

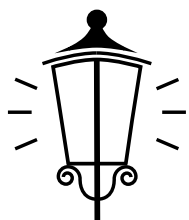


The Lantern
March 2024

Birches (excerpt)

*When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay
As ice-storms do. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.*

 *Robert Frost*



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.*

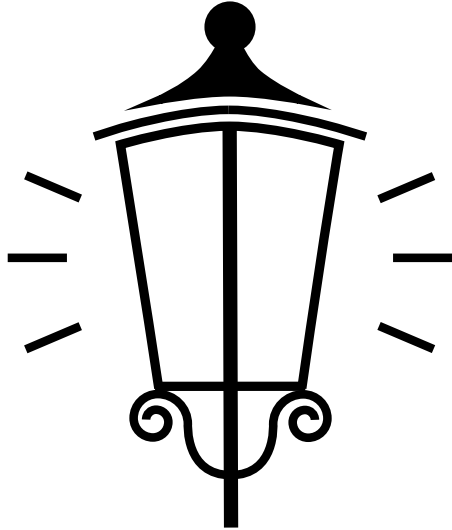
The Lantern began as an offshoot of a literary competition that existed for over a decade before 1932. After that date, the Lantern, previously known as the Lanthorn, began printing the works of students and has continued to do so ever since.

Front cover:

Tree, Catherine Lynip
Photo

Things

March 2024



Letter from the Editors

Dear Houghton community,

This edition of the Lantern wraps up our issues composed of general student and faculty contributions. While the Lantern will publish some senior spotlights in the coming month, this March issue concludes what has been compiled from your submissions for the 2023-2024 school year.

In the fall semester we considered challenges, seasons, and universal truths. This semester we focused on people, places, and (in this issue) **things**. Here we finish our spring 2024 Lantern trilogy by contemplating **things**, whether physical objects, such as a book, or abstract ideas, such as mercy. Please take a moment to pause and enjoy the works composed and assembled by those around you.

Yours for lighting up the world,
Emma, Hannah, Catherine, Lee, Warren, & Susannah

Table of Contents

Little Happy Things on the way to Highgate Wood	Alexa Williams	8
Rocks	Catherine Lynip	9
On the Magpie	Emma Dainty	10
The Deep	Destiney Schultz	11
Shovel	Catherine Lynip	12
Keychains	Jay Lagmann	13
Bindings	Jay Lagmann	14
Orange	Catherine Lynip	14
The Merlin	Emma Dainty	15
Becoming a Scientist	Destiney Schultz	16
Ice	Catherine Lynip	17
The Sanctimonious	Mayfly	18
Just a Few Days	Joseph Langlois	20
Wings of a Dove Fly Free	Rebecca Dailey	21
Summertime Radio	Adrianna Kappmeier	22
Bleachers	Catherine Lynip	25
The Return to Childhood	Julia Collins	26
Clouds	Lee James & Megan Sensenig	27
Author, Artist, & Musician Bios		29
Music QR Code		30

Little Happy Things on the way to Highgate Wood

Alexa Williams

I went on a trip to the park today.

On the way to the bus stop, I saw a woman drop her credit card.

A man quickly picked it up and ran to return it to her.

On the bus, a man gave me some travel advice;

he loved travelling, and had been to Uganda four times.

He thought that I was British.

Two friends laughed and walked down a path in the park.

A father helped his son get out of a bramblebush.

A woman complimented a stranger's dog.

The bus driver smiled at me as I got on the bus home.

Opposite:

Rocks, Catherine Lynip

Photo



On the Magpie

Emma Dainty

With long black tail and white front, the Black-billed Magpie resembles a gentleman in a fine dress suit. The sun teases gleams of green, blue, and purple from his shining black feathers. His sleek dark head passes for slicked-back hair. His snowy white front contrasts brightly against his blue-black tuxedo. As he struts about, his coattails dragging, he seems a respectable figure.

It is not until he speaks that we know his true quality. The hoarse “Chak! Chak! Chak!” reveals his ill-breeding, especially when he wings his way to thief from the neighbor’s garbage can. Here he perches on the rim, his beady eyes furtively moving to and fro. If another magpie ventures near, a quarrel is sure to ensue.

