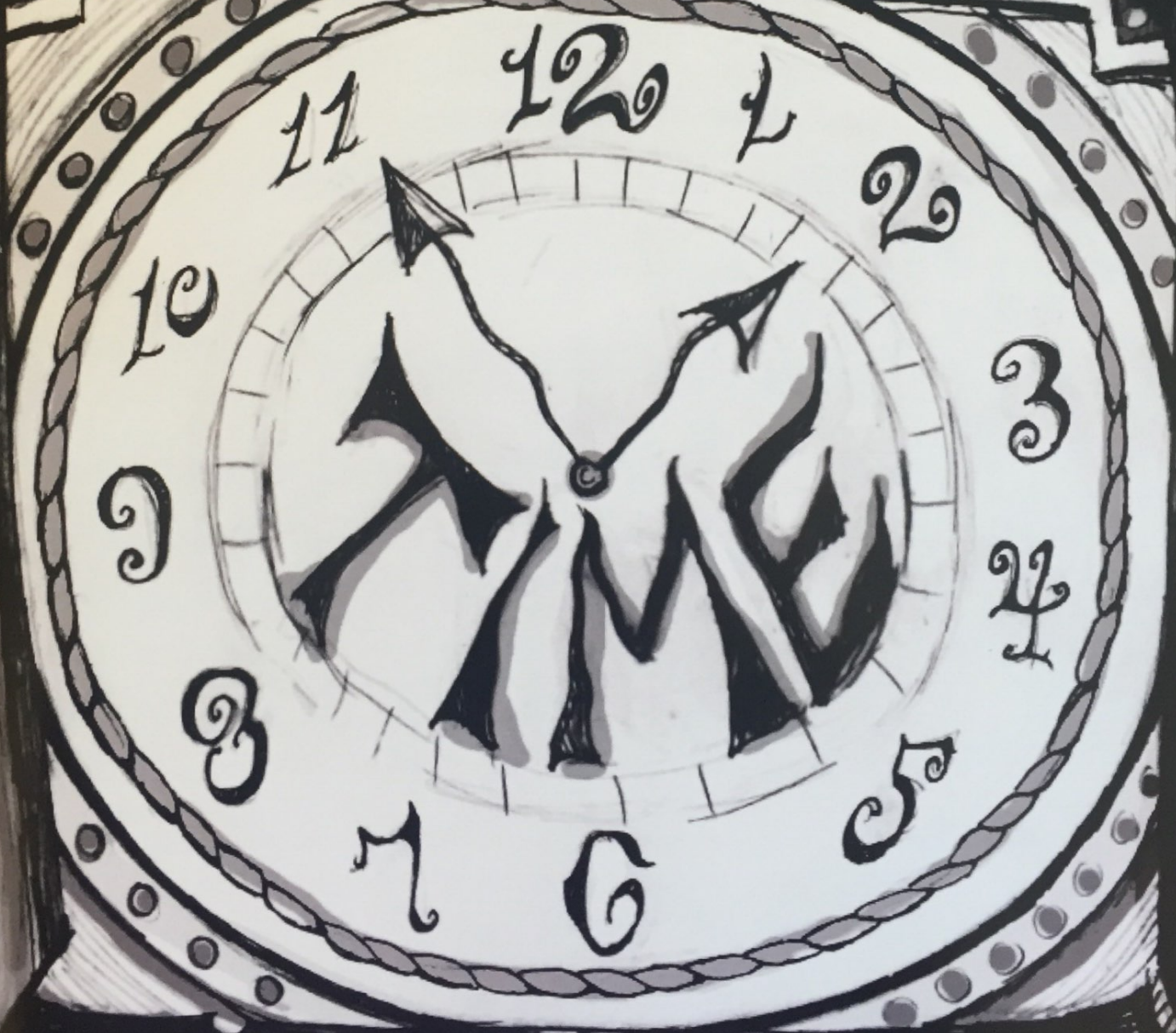


The Inkwell

Undergraduate
Literary
Magazine



THE INKWELL

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NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

As another year comes to an end at Fairfield University, we are brought to the same reflection on how fast the years have flown by. For some of us, this is the last issue before we part way with dear friends; for others, it is the end of one year that has only just begun to give a taste of what this wonderful place has to offer. In this reflecting, many of us have found inspiration along with the mix of emotions that so often accompany time passing. So, no matter how many times you have been here before, or will find yourself again, we thank you for being willing to spend this time with us, and we hope you enjoy what you find while here.

