



# The Aerie

Volume 14, Spring 2013

# aer·ie

also aer·y (âr'e, îr'e) n. pl.-ies

1. The nest of an eagle or other predatory bird built on a crag or other high place
  2. A house or stronghold built on a height
  3. The literary and arts publication of Concordia University, Irvine
- [Med. Lat. aera < OF.aire.]

# The Aerie

*Concordia University's Literary and Arts Publication*  
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*The Aerie* is an annual journal which showcases work being done in creative writing and art by Concordia University Irvine students, alumni, faculty and staff. In addition, it provides students from both the English and Art departments a hands-on experience working collaboratively to produce a quality literary and arts journal. Students are involved in every aspect of the production from the call for submissions, to the selection of creative work and the design of the journal. The publication of *The Aerie* is made possible with funding from the Office of the Provost.

**Untitled**  
Acrylic  
Sabrina Martinez



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## Flowers Appear on the Earth

*See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.  
Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come.*  
Song of Solomon 2:11-12

The rains are all over and gone  
and we are sprouting from the rocky ground  
not "springing"  
like it's easy, no -  
we are pressing  
through the rot  
and death  
and shaking all that dust off our faces,  
lifting chins and fists  
to the listening sky  
and singing.  
And not every song is light -  
some are heavy as the ground that kept us under,  
but our tendrils have grown strong enough  
to thrust them up regardless;  
we are singing.  
We are singing that the rains are gone  
the rains that held us down  
and nearly drowned us,  
only now,  
we suck them up as sustenance.  
It makes no sense  
but it's beautiful!  
We are singing of the pain of waking.  
Oh, how numb we'd grown in death,  
our seedy shells protecting us from everything uncomfortable,  
but we rejected that.  
We cracked ourselves in half  
and faced the pain of germination,  
reaching for the sting of wind awaiting us above the surface,  
and for what?  
Well, maybe we're all crazy,  
cause we still can't quite explain it,  
but there's something so sublimely good  
in singing to the sun that shines upon us...  
So if we turn back to the dirt and pain,  
it's only long enough to thank them,  
cause we could never  
have been flowers  
til we faced them.

Elizabeth Rhea  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Lonely Growth**

*Photo Manipulation*

Anne Skowron



**Town Life**  
*Charcoal and Pastel*  
Stephanie Fittler



## I Will Go

*Esther 4:16*

Cousin, do not foster thoughts of danger --  
My oil-soaked skin creates a cloud of perfume;  
God grant it may shield my neck from a knife.  
My decadent robe drapes past gleaming anklets;  
God grant it may hide my trembling knees.

Find our people, command the fast;  
they shall not eat  
                                        or drink  
                                                        or sleep.

And I, too, and my maidservants fair,  
we shall not eat  
                                        or drink  
                                                        or sleep.

But on our knees, sunk in carpets of Persian thread,  
for our people's safety, for protection from annihilation,  
we      will      pray.

Cousin, then I will sweep softly over marble;  
I will go without a summons to that terrible throne,  
God grant the King, my husband, feels my love.  
As I stand, a forbidden female, in the ivory court,  
God grant the King will hear my people's plea.

And if the King is selfish with his scepter  
and orders my neck to feel the knife,  
still I will not fall,  
                                        or scream,  
                                                        or faint.

For I have prayed to the Lord my God,  
and I know the Lord is  
by      my      side.

Gretchen Sheetz  
*Free-Verse Poetry*

## Icarus's Ascent

It never mattered if I fell.  
If I failed  
    *When* I failed,  
I would already have achieved  
    My foolish goal:  
    A kiss from Fire,  
Briefly mingling my mortal soul  
    With that eternal temptation.  
I never wanted to touch the sun  
    Only to say I've been burned.  
And though I am beyond recognition,  
    Rains of ashes brushed off  
    By more innocent hearts,  
        I am peace.  
And for one brief moment,  
    I was fire.

Andrea Hawkins  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



### Schizophrenia

*Photoshop*  
Andy Zanca

## Mars Landing

The irrefutable pull  
of this former fleck of light,  
this ancient god,  
this brother-world,  
makes evident  
the insignificance  
of my own  
small  
gravity.

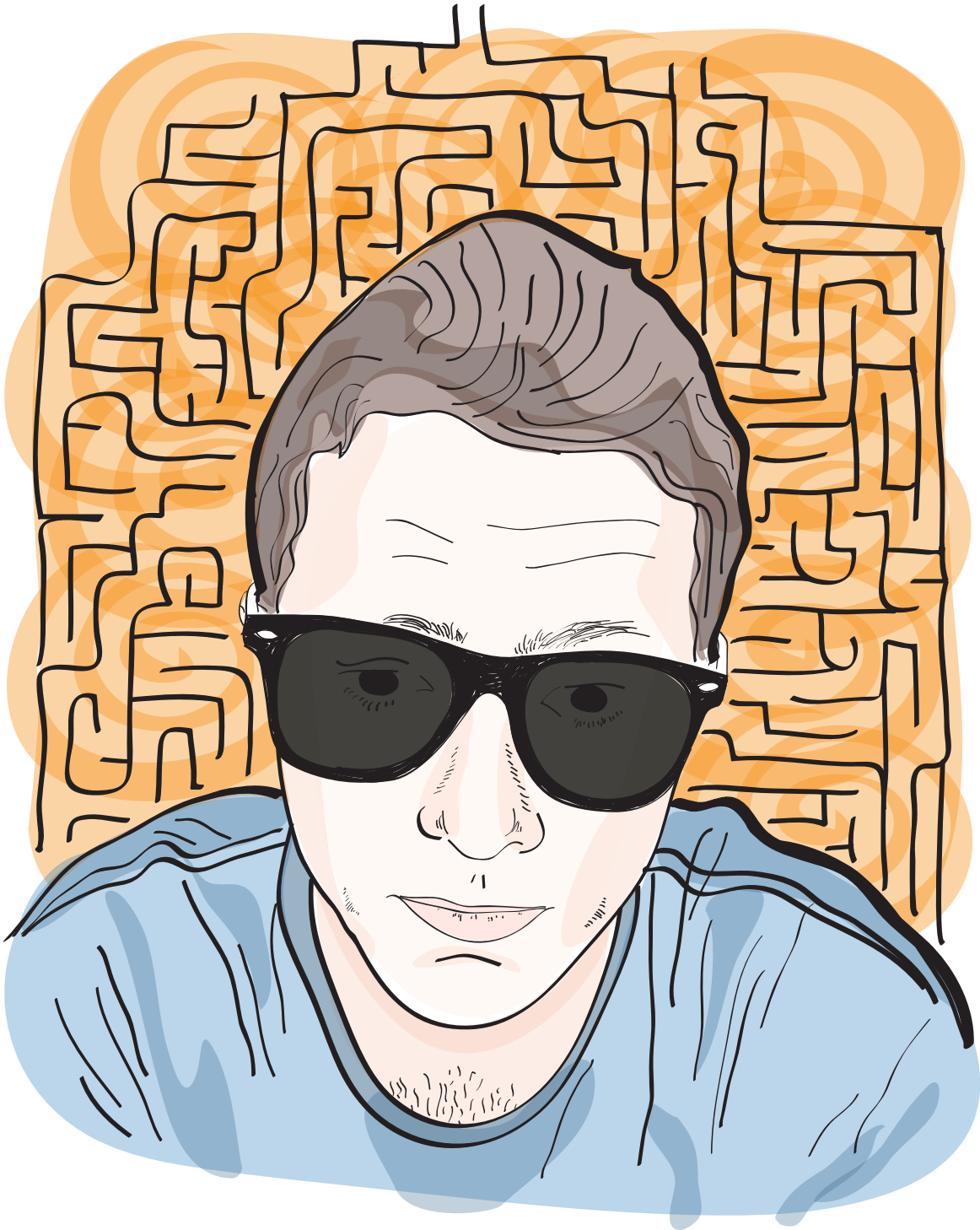
The acid contours of this place  
stretch to form horizon,  
redder than the first light of creation,  
redder than the blood in the veins  
of the life they hoped to find here.

