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And if you are reading this, I thank you, too!
SCRAWL 2016

“But all the fun is how you say a thing.”
-Robert Frost
I dedicate this book to those who undertake and support artistic endeavors.

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There is a way about spring like a sleeping breath, one that exhales living into decay, a slowness like the sound of opening lips.
I would hold you at dawn like frost grips a crocus, softly, tenuously, as if a single sigh would melt me into the ground.

One forgets in winter how the world could be so full of green.
Warmth from the golden wheat fields
waved gently from gliding nudges
under soft clouds.
The dusty trails hugged between young toes,
pounding out baby dust devils
swirling among the cornfields.
Glowing marbles hiked over small mounds,
ever wandering away from the nourishment
of the fiery mother of the Earth.
Until the day the unbreakable rocks were given value.
Fields of dancing life collapsed together
manufacturing heaps of dirty pulp.
Steel boots stomped many-legged creatures
finding refuge from the artificial hurricanes.
Somber eyes flattened lands with glances
only to assemble mountains of refuse that rose above
fossils of a forgotten sanctuary.
Prayer from My Window

Eliana Swerdlow

When the willow’s vines pull me from the clay,
I am no longer homeless under the fallen leaves.

Beneath the birch tree’s bark,
I search for the secrets that remind me of the tears I taste in my sleep,

and I lie still under the weeping hemlock outside my window,
praying she forgets my voiceless pleas for comfort.

I ask the cherry tree if she ever feels choked by the nights in which she realizes how little she knows.

When I’m tired, I will pluck the pine needles from my boot soles, and I will ask them the questions, once again, to find their memory, too, is lost in all that is me.
Under the Nameless Tree

Eliana Swerdlow

We sit in broken chairs as mother scrapes nickel spoons against copper pots, and we read fragile books as winter grows through father’s bones.

When spring overwhelms us with being and the rain can’t unite our rhythms, I like to bury the spoons and hide the books under the nameless tree.

I pray the neighboring trees forget our memories and the doves silence our stories in the morning with their song.

I wonder why mother’s cries coexist with those of the bus stop, yet father’s mingle with those sitting in our best chairs.

For my father, I can’t smuggle warmth from the forest he planted.

For my mother, I can’t shake truth from the uprooted weeds on our patio.

I can only be present in my broken chair.
Dances with Leaves

Olivia Martin
Bye Bye Birdie

Olivia Martin
At 4am

Sarah Gabrick

It might be the cracking that wakes me, the splintering of floorboards that give their fleshy bodies the ability to squeeze inside. Maybe it’s the scratching, the sound of claws against the drywall they climb to stick their barbed tails into the ceiling, dangling like a glowing, red chandelier over my bed; thinking their giggle is a lullaby, that their blood-caked nails belong against my skin.

Sarah was the winner of the Sigma Tau Delta and SCRAWL Poetry Slam!
Sarah Gabrick

The clock face opens, spewing numbers off the wall quicker than I can catch them. I dropped an armful, they bounced on the tile floor and scattered into all the hard-to-reach places.

On my knees, I begged the clock to stop shouting. He wasn’t making any sense and neither of us were getting anywhere stuck in that kitchen; him mounted on the wall, me too busy holding onto lost time.

Sarah Gabrick receives her award from Olivia Martin, the president of Sigma Tau Delta, and Zack Shively of SCRAWL
The fallen tree beyond the grassy plain lays latent and lazy around its brethren. It does not bow to the wind or give its shelter to the ground. It contains no moss nor mice, but merely its skeleton of bark and bones. It fathoms the capacity of its bare catacombs.
“Can I take your order?”
“Yeah, can I just have a coffee, please?”
“Sure thing, hon. One sec.”

Wonder if her voice has always been that husky. Probably not. It was probably always deep, but I doubt she had that rasp when she was younger. Gotta be in her late forties, early fifties; could have started any time. Maybe she smokes. Wonder when she started. I can see it now. Smoked when she was a teenager because her daddy used to. Daddy’s dead now, though, that’s for sure. Probably never quit. Daddy lived to be sixty-eight, smoked since he was twelve, no reason to quit now.

