

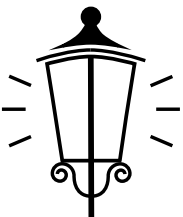
# *The Lantern*



*February 2024*

*Here in this place, the new light is streaming;  
now are the shadows vanished away.  
See in this space our fears and our dreamings,  
brought here to You in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;  
gather us in, our spirits inflame.  
Call to us now, and we shall awaken;  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.*

*✧ Marty Haugen, Gather Us In*



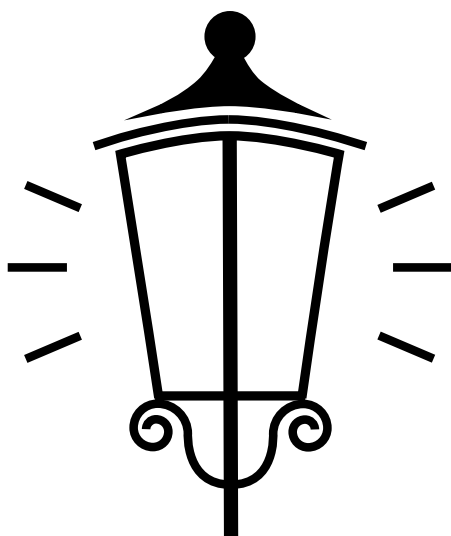
*The Lantern*

***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.*

# *Places*

*February 2024*



# *Letter from the Editors*

Dear readers,

What would our lives be like without places? Rather impossible is really the answer. We have to be somewhere. And, as this universe would have it, when we are in a place, we are in a very particular time. Every moment we are in a place that will never be returned to. We cannot return to childhood rooms in the same state they were when we were eight (although for some the mess hasn't improved), we cannot return to the one night around the campfire with friends looking up at the stars, we cannot return to our victories, and we cannot return to our mistakes. (Though something of them have remained with us, the place has not.) But as we asked in the prompt, the given task was to try to ponder and reflect on or dream of a place. Though our bodies are bound to one time, our imaginations and memories still linger and dance around the places we had, found, have, or made.

The places we have been,  
The places we will be,  
Thank God it will all be renewed;  
into perfect Eternity.

As has been made clear, this Lantern issue is dedicated to **Places**. We hope that you may find this a time to reflect on the concept of "where." If nothing else, though, may you all find some quiet and peaceful places in your lives.

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

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*Lanthorn Office, 9 Sep 2023*  
*Alexa Williams*

*Scraps of paper drift  
among dust and daydreams  
of dusking times—  
I'm living in decades-old thoughts  
and thoughts of the now  
as my friends and I clean  
and laugh over:  
magazine cutouts  
old advertisements—  
an outdated DSM  
a deck of cards  
three green watering cans  
museum postcards  
notes on someone's oration  
wilting yearbooks  
an essay on relationships  
a yellowed newspaper  
a chapbook cover  
and boxes and boxes more  
To me,  
dust smells like memories  
of laughs.*



# *Blueberry Mountain*

## *Alexa Williams*

*There's fog all around us, and I can only see you. There's thunder up above us, but I can only hear our laughter. The trees around us shelter us from raindrops drizzling down. Our hammocks swing as we shift toward sleep, yours below mine, strung to the same two trees. Mosquitoes bite until we huddle below sleeping bags or blankets, sheltered from all but the occasional soft buzzing and drip-drop of raindrops. My muscles ache from movement and my heart aches from joy. It's dark but for flashing lightning, and there's fog all around us. Tonight, we're best friends, all laughter and stories late into the night. Tomorrow, I won't know you. We barely know each other's names.*

# *To the friend who left first*

## *Alexa Williams*

*You left me in august last year.  
Don't worry, I'll never blame you,  
and I miss you terribly.  
You and your laughter.  
The days you call are always a little brighter.*