~THE INKWELL STAFF~

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Moment

by Marc Lee

Tick.

Take it in. Everything. It only takes a second. Look at the faces; count the smiles – how many are fake? So similar to the others but tainted, just at the edges, by the slightest bit of a turn.

Tock.

It's laughter, but it's hollow, half of them don't care what was said, they're just afraid of being left out. The other half, though, they are the ones hanging onto the laughter for dear life, like it's the last thing keeping them sane in the world. They would've laughed at anything because it gives them a chance to get out of their own heads, just for a second.

Tick.

He knows it. He knows why they're laughing, every one of them. He isn't smiling because the laughter is recognition of him; he's smiling because of the half who needed the laugh. I wonder how many times he's been in their position, but never got the chance to laugh.

Tock.

"You're doing it again," she said.

"What?" Even as the words passed my lips, I realized I'd said it too quickly. She knew.

"If you're gonna watch everyone in the room while we're talking, can you at least tell me the stories you're seeing?"

I was focused on her, now. Her curious smile, white superhero T-shirt, and the constantly present, singularly out-of-place hair all filled my vision from across the small coffee table.

"That's just it," I replied, "it isn't stories." I leaned forward and continued, "It's all just one story, but every part of it happens at the same time."

"Well then, you've got a lot to catch me up on."

Her smile widened, and, seeing it, I felt the tiniest tug upwards at the corners of my mouth as I began to tell her about the moments.

Threads of Time

by Meaghan Conlon

I.

It's all too much to handle—the tests, projects, essays, reading—there are not that many hours in the day to do it all. I take a deep breath as I try to calm my pounding heart; can I get this done? Am I prepared for the group presentation on Thursday? Did I submit that latest article? Should I actually make dinner tonight or just eat cookies and granola bars to save time and energy? Would it really be so bad if I skipped class tomorrow morning to sleep? Is that professor serious about adding a whole new section to the presentation a day before it's due? I just want to curl up in a ball, burrow beneath my covers and sleep until it's all over.

II.

Kronos is the name that the Ancient Greeks gave to me, back when I was a powerful Titan that played a vital role in their daily lives. But the people of the 21st century know me better as Time. I control the flow of time; I can speed it up or slow it down so much that it seems that everything has stopped. Like mortal humans, I had my own problems with time; even though I controlled it, I could not escape its grasp. My reign over the ancient people was ended when my wife tricked me and my children overpowered me. I was cast down from my throne and no longer worshipped as often as I once was. But though exiled, I was not forgotten. The control I could have exerted in the daily lives of the ancient people did not leave their memories. Their devotion gave me such power and centuries ago I was given gifts and sacrifices. Now, I am given nothing—no presents or appeasements; my name is marred as Time is cursed.

III.

The rolling hills of the blue-green water come crashing down upon the sand. As I lay on my beach towel, I read a book, and the scent of the paper mixes with the smell of salt water. The sun shines down, and I can hear the waves breaking on the sandy shores. Even though the pesky seagulls overhead make too much noise, I still feel peace. Here on this beach, I have no worries or concerns, except getting sunburnt. I shift my body as my arm gets pins and needles, and I stretch out, somehow getting sand everywhere. I roll over and, as the sun hits my face, my whole body

feels the warmth. Although I was going to get up, the sun's rays seem to keep me locked in place. Unconcerned, I smile as I listen and watch the seagulls fly overhead.

IV.

There's no way I can do this. Maybe, if I stare at the page for long enough, my mind will just absorb all the useless information contained within its pages. Or, perhaps it will work better if I lay my head down on the useless two-hundred dollar textbook and take in the words through diffusion. Revenue is found on the Income Statement. Capital assets like property, plant, and equipment are on the balance sheet. Make sure debits and credits always match. Know the difference between gross and net profit. I need more caffeine; there's nothing quite so boring as a business textbook, yet nothing as stressful as exams. How can I get a job if I can't pass my classes? Curse, breath, read, repeat. I can sleep and de-stress once I pass the exam.

V.

He sits on his cloud in the Heavens, and watches those living on Earth with a critical eye. He is old, wrinkled, and gray; he practically blends in with the cloud upon which he sits. He holds a scythe in his right hand and an hourglass sits at his feet. Although it is within reaching distance, he does not reach out to touch it. He has the power to change the reality of mortals, but he does not exercise it, for that is not his job. His job is to watch and wait and simply observe the millions of lives on Earth. Even when he feels something, feels it, he is bound by his own laws to simply stand in the shadows and allow the humans to make their own choices, build their own future. Once in a while, a particularly heart wrenching moment causes his arm to shift toward the hourglass at his feet, but his mind overpowers his heart and he pulls his arm back. And after a bit, the feeling in his heart lessens, and fades away, just as all the others have done. After all, Time is forever and eternal.

