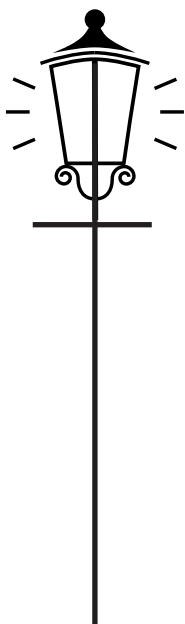


The Lantern



Memory

September 2026



The Lantern

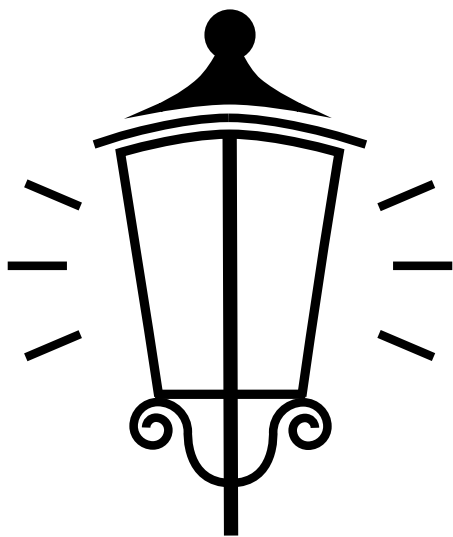
***The Lantern**, begun in 1932, is Houghton University's student-run literary journal that exists to illuminate the thoughts and expressions of students and the greater Houghton community through works of literary and visual art.*

The Lantern began as an offshoot of a literary competition that existed for over a decade before 1932. After that date, the Lantern, previously known as the Lanthorn, began printing the works of students and has continued to do so ever since.

Front Cover:
Keiryn Sandahl

Memory

September 2026



Letter from the Editors

In the future, when your son asks you, “What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?” tell him: “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Before our eyes the Lord sent signs and wonders—great and terrible—on Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land he promised on oath to our ancestors.

~ Deuteronomy 6:20-23

Dear Readers,

The capacity to remember is an important gift. We use it to learn and to teach other people. We tell each other stories about our family members and our communities so that we remember people beyond their lifetimes. Through our memories, we build a sense of who we are. We study history, gather objects into museums, celebrate holidays, keep diaries, and take photographs of vacations, children, or pets, in order to remember where we’ve been. Memory is a powerful storyteller.

In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, God continually tells the Israelites to remember: remember His promises, remember His faithful provision, remember His commandments. We read, again and again, that they forget how God cared for them in the past, and look to other gods or kings. Our memories are a gift, but they are also frail. We remember, but we also forget, or remember incompletely. Some things we forget because we are finite, but others we choose to forget because they trouble us. However, when God delivered Israel from Egypt, He gave them the Passover, so they would remember their rescue long after those who experienced it had died. At a Passover meal centuries later, Jesus gave us another meal, so that we as his followers might remember his death and resurrection.

Some memories are glad. Some are painful. Yet no matter what stories we have to tell, God has given us powerful reminders of the part His grace plays in those stories. Best of all, we belong to a God who remembers the promises He’s made to us. As He has been faithful to hundreds of generations before us, so He will be faithful to ours.

Yours for lighting up the world,
Keiryn, Lillian, Hannah, and Annalise

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Tearfull Memories

Elavoir Nosak

A man hunched over a wooden desk, fiddling with the dials and settings on his microscope. The room around him whirled and buzzed with noises of all various types of machines and gadgets. As the sky darkened to black, the lamp by his elbow was the sole source of light.

He adjusted the clear tray cradling the precious water droplets under the eye of his microscope. He picked up a drop with tweezers. Being careful not to squeeze too hard lest it burst, he placed it on another microscope bed, this one much more powerful. He pushed back his black hair, the grey undertones showing through. He hunched over the microscope to place his eye to the lens. He zoomed in. Gently, with the precision gained only through years of practice, he grabbed a thin blade and sliced the droplet in half. As he analyzed the inside of the droplet, he muttered, "Now, let's see what you store."

I tore my gaze from the stars and looked at Philip's face which was still staring upwards into the nothingness.

"I still miss him, Elizabeth." His face was blank. "It's already been two years." He paused, then whispered, "How has it already been two years?"

"Yeah." I held his hand, giving it a gentle squeeze. He squeezed back automatically, his eyes staring blankly into the void.

My heart hurt for his. I wanted so badly to pick up his broken pieces and fix it, but I couldn't. I couldn't bring his dad back. I felt a tear run down my cheek.

Softly, quietly, he wept. There we laid in the quiet stillness of night. I could only hope that I was doing more than I knew just by listening.

The man blinked his own tears away. Her pain was so evident, her overwhelming helplessness. He paused. Tenderly, he squeezed the two halves of the droplet back together to be one once more. As he gingerly packaged the droplet into a labelled

vial, he wondered, How can such deep memories be held in such tiny drops? The man went back to work, performing the delicate procedure on another drop.