All is silence  
save the violent flutter  
of descent--  
no familiar air to tear me to pieces,  
only acrid vapors  
that would rust me the color of this place,  
were I of weaker composition.

Light and dark divide themselves upon the surface:  
rocks appear,  
and rivulets;  
no tracks of those who came before--  
no one came before.

Mountains rise--  
Engines fire--  
Metal braces--  
Impact.

Elizabeth Rhea  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**I'm Complicated**

*Illustrator*

Justin Hodges

## The Truth About Forever

My father believes that the moment we die is not only the exact moment of the end of our presence on Earth, but the end of our existence completely. Like a light switch, our life is turned on one second and then off the next. My mother however, is a devout Catholic, and so was I until I was old enough to understand the severity of her schizophrenia. That's when I began to question religion. I didn't want to follow blindly in the beliefs of someone who spent most of her adult life in a psych ward.

I would frequently ask people why they believed in God and I would constantly get the same answer in so many words: "It's what I was taught to believe." Coming into Concordia, I was adamantly against religion. Until I came here, I had never asked myself, "Why don't I believe in God?" I could only come up with one answer: it's what I was taught not to believe.

When I applied to Concordia, my stepmom surprisingly told me that she was brought up Lutheran. This was the same stepmom who had the "Under God" part taken out of their wedding vows. Surprised, I pried. She told me that she had never considered herself religious. Catechism was more like an after-school activity her family put her through, like piano lessons. She went through the communion process and as was usual, when she finished communion, she was interviewed by a priest before she was confirmed. The priest asked her, "Why do you believe in God?" She thought about it for a minute, and unsure of how to answer honestly, she replied, "Because sometimes I think there's nothing else to believe in." The priest sat back in his chair with an almost shocked look on his face. She immediately knew that it was the wrong answer. He told her this was the best answer he had ever heard. It was the best answer I had ever heard too.

This made me question the motives behind my mother's beliefs. The last time I visited her, I asked her why she believed in God. She licked her chapped lips and replied, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord. 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.' Jeremiah 29:11." It was the most coherent response I had ever gotten out of her.

Recently, I went through a very difficult time. My life felt like a pearl necklace. When the thin string broke that held the pearls together, the whole necklace fell apart. For once, I found myself rummaging through Bible passages instead of just literature. As an English major, the first thing you're taught is to never use clichés, but I always believed that everything happens for a reason. Up until this point, that was the closest I had come to believing in anything.

People argue that turning to religion at a time of need is like befriending Steve Jobs, the nerd you made fun of in high school, after Apple took off. However, I believe that there is no better time.

I still can't allow myself to use a cliché and say that, "I found God." I still like to think that our lives aren't planned. That the decisions we make, make a difference. That there's no such thing as soul-mates, luck, good or bad, or fate. However, lately I have found it nice to believe that what we do on this Earth has a purpose, and that after we go, the knowledge that we have acquired won't be for nothing.

If you were to ask me if I believe in God, I would say sometimes I think there's nothing else to believe in.

Melissa Hobson  
*Creative Nonfiction*

## Law of Love Incarnate

“Three...two...one!”

I stuck my arm underneath the right arm of the Indian man and lifted. My friend Jim did the same on his other side. The man let out a loud scream and dug his nails into my arm. I grimaced, but continued to tug and pull on the man, all while he kicked and yelled.

Our objective was to move this man from where he was sitting, the laundry area, into the restroom/shower area. I was serving at Kalighat, a home of Mother Teresa's, where the destitute and dying lay. This man, who had just arrived an hour ago, was neither dead nor dying. In fact, this man was very active as he continued yelling and grabbing hold of various objects to further prevent Jim and myself from getting him to his destination.

We finally got him into the restroom and pushed him to the floor. I, at this point, had no idea why I was doing this or why he was so against moving into the restroom. All I recalled was Jim bringing me over to this man's side and saying in his British accent, “On the count of three we are going to lift this man and move him into the restroom. He will not like it. He will likely kick and scream and yell and may even hit you. Do not under any circumstances let him go. Three...two...one!” I, of course, was startled but did what he said because Jim gets his orders directly from Sister Florentine, and she gets hers straight from God.

Sister Florentine is not someone to pick a fight with. As far as nuns go she is pretty tough. She is a large, dark-skinned sister, who lays down the law with her patients. She of course does this with a sharp tone, but also with a smile and with love. She takes a desperate situation and smiles it away. When she moves, she treads on the ground in her blue and white sari. She is incredibly intimidating but also incredibly patient and kind.

Sister Florentine arrived. She entered the room through the curtain holding two large syringes in her hand. For a moment all of us, even the man doing the yelling, fell silent. All three of us looked up from the bathroom floor and stared at the needles. The man, realizing that these were likely intended for him, began his fight once again. The sister turned to me and said, “Hold him still.” I continued to try to hold him down, but with little success. The sister took the first needle and jabbed it into the man's arm. He yelped. She injected whatever was inside the syringe into his body and tossed the needle aside. She then took the next long point of the syringe, found a similar spot in his arm, stuck him, and emptied the fluid, before throwing the needle across the room.

“Take his clothes off,” she said as she stared down upon the three of us. First I made a motion for the man's shirt; he bit me. The sister pushed his face away from my arm while motioning me to get out of the way. Then Jim took initiative and made a motion for the man's shirt. He got slapped away. Finally, Sister Florentine, weary of the man taking advantage of her volunteers, pushed both of us aside and stood over top of the man. He looked up and for the first time I saw him realize that this was not someone he should have messed with.

Sister reached down and grabbed the man's shirt collar. She then tore the shirt right down the middle; a button flew off and hit me in the chest. I recall the sound of the cloth tearing and shreds

of thread fraying from the shirt. She pulled off his necklace before pushing him to the floor. He tried to crawl away but this only worked as a disadvantage as she used the momentum to help pull off his pants and undergarments. She then grabbed him by the leg and dragged him back to the center of the room.

She took a bottle of soap and poured it over top his head, immediately followed by a bucket of water. There he sat, naked and wet, his ripped clothes to one side, and syringes to the other. She then began her work on his wrapped foot. She began unwinding the layers of the bandage. First the mesh vegetable bag that he had used as a makeshift cast. Then, she began working on the next layer until I finally understood why we were so intent on getting him care. His foot, finally exposed, revealed a gruesome sight.