VI.

It's the laughter that brings me out of my dream-like state. I open my eyes, blinking in the sunlight. I mentally congratulate myself for putting on sunscreen before I closed my eyes. I sit up, groaning, as my friend throws herself to the ground and kicks sand everywhere. She chats with me as I brush the sand off my body. Let's go in the water. She has a smirk on her face, so I figure even if I deny her request, she'll manage to get me soaking wet.

Only a tad grudgingly, I get up from the ground and make my way down to the crashing waves. We dip our toes into the water and go in up to our knees. As we talk about menial things, she gets a gleam in her eye and I'm suddenly wary. Without warning, the wind is knocked out of my lungs as I am tackled from behind. I let out a small shriek as I land in the cold water. I come up sputtering only to see her younger sister laughing with her. Payback. They say as they laugh when I splash them. And as they retaliate, I join in their laughter.

VII.

I sit alone in my brightly lit room. The windows are open to let in a breeze; the air is stifling, suffocating. There is laughter outside, but I can't afford distractions. Spread chaotically throughout the bedroom are textbooks, notebooks, and loose pages of paper. Post-it notes litter the desk, to-do lists taped to the wall. I sit at my desk, foot tapping anxiously, a blank word document open on the laptop in front of me. I tap a pen absently as I try and think. It can be such a struggle to get the words on the page. I was in this same position over an hour ago, except there was a poorly written paragraph on the screen that I had to get rid of. And, just to make matters worse, I know I will be in this same position in another hour, but, by then, there will be maybe two hundred words on the page. I try and write, while checking the clock every so often, but the work barely seems to diminish as time slowly ticks by.

VIII.

They have no idea what they miss. These...humans. They think that the world is centered around them, that only the present time matters. They are wrong. I have existed for millennia, and I have seen civilizations rise and civilizations fall. I have seen history repeat itself too many times to fathom. I watch these mortals as they live their daily lives, each one as boring as the next. It pains me to observe them, all the moments that they take for granted. Do they know that it could all change tomorrow? That, within a year, they will be in a new place, meeting different people, and forgetting the ones that they have left behind? Has the thought crossed their human minds that they are only mortal? That, a century from now, all those that knew them will be dead? And they themselves will have passed on as well? Do they know that, to the rest of the world, it will seem as if they never existed? I pity those that understand, but even more so, I have lost faith in those that have no idea. I, Thoth, God of the Hours, weep for humankind.

Time

by Bronwyn Kelly

The old woman sits in her chair, indifferent to the time of the day as it passed by her unmoving eyes.

Her bright, oceanic, blue eyes, once vibrant and lively, have a cloudy film over them that blurs her pupil from view. Her freckled face, once tanned by the sun from too much time at the beach, has wrinkles like a fabric that has been folded the wrong way and stuffed in a drawer. Her hair, once described as luxurious and a brown as rich in color as a mahogany table, is now white, short and missing in most places, where the spots of her scalp are completely visible. Her smile, once full of straight teeth that gleamed at all the handsome young men, is, now, mostly just gums and deteriorated teeth. Her spine, once likened to a ballerina's straight posture, is now curved like a boomerang. Her hands, once thin and feminine, yet strong from years of hard physical work, are unable to communicate with her brain properly as they tremble in her lap. Her legs, once long and muscular from long distances traveled, are bound in a wheelchair without any feeling of the earth beneath her feet. She doesn't speak. The world slowly became a strange and unknown place to her. Her children and husband were forgotten. She can't remember her name and her ability to comprehend will fade away, soon, too. But her heart, oh her heart! It beats with the strength of a thousand oxen. It soars out of time, untouchable, still pulsating with blood, and sustained by the great abundance of love she gave and received during her lifetime. Her brain and body gave up on her long ago, but her heart stayed healthy. It acts as her prison by keeping her alive enough to exist, but not enough to live and love with a purpose.

Time is her enemy, it gave her everything and then broke her down to nothing. Time lets her live but comes every day to knock at her door and to take a piece of her away with each visit.

Time is Running Backwards

by Alyssa Vigorito

Time is running backwards. I saw her. She's fast too. Her calves and ankles must be spectacular. Don't get me wrong, I'm not in love with Time. But... Time. Is. Toned. My friends.

