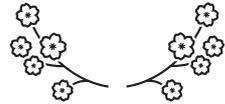


Talking Leaves 2020



Talking Leaves 2020**Volume 23****Managing Editor**

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Policy and Purpose

Talking Leaves accepts original works of prose, poetry, and artwork from students at Indiana University–Purdue University Columbus. Each anonymous submission is reviewed by the IUPUC Division of Liberal Arts Talking Leaves Selection Committee and judged solely on artistic merit. ©Copyright 2020 by the Trustees of Indiana University. Upon publication, copyright reverts to the author/artist. We retain the right to archive all issues electronically and to publish all issues for posterity and the general public. *Talking Leaves* is published almost annually by the Talking Leaves IUPUC Division of Liberal Arts Editorial Board.

Find us on the web at www.iupuc.edu/liberal-arts/talking-leaves

From the Managing Editor

I am thrilled to present the twenty-third edition of *Talking Leaves*. This edition has faced unforeseen challenges set forth by the global pandemic and has overcome them, as we all have. 2020 has been a trying year; and, with everyone still trying to adjust to the new ways of life, I am pleased to provide something with a sense of normalcy.

I thank Joshua Holycross, Molly McGinnis, and Samantha Maxfield for their tremendous help with this year's selections. I must also show special thanks to our faculty sponsor, Dr. Lisa Siefker-Bailey, for her unending support and encouragement as I worked to learn the ropes for my first year as managing editor of this magazine.

Producing this magazine has been an incredible experience for those of us involved, and I hope it will be equally as magical for the writers, artists, and readers who have been eagerly awaiting this edition's release.

All IUPUC students are welcome and encouraged to submit their work for the next volume of this publication. I am eager to see what next year will have in store and how that will manifest in submissions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lyndsey Wolfe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lyndsey Wolfe
Managing Editor

From the Faculty Sponsor

For last year's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of this publication's beginning, I brought all the library's magazines to the launch party. When we counted the books, we realized we had two volumes that were not in the digital archive. So, this volume is not our twenty-first, but it is our twenty-third. Leave it to English folks to mess up the math!

Lyndsey's enthusiasm and attention to detail make her a strong Talking Leaves leader and a pleasure to work with. Special thanks goes to DLA Head, Dr. George Towers, and to all faculty who encourage students to create and to submit their work. We appreciate Adam Frazier's web expertise and are perennially indebted to Vicki Kruse for ensuring anonymity in our blind review process. Most of all, we are grateful for the vision of our Vice Chancellor and Dean, Dr. Reinhold Hill, who champions student work by funding publication of the magazine in both digital and print forms, endorsing the value of our students' creativity and their unique voices.

On behalf of the Division of Liberal Arts, I remind readers that *Talking Leaves* is a student literary magazine which encourages IUPUC students to find empowerment through self-expression. As has been our practice since the magazine's inception, we have kept copyediting to a minimum to preserve unique voices, personae, and ideas.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am increasingly aware of the need for creativity in our society. I hope this magazine provides a bright spot and helps its readers feel a bit more connected in the tumult of 2020's isolating and uncertain world.

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Adulthood's Threshold

I never realized how stressful life could be,
I have always had most things handed to me.
Sometimes it feels as though it's hard to breathe
but the stress and anxiety are what people don't see.

Coming to college was scary but fun;
I am able to choose different paths to run.
And while my first semester is almost done
I feel like the knowledge I've gained weighs a ton.

I remember high school and the trivial things that didn't matter,
like what I was going to wear or where I was going after.
I remember all the fun yet pointless childish chatter
about makeup or our infatuations with famous Hollywood actors.

That was back when everything seemed simple
and the worst thing that could happen was getting a pimple.
Before we had to worry about going mental,
or looking for insurance to cover our dental.

That was before we worked five days a week.
Before some of our friends decided to tweak.
Before lack of sleep or change in abilities made us feel weak,
and before our bank accounts seemed so meek.

When we are young, we feel like we own the world.
We fear nothing as our lives are whirled.
We believe ten dollars an hour should make us pearly,
and we found joy in mindless things, and laughed till we hurled.

Now we are adults, and on a new journey in life.
And at some point in time we will all face strife.
Some of us are single, and others have a husband or wife,
and some of us still worry about things that are rather trifle.

While we may not know what the future could hold,
we do know that not all roads are paved in gold.
As some remain young, and others grow old,
we will all eventually stand at adulthood's threshold.

Eight Little Kitties

Eight little kitties stumbling all about;
some are big and tall, others short and stout.
Four black and white, and one calico;
one gray with stripes, one black, and one yellow.

Eight little kitties like to run and pounce;
even though some don't even weigh an ounce.
They tumble and fumble meowing with joy,
playing as if everything was a toy.

Eight little kitties climbing all about;
some are more daring than others no doubt.
The higher the climb the braver the cat;
well, at least until a kitten falls flat.

Eight little kitties miss their mother so;
as she returns the happier they grow.
Pulling them close, as she holds them so near,
softly purring *it's time to sleep, my dear.*

Eight little kitties yawn in their bed;
visions of catnip dancing in their heads.
As their mother sings a sweet goodnight song,
eight little kitties sleep soundly all night long.

Matas

I hope we dance to Cannibal Corpse and drink honey wine in the flora

Just like we said we would

When the moon had fallen behind an October sky

And my hair was bright red.

You were my Baltic amber right from the start.

Cursed

Chameleon,

Forced to change and adapt for centuries,

Nowhere to rest my feet as

I simply wander from western rocks to eastern shores.

My spirit will not be free unless I am running straight into the night.

I dream of dying among the green, spiny succulents that prick

And heal in the same life.

They burn bright

until only their bones are left.

My mother said that they fill the desert

And everyone stands in awe.

Aušrinė

He said that I was the dawning,

His new day, the rising sun,

And the setting moon.

I am your threat and I see the fear in your eyes,

You and I both know

That the crown belongs on my head.

What You Took from Me

You really want to know?

You really want to know of all the things

You did to destroy and stomp on my life

As if I was a spider searching for a corner

To spin my last web.

You took my sequin dress from me. It was blue

And it fit me like an ocean wave.

You took my ability to simply leave the house

To grab an iced coffee.

You took my sobriety and serotonin,

My endorphins and you have the nerve

To give me Xanax eyes.