*I wish I was there with you.*

*I wish I could've left with you last year,  
packed my bags, and went away searching for greater things.  
But I'm still here, and you're gone,  
and the comfort of the dirt road I drive down  
is starting to get redundant.*

*Can you fall out of love with a place?*

*Because I'm not sure if I'm falling out of love  
with the winding highways,  
or with you.*

*I'm losing my memory of the sound of your laugh.  
My days feel too dry without you here.*

*I miss you.*

*Or maybe I miss the feeling that things were right,  
the feeling that I was in a time that wasn't waiting,  
the feeling that I knew the turns of the roads in my town.*

*I don't know what turn comes next down my road,  
and I'm waiting for an answer,  
but all of this feels wrong.*

*I can't make myself stay here  
in this pond-water town,  
but I don't want to leave, because I know that  
even though I'm waiting for you right now,  
you won't be waiting for me.*

# *The Deadly Longing*

## *Joseph Langlois*

*They awoke a deadly longing in me*

*A longing for my home*

*I was content with my place*

*But then I met them, and I haven't been the same*

*I desire the familiar stories*

*The familiar jokes*

*The familiar tongue*

*When alone I can only think of home*

*A home I left many years ago*

*A home I willingly left*

*So much time is left on foreign land*

*And I wonder how things have changed since I left*

*Will any bit of my home remain*

*Or has time and my imagination killed it*

*Will my return see tears of joy*

*Or tears of sadness*

*Till then I will let myself dream*

*And try to quiet the longing they awoke in me*

# *A triolet for growing older*

## *Alexa Williams*

*All my friends are getting married,  
and I don't know if I want to  
recognise adulthood, even though  
all my friends are. Getting married  
is getting familiar with that sinking feeling  
of getting older, of me having to watch as  
all of my friends are getting married.  
I don't know if I want to.*

# *Shadowlands of My Heart*

## *Rebecca Dailey*

*I am here in the shadows.  
I wonder how many others step into the shadows.  
I hear their voices rising in the light like the sun.  
I see their joy, nothing could bring them down.  
I want to be them, to be free of the darkness.  
I am here in the Shadows.*

*I pretend that it doesn't bother me.  
I feel comfort but lonely at the same time.  
I touch pages of books, invisible friends hidden away.  
I worry that I'll never escape.  
I cry out for someone to join me, to find me.  
I am here in the shadows.*

*I understand the shadows are unique.  
I say that it will be okay, that I will be okay.  
I dream of stepping out into the light filled with color.  
I try to have one foot in both places, testing my limits.  
I hope that someday I'll cross both worlds, both will be my home.  
I am here in the shadows.*

# *Vivre de l'air du temps*

## *Adrianna Kappmeier*

*Will you come see me by the riverbank?  
Mother needs water for the clothes  
Father needs someone to water his doubts  
And I, I am from where it all flows*

*Will you come see me by the riverbank?  
Teach me how to have fun again  
Like how we used to waste the day away  
Jumping in hand in hand with our friends  
And when it was finally time to leave  
I'd smile at the wind whipping my face  
The cold as it stung my cheeks  
The way it made me feel complete*

*Now when the weather turns to December  
And all the riverbanks, they've frozen up  
Father tells me to make my way across  
To the well where so many have come to die*

*But I wonder if I'm as strong as he thought  
The ice under my feet slowly gives in  
Like a question, or rather even a promise  
If you want to go, then just go  
But if I go they'll give it only selfish reasons  
We would do anything just to find meaning  
Sometimes there's nothing in suffering  
Sometimes, there's everything*

*Will you come see me by the riverbank?  
Mother needs water for the stew  
Father says it will all be over soon  
And I, I am hoping that he's wrong*

*Will you come see me by the riverbank?  
Teach me how to be myself again  
If you ever cared to remember her before  
If my touch hadn't left you cold and sore  
You used to say that only time would tell  
Years later the rivers faced a dry spell  
I wish you could tell me where it's all gone  
Someplace better or taken by the sun*