I came here to read. I should probably do that. I will.

How long have I been reading Ulysses now? Two, three years? Still haven’t finished it. Probably never will. I’ve read the end though. A couple of times actually. I love Molly. I love the way she thinks in long, run on sentences. I think like that sometimes. She remembers such long stretches of time all at once, as though everything that happens all at once. I guess that’s just how it works. Every moment just sort of builds up on top of all the other moments until you have a life. I wonder when I’ll have a life.

I wonder if that guy has a life. Better yet, I wonder if he thinks he has a life. I’ll bet he does. Looks like a worker. Got the shirt for it. Plain,
white, sweat stains deep. Probably a mechanic. No, doesn’t have the motor oil hands. Mechanics have motor oil hands. It’s what sets them apart. That and the self-determination to set their own prices for their work. One has to believe one’s time is worthwhile and charge accordingly; otherwise you’re just wasting it.

I’ll bet he works in a mill or maybe a warehouse. Definitely lifts things for a living. He has the bearing of a man who would move you out of the way if you got into his. I’m glad I’m out of his way. Wouldn’t want to impede his progress.

Probably a church goer. Has the hair for it. Not too short, but not long. Not wearing a hat, but I can see him clutching one over his chest as he sings hymns. Nah, he’s not that old school. Not a Catholic; probably a Lutheran or maybe Presbyterian. Holy rollers, rolling down the sixty-year-old new wave.

What am I doing here? I came to read.

“Here’s your coffee, hon. Sugar and cream are on the table.”

“Thanks.”

Definitely a smoker. I would be too if I was a fifty-year-old waitress. I’m a smoker even though I’m not a fifty-year-old waitress. Wonder if she ever smoked anything other than tobacco. Bet not. I can see her turning down a joint in her late twenties. Thought it was a slippery slope. Didn’t want to get mixed up in something she wasn’t ready for. But that was always her problem; thought she needed to be ready for the next step, but she never knew what that was. Should have run away with Billy Bob when he begged her to. Could have made a life together, somewhere. But no, that would have been crazy. She’s happy now. Isn’t she?
Of course she isn’t. But then, who is? I guess there are some people who are. Have to be. How would we know what happiness is if there weren’t any happy people anywhere. It can’t just be some kind of urban legend. Can it?

I bet that girl is happy. She hasn’t lived long enough not to be. Can’t be older than eighteen. Somewhere in the ball park: sixteen, seventeen, twenty. Who can tell anymore? We grow up so fast when the whole world is right in front of us all the time. I bet she knows her way around the internet. Almost has to these days. More likely to be a Mormon sister wife than have no knowledge of the internet these days. But which one’s whackier?

I think I might be.

Yeah, she knows the internet, but it’s not her fault. She just got acquainted with it when she was searching song lyrics on the google. Wanted to be a guitar singer. Worldwide sensation, instant star. Bet she’s got some good stuff. Pure poetry, set to a progression in G. Been learning since she was nine. Hasn’t really gotten better, but that’s fine with her. She still thinks she’s different.

Goddamn, coffee is so necessary. Diner coffee is always better than homemade. It’s probably just the atmosphere though. It’s like the hunger and thirst just build up in the corners and fall down on you when walk inside. Comes out of nowhere. Think I might need to call the waitress, and get something to eat. Nah, but I don’t want to bother her. She has enough on her mind.

Been working here for fifteen years if she’s been here a day. Almost sad, but not really. A body’s got to work. Keep food on the tables. And tips. Tips especially. I bet she hates getting paid in tips. She was strong once.
day waiting for other people to tell her where to go. She resents it; I can see it in the corners of her tired eyes. Been here too long. Not long enough. At least not yet. Someday she will have been here exactly as long as she needed to be, but then they’ll be remembering her in the obits. Bet she reads them. Secretly wonders if she might see her own name someday, so she won’t have to show up for work. One last holiday. Just pack up and leave; go see the world or at least somewhere other than this goddamn diner.