You are the reason that I wake up screaming

And fall into anxiety holes

For three hours

On my best friend's floor,

While the rest of the group watches *Pulp Fiction*.
You are the reason that I lock the door an
Infinite amount of times,
And check behind curtains of my own damn house,
And only pump gas in the sunlight.

You are the reason that I am writing this
From a locked bathroom stall
In terrifying,
Paralyzing fear
Of phantasmagoria.

And for this pain, and for all these things
And these “irrational fears,”
It is simply me that you should be afraid of.

Frankenstein's Girlfriend

I'm a monster tonight.

Jaded

Eyes, skin, and Plath lips,

Hirsutism gone awry.

Mossy lace hugging my Venus hips

Diamond encrusted skull hanging from a

Boney, limp wrist

Against the stench of patchouli and eucalyptus

Blooming,

Radiating.

He whispers in my ear, "You're beautiful tonight."

But he holds his breath as he kisses

My rotting cheek and I know that he knows

I am a decomposing mass of forgotten beauty.

I'm hideous tonight.

That's what the mirror tells me

As I look again.

Stevie Jarrett

An oxymoron, in couplets

You asked my favorite place,
naturally I said the lake.

I love its safety, its solace;
a true place of peace.

I love its unknowns, its wilds;
a beauty that leaves me beguiled.

Then I knew something else to be true:
These things make you my favorite place too.

There is safety here, in your endless embrace,
a stronghold, a fortress, when I see your face.

The wild in your eyes I want to explore;
the intensity, mystery—a faraway shore.

A wild safety, a safe wilderness.

An endless adventure filled with ethereal rest.

Abigail Alderdice

Elegy

You were in my dreams six months ago,
you sat in the back of my car.

I was driving and asked where you wanted to eat.

You didn't care, you were just hungry.

The dream wasn't even about you,
you were just there.

A strong presence, quiet strength,
about to become a memory.

I knew that when I woke up

I wouldn't see you again.

My heart broke at the thought.

"I miss you." "I know you do."

You were in my dream last night,
again, I sat in my car.

But this time, I was alone.

It was the first of September.

I looked at the glowing green numbers
on my Oldsmobile radio—3:06 in the afternoon.
Twelve hours, I thought, and tears filled my eyes.
Twelve hours and you would be gone.

I can stop it, I thought. Surely I have that power?
Reweave the fabric of time,
prevent pain, mourning, grieving and loss.
3:12 p.m. Maybe just a phone call.

But I knew that I couldn't do it.
I didn't want to play god,
not even in my own dream.
Even if you living meant the death of pain.

I guess you weren't in my dream after all.
I never saw you, didn't even call you.
But you were on my mind every moment,
in every single thing that I did.

I woke up, and this is reality too.

A face I'll never see,

a voice I'll never hear.

But still, in every thought, move, and moment—you live.

Blocked

Words like a flood
filled my mind,
Relentless waters of
never-ending lyrics.

"Those eyes are—"
"Those hands, they—"
Lines left unfinished,
mysteries unsolved.

Rivers and rain,
and yet pen to page,
a dam was built.

Abigail Alderdice

Too Much to SAY

I've relentlessly tried to gather all my thoughts
into inspiring lines and romantic meters.

But when I think of all that is you,
words fail me.

Fragmented thoughts, simple lines.
Moments, memories, and feelings collect in my mind,
making a home in every corner,
until all I think of is you.

An electric moment—
lightning flowing through my veins.
When your eyes met mine,
it sent a shock down my spine.

A silence has fallen over the still waters,
midnight bringing a darkness filled with unknowns.
But right now, you are here—you are constant.

“How long have we been here?”

Your hands shake, quivering in the cold.

I take them into mine.

“An hour? Maybe two. Are you ready to go?”

You pull me into you, tighter, closer.

In the darkness, your eyes shine bright. “No.”

Words will continue to fail.

Stanzas will be uneven, rhyme schemes fickle.

We won't leave the dock.

We won't leave this feeling.

London Fog

I watch through my window as green turns to orange and red.

Sweaters and scarves wrap around bodies of people passing.

I wonder

Were they knitted by a beloved grandmother,

Infused with the scent of freshly baked gingerbread?

Or were they purchased on a whim in an airport lobby

By an out-of-towner not yet accustomed to sharp weather?

I bring the warm mug of earl grey closer to my chest

And bask in the sweet, musky fragrance as I nestle deeper

Into my own hand-knit blanket.

I think back on rushed pumpkin spice lattes on the way to work,

Cutting through the peaceful fog of the fall morning with fresh espresso.

I don't miss those days.

It's much quieter now.

The sun begins to set early, like it does in cooler months.

I feel a soft nudge on my leg.

Looking down

I see the bright yellow eyes of
My little gray kitten staring back at me
And I am awakened from my autumnal trance.

Too Much

I'm too much.

I think too much,

I care too much,

I love too much,

And I overanalyze everything.

But the thing about too much

Is it's never not enough.

I am too much

Of every little thing that

Makes up the

Beautiful, wonderful,

Needy, passionate

Girl that is me.

And I wouldn't give one ounce

Of any ingredient

In the grand recipe

Of my personality

To make myself easier

For you to swallow.

I'm too much
And I never
Want to be
Anything
Less.

His Voice

I know the voices. They whisper. Back and forth. Like waves pushing against the shore. I can make them out sometimes, but they usually amount to nothing more than incoherent mumbling. I try to listen more often than not. They are always trying to tell me something, to make comments about the world outside. Advice. Criticisms. Insults. They fluctuate like the tide—speaking with calm repose one minute, and searing, scathing remarks the next. Calm water. Choppy water. Raging ocean tides in the midst of a storm.

No one else hears them, but they are there all the same. Calling to me.

“Come here, Cordelia.” Like I’ve been chosen. Been selected to own this. . . this thing. They speak their sultry, slow words into my ear. I grasp at them. Their tangibility so real, but out of my league to coalesce with. Just like he used to be.

Sometimes these voices of mine shift the words of those around me—I mishear them, and I jump to the conclusions they make for me. The brief thought that they are abnormal strikes me in those moments, but I dare not mention it, for fear that my vague suspicions are confirmed. What would people think about me if it were true? What

would I think about myself if I admitted they were inside my head? They echo my worried thoughts: “You’d just be the crazy lady they used to know.”

“They’ll lock you up.”

“They wouldn’t even associate with you anymore.”

“Looney Cordy is all wrapped up in her own head.”

“You’ll become a footnote in their story . . . not that you aren’t already.”