The first thing I noticed was his bone. The next thing I saw was the decay and discoloration of the flesh on the foot. During my time in India I had seen gangrene but this made me nauseous. She immediately went to work on his foot. She took a bar of soap and began scrubbing directly onto the bone. He in turn moved to the fetal position and began screaming and yelling. I was frozen as I watched what appeared to be a nun torturing a naked Indian man. "Put water here," she told me. I obeyed taking a small bucket of water and dumping it onto the open wound. Pieces of flesh fell off. She started scrubbing again. My focus was split between the screams and shaking of the man and the fact that this sister did not seem to be letting up. She grabbed the rough end of a sponge and started going again. I kept to my job, dumping the water onto the wound.

After an eternity had passed, all was quiet. The man continued to shake and shiver on the floor. The sister stood up quietly. She did not look weary at all. She adjusted her sari and began to walk out of the room. She turned and said, "Get him dressed then bring him to me."

I looked down at the man. The tranquilizers had taken effect and he was unconscious. We propped him up and dressed him in the hospital-like Kalighat clothes. We then carried him into the infirmary. We laid him out on the bed as the sister prepared a sterile wrap for his foot. The sister began to laugh.

Jim turned to her and said, "Superb job as always, Sister."

She smiled back at him. "He really put up big fight, didn't he, Jim."

"He put up enough of a fight for all of us," I interjected.

She turned to me and smiled. The next thing to come out of her mouth would impact my entire time in India. It would change the way I think about life and death. It would prey on my mind constantly. She laughed heartily and told me to go home, but not before saying, "That's because love isn't easy. Love is a battle."

Trenton Semple  
*Creative Non-fiction*

## Reflection on the Sea

Sometimes my eyes are the color of the sea,  
a melancholy mix of jade, sapphire, grey.  
Longing grasps my heart, causing pain  
as if a stray seashell has pierced my foot.

Sometimes I taste the sadness of the sea,  
a salty combination of sweet tears, reflecting  
shores of memory and faded photographs,  
sepia-toned faces that were present then.

Sometimes I sink deep into the sea,  
the murky liquid fast becomes a blanket  
of coolness to surround my aching body;  
it drowns my distress and anxious thoughts.

Sometimes I listen softly to the sea,  
catching strains of mermaid music,  
melodies rising on foam formations,  
interspersed with whispers from ocean floor.

Sometimes my tears are the sea,  
crashing, pounding, day after day  
becoming sorrow before releasing songs  
of harbored anguish suddenly made calm.

Sometimes I am the sea.

Gretchen Sheetz  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



## Universe

The **U**,  
like the back of an open dress,  
Is an abyss as deep and dark as the secrets the wearer possesses.  
The **n**, once proud and strong reaching for the star of the **i**,  
now bends over,  
for the weight of the world has worn him down.  
The **v**, a heart incomplete,  
Stands surrounded in the universe but still feels alone.  
**e** tries to find his long lost brother -  
he makes a noise in his attempt, while his brother stays silent.  
Asking many questions,  
**r** leans in to hear the secrets of **s**,  
who can't decide which way to look at the world.  
Some days she's up;  
others she's down.  
Every day she twists her body to find the true meaning of our universe.

Audrey McKay  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Star Struck**  
*Pen and Ink*  
Elizabeth Hyde

## Burglar

It would have been like any other morning except that having my mom as your mom was never like any other morning she was convinced that that there was someone after us someone hiding in the bushes someone lurking in the shadows someone trying to find something out about us that we didn't want them to know someone that was there that she could see someone that I could not see she called the police and they came I swung back and forth and back and forth on my swing-set I know what she was telling them she was telling them that a man was here she saw him in the bushes I had heard this story many times before it was sort of like a story to me because I had never seen him but she said that he was there and she was my mom so why wouldn't I believe her she said that he was there so I looked for him and thought that I saw him a few times but it turned out to be a shadow or the neighbor's dog the neighbor's dog that would come into our house steal loaves of bread off of our counter and bring it back to his owner's house only hours later for our neighbors to bring back the bread and a new loaf with several apologies I really liked that dog his name was Nelson his name was Nelson until he was no longer around to bark at the bottom of the tree when we were having our secret girl no boys allowed tree house without the house meeting lucky for me being an only child would have been very lonely without all the friends I had on the street the police came and went quicker than they usually do my dog escaped from the gate and ran towards the tree we were in across the street we had made a bucket lift for instances like this she was a Yorkshire Terrier so she was only a few pounds we attached a bucket to a jump rope she would hop in the bucket and we would hoist her up she was a she so she was allowed my mom came over and told us about the intruder and that the police weren't going to help her so we had to catch him ourselves this was the best part of the day make-believe that we didn't know was make-believe we changed into all black even though it was barely getting dark we climbed on top of the slide in my back yard where we had the ability to see the yard while still being able to hide behind the pillars of the monkey bars we saw a shadow moving in the bushes or thought we saw a shadow or were told we saw a shadow or wanted to see a shadow so we ran over to the ivy and walked slowly through it holding sticks out for protection my mom was shouting at us to be careful it was like pretending to be a police officer I felt something warm on my foot my only black shoes were not closed toe and they were not my shoes at all but my mom's sandals I looked down but saw nothing but ivy so I moved my foot up so I could get a better look I screamed at the top of my lungs and my mom came running it was half-alive and bloody and had no tail and 1 ½ ears its left eye was missing it was a rat I shook it off my foot and ran out of the ivy my mom hosed off my feet and the gate slammed I usually heard the car but I was so entranced I must have missed it my dad's stern voice felt like it echoed as he scolded my mom I always remember every time this happened which was often that he would threaten to get a babysitter instead tell her she's irresponsible he would yell for a long time before we could go I waited in the car for most of this one I opened the door slightly picked up my dog and waited.

Melissa Hobson  
*Creative Nonfiction*

## Silver-Wrapped Symphony

The fudge conducted a symphony in my mouth.  
It started low and sweet as I savored it  
and crescendoed to a great fudgy forte.  
The flavor floated down my throat at *adagio*  
and lingered like the residue of a note.  
Every bite was legato and every walnut I crunched, *staccato*.  
One more bite, a final crescendo, and then silence,  
for sadly, fudge symphonies have neither applause nor *fermatas*.

Katherine Dubke  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Crane Duet**  
*Graphite and Colored Pencil*  
Rebecka Chang



**30 Pounds**  
Watercolor  
Anne Skowron

# The Seven Deadly Steaks

## Lust

Click. Click. Click. My feet hit against the cool iron of my cart as I stare. Entranced, my body moves, slithering through the aisles to your beauty. Luscious and thick you sit, body constricted by the horrid, plastic bondage that the store forcibly packs you in. I could tear through that god-awful restraint now and have you all to myself. Oh, the things I would do to you if I brought you home with me. Sauté, slice, simmer, or stir-fry and your succulence would be all mine. T-Bone, your very name makes my insides groan, throat moisten, and lips smack in rhythm to the elevator music of desire. I need you.

