





The Lantern

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

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Cover art:

Catherine Lynip, *castle on a foggy morning*

Reprieve

November-December
2022-23 Acedemic Year
Issue No. 3

Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

As you complete this academic semester and approach the end of this year, we hope you are restored with a reprieve from or amid academic stressors. In this issue of the Lantern, you will find meditations on rest, snapshots of moments of comfort and solace, as well as reflections on soft calm.

While moments of pause can seem out of grasp within the confines of an academic year; we hope you find a sense of ease and stillness within the gentle turning of this edition's pages. Take in the soft rustle of paper, the shine of the ink. Thank you for the moments you have shared with this little book filled with imaginative snippets of your lives and creativity.

Yours for lighting up the world,
Rachel, Katya, Hannah, and Emma

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Invocation

Rachel Huchthausen

Invocation

Lord, gather us together now,
As bird gathers her brood beneath her wings,
Welcoming them to her embrace.
Let us be warmed, O Lord, with your presence,
Rejoicing in your common comfort to us all.
Let this gathering beneath your wings be of rest and healing,
Of harking again to the rhythm of your heart,
Of learning again to dream and hope and trust,
Of renewing our vision and strength,
So that you might send us forth
Flying with wings like eagles,
Unwearied.

A liturgy for mornings when we wake weary

Rachel Huchthausen

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.

Their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.

In them he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

Psalm 19:1-5 ESV

Blessed are you, O LORD, King of the universe, who has taught
the sun to rise in faithfulness each day since creation and has so
patterned the world that we might, each day, wake to the light of
your new mercies.

There are days, O LORD, when, even as we wake, night lies heavy
upon us. Our fears and faults of yesterday shroud our heads, fog
our vision, and follow us into tomorrow.

These are days, O LORD, when we would not follow the example
of the sun and open our eyes upon this new day. We long for the
cocooning dark when we might breathe back into your sleep, that
little death, that foretaste of that rest eternal in that better life that
you prepare for your children. Surely it is true: to die is gain.

Gently open our eyes, O LORD, that we may see that this is also
true: to live is Christ. The grace of Christ's living meets us in the
moments of our waking, filling us to face the future, that we, being
strengthened and renewed by the meeting of God in the minutes of
our days, might walk in the train of the sun, might rise in radiance
rejoicing in our strength, and might run our course with great joy.

Amen

Silence

Evelyn Dainty

Silence. Stop here and now and listen to the world around you. Are you inside or outside? Are you near other people or a road? Are there birds chirping? Or can you experience complete silence?

I was walking home from work this afternoon when it occurred to me once again how scarce silence is in this modern era. I got halfway home before noticing that I could hardly hear the noise from Route 50 in Fairfax. I paused a moment and savored the lull in noise. Not ten seconds later, though, a truck turned to cross my path in the distance. Disappointed, I moved on. Noise once more closed in.

I probably shouldn't continue until I have defined what I mean by complete silence, so here we go: Silence is where you hear no sound of human activity. If you can hear birds twittering, the grass stirring, the wind blowing, or a brook bubbling, I think that is still silence. It still has the feel of silence. If you hear people talking, machinery running, road noise, or even so much as a fluorescent light buzzing softly; you have not achieved silence.

Absolute silence is no sound whatever the source. Unless you are deaf, it would be very difficult to find a silent place. There will almost always be subtle sounds indoors, and there will almost always be quiet sounds in nature.

There are two types of silence. There's an indoor silence and an outdoor silence.

I find indoor silence stifling. Being one of four kids, I rarely experience silence unless I'm alone in the house. This kind of silence closes in and stifles me. It makes me feel afraid of my own house and lonely. It's a stuffy kind of silence.

Outdoor silence is relaxing. I can hear the silence in open spaces, and in the woods it could almost be said to echo against the still trees.

My main experience of silence is from Alaska. It's not as rugged as people imagine where I lived, but you can still find silent places less than an hour from almost anywhere.

My family would go for hikes and bike rides while we were there. I have experienced silence from mountains and valleys in the summer and winter.