So, I brush away the thought that this thing is anything less than normal in those fleeting moments of doubt, or rather, I like to think of it as an ability bestowed on me by some obscure, omnipotent force out in the stratosphere. Like gods, or simply the deep power of mankind in that Akutagawa story, “The Martyr.”

Yes, I rationalize inside my head. That seems accurate enough. Most of the time it doesn’t matter because the voices sink back into the realm of reality. My reality. I don’t need to rationalize them—most of the time. They are simply there, an indisputable fact that I’ve accepted.

They murmur at night when I’m lying in bed, as if they don’t want to disturb me. They do that a lot—talk amongst themselves,

babbling like a brook in the forest. They become more distinct as night falls—before sleep ebbs into my body, taking it over until the haze of darkness and dreams thrusts me into unreality. Ever . . . so . . . slowly . . . I . . . fall . . . into *that* point. The one on the edge of everything.

The precipice between waking and sleeping is the best time. *He* stands out most clearly then. Comes to play. *He's* the one who talks the most. *He's* the focal point of my single-minded obsession. *He* talks to me, drawing me ever closer into his embrace. The lines of his edges are visible, albeit blurred—his touches fleeting, tender. His breath on my neck distinctly *real*. It's like it used to be as I feel him next to me—before sleep can take him away. Take *me* away from him. The way it should have been before everything changed.

When I wake, they chatter on the very edges of my awareness. *He* is nowhere to be found. The others have adopted his place. They act as their own trains of thought, offering feedback for interpretation. Everything I see, everything I do, is scrutinized, judged. They are the ones who are so undefined in their speech that I question what they will offer me. They don't serve the same purpose as *him*. They are something else. A feedback loop for me to recognize things in others. Things I need to know. *Liar. Pretender. Bitch. Scum. Slut. Backstabber.*

Lindy, for example. The local “pretty girl.” She’s got all the perks, the looks, the suave charisma that’s to be expected from someone born to two overwhelmingly rich corporate magnates. She likes to walk around the office saying, “You’re doing such a great job. I wished I was that good at writing summaries” and other things that sound so sickly sweet she must be lying, exaggerating, or simply confused. They helped me figure out what was under her bright-faced façade. I used to think she was just trying to be friendly because we went to school together. Simply because she was nice.

It was a couple of weeks ago—just like any other day really, with the exception that Lindy decided to stop by *my* cubicle. She hasn’t really done that since. I remember the exact words she said to me, too: “You work too much. I worry about you, ya know? You do really good work, Cordelia. I would, like, absolutely hate it if you just kicked it or got sick, ya know?” She smiled, her hair framing her face in a kind-looking way. I could already hear the voices sneering.

“Look at the way her lips crease; she pulls them back too far.”

“I’m sure she’s just trying to be nice,” I respond. They were spoiling the moment.

“She’s just trying to look good for the boss.”

“Maybe, but at least she’s trying. Most people stopped trying a long time ago.” I did have a point.

“There’s a point where being nice is just a formality, *ya know?*” Sarcasm drawled in Lindy’s own voice.

“You all think too much.”

“And *you* don’t think enough. She’s probably contemplating how dumb you are, about how ridiculously under par your work is. We’re trying to protect you from liar bimbos like *her*.”

“You know it’s true. She’s slept with everyone on this floor other than you.”

“Probably, but I’ve known her for years. She just comes off that way . . . I think.” They were starting to piss me off.

“You might be right, but are you sure?”

“You haven’t responded. She thinks you’re a nutcase already, and you haven’t even said anything.” The voices giggled in unison.

Shit. That’s what it felt like. Absolute shit when I realized they weren’t trying to pull one over on me this time. The look she gave me was achingly familiar. The smile was gone, and *that* look was in its place. In her eyes. Written on her face. I knew they *had* to be right. She didn’t truly care about anybody. Certainly not about me.

It's strange because they sometimes lie to make fun of me. To confuse me. I resent it when they do that. They make me doubt them. Doubt myself. Are they lying? Do they see something I don't? If I trust them, will I be lying? They are right more than they are wrong—including the times they are intentionally deceptive, but they contradict each other more often than not. They are not *honest*. At least, not consistently.

He never lies, why do they? It doesn't always make sense, but I've adopted a way to see through them. It works . . . usually.

Every day is the same anymore. They all blur together. Who knows if all that was really last week or six months ago. I don't think I know. Every day the routine starts again. Get up earlier than the day before. Ignore the chipper tone of the voices—they like mornings, oddly enough. Take a shower. Ignore the crude comments and the suggestions to take a vacation, go on a spa day, and treat myself. What's the point of that when there is a single, most important, thing I look forward to? One that doesn't rely on how well I treat myself. In fact, the harder, the longer I work, the sooner I get to hear *him*. The way he used to be. Before the box and the gallons of dirt. **No.** *He's* still

here, just not for as long as he used to be. Not in the same way he used to be.

Get dressed. Style hair into something presentable. Watch some fall out with the brush before I tie it up. Prepare lunch. Pack it. Dismiss the voice of concern saying I should eat more. Listen to the one telling me I'm too fat to bother. I can't be fat for *him* after all. Go to work. Listen to the voices. Judge their sincerity. Ultimately believe them. Make some mistakes with judgment as a result. I wish they were honest again and again. Work. Work. Work some more. Take a lunch break. Go back to work. Gotta pay the bills. I have to see *him* again no matter what. Hear *him*. It's been getting harder to finish work lately. The voices have been getting louder and louder, but they don't affect my work or my ethic. No one else talks to me. I keep to myself. Time to go home. I'm tired. I should go and get some sleep, but in the end I elect to do some overtime for the boss. My work is necessary. He leaves later than usual and tells me to get home soon. Tells me that I'm a valuable worker. The voices argue about his intent, but it doesn't matter. Not really. Either way, he's still my boss. So, it never really mattered.

“When will it end?” I wonder aloud. I mean too many things all at once. Nobody else is here, so my musing voices can come out into open air. “Why don’t you take a break on the roof?”

“That idea sounds boring.”

“The air outside is nice, you’ll feel better.”

“You know, the roof is a better place to be than in here.”

Normally I ignore this type of request, but today feels different. So I go. I wait there at the threshold of the roof for a while. It’s as if I’m waiting for permission which is rather stupid of me, but there isn’t exactly a place to sit. Not really. Unless the rust-covered railing could be considered a good option. I walk up to it despite myself.