## Greed

One-day sale. You are half off. Marked down from \$10.89 to a meager \$5.34. Back and forth my head darts, scanning the aisles for anyone who dares take what is mine. You, woman with the mullet and the high waisted jeans, do you really think that you can have this? My scowl pierces through the soccer mom as I hold T-Bone close. I don't care if your son will go hungry because this is all that you can afford. I don't care that I just ate lunch and still smell of melted cheese and sour grease from my cafeteria's grill. Soccer mom, I need this steak more than you do, I want this steak more than you do, and I deserve it way more than you do. Let little Billy starve. What is mine is mine. With a deafening crash, T-Bone falls into my cart and I make my dominance known. I have you.

## Wrath

19 grams of fat, 182 calories, and about half a pound more of weight that I do not need. This body of mine huffs and puffs, straining under my sandbags of flesh and fat. If only I had self-control. I would not need to judge or berate myself after every little thing I eat. Never again would I refuse to leave the house because my thighs were looking "puffier" than usual. If I had self-control I would love going out and even volunteer to go to the beach. I would wear shorts again knowing that I looked just as good as the other girls. I would go to the doctor without fear, knowing that my weight would only bring about good news. However, I don't have self-control. I am not even sure if I know what it feels like to be in control of my eating. So now I eat and eat and eat and eat. I eat to take away the pain but the pain only brings more pain and that pain brings forth hatred in myself. T-Bone steak, you are masochism. I loathe you.

## Gluttony

I walk into the doctor's office. The smell of sterile cotton swabs and overly clean plastic gloves sends my blood pressure skyrocketing. Although the stink is justification enough for me to believe that it is just the odd atmosphere and fear of medical professionals that is jacking my blood pressure and heart rate up, my doctor doesn't seem to believe me.

"If you keep gaining weight like this you will get diabetes before you turn thirty," Dr. Lui warns, tapping my chart like one of those overly calm T.V. doctors.

I tap my foot along with him, letting his threat sink in. My dad said we could go to a buffet later. I guess my day is not entirely shot. I will die because of you.

### Pride

Across the aisle I hear the buzzing. Girls swarm around the produce section idolizing the lush vacuum packed and ready-for-the-bowl greens. They poke and prod with their stingers. Size zero fingers point at me now as their venom begins to numb my heart. I know they wish they were me, wish that their tiny limbs could have these curves. My mom says that God gifted me with this body, blessed me with the sweetness that only a large butt could give me. Instead of the vegetables it is me and T-Bone that should be idolized. Oh, my curves. I find confidence in you.

### Envy

The average model that graces the cover of the magazine Vogue is around 5'8" and weighs between 108 and 120 pounds. T-Bone and I look longingly at the front page of said Vogue. I pray that I could have that body instead of the model on the cover. I wish I were you.

### Sloth

The beeping gets louder as my cart slowly scoots through the aisles. The cashier's song propels my body forward as I consider the task ahead of me. 4 minutes on one side, flip, 4 minutes on the other side, flip again, let rest for 1-2 minutes. Waiting up to 10 minutes just for a piece of meat? I lumber back to the meat aisle ignoring the cashier's siren song. My love and I depart pretending like our brief infatuation never occurred. I will meet a double cheeseburger and fries in less than 10 minutes and the process will resume again. Double Cheeseburger will consume me and require a lot less work than T-Bone. I no longer need you. I need another.

Mariya Artis  
*Creative Nonfiction*



## Sassy

Sassyflower, you are bold.  
You throw your head into the air,  
No remorse for all your orangeness.  
Growing by the road among the simpletons,  
The undercut, unconfident, the pistil-lacking flowers--  
You blast the tune that they but murmur.  
I doubt you knew what you were asking:  
The ecstasy of being chosen,  
the fatality of being picked.

Elizabeth Rhea  
*Free-Verse Poetry*

## Slow

A snail on the side of the stair slides  
As the soggy sky drips with rain drops  
Soaking smog puddles into the cement.  
The snail slides slowly, oblivious  
As students ascend the staircase, seeking food.  
Someone stops and sees the snail sliding on the side of the stair  
And smiles.

Katherine Dubke  
*Free-Verse Poetry*

## Flu Season

“You're not going to believe this, but just as I pulled into the liquor store drive-thru to get a bottle of Sangiovese for my mother-in-law who came over last night—as I've told you before, she's the daughter-in-law of *the* Ralph Lauren—a man in a pick-up truck sideswiped me, taking off my right side mirror and slices of my Avocado Green exterior before he went on to crash into a Smart car, and if that wasn't the worst of it, there was a small German Shepherd in the passenger seat; I just sat there with my mouth open as the man in the pick-up revved the engine and put it in reverse, but the Smart car was so smashed that it amalgamated into the pick-up's hood so when the man started to back up, the little car with the dog went with him; by now the dog was howling at the truck, thank God for that, 'cause before I heard the dog, I thought the little guy was an instant goner; so there was the dog barking, the truck revving, and the metal screeching, but then a man sprinted out of the liquor store yelling, 'Stop it! Stop it!' until his voice cracked and he shook his hands at the pick-up; but I don't think that was what made the driver stop, 'cause at the same time, a brick flew diagonally through the right rear window and just missed the driver's head to hit the middle of the steering wheel, from which it bounced off and smacked him in the stomach; I know this, 'cause I pulled forward out of the drive-thru to park alongside the truck, since I was afraid he might've backed up into the front of my car when he tried to get unstuck from the Smart car, so I had a clear view of what was going on inside the front seat of that pick-up, especially since I got out of my car to walk over to the guy flailing his arms; I don't know how, but that brick came outta nowhere and whizzed right past this driver's head with so much energy it caused the horn to sound for one moment before it hit the guy in the stomach and he gasped and clutched his belly, but when he finally caught his breath, he popped the door open and stumbled out onto the pavement like he'd never walked before, and he looked at his grille and the Smart car that was smashed into it, but while he examined the damage, he started to lean to the left like he was gonna fall over and I nearly reached out to hold him up, but the other man who owned the newly destroyed Smart car and the dog that continued to bark for help, took two large strides, grabbed the driver by the shirt, and completely socked him straight in the face as if he wasn't already dazed and confused, and the guy fell to the ground like a large tree chopped down, and despite the blood dripping from his nose, the guy looked serene compared to the scene he had just made, and I looked down at him to make sure his breathing was normal while the owner of the store called 911, when unbeknownst to me, the Smart car owner pried open his door to let his dog out and within seconds the beast lunged towards me like *I* was the one who just wrecked their car and it grabbed ahold of my arm which was mostly uncovered by the polo shirt I had on, and as the dog tore at my arm, I was afraid I'd die from blood loss, but I survived with some painful wounds my wife covered up with these bandages I'd rather not take off, and that's why I cannot get the flu shot today, Doctor.”

Taylor Bundy  
*Fiction*



**Korean Teapot**  
*Ink*  
Kirsten Almquist



**Connections**

*Mixed Media*

Stephanie Fittler

# **A Descriptive Overview and Analysis of a Case Study of Further Problematizing the Potential of the Human Species Interaction in a Rathskeller**

John D. Smith  
University of San Confundido

Keywords: Relationships, Bizarre Case Study, Bar Head Scratching

Through observational methods, a single researcher took part in a double blind study. This research was done in a social setting looking at the implications of mate selection through means of participant observation in an attempt to support previously established theories of mate selection (Homogamy Theory, Stimulus Value-Role Theory) as well as address psychoanalytic approaches to mate-selection. This particular article was one of the one hundred and fifty-three (153) case studies recorded over the last ten (10) years in Springfield, California. This case study was noted because of its unique circumstances and counterintuitive behaviors.