I have been far slower than the rest of my family as long as I can remember, so I often trailed behind them when we were out in the wild. This led me to encounter wildlife and experience silence more complete than anywhere else.

The moment I remember most clearly was on a bike ride. We were riding the Tony Knowles Trail, Kincaid Park, Anchorage. At the end of our ride was a hill that led up to the Kincaid Visitor Center. I always got off and walked my bike up this hill. It was too steep for me. This hill winds through the green bushes, and in some spots you can get faint glimpses of the Cook Inlet. The day that I am talking about, it was sunny with a clear, deep, blue sky. There were a few bushes with many small clumps of ruby red berries. It made a lovely picture, and I savored it whenever I had to stop for breath, which was fairly frequently. (I struggle with uphill climbs.) I rounded a bend and was out of sight of any other humans. Through the trees I could glimpse the Inlet with the sun sparkling off it. I could hear the silence, and it was—for a moment only—absolute silence. It rebounded off the bushes around me and echoed off the sky. It was beautiful and reminded me that everything that we can see is wonderfully and perfectly made.

The other time I specifically remember was on a mountain somewhere in Canada. We were driving to Alaska and made a two week trip of it. Someone needed a rest stop, so we pulled off in a little overlook. The others were on the other side of the gravel parking area, but I went over to the wooden observation deck. It had educational signs, but what I wanted to see were the mountains that stretched in front of me. I stood there that afternoon and noticed the absolute silence. I think that was the first time that I felt like silence was, in itself, a noise.

All this being said, I can enjoy silence; though outside more than indoors. I don't want to become deaf so as to achieve permanent silence, but I do like a time free from the sounds of human society.

Sound can be pleasing most of the time, but silence is a rare treat nowadays.

Silence. Stop now for a moment and listen to the world around you. Are you inside or outside? Are you near other people or a road? Are there birds chirping? Or can you experience complete silence?

Silence

Next page:

Rachel Huchthausen, *Page 9*

[redacted] we're holding off [redacted] we're older. That's all.
[redacted]

[redacted] I wanted [redacted] go out with Peter. Drink
[redacted] in a very [redacted]

[redacted] Sunday night Peter called and played the second half
[redacted] in Central Park. I had to cut his call short after
[redacted] an hour, because I had to begin stomping around
[redacted] stairs and muttering like Attila the Hun, and I could
[redacted] hear Martha doing her best to calm [redacted] something she
[redacted] really does like a pro. The number of blows between
[redacted] Daddy and me has decreased dramatically since he mar-
[redacted] ried Martha. She's a soother. And he also pays a lot more
[redacted] attention to her and a lot less to me. I was [redacted] I heard the
furniture being thumped around. I knew this was a seri-
[redacted] ous case and I'd better hang up quick. [redacted] the family
phone. I'd be glad to have [redacted] private one of my own, [redacted] I
[redacted] can't until I can pay for it myself.

[redacted] I started to sign off, but first [redacted] had to confirm [redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] I'll meet you outside the theater at eight thirty. [redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted] No. Pick me up here. You know where I live.
[redacted] a pause.

[redacted] Your father has to look me over, eh?
I was [redacted] and said, "Sort of, Martha, too."
[redacted] I'd knock them dead with my respectability.
[redacted] That made me laugh. A dangerous rumble from down
[redacted] stairs warned me that Mt. Vesuvius was about to blow.
[redacted] "Good-bye," I said.

[redacted] See you Sunday night. Eight o'clock.
[redacted] Daddy really let me have it after I hung up. Jess, you
[redacted] know a thing or two about feeling [redacted] how could you be on
[redacted] the phone so long. How much time [redacted] I have to tell you

Caves

Anna Mummert

Suddenly I became aware that I was conscious.

I had the feeling that I had just woken from a dream, but I could not recall having been asleep. As my mind cleared of its dreamy fog, I was struck by an intense and unwelcome light. It was as if I'd emerged from the depths of a cave, with eyes unadjusted to the light of day. The light was glaring, white, and obscenely sterile, but it wasn't until my eyes became accustomed to it that I saw what it revealed. A stair. Ahead of me lay a stair leading downward.