“You could just jump.” I contemplate the fall if I did jump. Would it hurt? Would I actually die? Is it worth the risk if I might not?

“You really shouldn’t.”

“No one would miss you, so why not? What difference would it make?”

“That would make yet another mess of yours that others would have to clean up.”

“He’s not here anymore, so do it.”

“Shouldn’t you try to live for him instead?”

“You’re better off dead.” Maybe they’re right, but which one do I trust?

He shows up before I have time to make my decision, and I can see him with a clarity I haven’t had in *so* long. *He* talks to me, his voice like baritone silk. It’s like the good old days when he would take me by the hand to go to dance lessons, laughing with my head on his chest. I haven’t forgotten the steps. How could I have? It was the last thing we did before he was h—before that damn drunk bitch—before they had to put him nice and done up in that—that box. A pretty box for a pretty man. Before those people gave me *that* look. Before they made me put the first pile of dirt on that pretty box. Before they made me make him dirty.

“Cordelia, *ma chatounette*, I have something important to tell you. I want to let you know tha—” *He disappears mid-sentence*. My stomach is filled with frozen lead. I don’t see where he went. I *need* to know the rest of that sentence.

My desperation is instant, I *need* to find him. I chase after the shadows—into the safety of the office building. I *can’t* find him. My head whips in every direction I can think of so fast that I nearly give myself whiplash.

“He never really wanted to talk with you in the first place, idiot.”

“Seriously—why would he want to, ya know?”

“Shut up, I didn’t ask for your opinion.” They are just trying to distract me. Trying to keep me from him. I pull the paintings off the walls. There could be a secret door he went through. He was just *there*. He couldn’t have gone far.

“No, you shut up. He obviously hates you, you bitch. It’s your fault anyway.”

“No, it isn’t . . . It can’t be. I wasn’t the one driving.” The cushions fly off the furniture as my vision blurs.

“But you let him go out that night.”

“I wasn’t his mother; I couldn’t force him to stay.” The printer falls over on its side with a raucous thud.

“Let’s face facts here, *Kitten*, because you know it’s your fault.”

“How fucking dare you call me that. You—you have no right. Only *he’s* allowed to call me that.” I whip around to face them. They’re all ganging up against me tonight, and they are more real than I’ve ever seen them. I’ve only ever seen their shadows peeking from the corner of my eyes. If that. Now, they are flesh and blood. Vividly, definitely, touchably, undeniably real.

“You can’t deny it anymore.”

“He doesn’t want to see you.”

“It’s all your fault.” Maybe they’re right. The tears that had been hanging at the edge of my vision cascade down my cheeks like a torrential waterfall.

“SHUTUPSHUTUPSHUTUPSHUTUP!!!” I can’t take it a single second longer, and everything I’ve thrown at them in the span of what feels like an instant hasn’t affected them in the slightest. They won’t stop no matter how hard I try to make them.

Before I realize it, my voice is hoarse, and I wonder briefly how long I’d been screaming at them when the morning shifters walk in and freeze.

I lock eyes with Lindy, and that’s when it hit me, like a freighter into a crowd of people. I stayed the whole night. I destroyed the place. It’s all my fault. I fucked up. I can’t escape it. I might suffocate.

The voices have faces now, and I can’t stop telling them to leave, to shut up. I keep arguing. I *need* to see him again. I cling desperately to the argument as my coworkers pull me away from the trashed cubicle area. I don’t fight them. I’m so tired. Tears flood my

vision. I don't know what to do anymore. They're so *real*, but nobody can see them.

Lindy doesn't say anything as she pulls me to her chest. She doesn't need to. I was wrong. I stop screaming. I'm too tired. My voice has given out anyway. *He* says something I don't understand. It hurts too much, and the world fades to black as I pass out.

A week later, I was told I had a "psychotic break." They said it was due to trauma, that it stemmed from some form of depression that I had experienced in the wake of Sacha's death. I had undeniably developed a psychosis. Tearing furniture, ripping my nails out, not having periods wasn't my doing, or so they say. I suppose I could have tried harder to get help, but that wasn't guaranteed to have gotten me anywhere and I can't just turn back time to change what happened. I know that. I've been working hard to get better, but it is difficult. The voices may never go away, but I don't know how to feel about that either. Sacha isn't here with me anymore, and I don't know if I can keep going. Not when *his voice* is the one that keeps haunting me.

Dakota Mullikin

Beat of Love

Your sweet touch
Leaves lingering flames
Like an ever-burning beat

The morning comes and briefly feels too much
With your form enveloped by mine
A comfortable heat

The rains cascade against the rough
On the world outside that never dawns
The soft pounding of your heart, all the proof I need

Dakota Mullikin

I Almost Forgot

I almost forgot what the stars looked like
Tiny white specks across the indigo sky
Life gets so busy sometimes
I never stopped to look up
Truly admiring the chaotic beauty
Always hanging safely above

I almost forgot the feel of summer air
Driving with the windows down at night
My favorite songs blaring
I never took the time
To drive aimlessly on a still night
Following the winding roads

I almost forgot the sensation
That comes from the smallest touch
Like our shoulders brushing
A hand on the small of my back
Or the raw intimacy

Of a passionate embrace
I almost forgot how to live
To appreciate the smallest moments
Like looking at the stars
Night drives with no destination
And showing my affection
I almost forgot how
Until he showed me

Bear Cub



Harlan Mikesell

Old Tree



Harlan Mikesell

Lus Na Gréine



Samantha Maxfield

Dawn Redwood



Samantha Maxfield

Sunny Snowy Water



Samantha Maxfield

Black Meadows

The pearly gates
Shine before his eyes
Glittering like celestial gold
Held aloft under blackened sky

The ground quakes,
And heaven is denied,
The poor Crow sings an elegy
He spreads his wings, but never again to fly

He sees the lawn before,
Gloomy, black and gray
The Crow sips from the well of poison
And demons come out to play

The Jester strums a lonely tune,
From his gnarled pipe he smokes,
Beckoning to the Crow,
The Jester crafts a joke

“Oh black-feathered Crow,
why do you caw, so mournfully at the sky
Heaven’s but a grand facade,
An expert, laughing, lie.”

The Crow is silent,
Frightened of the Jester,
Chilled to bone with mortal fear
The Crow swiftly sequesters.

