind
and thinks
I don’t notice

Sara K. Fleagle

Summer Warmth
Erin Cartwright
Chinchilla

Grey puff, Silken fluff
Raisin snatcher in my house
Do not eat that thing!

Chewing carpet crud
Nibbling my fancy socks
Too cute to stay mad.

Eating everything
Part animal, Part vacuum
That was my best pen.

Leslie Wilson

Second-prize winner of the Progeny contest
sponsored by Writers Group
of the Defiance County Arts Council

Naptime
Samantha Stevens


**Chillax**

take a deep breath
count to ten
think of what
you’re thankful for
it will be okay
you will be okay

inhale, exhale
meditate, pray
follow a guided relaxation
everything will be fine
it will be okay
you will be okay

Sara K. Fleagle