I love this diner. Such a good place to read. I remember back in the undergrad days when a diner was the best place to hang out. Diners and bars: more home than home. I remember trying to read in diners and winding up talking for three hours with Matt, Bill, and Carter instead. So much more worth it. Matt was in a musical, in the pit. Played the saxophone. He loved it. Bill, Carter, and I never had half the talent but we loved talking about it with him. He was so enthusiastic even though it made no sense. Kid listened to speed metal in his off time, but put on The Music Man and he knew every line.

And I brought a book along, but I never read it. I think I can almost remember which one. Probably Homer; I was into the classics back then, but I only read every other book. Books, chapters, stanzas, lines. All blurs together.

I remember my favorite character in The Iliad was Diomedes. Probably because nobody ever remembers Diomedes. Nobody who hasn’t read The Iliad, that is. Always liked being in exclusives groups. I guess we all sort of do. Diomedes killed Ares in battle. Spear to the gut. Worst way to go. I thought it was badass.

I can’t really stand violence, but I’m a sucker for it in a good book. In
a bad book, it always seems so unnecessary. Just like in real life. I think that might be the difference between a good book and a bad book. The less believable it is the closer it is to being enjoyable. No, that can’t be right. *Ulysses* is about the most believable thing I’ve ever read, and I enjoy the shit out of it. Then again, I still haven’t finished it. I guess that does say something.

I would bet my life’s savings that I’ve read more of it than anyone else in this building has, though. Not that I would. For one, I don’t gamble, unless the bet is hilarious, and also that would most likely be the most pretentious bet ever. Nobody’d take it.

Although, who knows. Maybe the waitress studied literature for a while. She looks like she’s read something before. I wonder what. I hope it wasn’t just *Cosmo* or *People*. But then again, what makes my literature better than hers. She makes her own decisions; she raised two kids ten years apart in different states without any help from either of the fathers... maybe. Seems possible.

I wonder what she would think if she read *Ulysses*. I bet she would like Molly too. She’d definitely be her favorite character. Just trying to fall asleep while a whole lifetime of love and disappointment slips through her head and over the pillow. Sounds like her life. Sounds like life.

“Everything alright, hon?”
“Fine... thanks. Could I get the check, please?”
“Sure thing, hon.”
That’s life. One check after another.
Frank Sinatra

Ben Thoms
Dean Martin

Ben Thoms
Even when the sky is black, and morning will not come.
When the sky cries, and the earth dies,
one foot after another.
We carry on, though you may be dead and gone.
Our eyes, empty.
Our hearts, broken.
Yet we soldier on.
Through blood, through grime, death and crime-
we walk,
Waving your banner,
You are dead and gone-
yet your legacy lives on.
Unbind Us

Laurel Michalek

Ribbons of fate,
they are said to bind us.

Acts of valour,
they are said to define us.

Our thoughts,
they are said to betray us.

But what it said
-that is not what defines us.
Our human hearts
help make us.

Our human bodies
help limit us.

Our human friends
help create us.
Help
-does not define us.

Life is what tries us.
Dying confines us.

Yet the human mind,
that is what always unbinds us.
Another day of darkness
is concealed in this lively community.
It’s oozing into the houses
overwhelming lives with anxiety,
holding the hands of those conformed.
I find myself their identical.
The familiar dead, golden locks,
and thick, congealed faces
that hide the real issues
behind this sick, small town
and my sick, twisted mind.
You can’t manage the current alone, especially now that you’ve separated. Your mind focused on the land, taking in the landscape, your body is submerged, fighting without a brain. You flail around knowing that you’re not supposed to panic. But your head pulls away. You can’t concentrate on the situation at hand.

The mellow harp fills your ears like the liquid filling your lungs. You’re caught in a current, panic scissors through your skin, bringing a crystalline engagement, with the reality that you are drowning. The water presses your shoulder. Your chest crushes you awake. She screams relentlessly: “Fight, Fight, Fight!”
Heart Spiral
Jim Anthony
One:
You must promise to love me—
when I’m just waking up in the morning.
Yes I know, I’m not pleasant
and that I’m hogging all the covers,
but love me anyway.

Two:
You must promise to love me—
When I’m being difficult
Yes I know that I’m stubborn
And that sometimes I don’t get your jokes,
but love me anyway.