To hide away,
To seek the light,
The Crow, he runs,
Into blackened, eldritch, night

Demons all around,
Enemies abound,
He smells a sweet, sickly, scent
He hears a sweeter sound

A song sung in an ancient tongue,
In a dismal, forgotten, grove
Stood a young witch,
Chopping Garlic Clove by Clove

“You are the Crow, I see,
Feathers all in Black,
I’ve waited your arrival”
Her voice began to crack

“Come and rest your weary bones,
Snug inside my pot,
I’ve got some Cake to fatten you,
It’s respite you have sought.”

The hungry, weary, frightened Crow,
He perched inside her cauldron,
She cleaned his feathers, polished his beak
And rubbed his sore Pauldrons

“Are you thirsty, Master Crow,
I’ll draw you a fresh basin”
The Crow was briefly grateful,
But foresight made him hasten

Angry cackles behind,
Black Meadows before,
The Crow, forever a flightless bird,
Thinks of heaven no more.

Fallen to Pieces

Black and blue does not make purple.

I tried so hard, worked so hard, hoped so hard, and yet again, it wasn't
enough.

I pick up the broken pieces, like shards of glass ripping my chest open
because my skin isn't tough enough.

The scars from the previous times are still there. Maybe I'm finally
getting used to this.

Another day another heartbreak.

I sit and contemplate all my mistakes

But wait it's not over, the pain is just beginning.

As the face of agony is once again grinning

I've fallen to pieces again

Filling with regrets and

Hiding the secrets as

I fall to pieces again.

I'm starting over

When you try to fix this with glue, it never dries quick enough.

Try to nail it back together but the nails aren't thick enough.

Dried pine makes a cheap coffin for my still beating heart.

Blood gushes out of open veins.

I drink more poison of rye attempting to forget that day.

But as my vision goes double and my eyes go red I know the thoughts
won't go away.

The pain carries on for another day

I've fallen to pieces again

Filling with regrets and

Hiding the secrets as

I fall to pieces again.

I'm staring over

The fires in my eyes are lit by a weak spark.

The fire consumes me as I fight my feelings in the dark.

It's a struggle when the only thing to talk to is my own regret.

Tears run down my face as I realize prevention was the only thing that
could have saved me.

Wish I could turn back time to a better day

But it's too late now, I'm stuck with this pain.

There is nothing left to say

I've fallen to pieces again

Filling with regrets and

Hiding the secrets as

I fall to pieces again.

I fell too quickly again.

I'm starting over.

Isn't it funny how the joke is played on me again?

every room i'm in

I still look to see if it's you walking in the room.

Every room I'm in.

Any place I know you might be.

But it's never you.

I know you're gone indefinitely.

The Lost Girl, or The Girl in the Woods

Many eons ago, a people lived in the Great Woods. They lived off the land and always managed to get by with just enough, but times soon changed. With a shortage of food and the looming threat of the Crusaders from the south, the people chose to migrate to the north to join their cousins in the Snow realm. Their chief, who wanted a fresh start for his people, bade that one young woman be left behind. She had become pregnant out of wedlock, and the father of her child had been killed by a stray Crusader. She was left crying and screaming, the backs of her people fading into the distance. Months passed, but the child was not born. Not still, alive yet unborn. One year passed. Two years. She kept her child fed by gorging down raw greens and red meat. She hunted for her child, always feeding. Five years. Ten. Eventually, on the eleventh year since her people departed, the child, kept fed and safe for over a decade, was born. The mother, once again left behind, did not survive. But her child did, now a young girl. Her mother's efforts of eleven years were not spent in vain. She was alive. From a life in darkness to a vast world bathed in light, the girl was alone.

Many years later, a mother bear hunted for her cubs. She dragged the fresh kill to her young in the small clearing she left them in. It was to her surprise she saw the pale monkey, tailless and hairless, save for its head. It seemed to be dancing around and playing with her cubs. She barked a warning and the pale monkey locked eyes with her. It crouched with caution, which only helped to emphasize its already small stature. Then the mother bear noticed the blood on its mouth and the blood on the back leg of one of her cubs. She exploded into a frenzy, barking and roaring. The pale monkey shrieked and clambered off into the woods. The mother bear corralled her cubs and circled the clearing. Nothing. It was gone. She licked her cub's leg but found the fresh wound was not bleeding. Stranger still, her cubs seemed unafraid of the pale monkey. Her cubs nuzzled her, a reminder of her duty, and she dragged the fresh kill over for her cubs to feast on.

The year is 2014. I'm twelve years old and stuck with my parents in a dusty old antique gallery with knickknacks and neon signs arranged in the front window. Amos' Antiquities and Atypical Finds, the biggest building in a street lined with small businesses at the edge of a suburban neighborhood two hours away by car from our house. All for

stupid antiques. I weaved my way between the tight walkways lined with old pictures and posters of things I couldn't name.

"Don't get lost!" my mother joked. I shrugged, and my father gave me a disapproving look.

"Son, I know this isn't exciting for you, but—"

"That's an understatement," I said.

"BUT, if you just find someplace to sit or walk around, your mother and I will be done soon enough. Make sure to keep your phone on and be safe. 'kay?"

I grunted and walked away, doubting I could keep myself busy for the ungodly amount of time my parents would likely spend looking around. I weaved among the aisles, both ignoring and looking at the overpriced "antiques" for sale. I walked back and forth, in zig zags, in figure eights, even in circles. I closed my eyes and felt the wall and wooden shelves with my hands and began to walk. I knew it was dangerous, but that only made it exciting. My heart pounded as I listened for the sound of a vase breaking, then the angry voices of my parents. The angry voices of my parents. The excitement of the situation waned as I thought about it, and I opened my eyes. I found myself at a dead end, a few steps away from a shelf full of expensive

glassware. Relieved, I turned around to make my way back. A shadow. At the corner of the walkway, my ONLY way back. Black, dark. No eyes, but I could feel it . . . looking. It flashed in and out for a moment, slightly changing in posture each time it reappeared. I couldn't move. Fear gripped my chest in long, suffocating fingers.

“H-hello?” I whimpered.

The shadow rippled, and in its place, I saw a girl crouching, lonely, naked, her mouth spattered with blood. Despite my fright, I felt a twinge of pity.

“Hello?” I asked again.