A beautiful young female in a long black dress was sitting on a forty-two inch (42") tall chair. She was sitting there for about seven (7) minutes before a male approached her. Her facial expressions were those of excitement, maybe even a hint of joy, or possibly just intrigue before the rejection. This indicated no prior knowledge of his existence and possibly genuine physical attraction for the male figure. The male signaled to the bartender for two (2) drinks thus following the suspected social role (set of norms that define how people in a given social position ought to behave). The bartender brought over the two (2) alcoholic

beverages, light beers. Previous research and analysis would have concluded this decision to be inappropriate and in some cases explosive, but somehow this decision showed no immediate repercussions and ultimately had no effect on the potential outcome of this case study; thus rendering this decision irrelevant for the first time out of all the previous cases studied. The male was average height, stocky build and a little jumpy. This indicated his lack of experience in these situations. Mannerisms somewhat vexatious indicating fifty (50) percent less experience than previous research would have indicated. The stereotypical conversation would have lasted for about thirteen (13) seconds before the female would signal for an object removal out of the establishment. To the researcher's surprise, after a ten (10) minute thirty-four (34) second conversation, the male indicated his interested in extending their relations elsewhere and the female accepted. Thus counteracting the injunctive social norm (what people "should" or "ought" to do in a given situation) that was shown to be conclusive in previous case studies and opening up a new potential hypothesis that male figures can pass the test of the Four Horsemen (Criticism, Contempt, Defensiveness and Withdrawal) and communicate in a positive

way. The researcher noted that the chances of a male figure passing this test are around .05% with a standard deviation of  $>.002\%$ . This interaction suggested a third type of social influence other than Normative (stems from fear of rejection or desire for approval) or Informational (stems from need to look to others for clarification).

The male figure opened the door for the female and they left the establishment. This was very intriguing and gave the researcher a potentially groundbreaking new avenue. Interested in this potential breakthrough in mate selection and social relations the researcher perused the couple out the front door. Outside it was a little quieter but colder, so he offered her his jacket and she accepted. They walked around the block several times as the researcher observed from a reasonable distance of approximately six (6) meters away from the couple for one (1) hour and thirty two (32) minutes before they stopped in at a local coffee shop. In order to understand this interaction, further readings would include an article

Justin Wilson  
*Fiction*

written by Davis and Todd in 1985 on True Friendships and Real Love. Due to lack of information and environmental inferences, the conclusion of this article will remain inconclusive. The researcher was unable to continue his research because a local man driving by in his car found the researcher to be "creepy" and found his research to be somewhat "illegal" and he was taken "downtown" for being "non-compliant."

Further directions for research would indicate the understanding of compliance tactics such as Foot-in-the-Door (small request followed by large request), Door-in-the-Face (large request followed by a small request), Low Ball (deal becomes more costly after agreement) or Lure (Attractive offer is not available, subject is enticed to switch) would have assumed to take place if the male figure would have forwarded through with his theoretical intentions. Other possible conclusions will be unable to confirm due to lack of funding and immediate termination of researching privileges.

## Ummm...

Mumbling about mermaids  
Or the magical impact of some  
Cosmic explosion or something  
Making truth out of lies  
Molded and meshed  
Together during a morning walk

In class it becomes evident  
To my peers and me  
That I've lied about it all  
There's no mysterious splendor  
No masterful orator or  
Well-versed mathematician

There's just me  
Making nothing more than sounds  
Saying nothing more than "umm..."s  
Mumbling my way  
Through speech time

Mariya Artis  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Untitled**  
*Acrylic*  
Kristie Miller

## Plaid and Hoodies

I amble to class in my hoodie  
jumbling a muddle of words.  
A guy brushes past me in plaid  
and I glance at him showing my smile.  
But he passes, embracing a twig,  
a girl. And I feel like a trivial leaf.

In journaling, often I leaf  
through the pages, wearing my hoodie  
and pondering the features of twigs.  
Reflecting on early, impulsive words  
I read a passage with a grimace, not a smile:  
"I'm attracted to guys who wear plaid."

I own purple, blue, and red colored plaid  
much like the shades of the leaves.  
I wonder if the guy I like has a nice smile  
and burying my hands in my hoodie  
I ponder at opening, ice-breaking words.  
Walking, I hear snapping twigs.

The guy steps upon a brittle, white twig.  
I turn, and there he is, dressed in his plaid.  
"I'm a poet enthralled with the sound of new words"  
I say as my hands twirl a vibrant red leaf.  
Yet he judgingly glances at my comfy, grey hoodie  
"Do I look like I know you?" and he condescendingly  
smiles.

I'm rather repulsed by his snarky, sly smile  
if he thinks that a girl should resemble a twig.  
I'd rather be writing, dressed warm in my hoodie,  
of dashing young men wearing plaid  
who ponder the beauties of autumn-time leaves  
and relish the polish of well-chosen words.

For future, I won't waste my cherished fine words  
or my time, my attention, and smile  
on a guy who can't fathom the art of a leaf.  
I don't want to look like a pale, curve-less twig  
yet I'm still a big fan of a man wearing plaid.  
Perhaps I'll instead seek the boys wearing hoodies.

The best of both worlds: a plaid-patterned hoodie;  
a man who relates with my fetish for words and leaves  
and shows interest (not in twigs) with a genuine smile.

Katherine Dubke  
*Villanelle*



# wikiHow: How to Act When You Meet Someone Named Ariel

Meeting someone named Ariel for the first time can be a nerve-racking experience. The most important thing to do is to stay calm. She is probably just as tense about meeting you as you are about meeting her. First impressions are important, so keep the following outline in mind.

## Contents

- Steps
- Tips
- Warnings
- Related wikiHows

## Steps:

1. *Recall a time you met somebody with a different name.* Remember your first day of school? Or that day that you went to a writer's convention? There were no doubt a lot of introductions and a lot of handshakes. It might have been awkward, but if you're reading this article, you must have survived. Conjure that scene in your mind.
2. *Reenact your memory of step 1.* Give a salutation of your choice. This can range from a verbal greeting to a hug depending on your comfort level. State your name. If you feel compelled to, you can even add a phrase such as, "It's nice to meet you," or "I know we've just met, but you seem as though you are a beautiful and intelligent woman of God."
3. *Put yourself in Ariel's position.* She has probably been living with her name for a long time (approximately twenty-two years or so). You might have a joke that you'd like to tell, but chances are that she's heard it before (approximately twenty-two million times or so).
4. *Resist the urge to embarrass yourself.* This one can be painful. Humans are self-deprecating by nature, so you may be fighting against instinct. Still, do what you must to ensure that you do not come off looking stupid. If it feels like you're about to say something that you'll regret, you can excuse yourself from the room, literally bite your tongue, or cover your mouth with duct tape.