He is a bully too, we discover, as he and his associates gather together to mob the lordly bald eagle who has dared to enter their domain. They congregate in the trees, shouting to each other, screaming their outrage. Occasionally, one will dart past the eagle, shrieking insults. At last, drawing courage from their numbers, they descend in a body, and the bald eagle is forced to retire from the field of battle.

Yet if he holds his tongue and remains discretely among the trees, the magpie is a handsome bird. As he flies through the clear air and lands upon a branch, iridescent tail streaming and white wingtips flashing at every wingbeat, he resembles a tropical beauty from some verdant rainforest. For that is what a genteel magpie resembles: a macaw of the north.

The Deep

Destiney Schultz

Murkiness

Green bleeding brown

Blue in the crest

Shapes and forms

Shadows and light

The brush of an imagined fin

Terror in the bones

A remembered fear

My ancestors shaking in the hold

The clouds cover

A weight on my chest

Facedown in the color

Not enough air

Not enough blood

Holding myself in the water

Two sides of a mirror

Looking from underneath

The barrier between me and them

My ancestors

Applaud the wisdom of the boat

The appreciation from above

The Popotos swim on

Unbothered



Keychains

Jay Lagmann

*Shiny memories locked in a box
Dangling one day from my hands
Saved in a box then next
Small and compact, easy to hold close to me
Keychains with no keys
No way back to those places
No doors to unlock or homes to create
Memories of all I've done
Tied to cheap little kitsch
I'm holding my past with each one
One day I'll have more
More memories and a concrete place to hold them
I'll have a home with keys enclosed
Giving purpose to those memories
Holding my home in their shiny grasp
My past and future entwined in the present*

Opposite:

Shovel, Catherine Lynip

Photo

Bindings

Jay Lagmann

*Bookshelves decorate my home
Stacks of books on couches, benches, baskets
Everywhere I look knowledge overflows
Libraries were our playgrounds
Peaceful silence surrounding our searches
Victory when you found coveted titles
Pages rustled and breathed
Tea and cookies crumbled beside them
Mornings and nights devouring fictional sunrises
Still now, in my room, books litter the space
Stacked in crevices and shelves
Favorites marked with ink and folded pages*



The Merlin

Emma Dainty

*Bird above in the bare sky:
Arrow-winged, astride the air;
Ready to ride the rising drafts
And wandering winds which wave
The tree-tops and touch the face.
Sharply chattering, child of the shining
Sky: the small sun-seeker,
Master of the mounting morning heights,
Heir of the airy evening.*

Opposite:

Oranges, Catherine Lynip

Photo

Becoming a Scientist

Destiney Schultz

*Maybe next time
When my inner child says
“Get your feet wet”
My adult brain won’t say back
“wet feet are uncomfortable”
“tennis shoes are more practical”
“it isn’t warm enough for sandals”*

*Maybe next time
In my wisdom of 21
I will have the courage
To dip my fingers into the pools
Feel the scratch of the Hermit Crabs
Cup the glass shrimp
Under warm palms*

*Maybe next time
I’ll uncover the rocks
Peeking under with wonder
Letting my inner child free
To gently stroke
The sea anemone*

*Maybe next time
I will unlearn practicality
Unlearn the fear and safety
That gets drilled in
With every passing year*

*Maybe next time
When I do all these things
Run free and happy
I will join the hallowed halls
Of tidal pools and beach combing
Tree climbing and meadow running
Rock climbing and puddle jumping

And become a Scientist*



Ice, Catherine Lynip
Photo

The Sanctimonious Mayfly

“People say they care,” she said to me, “but, in truth, they never do anything.”

Repressed pain hid in the depths of her eyes, pooling alongside the stories she kept from me. Stories she must have voiced at one point, but stopped after wearily realizing it was futile. It was when it became complicated and hard that people looked away.

It’s always easier to claim the moral high ground and voice the right opinions, than it is to follow through with them. Categorizing the world into black and white has always been easy. It’s when things begin to blur into a monochromatic range that people avoid the questions with no real answers. They gloss over the problem, use “it’s situational” to evade responding, or are afflicted with sudden amnesia.