She turned her head and locked eyes with me. They were like ice in color, and her pupils a deep swirling black. She rose to her feet. Then, a limping step forward. I edged a pace back. Another step, and I did the same. She lunged at me, and my body coiled and tightened. Tears ran from my eyes, but I was too afraid to scream. Shaking, I slowly forced my eyelids open and looked around. The girl was gone. I eased my tense muscles and raised my head. The dark shadow behind me struck, and I felt a searing pain in my shoulder.

When the dark faded and consciousness came flooding back, I found myself being rolled on a hospital bed down sterile beige

corridors surrounded by both panicked and solemn faces. My parents were by my side talking to me, but I couldn't hear them. Only a slight ringing in my ears. I softly shook my head to get it out, but it stayed. As we passed several doors on the way to the operating room, I saw the shadow in one of the empty doorways. It pointed with a child's hand as I passed, and I tried to sit up to see it, but the doctors shoved me back down on the bed just as the operating room doors burst open. My parents were ushered away as I was lifted onto the table. The glaring light above blinded me in suffocating white. The doctor had his back to me as he prepared his medical instruments; the others were gone. He slowly turned around and approached me with a needle in hand. Gray hair was neatly tucked beneath his cap, and his surgical mask hung below his chin, long and sharp. As he brought the needle down to my exposed arm, his face . . . changed. It sparked, misted, then faded, revealing a face so terrifying my blood ran cold. The chipped teeth opened and clattered, broken laughter erupting across a forked tongue. I screamed and shoved the needle away. He laughed harder and brought the needle back. I flailed, punched, and kicked. The doctor tried to hold me down, but I shoved him with all my strength. His back hit the medical cabinet behind him, and the wall shuddered. The glare

of the overhead light shone off the needle, now protruding from his chest. He stumbled toward me and fell, and his head hit the tiled floor with a sickening crack. I peered over the edge of the table, and everything went black.

I found myself being rolled on a hospital bed down sterile beige corridors and . . . I had been here. Or had I? My shoulder ached. The wound was painful but didn't seem to bleed much. My parents spoke softly, and I could hardly hear them over my ringing head. My mother took my hand, kissed it, and said something. It was infuriating me that I couldn't hear her. I sat up. The doctors had gone. My mother kissed my hand again.

"I love you," she said, and walked away as she dabbed at her eyes.

"Mom, I—" I tried to speak to her but the doctors' firm hands pushed me back down on the bed. As I was shuttled along to the operating room, the girl that disappeared at the antique shop climbed onto the rolling bed and sat in front of my feet.

"Hey!" I yelled weakly.

She either couldn't hear me or didn't want to, but I was shushed by the doctors. They couldn't see her. She climbed off as I was lifted

onto the operating table and circled me as the doctors prepared. She passed her hand over my eyes when she walked by. The other doctors were now gone, save for the one at the medical cabinet. The doctor tucked her loose black hair under her cap and pulled the surgical mask over her tight square face. As she readied the needle, her eyes shifted from green to yellow to a horrible bright red. Blood leaked from the corners of her eyes, and she raised the needle with both hands over head. Her forehead wrinkled, and just as she began to bring her hands down, preparing to slam the needle into my chest, the girl walked past my head and nonchalantly touched the doctor's shoulder. It trembled and wavered, and the doctor faded into mist before the needle reached me. The girl then approached me, placing her hand upon my head. I shut my eyes and tensed, but found I was still there, alive and solid. She stroked my head and smiled, acting like a parent comforting her child. Her barren icy eyes pierced me, but I forced myself to look back into them. Tears streamed down my face, but still I kept my focus. The girl seemed pleasantly surprised, despite her unearthly appearance. She leaned over me and kissed my forehead, at the same time slipping something into my hand. She raised herself, then turned her back to me and left through the operating room's swinging doors. I sat

up too fast and my head pulsed sharply. I screamed in pain and blacked out.

I was back on the bed, coursing and rolling, pushed fast by solemn doctors. My head was ringing and striking, so much so that I could hardly stay conscious. My mother said something, but I was too focused enduring the pain to listen. My father patted my shoulder, the good one, with his large hand.

“It’ll all be okay, son,” he crooned. “We’ll take care of ya, real good.”

Before I could question his oddly clear voice, his hand slithered from my shoulder to my neck and began to squeeze tight, then tighter. I looked at my father. His careworn face looked reluctant, then it broke, crunched, bulged, morphed, transformed. I screamed and convulsed, but all sound was blocked by the hand around my throat. Laughter that sounded like the screeching of broken glass came from my father’s changed face, it rolled over forked tongues and through dripping, yearning saliva. My mother didn’t notice my panicked face, her eyes always darted away at the last second. The doctors remained concerned with themselves, hair both black and gray tucked under caps. I was trapped, losing oxygen bit by bit. I tried moving but hardly

had the strength. Just as I began to give up, my hand felt warm and grew warmer. Time seemed to slow as I opened it, revealing a long string of ancient beads. As I raised it for a better look, the hand around my throat grew tighter and the hideous laughter became determined. I suddenly recalled the girl in flashes painted through my empty mind: her icy eyes, the beads tucked in my hand, the doctor crying blood and fading into mist, the other with his changed face and the needle in his chest. In a surge of insight and adrenaline, I shoved the beads into my father's changed face. He released my throat and tried pushing me away, but I pushed back harder, more focused. I wrapped the beads around his neck and pulled. His eyes bulged as the beads shone with a steady orange light. What were once the clothes and skin of my father faded and peeled away, revealing the form of a hideous creature. I yelled and pulled once more, the creature reared back, choking. The beads flashed with a brilliant light, then all hushed to darkness.

I woke in a hospital bed, one silent and still. The bed next to me was empty. I had the room to myself. The midnight moon shone through the thin curtains and caressed my side of the room with light. I rested my head, letting out silent tears of relief. I took a deep breath and scanned the room just as the shadow in the corner began to move.

I sat up not knowing what to do. I was confused, scared, but mostly wary. The shadow belonged with the girl, or did it not? I shook the questions from my head, simply finding solace in the absence of doctors. The shadow now stood at the end of my bed and I was certain I could feel its gaze. With a slow arm, it pointed to the small table at my bedside. My phone, resting upon it, rang. “Unknown” said the caller ID. I cautiously picked it up and answered as I brought it to my ear. I didn’t so much *hear* it as I could *feel* what the voice said.

It spoke softly. “I am the Lost Girl, born at the age of eleven. I take one bite when I might take more. I am not malevolent, yet I must feed. And feed I have. I approached you, for you had kindness in your soul. And for your kindness, I delivered those beads.”