"This is a gift for Mommy." I showed Daniel my pile of rocks. He shook his head. "We can't carry one hundred rocks back to Mom."

"No!" I stomped. "They're for Mommy."

He sighed. "Look, you can pick one favourite."

I looked up at him. "But Mommy likes pretty rocks"

Daniel looked at my big pile. "Look, you can pick two."

I picked up some of my rocks. There were pink ones, sparkly ones, white ones, smooth ones, and rough ones. It was hard to pick two.

Dan grabbed my wrist. "Kyle, come on. We need to hurry up. Mom and Dad told us to leave five minutes ago."

He dragged me away down the path. I only had one rock. "But, Mommy's rocks!" He didn't stop. "Dan! I only have one rock!" He didn't listen. "Dan!" I screamed. He ignored me. I tried to stop crying. It didn't work. I don't like my face being wet.

The man sighed heavily. Little ones carried certain burdens that were only heavy to them. He fidgeted with the crayons in his lab coat pocket, lost in thought.

He glanced at another droplet. He didn't want to observe another moment. However, he knew how important this work was. One more. One more, then he could be done for the day.

I opened my mouth wide as I tried to bite into my hotdog. Ketchup oozed out, and the relish plopped onto my plate.

Elizabeth scrunched her face as she saw me. "Daniel, that is gross."

"You're gross," came my muffled reply as I chewed.

She gasped dramatically. "How dare you!"

I gulped. "How dare you!" I shot back.

Kyle joined in. "How dare both of you!"

Elizabeth retorted, "How dare you for how daring us!"

Mom just shook her head, smiling. Dad, feeling left out, joined in. "How hotdog you all!"

Four pairs of eyes stared at him before bursting into

uncontrollable laughter. I coughed as liquid went down the wrong pipe. Elizabeth and Kyle's faces were red, and even Mom was almost bent double over.

Dad surveyed the scene, his face puzzled. "What did I do?"

"You, you said... how hotdog you!" Kyle spit out between laughs.

Realization dawned upon him, and Dad spit out his food onto his plate as he was overwhelmed by uncontrollable spasms of laughter.

Tears ran down our faces, all thought of eating forgotten. There was no recovery.

The man chuckled, displaying deep wrinkles in his face. He was glad to be reminded of the good. He couldn't help himself but to look at the water droplet again, to reexamine their mirth. After he was done, he carefully merged the halves back together and stowed the droplet on the metal shelf along with hundreds of others. Once he documented the day's findings, he breathed a contented sigh. Today's work was done.

The door to his laboratory closed with a soft click, and he walked down the softly lit hallway. He paused at every doorway, peeking in at his sleeping children in their rooms. The day's worries were washed off their faces by the peaceful obliviousness brought through slumber.

He softly whispered to each sleeping child, "Don't fret my child. Your tears are seen."



The Flood

Diego Fernandez

4pm

Pitter Patter

Pitter Patter.

The spark of lightning,

The crashing roar,

The chaos waters fall

on earth below.

Machine gun speed,

Rain fires down on earth.

The creek once tranquil

Now only knows violence.

Carriages of steel sunk below,

Damage to the structures

Yet at that time unknown.

How will we get home?

How will we move on?

The waters roar little one,

I cannot hear.

We muscle together,

Because with the LORD we shall not fear!

We'll join together,

Until the sky sheds its final tear...



In the Foggy Meantime, Jonathan Stacy
Photography

Still Cold

Zillah Reukauf

*There's a kind of cold they say,
that doesn't steal your breath away;
But rather given to a child on a Monday morning
Where the birds rise in the lateness of May.
The mist lay still on the surface of the grass,
in which holds the memories of a child's first gasp.
Freedom nor prison does this here convey,
but to simplify the mind before night hands over the day.
And when the mourning dove gives its call,
memory there takes its fall.
Can you imagine such time as this?
To think that nothing cares to give even a task;
When scold has not withered the child,
To the heart of this, one may come riled,
Yet bother none the innocence,
You with a life of insolence.
This cold I've heard, is magic in theory;
to think of it now makes me teary.
Still cold,
still cold,
still cold.
It's cold but it's no bother,
if at all at this time I'd say it's an honor.
To have it again I'd count it a blessing
and carry it with me till the end of all this masquerading.
A still cold I've heard it called,
To be there again, I'd have half the mind to give it all.
A mist that rolls over a bleeding heart
To conceal what burdens impart,
"Forget me not" she cries from the soul
As the still cold begins to pull.
Here I remember and shudder with great tremor,*

*when the trees danced with me and the wind blew to my favor.
Is it possible to have it for maybe a moment,
Yet time plays a funny trick on remembering—
oh God let me not resent...
Still cold,
Still cold,
Oh, memory my dear
I'm still cold.*

Chasing You

Helena Ragsdale

*When I reflect
All I see is black.
My heart begins to race.
You're a memory
I want to chase.*

*My recollection got buried with you.
You're on the tip of my tongue;
Just within my reach,
Like a breath I can't keep.*

*You've become something I can't see;
Its gotten hard to breathe.
You're something I have convinced myself
I need to be complete.*

Remarkable

Anonymous

I have done nothing remarkable.