*Now when the weather turns to December  
And all the riverbanks, they've frozen up  
They ask me the same question every year  
Do you still have the courage to be here?*

*But mother and father, they need me  
In the end it doesn't matter how I feel  
Still, I wish that I could go out just like you  
A heart so frozen, so fragile it split in two  
And as I look at the well staring from across  
Would it be better if it too had frozen up?  
I am from where the water flows  
Without me, then, where would it go?*

*When I find my answer, will you be there waiting?  
Or will we go back to pretending?  
I wish I could still feel the wind on my face  
The cold stinging my cheeks  
All the things that made me complete  
All the things that made me feel something  
Perhaps that's why I still come to this place  
I've seen Heaven and I can't forget it's face*

*Will you come see me by the riverbank?  
Moonlight dancing on the water's flank  
Where time seems to stop, to hesitate  
And I, I am where the memories lie awake*

# *Ballad of the Mountain Citadel*

## *Emma Dainty*

*Listen to my limning; learn now my lore;  
Here now heed tale of haughty Men  
And forthcoming fall of mighty fortress.  
In Solpeak's side: the Mountain Citadel,  
Strong city of stalwart Men  
With lore and learning enlightened.  
Now King Ninngrod, proud Ninrod's son,  
Seeking to extend his farthest borders,  
Mustered mighty army of valiant Men.  
Bourne by black horses, bearing bronze shields;  
Steel swords shining, clad in silver mail;  
Purple banners emblazoned with bold eagle.  
Alas for Audacia with august king;  
Ban watched Urbansis, his brave city, fall;  
Doughty Dominal the Great was destroyed.  
On Longwater where it swerves west:  
Here lay Halycamlet, happy town.  
Thralls to make them marched Ninngrod and his throng.  
Gravelly to greet them came Noael, greatest sage;  
White-haired and aged was he, sage most wise,  
Supporting himself on oaken staff.  
"Hail, high king! Of your prowess I have heard."  
"You must yield this town to younger men."  
"Noael rules it not; to yield it there are none."  
"You may not yield it, but it shall yield."  
Bowling noble head: "So be it.  
My people leave in peace only I pray."  
"Much wisdom is met here and in you most.  
I command you: come; reveal arcane learning."  
"Nay, lord, I live with my people and lands."  
"Does pride prevent you from life among my people?"  
"Nay, rude pride I refuse," Noael replied.*



*Drawing dire sword: "An insult you dare?"  
"If truth be insult, let it be so."  
The king smote with cruel sword; the sage he slew,  
Molesting man unarmed of many years.  
"Leave none alive! The lowly folk.  
Slay them swiftly for their base insult!"  
Heartless, hellish slaying. The Hýlæel looked away;  
Dire darkness fell upon the destroyers.  
Gross and guilty: the Guiltlesslaying.  
With bloody bodies choked, the town burned.  
Calling upon Cruel Lord, Ninngrod cursed the dead:  
The World to wander, Grim Lord as his witness.  
Greatly Ninngrod's pride grew; declared as a god.  
Tëeäs'shó told Elderin, "Take your staff."  
Elderin followed errand, braving life's end,  
Knowing worthy was Ýmäýmhó's Will.  
"High king, hear the words laid on my heart:  
Before holy Hýlæel yourself humble;  
Declare Ýmäýmhó divine, yourself no deity,  
Or desolation and death take all dwellers.  
This Thaurian city falls in three days."  
Rising in wrath, Ninngrod replied,  
"I slew one such maligner; I do so again."  
The king smote with cruel sword; the seer he slew.  
Hearts hardened with pride, none raised a hand forestalling.  
Callous Ninngrod called to the men of his court,  
"Disregard this dotard. Set up defenses!  
This city none may seize, legends say!"  
Weapons for wielding; men on watchtowers;  
Toil for battle; thus passed two days.  
Steel shielded, silver armored, forth strode Ninngrod.  
He brandished bold sword to the blue sky.  
"Do what you will! Your terrors I withstand!"  
All stood silent, Ninngrod set and stern.  
As sun arced back to earth again,  
Hark! Here came the pale gray host.  
The men in fear murmured, "These are not mortal."*