I saw her running backwards from my balcony window and I impulsively grabbed my green raincoat – the one with the broken zipper, so it's kind of useless – and I rushed out of the house in pursuit of time. My useless coat caught the wind and trailed behind me as I sprinted in my slippers over the cracks in the pavement. In fact, I galloped. Unfortunately, unlike Time, my calves and ankles are not spectacular.

I wondered, why was she running backwards like that? Did Time rob a bank? Did Time design a portable clock that humans can slap on their wrists across the globe and is running to present it on Shark Tank? Is Time running off to find a disguise in order to eventually pose as a male soldier named 'Ping' to bravely take her father's place in the Imperial Army? Is Time running late on her way to throw a bat mitzvah for a gentile? I'm asking for a friend.

Again, I ask, for a friend: Why is Time running on the balls of her feet, facing towards me but moving backwards? What if Time trips? What if Time trips and cannot get up and forgot her life alert at home inadvertently because, again, she's late on her way to throw a bat mitzvah for a gentile, and, instead of using two hands to help her up, people just stand there and French braid their hair?

Whatever the answer may be, none of it mattered. Time stopped suddenly, leading me to stop dead in my slippers. I stood frozen in my useless raincoat, especially useless now that the raindrops stayed stagnant in the air. I wondered why time had stopped. I guess Time had nothing to do, or Time caught up to me and my shenanigans. Well, I thought that. Yeah, I thought that, until Time slithered up to me like a serpent with ravenous eyes.

Aging Backwards Doesn't Make You Tolerable

By Sabina Dirienzo

The university had acquired a scientific oddity of a keynote speaker. They were very proud of it, and had been slapping up posters and handing out flyers advertising five-dollar tickets for weeks – and there were very few things that Eva wouldn't attend for five dollars.

“Jasper was born an old man,” the introductory speaker said, wrapping up her very quick speech, “Now he's in the equivalent of his thirties, but has been alive for fifty years. He's going to tell us about life and love when you age backwards.”

The audience erupted into applause, and Jasper ascended to the podium. His hair was greased back and under a pitch-black fedora. There were several class rings on his fingers. His coat, which he handed off to the introductory speaker, was real mink fur. His wallet was attached to his khakis by a chain.

“Oh no,” Eva said under her breath. “It's a magical jackass.”

Rose clapped a hand over her mouth to keep from laughing and elbowed her in the ribs. Eva snorted, and Jasper coughed into the microphone as the noise of the audience started to die down.

Jasper launched into a speech which included the key points “never tip waitresses,” “negging works because women are emotional,” and “a woman shouldn't be on the twenty dollar bill.” In the second half of the speech, he included “America was best in the 1950s,” “I'm not rude, just honest,” and “females on their periods.” He was loud and obnoxious and went on for ten minutes longer than he was supposed to. Audience members slipped out of the exit at the back, stared down at their phones, and mimed shooting themselves with finger-guns.

Finally, he ended his speech saying that modern music is stupid, modern clothes are stupid, and everyone would be better off if they listened to him all the time.

“Questions, anyone?” he asked, rapping his ring-clad fingers against the edge of the podium.

Eva launched to her feet and shot her hand in the air. “Dude, don’t do it,” Anna hissed.

Jasper pointed at her. Eva asked, as loudly as her (very authoritative) voice could carry, “Has anyone ever told you that you’re an asshole?”

Thinking Ahead

by Katie Barrera

“Next Tuesday I have a few hours to myself, I ought to make a pie,” you think to yourself as you change into your pajamas.

It’s been forever since you’ve baked anything; and, honestly, you wouldn’t mind having a slice after the fact.

Pausing, you frown; you can’t really eat an entire pie all by yourself.

“If you made two pies,” you reconsider “You would have enough to bring to the book club meeting later that evening.”

“It would be nice,” you reason. “Some pie and maybe even some ice cream,” if you can manage; you’re not sure though. It could melt before you get to the meeting. Sighing, you suppose you can think it over later. It’s only Monday night after all and you’re already planning for next Tuesday.

You feel the corner of your mouth quirk up as a thought crosses your mind. You have been thinking ahead a lot as of late and not in the way you used to. It feels good this time; it feels healthy.

You unpin your hair from the coil on the back of your neck, and brush it out with your fingers. Taking a glance in the mirror you smooth some acne medicine over your face. The bags under your eyes are pretty minimal nowadays, but finals are fast approaching. You snap open the bottle of antidepressants and take your dose. You wrinkle your nose as it goes down with a glug of water. You think you’d be used to taking medicine by now, but the concept never fails to seem foreign. Regardless, as you crawl into bed you feel your mind grow quiet and your heart thumps out a steady beat. You’re pretty sure you’re doing something right.