*I never carried a tent up the alps and prayed my camp
protects me from bitter winds.*

*I learned to camp on the living room carpet,
watching my parents stoke the woodstove to keep the pipes from
freezing.*

*I have never woken to the chattering song of hyenas or the
trumpeting of elephants.*

*I have only been sung to sleep by the ghostly
echoing melody of the wood thrush.*

*I have never changed the world. It still burns.
Rulers and nations still kill children and widows
without my hand to stop them.*

*I told parables to unlistening ears,
begging them to change the fabric of the future.*

*I have never known anyone important. None
whose word could stop the spiraling cycle of pain.
I held the hand of my sisters son while he asked
what a tadpole becomes before it can be a frog.*

I never married.

*I never saw the woman I love walking through a veil
of tears towards me,
only away.*

I knew only the ordinary taste of her lips.

Why Do I Remember?

Marah Sinclair

*Memory is such a fickle thing,
It blots out what I most wish to remember
And records in careful detail
That which I strive to forget.*

*And perhaps some corner of my mind,
Dark and twisted, loves the pain
Of harsh words spoken long ago
And traitorously adds them to the heap
Of treasures it deems suitable to keep,
While softer words are thought too prone to rust
And left to turn from memory to dust.*

Why Can't I Remember?

Darah Sinclair

*I know her eyes were blue
But I could not say
If they were ice or sea or sky.
Her nose, too, is gone,
Lost to two years of avoiding photos.
Her mouth remains,
But never her smile.
If I were to see her on the street,
I would know her in an instant,
But I could not recreate her
With graphite or ink.*

*I did not think I would forget
The face of one whose life gave fruit to mine.
And yet, I know the fault
Belongs to me, and me alone,
The harvest of two years
Spent in a conscious lie:
The hole she carved was ever in my heart,
Not formed the very moment that she died.*

Mirror of Memory

Anonymous

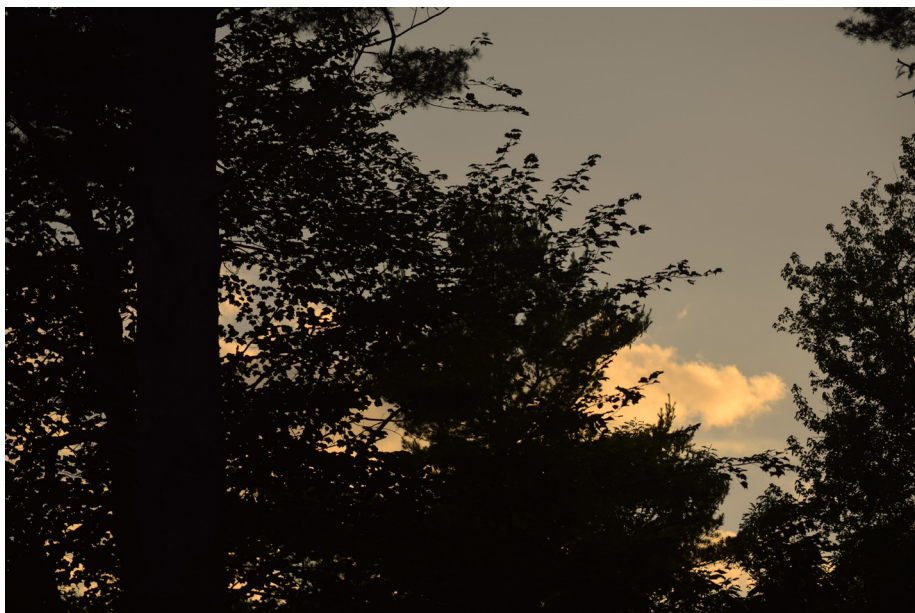
*As I gaze into the mirror
That holds the memories of my life,
I wonder whose memories they really are.
I squint and peer deeper, grappling for any shard of truth
That explains why I remember these things.
I see the anger, the bitterness, the screaming, the crying.
I taste the tears, feel the pillow in my hands as I grasp for something,
Anything that I can hold to remind myself that it was real.
I feel the sobs rise up in my throat, force them down, and it is like
swallowing fire.
I hear the words as clear as glass
But is the glass clear?
The anger, tears, sobs, words – if I remember them, they must have
happened. . .
I blink. The mirror is foggy.
The mirror is cracked, shattered at the centers,
And the cracks crawl carelessly to the edges,
Distorting everything.
Were they memories or dreams? Dreams or nightmares? Nightmares
or realities?
Were they ever my memories at all?
If not my own, then whose?
Do the memories of my life belong only to me?
They should. But I do not own them. They own me.*