*Heart dread-haunted, Ninngrod heard but was silent.  
Misty host assembled. One stepped forth.  
His white hair waved in a ghostly wind;  
He supported himself on oaken staff.  
A whisper of fear swept all. "Now comes our woe!  
The dreadful dead are upon us! Our doom falls!"  
"Nay! I fear neither living nor dead!" cried Ninngrod.  
The men's fear faded; they launched forth arrows,  
But no dart disturbed them, the wispy dead.  
The specters were silent; men ceased their efforts.  
Gray and ghostly, wandering wraiths without grave  
Marched beneath the moon while fearful men watched.  
Dark gave way to dawn; the wraiths desisted.  
As night faded, Noael to Ninngrod spoke:  
"Proved your pride is; pity you had none.  
For scandalous slaying shall you be slain."  
Laughed loud Ninngrod in answer, yet hollowly.  
"Slay you a second time I shall if such can be."  
"Heed now, hardhearted, this doom is on your head."  
Doomed to destruction, walls fell before the dead.  
Bar of iron broke; nothing held them back,  
No steel sword or arrow swiftly flying.  
No weapon wielded they—their breath none could withstand—  
Mere touch sent Men to Queen of Mourning's Halls.  
When breathing and blooming ceased, the dead blew away,  
Leaving corpse and crumbling wall where no crow came.  
Fell Mountain Citadel, mightiest among Men.*

# *Cement*

## *Susannah Denham*

*The tunnel was built to last.  
To hold the hill, to keep the earth from crumbling.  
To keep the creek running to the river.  
Cement only lasts so long.  
It soon crumbles down like the earth around it.  
Dust to dust, and where will the water flow?*

# *In HIS House*

## *Emma Dainty*

For as long as he could remember, Seth had lived joyfully with *HIM*. As far as Seth could remember, there had never been a time when he had been apart from *HIM*. *HE* had always been kind, and all Seth's wants had always been provided. Whenever Seth asked *HIM* to come, *HE* was always right by Seth's side. Seth had never left *HIS* house, but he had never had occasion to, for he was happy in *HIS* house. *HIS* presence was enough. What more could Seth want?

Being content with his situation, Seth had never even considered disobeying *HIS* order. It was not until Seth met the Stranger that doubt entered his mind.

The only command *HE* had ever given Seth was this: "You must never leave this house."

Seth was perfectly content with this edict. Why should he leave *HIS* house? All he could ever want was here. Or was it?

Tragically, the Stranger's appearance awakened in Seth the awareness of this supposed lack, which ruined everything for him.

\*\*\*\*\*

*HE* often left the house for several hours in the evening, but in such a way that Seth never had a glimpse outside the door. It was during one of these absences that Seth first met the Stranger.

Seth was seated in the library, engrossed in a large, beautifully illustrated book, when he was interrupted by a slight cough. Seth looked up. The only voice he had ever heard was *HIS* voice, and he immediately noticed that this was an unfamiliar one. Surprised, he set down the book and rose.

“No, no, pray do not let me disturb you.” The voice was soft and gentle, and the person who spoke was tall and graceful, almost exactly resembling Seth himself, only much more magnificent. His face appeared beautiful and kind.

Seth hesitated. “Who are you?”

The only face he had ever seen was *HIS*.

“One who often speaks with *HIM*.”

“Then how is it I have never laid eyes on you?”

“I have only this once entered *HIS* house.”

“How is it that you have spoken with *HIM* then?”

“*HE* often leaves the house, does *HE* not? It is then that I speak with *HIM*.”

Curiosity surged up in Seth.

“What is outside this house?” he asked eagerly.

“Why do you not come out and look upon these things yourself?”

“*HE* has commanded me not to.”

“But *HE* will never know if you only take one tiny peep.”