I crept to the edge and peered around. Several steps down, there was a landing, and around the corner another flight started. I could see nothing beyond it. I inspected the landing upon which I stood with closer attention and found, well, nothing. No door, no rooms, and no steps leading upward. The only furnishing was the buzzing lights overhead; flat, blazing, mesh-patterned panels embedded in a blank ceiling. I inspected the walls. Concrete blocks painted white. White. Everything was white except the floor and the stairs which, being a light gray, gave little contrast to the invasively bright cavern in which I found myself.

Trembling slightly, I took the steps down to the first landing. To my left, a window was carved into the wall. I sprang toward it and peered out, only to be met with infinite darkness as if it were a cloudy sky on a rainy night. Disheartened, but determined to find my way out, I started downward again. The wall of the landing was curved, white concrete blocks forming a perfect arc. But there was nothing else to see.

Down the stairs. I counted thirteen steps. Staring at my feet, I noticed black treads on the edge of each step.

Down the stairs. Thirteen steps. Each landing had a window, but none of them provided me with a view. Down the stairs. Thirteen steps. Around the landing. Hear the buzzing. Step step step step.

Continue downward. I paused, breathing hard, though not from exertion. I looked up. I looked down. All was the same

around me.

I pressed on, each landing curved, each step adorned with its black stripe, each window devoid of—anything.

I became increasingly aware of my footsteps. Tap tap tap they went incessantly on. Tap tap tap. Tap tap tap tap tap tap TAP TAP TA—I stopped and, covering my face with my hands, groaned aloud, the sound echoing all around me. I was driving myself mad by the tapping of my own feet. I had to have traveled fifty flights by now.

With new determination surging within me, I fled down the stairs, taking two or three at a time. The trap that held me whirled by as I sped down flight after flight after flight.

The buzz, the gray stair, the treads, the buzz, the white curved walls, the window, the treads, the buzz... the darkness... until I grew faint and leaned my head against the windowpane. “I’ve been here before. I’ve been here before!” I moaned. “Dear God,” I prayed, “Can’t I get out?” Fraught with despair and exhaustion, I sobbed, “Please, can’t you get me out of here?”

After a moment, my resolve returned, and I walked on weak legs down to the next landing. I glanced at the window, and then spun around and stared. Beyond the window were lush, green treetops. I hurried down the stairs.

At the next landing, I stopped and stared again. In the wall on the floor below—did I dare I believe it?—was a door. The final flight of stairs was surely the most difficult. I struggled within myself. I dared not approach the door only to find that it is no door at all. But I dared not remain, else I would never get out. Did I dare I move from this spot, this stairwell that seemed to be all I have ever known? The monotony had become familiar to me, and I knew not what chaos may lay beyond the door. Eventually, my drive for freedom from this trap and the knowledge of the unknowable prompted me to descend the last set of stairs. With hesitation, I turned the doorknob, eased the door open, and stepped outside. A warm summer breeze wafted over me, and I turned. Behind me stood a building, but it was only my own two-story house.

10.25.22 Observations from Underneath the Linden Tree

Catherine Lynip

The sound of plastic wheels approaches.
The rider pedals with all his might.
He is hyper-focused on the next obstacles,
His face set in utmost concentration.
He deftly swerves around the corner
And over the bumps in the sidewalk
Created by creeping roots from my Linden tree.
With small plastic training wheels,
This four-year-old is unstoppable.



Tenshi Chispa, *On Road to Connection*

Peace along the Wayside

Emma Dainty

The weary traveler trudged along the dimming road. Flanked by tall pillars of trees, the road stretched on until it was lost in the gloaming. The weary traveler stumbled, his tired feet caught in a root. He raised his bent head and glimpsed a glimmer of yellow light ahead. He picked up his pace, weighed down by his burden but eager for a hope of rest and shelter, a reprieve from his hard journey.

At length the light coalesced into a window. As the weary traveler approached, the house materialized about the glowing wink of hope. Then he was before the door. He lifted a hand to knock, but hesitated. Before he could make a decision, the door was flung wide, turning inward upon a room full of light and warmth.