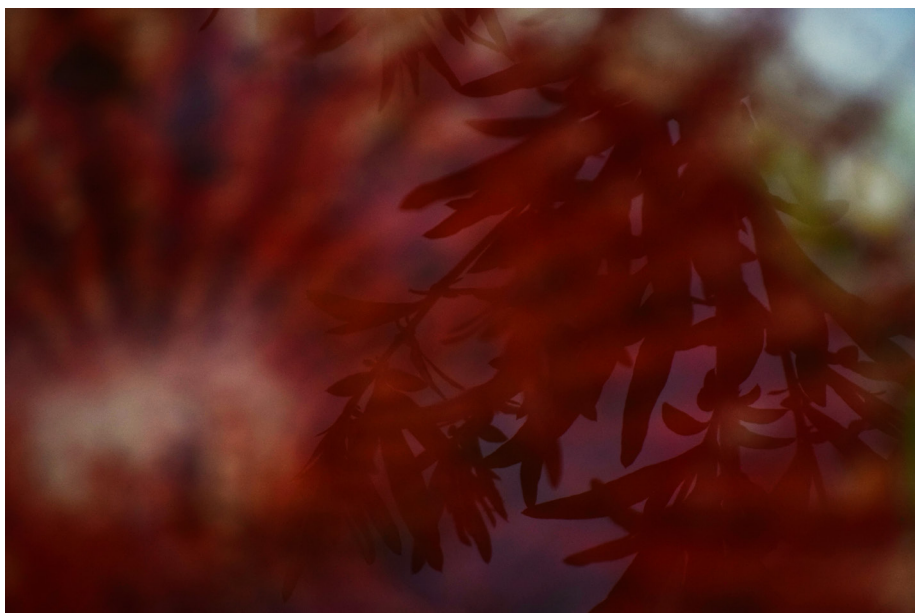


Rusted & Overgrown, Annabelle Root

Photography (DSLR camera, Affinity editing software)







On No Longer Being a Child

Jo Berthin

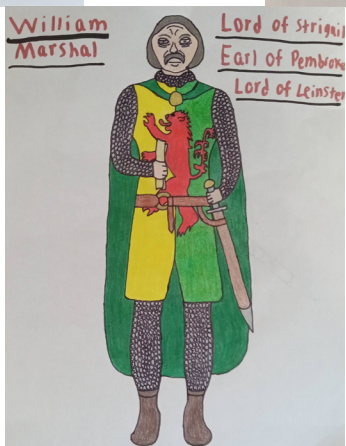
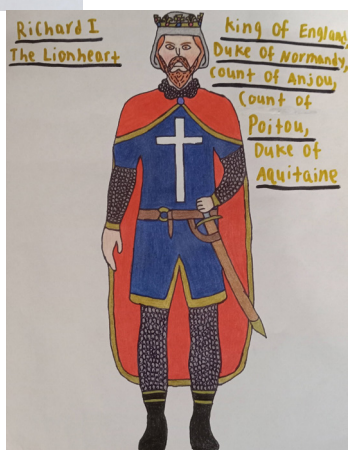
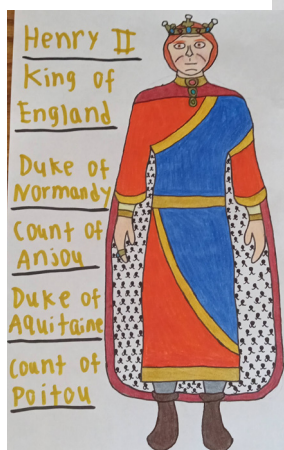
*There used to be a grove of trees
Where I would climb and scrape my knees
A place where I could do no wrong
Where all was love and joy and song*

*My brothers, they would play with me
A game of fun and make believe
With made-up rules for made-up kings
Our crowns were made of gentle things*

*But I had dreams of growing old
And living stories yet untold
I didn't want to waste my time
And sought out higher boughs to climb.*

*So the trees, they laid their branches down
To fit my sister's wedding gown.
And I got into bigger scrapes
That can't be fixed with band-aid tape*

*Yet I think I had it wrong back then
I could use some simple times again
I'd pretend again if they asked me to
Such gentle things seem far and few*