Wednesday you have time to go grocery shopping. You’ve got a list. Pie ingredients are secondary to staples like cereal and milk. Still you find a way to balance the costs out. Even if that means over thinking whether or not you need to spend \$2.88 on store brand knockoff Girls Scout cookies (You convince yourself they will not be as good as the original and buy

the flour you need for your pies).

Later in the week you recount your struggle to you counselor. She finds it entertaining, before segueing into a question about if you've been to the cafeteria yet since you returned from break. You admit you haven't, but you are planning on going on Friday. You want to try to go around 4:30 when there's barely anyone there, just so you can ease yourself into it.

On Friday, you don't go to the cafeteria.

Saturday, you feel anxious. You've been taking medication for two months now and sometimes you wonder if it's doing anything at all. Your brain keeps telling you, "Your friends don't want to talk to you," despite the unanswered text messages piling up in your phone. You call your mom because it's Saturday and she wants to hear from you at least once a week.

When she asks how you're doing, you say "Great." You're feeling much better than you did. You leave out the part, where you don't really feel great right now, because you don't want her to worry.

"Sorry, you don't want to burden her."

Suddenly your thoughts seem to be spiraling. Every terrible thing you've ever done seems to mentally resurface as if to remind you,

"You are a bad person."

And for the first time you think back, "No I'm not."

Consciousness

by Bridget Belfiore

1:23 am:

Air is brisk,
Sharp and crisp like leaves,
Eerie breezes in the early hour

1:34 am:

My hair flutters in the wind,
Navy heavens illuminate blonde highlights,
Earth's dark breaths discover light.

1:48 am:

The moon looks peculiar against the sky,
A saucer sinking in a cerulean sea,
Drowning surreptitiously with time.

1:51 am:

I imagine the moon feels happiest in the dark,
Glowing effervescently against a dull background,
Dimming as its spirit fades into the unknown.

2:03 am:

Air still blows my hair,
Firmament floods the moon,
Drifting minds collide into nighttime.

Where Adventure Ends

by Celia Wilson

Gray skies settle down
with silence of old regrets,
Got lost in blue eyes

Blue water ripples
regrets like wrinkles in skin,
Got lost in bright smiles

Bright summer sun blinds,
Seasons change like memories,
Got lost in close hugs

Clouds hug a full moon,
Light fills a path with regrets,
Memories live on

Don't regret wisdom,
Learn from your haunting regrets,
Time knows all who age

Meander through time,
Do things without old regrets,
Start new adventures

ANKH

by Marina Lindland

Nothing is written in stone, they say
Yet the ancients knew better
Chisel away at another letter
Another symbol
Another picture
Tablets can be broken
But the message is still there

It's a queer symbol, I'll admit
Yet there's an elegance to it
Strong and sturdy at its base
Like a cross
But graceful
the top arching back
like a gymnast staring at the sky

Nothing lasts forever, they say
Yet I wonder if they knew
That their breath of life
The key to the Nile
Eternal life
Would hold the same depth
For someone thousands of years away

I haven't gotten it, not yet
Yet I suppose it's a matter of time
Etched on my right wrist
A testimony
A reminder
Of the trials of the past
And the strength in my heart

For through my veins
pumps the blood of a Goddess

Alethia

by Elliot Neski

You gazed upon red skies, burning alive
As the rapture of endings crowned that first dawn
But you never saw the grimmer hereafter
The sluice of grey that haunts all my sunsets

And you've never wondered just where the light goes,
The resting place of the end of our days,
Yet I never expected that on the last morning,
The sun rose anew but the dark never left

We never intended to fade under starlight,
to lose every second to which we laid claim,
but I was too busy looking for questions to answer,
To realize my answers died soft in the rain.

Where does the light go, when grey skies lie empty,
And the memory of night won't let go of the day?

**Are you interested in submitting
your work to The Inkwell?**

We accept entries in the categories of:

**Poetry, Fiction, Creative Non-fiction,
Essay, Comics, Graphic Literature,
Original Lyrics, and other categories.**

(So, basically, everything...)

**We'll also accept submissions for the
cover-art for future issues from all
interested artists.**

Please send all submissions to:

inkwellliterary@gmail.com

Thanks to all of our readers and writers!

~THE INKWELL STAFF~

COVER ART
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