“Welcome, weary wanderer! Let light lift your life and load!”

The weary traveler squinted in the sudden brightness. A cheery figure stood in the halo of firelight, his round cheeks cherry-red, and his bright eyes gray as silver. He was short, and while he could not be called rotund, neither could he be called slender. He was clad in bright-blue and had a green hat with a jaunty yellow feather in it atop his thick brown curls. Smiling so brightly it etched wrinkles about his eyes, the strange man burst into song.

*“Firelight and starlight!
Best of all house-light!
Come out from dark night
And stand in warm light!”*

The weary traveler did not move, his eyes and mouth open. The short figure cocked his head and waited.

“Well, how long are you going to keep standing on my doorstep!” finally asked the host genially, reaching out his hands to relieve the weary traveler of his burden. With great strength for a person of his stature, he held the large load easily in one hand,

while his other arm encircled the weary traveler's waist to pull him into the comfort of his home.

*“Now we bring the traveler in;
Now we give him comfort!
Now let the heart-warming begin;
Now let warm light heal hurt!”*

The door closed on the night and the burden went beside a pair of green boots.

“There we are!” exclaimed the little man impelling the weary traveler forward to the embrace of an armchair and seating himself across from him. “Now what brings you down the avenue of trees in the dark.” He checked himself suddenly. “But that's none of my business. It is my business to give weary travelers light and peace and warmth and comfort.” He smiled and his bright eyes twinkled. “And perhaps some food and song.”

“Who are you?” asked the weary traveler in amaze.

The man leapt to his feet and, sweeping the hat off his head, bowed with a flourish. “Perry-the-Singer at your service.” He replaced the hat, and the yellow feather bobbed merrily.

The weary traveler opened his mouth to speak, but Perry-the-Singer interrupted. “We can't talk easy without some nourishment, and you needn't be atelling me your name—I know it already. Come! The table is set! I knew you were acoming.”

Before the weary traveler knew what he was about, he was seated close before the fire with his feet up on a stool and a spread of soft bread and butter and honey, strawberries in cream, and more kinds of nuts than he could count. Milk and mead were for drinking, and Perry-the-Singer was for listening, for he sang and talked and whistled and danced—all the while tucking away so much food that the weary traveler was not embarrassed to do the meal great justice.

Perry-the-Singer regaled his guest with many wondrous tales and songs. At last the weary traveler could hold no more food, although his appetite for story was not sated—and no one's could be even after hearing a thousand of Perry-the-Singer's songs. It is

my belief he knows all the tales of the World, and makes up that deficient knowledge tenfold with his own. There is not a tale, ballad, poem, song, lay, epic, or story he cannot supply, and if there is none already made to suit, he makes one up on the spot.

For a long time the weary traveler sat enthralled before the fire, wrapped up in a blanket in a soft armchair while Perry-the-Singer told story after story, sang song after song, and capered dance after dance. At last Perry-the-Singer ceased abruptly and cried, “But what am I athinking! My guest is weary and sleep lies heavy on his eyelids—only chased away by my rambling.”

“Oh no!” protested the weary traveler. “Not at all!”

Perry-the-Singer laughed. “Time for sleep it is all the same, for tomorrow you must be on your road.”

The weary traveler’s face fell. Perry-the-Singer clapped a hand to his shoulder.

“Come now, you weren’t expecting to stay here forever. Each man has his task to accomplish. Mine is to stay here and deal out cheer and comfort, but yours is to journey as far as you can in the time that is given you.”

The weary traveler bowed his head.

Perry-the-Singer’s silvery eyes cast off their solemnity and twinkled like shining stars. “But don’t you be aworrying. You shall have long sleep at my house and food and songs to help you on your way. That is what my pantry and your memory are for, and with the former sometimes and the latter always, you can help others on their way as I am ahelping you. Now, off to bed with you!”

So the weary traveler found himself between warm, soft blankets, dressed in a clean night robe, in the mellow dark, while outside his door he heard Perry-the-Singer softly singing one more song.