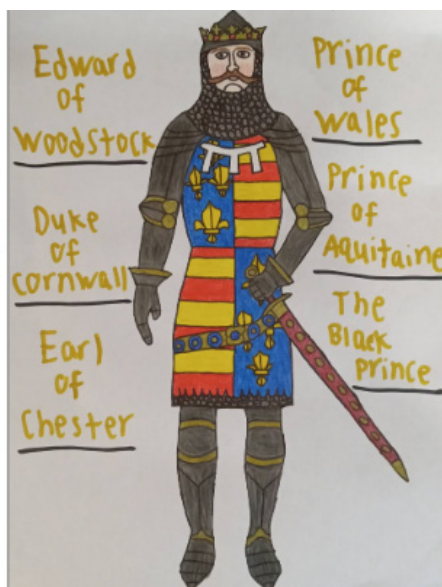
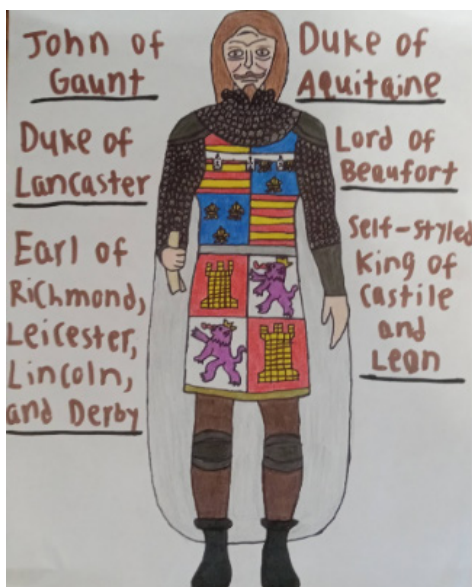


Previous:

The Angevin Legacy, Denny Glinski

Colored Pencils

Eleanor of Aquitaine is on top because she was the matriarch of the Angevin Empire, and arguably the one who truly made it an empire via her Duchy of Aquitaine. Eleanor also played a huge role in running the empire, particularly while her son Richard was off crusading. Henry II and Richard the Lionheart are beneath Eleanor but on equal footing given that they were both Kings of England and rulers of all the territories listed. William Marshal is on the bottom because he is not a member of the royal family, but was a part of the royal inner circle and played a huge role in maintaining the empire.



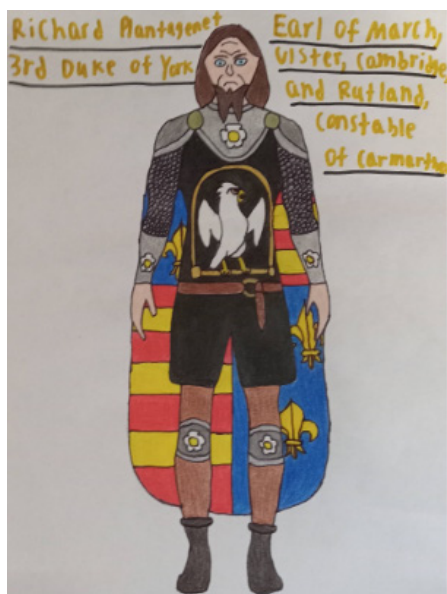
The Sons of Edward III, Denny Glinski

Colored Pencils



Monarchs in an Age of Change, Denny Glinski

Colored Pencils



Key Players in the Wars of the Roses, Denny Glinski

Colored Pencils

The Houseguest

Keiryn I. Sandahl

Saturday morning, and David was coming home. Because both of their parents had meetings that day, Naomi was responsible for preparing the guest room for him. She helped Sapna Auntie ready his bed. Together, they peeled the dusty covers off the bed and Sapna Auntie bundled them away to the washing machine. Naomi took a bounce on the exposed mattresses, like she'd done when she was little. Sapna Auntie walked back into the room just as she was doing it and laughed at her.

“Bahut soft he?”

“Nahi, not very,” said Naomi.

She shook open the first sheet, setting the dust motes a-whirl. The sheets had that fresh sunny smell they got from drying on the clothesline in the open air, the fragrance of expectation. She took one side, Sapna Auntie took the other, and they dressed the bed in its crisp new clothes, carefully folding and tucking so that the sheets lay smooth. Last of all they covered it with the Indian quilt, the red one that used to be David's. Sapna Auntie closed the curtains to keep out the heat.

Naomi wiped down the insides of the closets, the desk, and the bedside table. She fetched a fresh box of tissues. On an impulse, she went to her own room and dug through a bin of old toys, the ones she'd hidden from her mother years ago so she wouldn't throw them away. At the bottom she found the battered plastic lion. David had chewed its face to a plastic mash when he was a toddler, and one of his flimsy plastic legs was permanently bent. They had called him the Blind Lion. One day they played forest fire and the Blind Lion, grouchy and suspicious of everyone, was taking a nap in his cave under David's bed. The frog family tried to warn him, but he thought they were burglars, and, roaring, chased them away. When the fire trucks came blazing past, sirens screaming at the top of David's lungs, he accused them of disturbing him.