Three:
You must promise to love me—
when I cry.
Yes I know, I’m emotional,
And that I always cry at that Extra™ Gum commercial,
but love me anyway.

Four:
You must promise to love me—
when I fall asleep.
Yes I know, I’m always dreaming
Even though my dreams have become reality,
But please, love me anyway.
A Sad Poem about a Salad

Alexandria Quigley

I hate the new black olives appearing in my salad. hardly connected to my disgusted body

Their blackness destroys the light, cheerfulness yet at the end I almost always bite into

and their bitter, sour taste lingers one persistent sliver of Black Olive as I attempt to enjoy

my juicy, plump, joyful tomato. and it remains in my mouth

I try—try to pick them out with two fingers all day.
Fibs

Marissa Miller

When
I
Was three
My mother
Told me I was not
A child, but a figment of
Pigment that she had brushed across her brow; a stain of
Pinks and chrysanthemum skin, acre on ache and breath on breeze,
a secret recipe.
An Interview

Zack Shively

The following is from Zack’s Capstone:

Jake arrived at the show a little before the show started. Surprisingly, he saw a lot of people with the bands merchandise—jackets, shirts, hats, pins. The building had water stains all around the ceiling and the hardwood had weird blemishes and discolorations. The place was really cramped, and Jake felt it had to be much over maximum capacity. He walked over the bar, ordered a drink, and watched as the band started coming on stage for warm-ups.

As they picked up their instruments, a few loyal locals cheered. A wave of seemingly unrecognizable music filled the room. The guitarist broke into a virtuoso level solo, tuned a bit, and then went back to his solo. The bassist played a very simple rhythm that Jake knew, but couldn’t name at the time. Later, he would realize that she thumped out “Hot Cross Buns.” The drummer violently smacked anything he could reach from his chair. Sometimes he used his sticks, other times he just hit them with his hands. The singer ran his fingers through his wild hair, walked up to the microphone, and started to moan and groan. After two minutes of this, he plopped down on the ground and sat cross legged as he twiddled his thumbs. Shortly following that, he lurched up and started screaming syllables.
Then, he hit himself in the forehead and began to scat. After a few bars of scat, he turned toward his band mates and cut them off.

“Hello all you beautiful, bea-u-tiful people out there,” he said into the mic. His smooth baritone voice quieted everyone in the room. A few people cheered after he spoke. “We’re here to tell you a story.”

The band played six songs that night in the course of an hour. Jake expected to see a crappy punk band, but instead was treated to a very decent progressive, artful, and quite pretentious rock band.

**Bartholomew J. Washington**

This Friday, I saw The Universe is Calling at Bar 57 in Squatter’s Square. The little known band put on quite a big performance complete with artworks, songs surpassing the ten minute mark, and even some masks. What really gave the band an extra kick to their spectacular performance was their frantic frontman. After the show, I saw him sitting at the bar grabbing a shot of whiskey. I decided now was as good a time as ever to introduce myself.

“Hello, my name is Bartholomew J. Washington. I sing and write for The Universe is calling.”

“That was quite a show, don’t you think?” I asked.

“Yes. Quite.”

“You have some lengthy, intense songs in that set. What’s that process like? How do you create them?”

“Man, it’s this huge, long narrative. So before anything else, I came up with the story. After that, I figured out different ways to explore that storyline. Then I started writing and recording the music and poetry.”

“Wait, so when you say you—”

“Yes. I wrote all the music myself. All of the lyrics and sound.
However, I can’t perform them all by myself. So I brought in very talented musicians to help me perform my art.”

“So could you briefly explain the story received tonight?”

“Well, the whole thing takes place in 4X8T, which is 2560 years past the nuclear holocaust of 2105. So we’re talking 2650 years in the future. The first five minutes of our opener is the prologue that explains the war between humans and robots that has lasted twelve years. Then, the next part is a cross-cutting between the human war general Simon Walker, played by me, and the robot leader XR-002, whose voice is simulated by distorted guitar solos. The end of the song has quick snare hits to symbolize Walker’s death. The Taps-like beginning of the second song shows the mourning for—”

“This is a little more complex than I expected.”