## Tips:

- Do your research. Ariel was a name long before it was featured in *The Little Mermaid*. Her title might be in reference to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the former Prime Minister of Israel, the Dean Freidman song, or the novel by Alexander Beliaev.
- Don't look confused when she mentions its other uses.
- Do ask how her friends or family are.
- Don't assume that their names are Flounder and Scuttle.
- Do preface all questionable comments with a phrase like, "I'm sure you get this a lot, but..."

- Don't pretend that a preamble makes your hackneyed comments any wittier.
- Do inquire about her interests or hobbies.
- Don't ask to see her gadgets and gizmos, as this can easily be taken as a sexual advance.
- Do compliment her appearance.
- Don't compliment Ursula for a job well-done on the legs.
- Do introduce her to your friends.
- Don't invite her to judge who among you does the best Jamaican accent. None of you sound like Sebastian and none of you ever will.
- Do ask what kind of music she likes
- Don't sing Kiss the Girl.
- Don't Kiss the Girl.\*
- Do have her over for lunch or dinner.
- Don't act surprised when she demonstrates her ability to use a fork.
- Do ask if she dyed her hair.
- Don't tell her that you liked it better red.

#### Warnings:

- One mistake can lead to a painful level of self-awareness. If you think you're funny now, you won't for long.
- Never ever ever use the word "mermaid." Ever.
- Compliments like, "I loved your movie," are only acceptable if she has been in a movie.
- Ariel will probably tell her friends about the idiotic things that you said to her. She might even write a hermit crab essay about it, so you'll need to be prepared for that.
- His name is King Triton, not Poseidon. If you're going to make the reference, it at least needs to be accurate.
- It's a little weird that you haven't met anyone named Ariel up until now. You need to make an effort toward socialization or you'll be in danger of becoming a cat-woman. \*\*

#### Related wikiHows:

- How to Separate Real Life from a Movie
- How to Treat a Human Being Like a Human Being
- How to Make Someone Hate You Within the First Five Minutes of Meeting Them
- How to Bake Delicious Cookies
- How to Sell Your Voice to a Sea Witch
- How to Use Body Language to Make a Prince Fall in Love With You (and Not With Someone Else Like in the Hans Christian Anderson Version).

\*Unless you are Johnny Depp. Then kiss her, and kiss her with passion.

\*\*Men are not exempt. Cats hate all people equally, regardless of gender.

Ariel Castagna  
*Creative Nonfiction*



**Mitzi and Domino**

*Prisma Colors*

Ashley Bell



**Two Sided**  
*Charcoal*  
Stephanie Coyne

## Beats

Jet-black beats embrace my ears  
Audio implants “bass”-ically.  
Hater’s gonna hate Dr. Dre but I say  
They’re my ticket to a sonic disturbia,  
A kinky kaleidoscope of concocted melodies  
Entrance to a mad scientist’s laboratory  
Splicing Nicki Minaj’s lips to Adam Levine’s mouth  
Who now boo-ooo-ooms like Jagger  
Witness to a turf war of tunes  
Pitting Coldplay vs. Foster the People in a  
Pumped up Paradise.

And all the while, she’s like a song played again and again...  
I’m solo, I’m ridin’ solo, I’m ridin’ solo,  
So low...feelin’ down, down, down  
Deeper into the rabbit hole of Mashupland  
Livin’ on the pop, livin’ on the dance, livin’ on the rock ‘n roll  
‘Cause there’s a fire burning in my heart  
And I ain’t afraid to show it, show it  
She had woven Queen into a Bohemian Dust-biter  
Made a fiasco of Lupe Fiasco—  
The show goes on—every night and day—the dream goes on  
For what it’s worth it was worth all the while  
And after all, you’re my Wonderwall.

Ears breathe dawn’s fresh air  
As the bat departs from my skull.  
The boom-boom-pow declines  
But still I’m mashed, mashed up inside.

Justin Solis  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Choose The Shoes**

*Acrylic*  
Emily Moore

## **Always The Young Stranger**

Always the young stranger  
A pretty boy  
With eyes and hips  
Like no man  
You seen before

Always the young stranger  
Make a poor girl believe  
She matter more than all them other strangers  
Whose names he don't remember

Always the young stranger  
Make you feel safe  
You ignore the fact  
You can't breathe

Always the young stranger  
Say that love suffocates  
That love takes  
And don't give back

Always the young stranger  
Comes

Always the young stranger  
Goes

Always the young stranger  
You promise not to love

Mariya Artis  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**In Your Head**  
*Photo Manipulation*  
Megan Brunkhorst



# Organizing February

## To Do List 2/1

Make to do list  
Pack lunch  
Practice Speech  
Buy suit

## To Do List 2/2

Make to do list  
INTERVIEW TODAY  
Call mom  
Drink champagne

## To Do List 2/4

Make to do list  
Send applications  
Ask cute grocery girl for her phone number!

## To Do List 2/5

Make to do list  
Follow up on applications  
Send cute but not too forward text to Molly  
Lift weights  
Read up on Veganism

## To Do List 2/6

Make to Do List  
Cancel reservations to steakhouse  
Go to that new yoga class you saw at the gym  
Iron suit

## To Do List 2/7

Make to do list  
INTERVIEW TODAY!  
Drink champagne  
Buy roses  
Take Molly to smoothie bar.  
Ask her how she feels about your dietary preferences.

## To Do List 2/8

Make to do list  
Throw away meat, dairy, etc.  
Buy protein supplements  
Iron suit  
Eat a juicy steak

## To Do List 2/12

Make to do list  
IMPORTANT INTERVIEW  
Slightly less important back-up interview  
Call mom and beg for rent money  
Bake Molly that vegetable casserole you saw in that Oprah magazine in her bathroom

## To Do List 2/13

Make to do list  
Try on khaki pants and red polo shirts  
Remind yourself the cash register is only temporary  
DO NOT CRY TODAY :)!  
Send out your resume again

## To Do List 2/14

Make to do list  
Buy roses  
Buy champagne  
Buy scented candles  
Decorate apartment in rose petals  
And the streamers you found at the dollar spot  
Rent a chick flick  
Romantic fun time with Molly!

## To Do List 2/15

WAIT BY THE PHONE ALL DAY  
Answer phone

## To Do List 2/16

Call in sick

**To Do List 2/17**

Make to do list  
Write the word bitch on all of Molly's photos  
Eat a damn hotdog  
Send out resumes to important jobs  
Iron khakis

**To Do List 2/19**

Make to do list  
Reluctantly meet Molly for lunch

**To Do List 2/20**

Make to do list  
Buy roses  
Dinner at fancy restaurant  
Ask Molly to move in with you  
Drink champagne

**To Do List 2/21**

Dispose of spare key  
Attend work punctuality and productiveness seminar  
Start the atkins diet  
Rent The Notebook

**To Do List 2/22**

Call in sick  
Creep around the smoothie shack

**To Do List 2/23**

Call in sick  
STALK WEIRD GUY WITH BIG MUSCLES  
WHO YOU SAW WITH MOLLY  
Compose threatening letter

Andrea Hawkins  
*Experimental Fiction*

**To Do List 2/24**

Send anonymous police tip that Brad Grenshaw is a pimp  
Purchase long range binoculars  
Turn in Target badge  
Burn suit  
Buy kerosene  
Read up on petty arson crimes

**To Do List 2/25**

Return kerosene  
Buy hundred dozen eggs

**To Do List 2/26**

~~EGG BRAD CRENSHAW'S HOUSE~~

**To Do List 2/27**

Call Molly  
Tell her you love her  
Tell her you are sorry  
Play the "I'm dying card" to get sex  
Wait, don't do that one!  
Tell her she is beautiful  
Ask her to take care of you  
Tell her you're scared

**To Do List 2/28**

Memorize threatening voice message from Molly about harassing Brad  
Memorize the sound of her voice  
Buy rope  
Lock the garage door behind you  
Change your mind?