Naomi stole back into the guest room and placed her token on the bedside table, next to the alarm clock. A secret signal, perhaps, between them. Welcome home. Remember when you were my best friend?

To still the flutters of anticipation, Naomi joined Sapna Auntie in the kitchen, chopping the dinner vegetables. That done, she decided to take a shower. She felt as silly about showering as she had felt about the lion – she was making a fuss over David, behaving as though he was some distinguished stranger instead of her brother. But she was hot and itchy, and she could detect an incipient headache, so she excused herself the shower.

Now washed and prepared, she twisted her hair into a low bun. She always wore it low, but never down. She didn't like the way it felt, the way it would betray her by bunching into hot, awkward lumps. Naomi was seventeen; David had left two years ago, when their maternal grandmother died and left their grandfather in a lonely house. He had health risks, and their parents had seriously discussed moving Stateside to take care of him. In the end, they agreed to send David by himself, as a sort of companion for his grandfather. David had pushed for his big adventure, proving his responsibility by learning to do laundry and cook a few things, though at the time he was only thirteen. He had his heart set on going to school in America. Now he was riding up from Dehli with their friends the Mahlans, who had arrived that same day.

Naomi's parents came home late. She could hear her mother in the kitchen, laughing about something with Sapna Auntie, a mixture of Hindi and English. The clock on the wall ticked loudly. Curled in her favorite chair, with her toes tucked into the crack between the arm rest and the cushion, with her elephant pants, her T-shirt, and her wet hair, Naomi might have been part of the furniture, a piece of the home scenery as familiar as the TV cabinet and the crooked lamp. She scrolled absently through her camera roll – last year's pictures. The electric standing fan cranked noisily on its axis. Every now and then, it would blow across her face, for a few moments animating the wisp of her hair that dangled softly over her forehead.

Just when her mother called her to come set the table, the doorbell rang.

Naomi suddenly could not bring herself to join the rush outdoors. She could hear the shouted greetings, the questions, the laughter, the thud and clatter of unloading suitcases and wheeling them inside. She lingered in the dining room, laying the places. Nine places – Sapna Auntie was going home, and the Mahlans were staying, since they were going home to an empty house and no groceries.

Two Mahlans pounded into the dining room in their stocking feet. Little Abby Mahlan stopped herself short, and, with childish self-consciousness said, “Can I please have some cold water please?”

When she came back from the kitchen with the water bottle, the crowd had drifted into the dining room. She picked out David at once: he had his old grin, and he still bounced on his toes while he talked, but he had turned lanky, brawny, and his face had lost some of its former boyishness.

“Naomi!” They embraced. She was startled to find he was taller than she was. He seemed startled, too, because he pulled away and blinked at her face below his, disoriented.

“How was the States?” she said, inanely, as if a few words could answer such an enormous question.

“Good, really good,” he said. “How’ve you been?”

“It’s been good here, too.”

Then the conversations around them converged on them, and David was drawn away to tell Mom about his flights, and Abby wanted to tell Naomi about a funny snack the airline served. Sapna Auntie rejoiced over David with many tearful hugs before she went home. Mom brought out soup and bowls, and everyone lined up in the kitchen to serve themselves.

David talked readily, although mostly about his trip. Dad had a few questions about his final exams, Mom about his packing. Uncle Andrew and Auntie Lina answered questions about meal plans and picking up their other car. Naomi stretched out on the dining room floor, heels in the air, playing cards with Charis Mahlan and listening to the grown-up conversation. David scraped

clean two bowls of soup, then drifted away to his room. He did not reappear. Dad went to check on him and came back chuckling.

“Mayday, we have a crash.”

Auntie Lina yawned. “Me too, I hope. Five minutes,” she said to Charis.

They said their good-byes to the Mahlans in a scramble of finding shoes. Luke Mahlan was already half-asleep, trying to tie his laces with wooden fingers.

“Thank you so much for driving David,” Mom said, again.

“I’m delighted we finally got to meet him,” said Auntie Lina. “He’s amazing with kids. I don’t think Luke asked me how many more minutes we’d be in the car, not once.” Luke staggered out onto the porch, yawning, trailing shoelaces. Naomi walked to the gate with the rest, waving to Charis as their car pulled into the street. Mom slipped her arm around her shoulders.

“I’ll do the dishes tonight,” said Naomi. She was trying to remember when they’d first met the Mahlans. At a Thanksgiving party – it would have been a few months after David left. The Mahlans and the Robersons, both had appeared on the scene after David. Although, they’d had that one lunch with the Robersons right before they took David to the States, so he’d met them then, but he probably didn’t remember it.

She paused by David’s door. His light was out.

They went to church without him the next morning. When they got back, he heard their voices and emerged bleary-eyed from the bedroom.

“Get me your laundry,” said Mom, tousling his hair.