“You didn’t even let me get to the aliens who resurrect Walker or the diplomatic creatures from another dimension who ask for peace among all life forms in all dimensions.”

“Incredible. And do you think the audience gets all of this?”

“I never talk down to my audience. You were at the show. Did you understand it?”

“I caught the gist of it.” Not true. “But I had people talking in my ear and other typical bar commotion.” True.

“Ah, well. Can’t control that.”

“Yes. But a final question: going back to the complexity of your music, how many characters do you play?”

“49.”

“Wow.” Well readers, get the eponymous album now. “Thank you for taking this time to sit down with me.”

“Thank you for having me.”
Party

Dan Kushner
Old Man
Dan Kushner
Jeralyn Tatano

She tells me don’t forget the cakes.
“Of course, mother!” I say.
“And darling!” she reminds me,
“From the path, don’t ever stray!”

And so I don my scarlet cape
With pretty little hood.
I gather up the cakes and wine
And skip into the wood.

The path is neither straight nor short
It crawls and curves and climbs.
I do not fear the journey
For I’ve made it lots of times!

The wolf was tall with shining eyes
That seemed to smile at me.
Sweetest tongue and whitest teeth
Displayed for all to see.

He bowed his head in greeting
As he settled in my way.
“Good morning, little sweetheart!
Is it not a lovely day?”

The birds are singing sweetly
You must let me intercede,
For surely it’s a crime,” he said
“To pay the flow’rs no heed.”
I could not help but notice
He was absolutely right.
The leaves and flowers seemed to dance
In rays of fading light.

I could not help myself and so
I sat beside the road.
I stretched my little arms and legs.
I set aside my load.

I could not help but close my eyes
And let my dreamings drift.
After all, it won’t take long
To bring Grandma my gift.

I woke up to the setting sun
And hurried down the path
With hopes of being not too late
To avoid my Granny’s wrath.

I hurried through the doorway
And set my basket down.
I was worried she’d be angry
But she didn’t even frown.

“Good evening dearie” smiled she,
In her gruffest gravely way.
She seemed to not be feeling well
So I crept to where she lay.

“Oh Grandmother!” I cried out
“What ears, what hands, what eyes!”
“It’s the teeth that you should watch for!”
And he jumped from his disguise.

The teeth were once more smiling
They’re the last thing I shall see.
And with sweetest tongue and whitest fangs
The great wolf swallowed me.
The Nobleman

Jeralyn Tatano

Why my dear, You look so lovely
In your pretty cloak of red.
And out so late at night?
Shouldn’t you be tucked in bed?

But my darling, I’m so happy
To have met you on the road.
Do let me be a gentleman
I’ll carry your dear load.

Take my arm, my pretty one
And walk a spell with me.
Together we shall see the sights
That we were meant to see,

Like starlight glowing silver
On your softly curling hair.
And those sweet innocent eyes of yours!
I’ll try hard not to stare!

But you see, it is quite dangerous
To be here all alone.
You should have a companion
When you go outside to roam.

For wolfish men do prowl about
In search of sweet young girls.
They’ll do their best to woo you
With their promises of pearls.

But you must not listen to them,
They are scoundrels all, you see!
But I promise to protect you.
Aren’t you glad that you found me?

But now, my sweetheart, we’ve arrived.
Do let me take your cloak.
Of course you’ll rest a while here
Oh, what feelings you evoke!

Let me wrap my arms around you
And please don’t wiggle so.
For I saw you here quite safely
So you owe me, don’t you know?
I roll out of bed,
Pull the clothes over my head,
Make my way to class.
History class, to be exact.
Everyone’s chit-chatting
And having a good time.
Talking however they want,
Wearing what they want,
Complimenting each-others looks.
But not mine.

The gazes about my clothes,
My hair,
My ass,
My tits,
I feel every stare.

I sit down at a table in neither the
front nor the back,
Open my book, and turn to page 362.
We’re talking about black history
today.
Great.
That African American history.
The account stained into my skin,
My voice,
My hair,
My lips.