*“I sit at home in peace and think
Of all the days that came before,
While above my roof the stars wink.
I know what’s held behind my door.*

*I cannot journey on and on
Like those who come before my door;
But I can help them journey on.
I know what lies beyond my door.”*



Rest

Liz Long

The bright blue sky with its snow-white clouds always looks like a painting living moving breathing. The color moves and changes with the bright sun shining with all its beauty behind the distant green mountains making them glow. It seems like perfection as the light reflects off every shimmering leaf that waves gently in the wind. The light slowly fades from every blade of grass, as the moon rises with its gentle glow and the stars shine with the beauty only stars have. Gradually all muscles relax from the feet crawling to the head. Lips stretch in a small smile as eyes glide closed. The time to rest has come.

Previous page:
Emma Cole, *Untitled*

Compline

Rachel Huchthausen

...then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...

Genesis 2:7 ESV

Let your children sleep tonight, O Lord, our Maker.

May our every breath be a declaration of your name and your
breath's closeness.

May every breath be a bastion against fear in the knowledge that
you are with us.

May every breathed repetition of your name,

Whose pattern is stronger than the whirling of the mind,

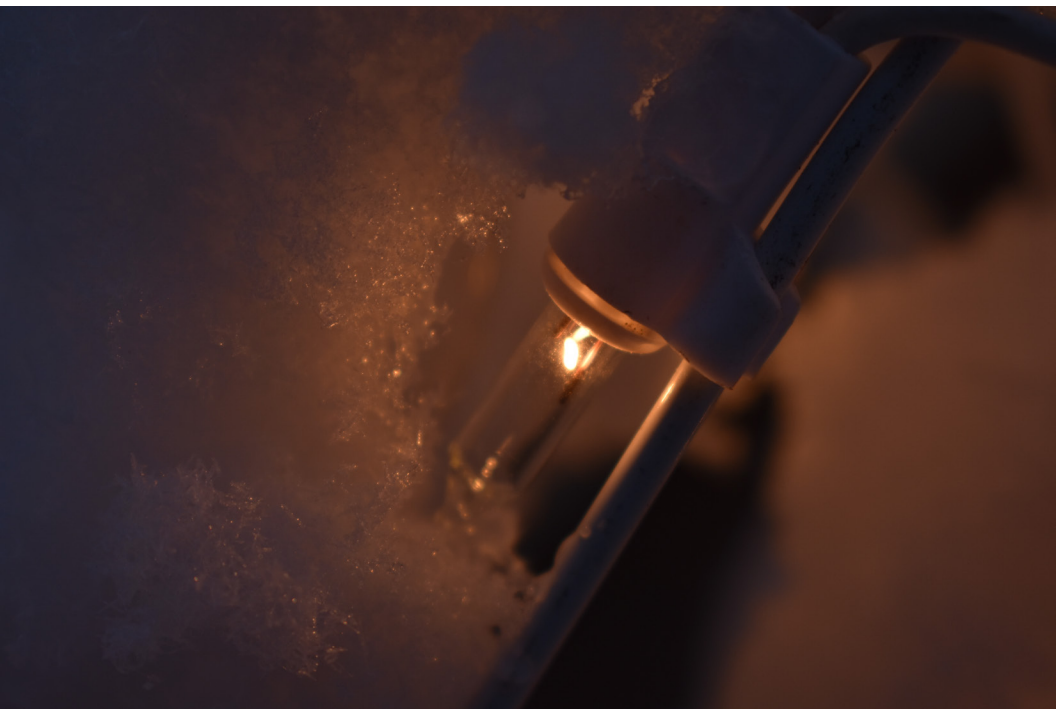
Upset our churning cycle of worry.

As we breathe in and out, even as we sleep,

May we praise your name:

Yahweh,

Yahweh.



Tenshi Chispa, *Warmth Inside*

Open and Soft

Anonymous

A heart that beats warm
A heart that leans in
A heart that is tender
A heart that is torn

Breathing in peace
Breathing out hope
Praying desperately
Breathing in Christ
Breathing out me

Forgiving
Softening to hope
Letting go and looking forward
Like gentle sunlight
Open and soft



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Thank you and Merry Christmas!