At lunch Naomi asked him what kind of friends he had.

“Most of them play volleyball. Basketball, too, for some of them. They’re cool. We have a good time.”

Everyone chewed in silence for a few minutes. Naomi studied the sandwich in her hands and wondered how many sandwiches David must have eaten in surroundings she could barely picture. She had no words for the question she urgently wanted to ask.

“Got any good stories?” asked their father.

David folded his hands behind his head and slouched in his

chair. "I missed the bus one morning."

His listeners gasped in mock horror.

"Yeah. I got up and got dressed like normal, and I was hurrying a bit because I couldn't find my phone. I ran downstairs with ten minutes to spare. I thought I would bolt my breakfast and run. But there wasn't any breakfast, Grandpa was still asleep! I never realized how much I relied on other people making my breakfast. I mean, I panicked. I didn't know what I was going to do."

"Toast or cereal," said Mom.

"That's what I did. Well, I didn't think of cereal. I found the bread and made jam toast. I probably should have put it in a bag and eaten it on the bus, but I didn't think of that, either. I ate really fast and washed the dishes and brushed my teeth, and I ran all the way to the bus stop but I was too late. I just started walking. I knew the directions pretty well, but it was a long way. And the country roads, before you get into the town, they don't have sidewalks or anything. I was walking on the grass by a ditch. Well, along came this old lady in a pickup truck, and she asked me where I was going. I told her I'd missed the bus, and she told me to get in with her, so I did."

Mom winced. Dad said, "Don't tell your mother these things."

"And she drove me to school, and I wasn't late after all." David frowned. "I mean, she wasn't a total stranger. I recognized her from church. And what's an old lady going to do to me? Anyway, after that I learned to make my own breakfast. I did it a bunch of times. Can I take everyone's dishes?"

David cleared the table. Dad put his arm over Mom's shoulder. The same pride gleamed behind their eyes. Naomi fought down the disquieting feeling that her baby brother was more grown-up than she was.

As it happened, Naomi didn't get a chance alone with David until Monday afternoon. Dad was at work, and Mom and Naomi had just got back from Hindi class when Mom decided she would take a nap.

In the hallway, the floor was slick where Sapna Auntie had

just finished mopping it, and she could hear the wet slap of the *poccha* in another room. She knocked on David's door and entered. She found him in the rocking chair by the window with the curtains drawn, checking his messages on his phone. He looked up when she came in, laughing at something he'd just read.

"What's funny?"

"It's just Paul." Still chuckling to himself, David put his phone away. Naomi sat down on the corner of the bed.

"How's it going?" asked David, agreeably.

"Good." Silence between them. Naomi saw the lion, still standing lopsided on the desk. The poor beast's right legs were shorter than his left ones. She remembered crawling under the bed with him, coughing on dust and pretending it was the choking smoke. The Blind Lion was about to roast in the forest fire. He had realized his danger too late. Then Mother Penguin appeared on the scene – she could imitate a lion's roar. He thought her voice belonged to another lion, so he listened to her, and she guided him to safety. They rode away from the burning forest in a helicopter, and on every adventure afterwards, they were fast friends, even though he still believed Mother Penguin was a lion.

David must have followed her eyes, because he said, "I saw you found the Blind Lion. Scruffy as ever."

"Yeah, well, he'd hardly let anyone comb his mane." She was gratified to see him smile.

The ceiling fan beat round in rasping circles. A bicycle bell dinged outside. Sapna Auntie knocked on the door and entered, bearing chai. Naomi took it from her with many thanks and set it on the desk.

David picked up his cup and blew on it.

"Who's Paul?" said Naomi.

"My best friend." David tasted his tea.

"What's he like?"

"Quirky."

"What do you mean?"

He has these shoes that are too big for him"—he demonstrated the size of the shoes—"but he says they make him feel more intimidating. I've never met a less intimidating person.

He's super freckled, says his mom dropped a jar of cinnamon on his face when he was a baby and scarred him for life."

Naomi thought of her friend Theo Roberson, with his green plastic sunglasses and his villainous cackle. Hiding in the closet with Charis and Ellie Roberson. Theo's terrible voice during the interrogation scene, when he tied her and Luke Mahlan to chairs, actually tied them, and turned the lights out. Ellie had rescued them, a feisty grandma wearing a scarf tied at the chin, armed with an umbrella.

"I had some quirky friends, too," she said. Theo and Ellie were gone now, and David would never meet them. Anyway, he didn't ask, so she said, "How about Grandpa? What's he like?"

"He leaves himself notes. Checklists. Everywhere. He never checks anything off, though. He's afraid he won't remember something important, so he writes it down and sticks it on a cabinet door or a desk or on the back of the couch, once. He doesn't have people over much. It was like a map of the inside of his head. I would read them sometimes, so then when he would ask me like, 'Where's that thing I wrote about Friday?' I might know where it was. He hardly ever needed them, though. It was as though writing them down was the only help he needed."