“*HE* knows everything.”

“Does *HE*?” The Stranger’s voice was slightly challenging yet still as gentle as before.

Seth hesitated a moment. “Perhaps not everything, but...”

“Then why do you not come?” insisted the Stranger.

“Surely *HE* would not have forbidden it without an excellent reason,” protested Seth almost reluctantly.

“*HIS* reason was purely selfish. Outside you would become exactly as *HE* is. *HE* does not want that. So come, and you will be the same as *HIM* and kept in the dark no longer.”

Seth struggled inwardly; his overwhelming curiosity, irresistible desire to be exactly like *HIM*, and angry resentment at *HIS* keeping anything from him battled against his love for *HIM* and wish to obey *HIM*.

“I cannot.” Seth managed to choke the words out. “I *cannot* disobey *HIM*.”

“Is it fear that holds you back?” The relentless voice had a touch of a sneer in its tone.

“No!”

“Then why can you not do this simple thing? You know where the door is. *HE* is not here to know. Why do you hold back instead of grasping this opportunity with eagerness?”

Seth stood panting for a second, and then he burst out, "I will!"

He rushed, staggering, from the room. Smiling to himself, the Stranger followed.

Seth reached the door and yanked it open. Blinding light seemed to pierce his eyeballs. Like a knife, it shot through his body. With a cry of agony he fell to the ground, writhing, as a horrid sound of malevolent laughter rent the air.

"You have paid for your folly!" cried the Stranger. His voice was no longer smooth and gentle, but harsh with hate.

Seth tried to open his eyes, but he could barely do so. The last thing he saw was a blurry image of the Stranger on one knee bending down to look at him, his face now ugly with his evil exultation, as he growled through his gritted teeth, "*HE* has been my deadliest enemy since almost the beginning of time. Now I have gotten my revenge!"

Then Seth's eyes were sealed shut. He could no longer see. His vision had been reduced to a faint ability to detect light and no more. He tried to move his arms, move his legs, but nothing happened. He no longer had arms and legs to move.

"Wriggle on the ground, vile worm, and be tormented over what you have become—what you have made yourself." The Stranger's voice broke through Seth's anguished cogitations.

"Suffer this guilt that shall never leave you—the guilt of disobeying *HIM* you loved most."

Shame fell on Seth like a heavy weight. His heart felt as though it were being crushed beneath its immensity.

Seth cried out, "I still love *HIM!*"

"Do you?" asked the Stranger. "It is through *HIS* not telling you what lay behind that door that led you to this fate. If *HE* had warned you, would you have opened that terrible door? Now I shall leave you to the shame of your new form and the guilt that shall forever burden you."

Seth heard the Stranger's footsteps walking away. He felt horribly alone and desolate.

Then Seth heard *HIS* voice. "Seth, Seth, where are you?"

Seth realized that in his new form he was too small to be at once noticeable, yet he felt ashamed to answer and call *HIS* attention to his shameful state.

"Seth," *HIS* voice repeated.

"I... I am here." Seth's voice was hardly audible, but *HE* heard it at once.

"How is it that you have become this?" *HE* asked soberly.

"I... I was reading in the library when... when one *YOU* have often spoken with came in to me. He told me that marvelous things lay behind the door... and... and he forced me to open it."

Seth was shocked at himself. Never before had he told an untruth to *HIM*.

"I must speak with this person." *HIS* voice was grave and

heartbreakingly sorrowful.

Seth longed to call out and tell *HIM* his falsehood, but *HE* was speaking again. “Have you tempted *MY* Beloved?”

The Stranger’s voice answered. It was no longer confident but cowering. “I was merely testing him. He failed the test.”

*HE* asked Seth, “Is this true? Which of you speaks truth?”

Sobs broke from Seth as he cried, “Oh, it is I who am at fault. I disobeyed *YOU* because of my own selfishness—because I did not trust *YOUR* goodness. Oh, forgive me!”