**Untitled**  
*Color Aid Paper*  
Kirstie Millar

## Nightbreak

Pink, yellow, and orange cotton fingers  
reach, grab, and claw to hold on  
to the last bright rays.

Blue, purple, and black fists creep in  
slow, quiet, and blind at first but  
soon they will smash everything out.

Breezes fly down  
through the grasses, windows, and open spaces  
thinning from warm to chill.

Blinking lights in the sky and lining the street  
tell children it's time to go home,  
leaving swings to rock empty and balls to bounce without aim.

A crooked smile lights the way for the strays  
but lends no warmth  
because that left hours ago when those cotton fingers  
let go.

Jessica Easley  
*Free-Verse Poetry*



**Wetlands Series 2**  
*Photography*  
Nikki Berry



**Untitled**  
*Photography*  
Megan Miller

## Apartment 358

Gum. Pliers. Pepsi bottle. You're a mess. Your life consists of chaos. How did you ever manage to get her? She waltzes into your apartment, slips off her Chanel shoes and beams brightly. You apologize for the clutter (again), she politely steps over a half-eaten Snickers bar, murmurs, "No problem," (again), always classy. Your tattered sweatshirt with the duct-taped hood brushes her string of creamy pearls as the two of you embrace, briefly tainting the air with an odorous combination of dirty socks and designer perfume. You both sink into the inauspicious sofa; you try to ignore yesterday's soda spill, a stain imprinted in your memory like the time you first asked her out, while she arranges her toned limbs with a dignity and posture that smacks of forced etiquette, home elevators, and no siblings, all phenomena completely foreign to you.

She begins to unravel the events of her day, pattering along in that tone that is reminiscent of a gentle rainfall, soothing and smooth, never grating; you usually listen, but today your thoughts roam. You stare vacantly at the bedroom door propped ajar, a fast food bag dangling from the doorknob, a half-eaten taco within. You sense the couch space separating you both, always preserving rules of propriety. It is not uncomfortable; it has become normal.

"Are you tired?" she asks.

"No, just thinking."

A shift. Space. Hands.

Touch. Surprise. Startled looks. You glance down. Hugs had always sufficed before. Why did she do that, and why now? Why endure your hovel when she could be playing on her tennis court? Your mangy bookstore on 6th Avenue would barely contain a single bathroom of her family's mansion, let alone her bedroom suite. You try to remember the first time you noticed her manicured nails skimming through the shark-bitten pages of *Crime and Punishment*; you had smiled at her interest, attempted to help out a potential customer. She had come in again and again after that day, always looking starved; at first you thought she hadn't had dinner yet; then you mused over her longing for literature; and then you realized she would never relax until you greeted her with a smile, a friendly "Hi there," and a few common conversational phrases.

You had felt badly for her, despite her pressed pencil skirts, endless supply of crisp Andrew Jacksons, and diamond studs (you knew they were real) – you didn't know why you felt compelled to comfort. Coming back to the present, your eyes finally focus on an ugly purple carpet spot, six inches from your holey sneakers. The possible history attached to that blot belongs to the previous apartment owners. You don't want to know why it's there. You suddenly realize it's hideous. An unnecessary blemish. Elbow grease. Rag. Gone.

Hand. Again?!

"Stop it!"

You turn around. She stares at you, pleading.

“Don’t clean up for my sake, please don’t.” Her hand still rests on yours, a cool pillow covering a rough terrain. You feel her desire for a hand to hold hers when dirty snow covers the city streets, threatening to trip her. You imagine her alone in that big 5th Avenue apartment, her father busy making money on Wall Street, her mother occupied with “keeping up appearances”; the maid has work to do, she can’t talk. The loneliness of twenty years is etched in that soft hand; an unscarred hand because it never had the opportunity to cook; a smooth hand because it never had the opportunity to try a rope swing; a still hand, because it was never allowed to gesture during exciting conversations; a hand never held tightly.

You suddenly understand why she comes over to your place every time you plan a “date,” why she doesn’t mind the piles of scum and smelly laundry and canned foods with questionable expiration dates. For the first time, you discover an urge to pull out the vacuum and wash the dishes heaped in the sink. You long to sterilize, to do something special for her because you care. You want to give her hand an occupation.

“Help me clean?” you say.

“Yes,” she says.

Hands disjoin. Space. Together.

Gretchen Sheetz  
*Fiction*



**Order Up**  
*Acrylic*  
Andy Zanca



## Cling

Driving away while  
"I Know It's Over" repeats.  
He does. But do I?

Taylor Bundy  
*Haiku*



**Kingwell**  
*Photograph*  
Megan Miller

## Fifty Years is a Long Time

“Oh Jessie, it’s just beautiful. You and your mom did such a lovely job.”

“Good. I’m glad you like it Nana.” I rubbed my hand up and down her slightly hunched back, the prickly fabric of her blouse rough against my cool hand.

“Look at that cake!” Not surprisingly, Papa’s attention had been grabbed by the two-tiered, sparkling, champagne-colored cake ringed with deep red roses and topped with a golden 50. It had cost way too much, but Mom and I had wanted it to be reminiscent of a wedding cake and special, because how many times do you get to celebrate a fifty year anniversary?

As Nana toddled over with her cane to admire the cake, her left hand hooked into the crook of Papa’s right arm to steady herself, I took a moment. Months of planning had culminated in this. A semi-private room at a semi-formal restaurant with one long table dotted with mini champagne bottles of chocolate for the guests to take home. Frank Sinatra’s “Two in Love” played softly in the background, mixing with the pop of a cork as Papa’s favorite St. Michelle Riesling was opened and poured into the waiting glasses.

I watched small groups form as the thirteen guests mingled with each other and began exchanging the ‘It’s-so-good-to-see-you’ and ‘How-have-you-beens’ mixed with the occasional anecdote about the celebrated couple. I watched Papa move through the groups, glowing with his grand smile, obviously enjoying himself with his best friends and precious family. I watched Nana move with him, her eyes taking on some of their brightness of before and her sweet chuckle breaking through the murmur.

I remember sitting with Mom to make the guest list and only coming up with thirteen. Only thirteen people to celebrate fifty years, because over those fifty years, friends and family had been lost, disconnected, forgotten. I hoped it was enough. Enough to make them feel special. Enough to make the night special. Enough to celebrate everything that fifty years together means. But then, who knows what it means? Probably only the six percent of couples who have made it that far.

Mom came over and whispered in my ear, “It’s almost time for dinner so start spreading the word for people to sit down.” She rejoined my brother’s first grade teacher and her husband, who happened to be my grandparent’s handyman and one of their newer friends, thus the reason for their attendance.