He had prepared that story. Not that it was untrue – only rehearsed, and it frustrated her. A few distilled, entertaining moments plucked out of a vast mystery of independent experience.

"Did you like living there?"

David considered. "Mostly, yeah," he said at last. "How about you? How've you been?"

How could she sum up two years in a sentence? "Good," she said, and it was true. She wanted to tell him about Theo and Ellie and even Cat and the Mahlans. She wanted to know everything, everything, about Grandpa's house and his friends and his jokes and his struggles. What had brought about the changes in him? She wanted her jokes, her memories, born at home in his absence, to mean something to him. He could never love the people she carried around in her heart as she did, and she would never share his new friends. This sprouted David-person was a stranger to her. She was surprised to find a lump in her throat.

David started to tell her a story about another friend, who had got a hundred percent on a reading quiz by pure guesswork. He had rehearsed these stories, had told them before, because they were funny. Naomi enjoyed them but wished they could get beyond them. But whatever it was she really wanted, it was too immaterial too grasp, too precious to squish into awkward language.

Instead, she asked if she could take David and go to the market for the groceries. Her mother gave them the list and the money. She and David walked together through their neighborhood. It was more hers than his, for he only lived in it one year, back when they called it the “New House.” Still, surely it was the last house he remembered. David thought he knew the way to the market, but she twice had to correct him at the turns. The heat had its heavy hand on the world, stifling it. They passed the hibiscus bush by the corner house and the park with its rusty fence. Stray dogs lay panting in the shade of the big trees by the swings. The afternoon glare sharpened everything it touched, fiercely radiant. It hurt her eyes and gave her a headache.

The market parking lot was as crowded as ever. Together they wove nimbly between piles of parked motorcycles. They bought milk, bread, and lentils from the usual store. Flies buzzed around their ankles. David practiced his rusty Hindi with the shopkeeper, who smiled indulgently.

“Who is this?” said the shopkeeper, practicing his English. He knew Naomi.

“*Mera chhota bhai*,” she replied – my little brother. She loaded the grocery bags.

David was fidgeting with the metal weights that the shopkeeper used in his scale when he weighed the vegetables. As they turned to go, he didn’t put it far enough back on the counter. His elbow brushed against it, knocking it over the edge. It hit the floor with a resounding thud and David leaped backwards.

“Did it land on your toe?” Naomi couldn’t help snickering. David shook his head, laughing himself.

“I think it missed me.”

He snuck a few glances at his foot as though he hardly

believed it.

They had some extra money. As they walked past the men who were snoozing in their three-wheeled autorickshaws, Naomi suddenly said, “What if we took a rickshaw?”

She found a driver and told him their address, and they climbed into the bench in the back. David reached, reflexively, for a seatbelt, and Naomi laughed at him for the second time. The driver gunned the engine, and they took off into the street. Whenever he shot around a corner, David and Naomi were thrown into each other’s shoulders. David hung on to the side bar, his hair flying backward with the force of their forward motion. The wind blew Naomi’s mouth into a smile.

Then the rickshaw stopped at their own gate. Naomi paid the driver. As they got out, David said, “Sometimes, you gotta escape in a helicopter.” And she thought she forgave him then, but maybe it was afterwards.

As she and Sapna Auntie were unbagging the groceries and putting them away in the fridge, she heard David in the living room, telling Mom the story of grandpa and his sticky notes.

Author, Artist, & Musician Bios



Diego Fernandez

Current year: Junior.

Denny Glinski

Junior, majoring in Education & History.

Helena Ragsdale

I am a writing major who loves writing poetry and I am also a senior. This poem is about the fear of burying your past memories with a loved one.

Annabelle Root

Senior.

Keiryn I. Sandahl

I am a double major in Writing and Global Studies and the head editor of the Lantern. I love words, whether in reading, writing, or conversation, and I love best those stories of adventures, whether grand or simple, and of human variety.

Music QR Code

Follow this QR code to visit our YouTube channel with music that has been published in previous Lantern issues. Listen and enjoy!



Do YOU want to submit something to the Lantern?

Whether you are a skilled writer, artist, or musician with many years of experience, or a brand new writer, artist, or musician who wants to share their work for the first time, we are delighted to see your work!

Be on the lookout for the October submissions email: Imagination!

Additionally, if you are interested in following the Lantern's story throughout this year (and years to come), join our group on Campus Groups, visit our website hulantern.wordpress.com, or follow us on Instagram at [@h.u.lantern](https://www.instagram.com/h.u.lantern).

Also, please visit our Campfire bulletin board past Java 101 to read poetry and pin up your own. The submissions prompt will also be posted here.

Yours for lighting up the world,
The Lantern Editors



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