*HE* heaved a deep sigh, even more sorrowful than *HIS* previous sad words. “Because you have done this thing, instead of calling upon *ME* to help you resist it, you shall not look upon *MY* face again—”

Seth’s sobs racked his body, and he writhed about the floor crying, “Oh, never to look upon *HIS* face! It would have been better had I never come to be!”

“—until *I* send deliverance. At a great price *I* shall remove your guilt, and you shall once more be at peace with *ME* and will be able to look upon *MY* face without shame.”

Seth’s heart leaped.

“But you must suffer many things to atone for your disobedience before that time can come. As for you,” *HE* now spoke to the Stranger, “you shall suffer even more than *MY* Beloved when that deliverance comes. Now depart from *ME*!” Terrifying anger filled *HIS* voice. “Leave *MY* presence! And never again will your beauty please the eye; you shall be an object of horror to all except the vilest creatures!”

The Stranger let out an awful shriek, and Seth knew he was gone.

“Now you must leave *MY* house, Beloved,” *HE* continued in a gentler, though still very stern, voice.

Suddenly Seth knew he was outside *HIS* house.

*HIS* voice broke through Seth’s despairing regrets. “There is still hope. Remember, *I* shall redeem you one day, Beloved.”

# *A Perfect Paper Airplane*

## *Rebecca Dailey*

*Seamless, beautiful,  
A note written to another.  
In between the pages,  
A perfectly folded paper.  
A perfectly folded paper airplane.*

*I wondered where it came from,  
Who it belonged to.  
Trapped between space and time,  
Forever wondering if it would find its person  
Or will be lost for eternity.*

*Like a note in a bottle,  
Cast out to sea,  
The Young Sailor boy and his love for thee.  
The things we have and  
The things we lose have a way of coming back to us,  
Even when we don't expect it.*

*I wait endlessly, knowing that someday  
The world will be as it once was.  
For now it is trapped among those who see it  
And those who don't.  
Among the garden is the disruption of the flowers.*

*Sulking in the night,  
Coming to life in the day.  
Among them, small and flightless,  
A perfect paper plane.*

# *A Future Reflection on the Past*

## *Musings of a Thinker*

### *An Ordinary Thinker*

*Here on this barren rock I stand,  
The sky like a twinkling canvas,  
More Beauty than I know,  
What am I in a place so vast?  
When my life is a grain of sand.*

*To the stars boldly go,  
All said those left on Terra,  
Through difficulties tossed,  
Ad Astra Per Aspera,  
Now left all those below.*

*Friends, a few I have lost,  
Once a large gaping wound,  
Painful even if I succeed,  
I will meet some of them soon,  
Is there any reward worth that cost?*

*But now like a scar partly healed,  
Only an ache in my soul,  
To end all good things befall,  
Even though I'm less whole,  
And the hurts now are concealed.*

*What now that I've achieved all?  
Though I have done much wrong,  
And sorrow mine to get,  
But even now do I belong,  
In a world that I see as small?*



*Barely a home I left,  
Forsaking all to pursue,  
The goal attained today,  
Is it too late to begin anew?  
Now a bird without a nest.*

*Maybe it is best to stay,  
Here on this cold land,  
A watcher now I become,  
The few joys in my hand,  
A fragile ball in my display.*

*But my end has not yet come,  
The race is not done,  
More still can I help to finish,  
Even If I can't find one,  
I might still serve some.*

*My journey might be finished,  
I have done what I have tasked,  
Helping others in their chains  
Finding joys until my last,  
Making others undiminished.*

*Now I see much still remains,  
Not all is bare and bleak,  
Friends with chances in hand,  
Helping others to seek,  
Giving hope in their days*

*Here on this barren rock I stand,  
The sky like a twinkling canvas,  
Now all the more beauty I see,  
Now to serve others my axis,  
Now my life to understand.*

# *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.

## *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 March  
submissions email!*

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](http://hulantern.wordpress.com), or follow us on Instagram @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



**The Lantern; February 2024**