“When a situation is more complicated, people don’t want to get lost in it,” she said, her fingers clenching around the steering wheel. “Sometimes they don’t know who’s lying and who’s telling the truth.”

Then she frowned, “But doing nothing is worse. It makes everything worse.”

I thought it would be different. I had wanted to hold onto some insignificant hope that people wouldn’t turn away when a situation arose, especially when people claimed to stand for the opposite. Especially not in our community.

Of course, some people regularly bypass statements and values they claim to be committed to. Perhaps these people only view the commitments as non-binding obligations, because there’s no one to enforce it—at least not yet. Nevertheless, I would have expected the majority to follow their word. After all, what are we without it?

When I sit against the wall, drifting in my consciousness, I often wonder if these responses are something innate to us, or if it

is cultural conditioning.

I wonder if I will end up like everyone else; claiming I care, but never doing anything. I'm probably already doing so and don't even notice.

I wonder if it's worse to voice my "commitments" and not do anything, or to never voice anything so that doing nothing doesn't matter.

I wonder how people would respond if I claimed to care about two, or more, conflicting beliefs. Is it socially possible, or will I have to choose one over the other(s)?

I wonder if I should risk being jeered at or outcasted if I voiced an opinion rather than hiding it, because we're told it's selfish to be self preserving. Would anything change if I did speak? Probably not. After all, people tend to continue in the ways that are easiest. Someone might pause for a second when something flickers by, but soon, as most people do, that person would turn back to the same well-worn path.

"People like what's easy," I said.

"But you don't grow if it's not hard," she replied.

I paused. Smiled.

Oh. Right, that's true.

Then I thought for a moment, and added, "But it really is hard."

"That's the point."

Just a Few Days

Joseph Langlois

*Just a few days remain
And I don't know what to do
My stomach turns in anxiety
My soul longs for an answer
For months I have waited
Unable to take action
But now that action is around the corner
I fear freezing
I fear blowing it all
I try to put it out of my mind
To go about my day like any other
As I have done for months
But it rests in the back of my skull
This need to act
The inevitability of it
My preparation was inaction
And in it I was composed
Now the anxiety and longing have taken hold
A battle rages within
But the deadliest enemy of all is the image in my head
The image rooted in inaction
So now I wonder if it was true
If all the waiting
All the anxiety
All the longing
Were for nought
But it is better to know
To take action
To face fate
Then to cower in inaction*

Wings of a Dove Fly Free

Rebecca Dailey

*I stand on my tip toes
Reaching for ceiling tiles, just barely there.
I jump, my fingers brush against the surface.
Papers scatter as I spin,
Homework and projects unbidden and unfinished.*

*But for the moment, I don't care.
For the moment I am free.
Metaphorical chains hit the ground with crash
That can be heard for miles around
If they were but wisps of the past.*

*Responsibilities forgotten, but the
Papers should probably be picked up, lest they
Become ruined.*

*It is a beautiful thing, freedom.
A world spanning across oceans.
A world with no boundaries.*

*For now, though, I must return to a different chapter.
One in which the papers become complete.
Another day, then.
Dreams never do fade,
Nor the freedom they bring.*

Summertime Radio

Adrianna Kappmeier

*It's summertime in Jersey when the hot air hits
Let all the bennies know who they're dealing with
Roll down my windows cruising down the shore
But summer just doesn't feel the same anymore*

*College kicked me into next December
It's cold and bleak and I still feel under the weather
Now I just pretend it's fine, sit back and unwind
But I can never seem to get rolling with the times*

*I miss the days waiting for that final school bus
Telling my friends man, I'll miss you guys so much
But I'll see you when it's over, won't be gone long
Summertime radio's when they play all the best songs*

*Now I work overtime with part-time pay
Being an adult is the worst kind of headache
All I do is save but I can't seem to shake
The dread as time keeps slipping away*

*My radio's dead I can't hear all of the songs
That carried me through the worst of it all
But like all things in life every song must end
And all that's left is the silence in our chests*