My eyes are looking forward,
Their eyes are looking sideways,
And I just want to say
“Bitch, can I help you?”
But I look straight,
My back is straight,
My ears are straight,
As the professor lectures on slavery,
Murder,
Rape,
The incrimination of innocent people,
Same crime, always different time,
I couldn’t hold the rage in any longer
Their stares burned through my skin!

And I realized I had no hope on this white privileged campus.
It didn’t matter that I wasn’t labeled woman.
It didn’t matter that I wasn’t labeled woman.
It didn’t matter because I was too many shades too dark!

My body retched with the need to leave,
To run,
To find refuge elsewhere,
But, where?
The professor continued with the lesson,
And my lungs continued their retchin’,
When my ears started catchin’ the names of these African American women.
But they weren’t referred to as women, but rather “These individuals of the female sex,”
And my ears bled for the ambiguousness
The loss of their sense of humanity,
Their identity.
So bitter on my tongue and acidic on my skin.

The more the professor spoke of them the more strength I found from them,
Because these females were not just females, they were women.
Why was that suddenly important to me....
That they identified as females,
That they fought as women,
That they fought harder than me.

Their anger, their search of justice, equality pushed them forward,
Their pain, suffering, and abuse made them durable,
Stronger!
They had no choice but to be strong,
To be strong meant that you were alive,
And to be alive as a black woman was a privilege.
“I am a black woman,” felt so solid and
So natural as the breathe rolled from my lungs to my mouth,
And into the air we shared,
I glared then, at every single God forsaken stare.
How could any of you understand?
The awe taken away,
The resilience ripped from their being,
The beauty devoured from flesh
As each identity went amiss.

And so I take with me these women’s battered bodies,
Stern faces,
And scorching eyes.
I wear their brown robe,
And their Afro crowns,
And their exotic hour glasses.

I latch on so they become my armor,
My armor against this world without gender.
The stereotypes, disdain, distaste won’t just vanish because my vagina’s
no longer a label.
It means nothing,
‘Cause I’m still black.
Nothing

Phillip Howells

Strange corners, saddened turns
Warmed up edges where life has earned
A second look; second chances, a third time around,
Fucked up sentences, and emotions abound.

All I know is I know nothing;
Only thing I’ve ever been,
Only place I’ve truly seen.
Ironic of the ironic; sociality of breathing.

Vocal tone in an atmosphere
Of social conscience and deep set fears
Put down in plastic, watching spinning wheels.
Easing convenience into profound seals.
**ARTISTS**

**Jim Anthony** uses math to generate his artwork. Some of his Flame Fractals take three days for the computer to generate the final image.

**Dom Boston** is a first-year History and English major. This is his first time in SCRAWL.

**Sarah Gabrick** is a senior English major who, when asked about her plans after graduation, still fights the urge to respond with “your mom.”

**Phill Howells** knows what the word “ineffable” means and uses it in everyday conversation. He resides beyond the beyond (in grad school) and has a website at philliphowellspoetry.com if you’re so inclined.

**Jordyn Kee** is a Junior Fine Arts major and is excited about her first appearance in Scrawl!

**Dan Kushner**. I don’t use the term, ‘Genius’ very often. I just thought I’d say that...

**Olivia L. Martin** is a senior English and Fine Art double major. She finds each day to be an interesting--sometimes baffling--surprise.

**Laurel Michalek** is a current junior who enjoys chocolate, Tolkien and sleep.

**Marissa Miller** is a sophomore English major with a minor in secondary education. She loves traveling.

**Lee Moore** is is like the phases of the moon; you only see one side of them at a time, and they are constantly changing.

I’m **Savannah Owen**, a biology major with a peace studies and history minor. This is my first time in Scrawl.

**Alexandria Quigley** is a junior History and English major with a secondary education minor.

**Zack Shively** enjoys writing and making people smile.

**Eliana Swerdlow** loves trees, especially the ginkgo in front of Thompson-Clark.

**Jeralyn Tatano** is a fourth year English major completing her student teaching at New Castle Middle School.

**Ben Thoms** is an international business major and a swimmer. Started to get into art last summer when I did these. Hope you like them.

**Elizabeth Venanzi** is a senior PR and English major. As a second semester senior, she finally got the courage to submit her work into Scrawl. Now she can graduate in peace.
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