I moved through the small crowd, spreading the dinner-will-be-served word. As we took our seats and the waiters served the filet mignon with mashed potatoes or the roasted chicken and vegetables, I tuned in and out of the conversations around me, finally focusing on my grandparents sitting across from me and my parents. I wondered, what was it like to be devoted to that one single person for that long?

Fifty years. Five decades. Half a century. No matter how you say it, most would agree fifty years is a long time. A long time to be alive, to work at a job, or to live in the same

place. But to be wholly and completely devoted to one person? Then it's a really long time. A long time filled with happy years, easy years, sad years, bumpy years. I could think of many times I listened to my grandparents bicker and get angry with each other over little things like what vegetable to have for dinner or bigger things, like whether or not to have this party. But I can also think of the times when Papa had to be Nana's caregiver as she went through lung surgery, hip surgery, and chemo, twice. Or when, after dinner, he would dish up her favorite ice cream in her favorite mug with a "Honeybunch, did you want two scoops or one?" My dad once said of my grandfather's devotion: "He has taught me what real and true love means because he stuck by her no matter what. He didn't leave."

I also remember watching my Nana support my Papa through the years when he owned the deli that was not really all that successful. Even when she thought it was a bad idea, she stuck by him, making sandwiches, and didn't leave.

Maybe that's what fifty years together means—not leaving when it's hard or when it gets easier. To love the person even when you don't like them or they don't like you. To have enough history, enough years together, to know that the frustration, anger, and rough spots are only temporary and will pass. Pass into years of ease and happiness, and abundant with love and respect. Maybe thirteen people at a party is enough for fifty years because after fifty years, all you really need is the person who has been there for all eighteen thousand two hundred and sixty-two days.

Jessica Easley  
*Creative Nonfiction*



**Still-Life**  
*Acrylic*  
Natalie Hershinin

## Any Questions?

May I ask you a thing or two? Do you have a moment to spare? Well, why don't you have a seat? Can you picture your earliest memory—and search through the hazy outlines of evaporated moments, sifting through the fog, ignoring any fabricated apparitions? For me, the question is: was my earliest memory that fateful preschool day a classmate slit my finger with aptly named “safety” scissors—a blurred ride to the hospital—an eventual cocoon of gauze on my ring finger? Would you believe I had to get four stitches? Here, can you make out the scar? Or was the earliest memory another preschool recollection? Playing “war” against the older kids with Batman playing cards? Chasing a loose duck on the playground? Or how about outsmarting the tyrannical teachers by only *pretending* to sleep on my stiff cot during naptime, lying very, very still with my eyes closed waiting for them to stamp my hand for being a good sleeper and chuckling with devilish satisfaction when the plan worked? (Have you ever heard of a more brilliant scheme?) Or was it roaming the savannah of industrial carpet on hands and knees—a make-believe scene out of *The Lion King* with my first friend: a girl who role-played as Scar and would whisk me, Simba, on adventures under the tropical canopies of tables and chairs? Now which was the earliest memory? Or does it even matter?

Do you remember how many “firsts” you experienced throughout your elementary school career? What about the first sense of pride—becoming a published author/illustrator with the lamination of my mystery thriller *Cat, Dog and Fish and the Missing Bone*? Or what about the first sting of disappointment—a year previous in kindergarten when I alone didn't know how to skip (I've always had two left feet) for the final scene of the nursery rhyme play? Why do the simplest things trip us up—literally—sometimes? Who could forget their first lost tooth and the shiny Susan B. Anthony dollar coin that would replace it under the pillow the next morning? Where were you when you first learned of the attacks on September 11th 2001? How could I not remember that somber beginning to the sixth grade—teachers crying, kids speaking in frightened whispers, televisions ceaselessly replaying fire and smoke and a hardly effective announcement over the P.A. telling us not to worry, for no planes were going to crash into the school? For the first time we had to ask: why do people hate us? And what about our friends, Haki and Said? Since they're Muslim, does that make them the bad guys?

When does one first fall in love? Do you believe in coincidences? Who'd have thought the girl that would capture my junior high heart would end up being the same one who had been my *Lion King* counterpart so many years previous? How did we end up side by side, watching the backside of a waterfall in a dripping grotto, her white bikini glistening with sun-soaked spray, the scent of adolescent hormones mingling with chlorinated water? It was the final pool party before high school dictated our separate paths—why didn't I say something? Have words ever escaped you, too? As I watched my century-old Nana on her last, anguished day of life, her glazed eyes staring forward, my young hand holding the gnarled club of hers—why didn't I say something—a word of comfort or love? What does it mean to regret? To lose? To have such specters haunt your memory pool, the ones you've yet to drain from your consciousness?

But what of those memories that provide confidence and drive to your soul, an affirmation

of who you are and the path you've chosen? I once found myself wondering in eighth grade history class, "How on earth am I supposed to write an eight-page paper on imperialism!?!?" Can you believe that I found the process of research and discovery exhilarating and knew from then on that history was going to be part of my career? And wasn't I surprised during senior year of high school, when my AP Literature peers unanimously voted my presentation on 1920s jazz for "best-in-class" and Mr. Brasington pulled me aside later, telling me that I could be much more than a high school teacher? Isn't it funny that a kid who relished flipping through dictionaries and encyclopedias in kindergarten would end up flipping through dusty tomes and sixteenth century manuscripts in graduate school on his way to becoming a professor of history? (It's better than flipping burgers, right?) So why don't you come visit my future classroom in a few years and say hello? I mean, one can dream, can't he?

Justin Solis  
*Fiction*



**Still-Life #1**  
*Acrylic*  
Leah Jaeger



**Untitled**  
*Acrylic*  
Allison Brocato



# Concordia University at a Glance

## Why CUI?

Concordia University Irvine is a US News Top Tier Regional University that prepares students for their vocations-their calling in life. CUI offers undergraduate, graduate, and adult degree programs in a beautiful Southern California location, with online and regional cohort options. Concordia's undergraduate program is distinctive among Christian universities in the region because of the University's innovative and engaging Core Curriculum (see [www.cui.edu/core](http://www.cui.edu/core)), and its Lutheran heritage that provides a thoughtful and caring Christian community that lives out "Grace Alone. Faith Alone." (see [www.cui.edu/gracealone](http://www.cui.edu/gracealone)).

## Location

Just 40 miles south of Los Angeles, Concordia University Irvine is located in the heart of Orange County, minutes from beaches, jobs, internships, world-class shopping, and a diversity of cultural experiences. Yet, with all of this so close, Concordia's campus is secluded and tucked away in rolling green hillsides overlooking the city of Irvine and Orange County.

## Accreditation

- Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education

## Schools

- School of Arts and Sciences
- School of Business and Professional Studies
- School of Education
- Christ College

## Faculty

- Full Time Faculty: 100 (Percentage of Faculty with Ph.D. or other terminal degree: 76%)
- Student to faculty ratio: 17:1

The opinions expressed in this edition of The Aerie are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the administration, faculty, staff, or student body of Concordia University, Irvine.

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# The Aerie



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**UNIVERSITY IRVINE**

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