*Beating hearts and fleeting dreams
Responsibility is not as fun as it seems
Traded happiness for the freedom to live my life
Sounded good enough so I thought I'd be alright*

*The days are rolling, it's already end of July
Digging a grave as my faith shrivels up and dies
Took my vacation now I missed a week of pay
It'll be a few weeks before I can continue to save*

*In a month I'll be doing it all over again
Don't know if I have the strength to do it all over again
But really, did I ever have much of a choice?
Between years of debt or a life with no voice?*

*Childhood friends living their own lives
We're strangers now cause nobody bothers to try
I still hear their laughter, feel their smiles
Like I'm back in elementary and we still got a while*

*Now I'm doing 9-5 almost every day of the week
Pretending like it's enough to make ends meet
On the outside I'm smiling but inside I'm screaming
Freedom seems to have lost all it's meaning*

*Got some double A's so my radio could play
But everything's changed and the songs aren't the same
Now I wait patiently for the noise to end
Driving in silence cause it's my only friend*

*Broken promises and raging tears
I ask myself, "How did we get here?"
Scared to live watching old friends die
Your 20s are great, yeah that's just the saddest lie*

*92.7 in the car I was only ten years old
Mom up front playing the summertime radio
Backseat with my siblings watching fireworks outside
On our way to the barbecue for a good time*

*Sitting on the beach feeling sand in my toes
Blissfully unaware that one day I'd have to let go
Into the ocean all of my memories, they go
All of the things that once felt like home*

*Now I sit alone going through old photos
To remind me of a time when I used to know
How simple and beautiful life can be
Only when you're still young and naive*

*Well, I'm still young but no longer naive
I've come to learn that this is reality
The glamor of adulting is all just for show
Nothing to look forward to but the summertime radio*



Bleachers, Catherine Lynip
Photo

The Return to Childhood

Julia Collins

*The return to childhood, evidently
Is wanted by so, so many
But as Bill once said,
I don't think so for me.*

*Why would I want to go back
to the unbearable angst
I felt so nervous all the time then
But now I feel quite free.*

Clouds

Lee James & Megan Sensenig

"It's a beautiful day, not a cloud in the sky."

"Well, there's one right there."

*And there, and there, and there,
struggle after struggle after struggle,
and me, and you, counting them
and looking for the silver linings.*

"I'm quite good at finding silver linings,"

you say,

and I nod.

For every cloud, you see a silver lining.

And I'm sitting next to you, and I only see gray.

I keep looking, though,

hoping that someday,

I'll see challenges the same way you do—

silver and smoke and wind and rain—

a chance to grow.

"Blue skies scare me." I say,

and it's true,

even though my clouds all seem so heavy.

When they're gone,

I'm just waiting.

I'd rather struggle than watch the horizon expectantly.

At least where there are clouds, there is rain,

falling to earth and watering moss,

and there is me, and there is you,

and I see the rain,

and you see the silver lining.

Author, Artist, & Musician Bios



Emma Dainty

I am Emma Dainty, member of the 2023 London Cohort, head editor of the Lantern, writing consultant at the Writing Center, and expert on all things Tolkien and Star Wars.

Rebecca Dailey

Hello, my name is Rebecca Dailey. I am a junior at Houghton, double majoring in Education and English. When I'm not studying or writing, you can find me with my friends having fun and acting as the resident Harry Potter know-it-all.

Music QR Code

Follow this QR code to visit a 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 first
submissions email Fall 2024!*

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

An ode: to the tree in front of my childhood home

Alexa Williams

*I used to be taller than you.
We both grew with each season,
climbing higher towards the summer sun
and standing shivering in winter snowfalls,
reaching arms and branches to the sky,
trying to catch the falling flakes.
Year by year passed and I didn't even notice
how tall you'd gotten.
This summer,
a bird made a nest in your branches.
When we were young,
birds perched on you
and you drooped.
Now we both can handle bigger burdens.
But you're taller than me now,
and there's a birds' nest in your branches,
and I'm not sure if I even recognize you.
You've changed, childhood tree.
You've grown older,
taller,
found your place.
I can hear the birds singing in your branches.*