The shadow pointed at my hand. I opened it, finding the old string of beads that had been wrapped around the neck of a creature, this time without a shining light.

“Th-thank you,” I said, then realized how stupid it sounded.

The shadow flickered and the girl appeared in its stead, alone, lost, naked. Her icy eyes met mine. The corners of her mouth raised to form a smile, a true smile, a word she didn’t know. The girl walked into the moonlight and faded into mist. I stared into the darkness, feeling a

mixture of relief and . . . sadness. Before I could dwell on it further, my parents burst into the room and rushed to my side. My mother hugged me tightly and kissed my head.

“I’m so sorry!” she cried. “I shouldn’t have left you alone. But you’re safe now, and we’re here, right?”

She looked to my father. His careworn face trembled as he began to cry.

“Right. We’re here now,” he said as he hugged my mother and me, bringing us close. I let go of my emotions and cried with them, relieved my father and mother were here, relieved I was safe. I hugged them as tightly as I could, ignoring the sharp pain in my shoulder.

For I was saved by the Lost Girl, born at the age of eleven. She took one bite when she could have taken more. She lived in the Great Woods, which was now a suburban neighborhood filled with trendy antique shops. I may have forgotten her since, but the beads she gave me never left my side. And I was safe.

The End.

Thomas Ellison

Pocket Sized

He likes me tiny,
tiny like he can shove me into a small box,
where my cheeks are squished between my knees,
he likes me to fit within his pocket.

I have gotten close with
his car keys
his cherry flavored chapstick
his spare change
and his lint

he likes me pocket sized
so small and so bent
so quiet and
so ordinary
I have become so close to everything
tiny enough to reside here
everything except
him

Shelby Gordon

Mother Knows Best

With icy blue veins
glazed over eyes,
mouth the color of copper,
and dime sized scabs
she smiles and tells me
“everything’s fine”
I know it isn’t
but I lie back and act
like nothing has changed
but the food within the fridge is near its death bed
the lights have been turned off twice this month
I have never been scared of the dark
but lately you stay up past midnight cleaning and
doing laundry
that never seems to get done

I’m never quite sure what’s really going on
I want to tell you
that I have seen this before

Unlike an Etch A Sketch

I can't erase this memory of you that haunts me

About five years old

we came home

I, holding my father's hand

not even sure what I had seen

but you were slumped over the couch

jet black hair

a white rubber band around your arm

your eyes twitching

the whites of them exposed

your mouth slightly parted

a quiet groan

my father's large hand pushing me behind him and back out the door

I can't remember what words were being screamed

or maybe they were uttered

as if this has happened before

I remember seeing my father cry
sleeping in motels for weeks on end
and then I don't remember seeing you
not for a while

but this memory haunts me
because now I know what happened
I can't say I blame you though,
your broken heart only feels fixed
when that feeling of euphoria finally hits
But some days I want to scream right in your face
that you have us, your kids
and
maybe that's not enough anymore
but what would I know anyways,
mother always knows best.

Only for Him

I wish every feeling I felt, had a word to describe it

The physical pain my heart endures as it's being crushed by a man
whose hands were too rough to hold it.

The moment right before my eyes swell up with water, where my nose
begins to run and my body begins to itch.

These moments, so powerful yet indescribable hold my tongue hostage.

I don't remember how I got to this point, where my words fail me and I
let myself become a puppet to some master who has no right to
control me.

He only cares about the views, how I make him look.

He cares about who he can attract to the show.

And his audience look at me with eyes of pity
but say nothing as he grabs me by my strings before I start to speak.

I wish I knew what it felt like to be free.

To say words,

mean them,

pronounce every letter.

I wish my tongue would learn to speak a language
so sharp and diligent
so profound
so assertive.

Instead, I sit at his feet,
ready for him to tell me what I must do next to please him.

I've done this for so long now,
it hardly feels like a show.
I am no longer stage fright.
I am a girl,
his favorite doll,
his puppet,
his.

Love Is a Good Shade of Vermillion

The carpetbaggers are burgeoning in the vagabond spirits of bourgeois
buffoonery

a little more, a little more they say as you work your soul away
in the hopes that when you come to collect, they'll be long gone, lost
not at sea but lost to the oceanic views they inhabit.

For a pauper, it's not enough to be poor, he must be proper poor
noble and respectable with unfathomable pride

paying the bills he can on time in the time he can – Enough! I say
when will we stand in the streets in solidarity instead of waiting on

zealots and oil tycoons to tell us what our deaths will be like?

When will we master our politics to where our politicians listen to the
paupers instead of the man in the corner with a checkbook and
underaged girls?

When will our government learn to fear its people? When will our
government learn to fear itself?

When will our government fulfill its promise that I will one day live on
the moon?

I wish Washington would fuck itself with a nuclear bomb but then I
have to worry about radioactive fallout

my tongue growing green with leaves and the ground becoming snakeskin
the birds overhead squawking frogs, turtledoves dropping like hail.

Did you know we are the only country to use a weapon of mass
destruction? and they say you have to go to Iraq Afghanistan
Syria to find terrorists.

Quick! Make haste! We must run! for our lives let's head West
those people seem friendly and laid back and all that open space with
mountains of backbone, canyons to the core – wowee!

Oh no – let's head North where the air's so crisp you can feel ice
growing in your lungs

and hear the shattering of a million microscopic icicles with each
exhalation of white fog

or South! where the tea grows thick and the air hangs like hammocks
on the front porch

anywhere I'd say East but then there's nothing but cliff notes and
Amish folk

anywhere I'd say as long as it's somewhere far enough away and wide
enough to hold us.

We'll stand naked in a field of poppy seeds with milkshakes by our
sides, growing fat and sick but of our own accord.

We'll watch each sunset tuck away behind our ears grow close and die
withered and transparent.

On a Day Like This One

Trees bare against the rain and I fight back tears

For I will never be as beautiful.

Pinks and purples fall in drops to reflect back from where they came.

I step softly so to not disturb the pools of mirrors and lean back against
the sweating stones.

On a day like this one

Everyone is dreary

Everything is bleak

But the flags dance full-bodied to shake off the wetness

And I, too, am flailing

Although with less grace

But effective all the same.

Today the rain will not get me.

I will exist within the prisms like walls of a cave.

I will duck the clouds and spoon nimbus into my throat until I spew
sustenance.

I am the fire inside a warm cabin with the roof blown off.

I will not extinguish

Only smoke

Until all that is left is the outline of what was once seen so clearly.

A black mass moving steadfast and forward

Until I am everywhere

Drawing with each breath a choking cough and watery vision

To be swept away with the first large gust that moves low enough.

Intimate Pages

You browse from your screen
And tap to see it closer
I walk slowly along the wall
And pull it down to look
You tap the corner
In order to read further
I gently caress the corner
And flip the page over
Your electronics detach you
From the intimate pages
You cannot smell the paper
Because you refuse to—
Afraid to get a paper cut
Go on, charge it for later
I already grabbed another book
To lose myself in
You see, technology kills
My soul is alive
When I can feel the pages

Within the palms of my hands
Unable to be stopped
By an umbilical cord
That feeds energy to your machine
I will hold onto my books
Building a bookshelf
Lined with memories
Of characters, poets, life

Brooke Jackson

My Last Poem

If you were the last poem I ever wrote
I would devote my time
To a dictionary and thesaurus
My shoulders draped over them
My eyes scanning every word
Making sure I found the ones
That perfectly described
The feeling and emotion
I would finally write
My first rough draft
Because if you were my last
I would want that poem
To be raw, deep, and perfect
I would not settle
On the second-best adjective
Because you deserve
All the best words
That I come across
And if you were the last poem

I could ever write
I would devote my time
To get every word right

Brooke Jackson

The Pen

What a thing it would be
To be the pen in a writer's hand
To see them and their emotions
When they feel inspired
Giving life to their ideas
As you slowly die
A beautiful death
Giving your all to them
Grasping the time shared
Before the last breath
The last drop of ink to give
Giving life to their thoughts
Knowing that with each thought,
You die a little more
Giving away your ink
To support their dreams
What a thing it would be
To die a slow death
Capturing a writer's life

With the ink you give away
Recording every emotion
Whether it be joy or peace
Heartbreak or agony
Curiosity or confusion
Frustration or anxiety

Biographies and Artist Statements

Abigail Alderdice

Abigail Alderdice graduated from IUPUC in May of 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts in English literature. In addition to *Talking Leaves*, she is also published in the weekly newspaper *The Brown County Democrat*, where she is the news and advertising coordinator. Writing has been a longtime passion throughout her life.

Thomas Ellison

Artist Statement on “The Lost Girl, or The Girl in the Woods”: a young boy dragged along with his parents on an antique-hunting adventure encounters a spirit with a tragic past. Their meeting devolves into unexpected chaos in which the boy must survive.

Shelby Gordon

Shelby Lee Marie Gordon submitted her work as a sophomore at Indiana University-Purdue University of Columbus. She is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in English and a minor in gender studies, with the hope to one day join the Peace Corps in an effort to teach

young underprivileged children the art, passion, and fulfillment of writing creatively. She enjoys free verse and prose poems as a way to express societal issues such as sexuality, identity, social class, love, and addiction in an effort to break down barriers of taboo topics.

Joshua Holycross

Josh Holycross has been published in *Blue Lake Review* and *Talking Leaves*. He is an English major with a concentration in creative writing and is set to graduate in the spring of 2020 as long as the Good Lord is willing and the creeks don't rise. Whatever that means. He heard it once and it stuck. Upon graduation, he will likely put his creative writing degree to good use by delivering propane or doing something that allows him to collect images throughout the day.

Brooke Jackson

These poems are my heartbeat. My trauma, my falling, my getting back up, and above all else, they are my truth. I am introverted, intuitive, feeler, and perceiver.

Stevie Jarrett

Stevie Jarrett mixes elements of the Western ethos, horror, and heavy metal to create worlds of spirituality and the question of human existence.

Brig Lykins

Brig is an English major whose writing generally focuses on dark somber topics. He often intertwines his work with social commentary in hopes to inspire others. When he's not writing, he's likely to be found at the gym.

Samantha Maxfield

Artist Statement on “Dawn Redwood”: I chose this picture because I liked that the viewer is super-close to the tree. This was taken when I first started photography in school.

Artist Statement on “*Lus Na Gréine*”: I took this on a rainy fall day. I like how there is a level of symmetry on the left and the right and still a focal point in the middle. I also liked how I used the rule of thirds along the line between the sky and the tops of the flowers.

Artist Statement on “Spring Blossoms”: While on a walk, I stopped to take a picture of this tree. I thought that the branch had so much character within its twists and turns.

Artist Statement on “Sunny, Snowy Water”: I really liked the contrast between the light-colored snow and the dark bark on the tree. I also liked the symmetry of the background in the water.

Harlan Mikesell

Harlan Mikesell is a junior at IUPUC pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering. He enjoys photography and photo-editing in his free time.

Zak Miller

Artist Statement on “every room i’m in”: I want this piece to reflect how I hold on to love, even when I know it won't be back.

Dakota Mullikin

Dakota Mullikin's work delves into fantasy worlds and enigmatic Japanese tropes and sensibilities. Her desire is to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western writing as well as to draw attention to

the link between reality and fantasy. She enjoys the company of Japanese postwar writers, specifically Osamu Dazai who has been an ever-present inspiration. Dakota was published previously in the 2018 and 2019 editions of *Talking Leaves*.

Zeke Raymer

Zeke Raymer is a junior at IUPUC studying psychology and English literature with plans to study environmental law after graduation. He is a tutor in the Academic Resource Center, as well as a teaching assistant to Dr. Siefker-Bailey. In his spare time, he enjoys running his own games of Dungeons & Dragons, powerlifting, boxing, and political discussion/activism.

Corden Simmonds

Corden Scott Stein Simmonds, IUPUC student, has never published any of his poetry before. He has been writing poetry and song lyrics for close to a decade now and finally decided to enter some of his work to *Talking Leaves*. Fall of 2017 was the first semester he let others read any of his poetry, and he now realizes he is better at it than he

previously thought. He will continue writing poetry and songs at his leisure and hopefully one day publish many of them.

Lyndsey Wolfe

Lyndsey Wolfe is a junior at IUPUC pursuing a B. A. in English with concentrations in both literature and creative writing. Lyndsey is passionate about women's studies, in which she is seeking a minor, and currently serves as the vice president of IUPUC's Feminism Club.

Lexi York

Lexi York is a Seymour native. She is a communication studies major with a minor in creative writing. Although she is passionate about writing, she also enjoys performing on stage, either in plays or musically. Lexi hopes to obtain a future career in journalism.

