

Elektrophraf

Fall 2017



Elektraphrog Staff



My first name is **Naomi Capodice**, but I go by **Summer**. I was born and raised in Sarasota FL. During my creating writing class on Monday I was informed about this class, and immediately thought it would be right up my alley. Production, design, writing, and photography are all things that intrigue me. In my junior year of high school I filmed and produced a documentary on the homeless, and loved the whole process.

Everything from meeting new people, going to new places, learning how to use a camera, and edit was an incredible experience. I plan on attending USF in the spring and majoring in public relations, and am beyond excited to be apart if this class.

Stacey Hicks is an avid photographer who is passionate about wildlife and capturing the world's natural beauty. She has been published on the cover of the Spring 2017 issue of Elektraphrog. Stacey is also a manager in a local pet store, and uses her photography skills to promote the company on social media.



Joshua Nadal is a 20 year old student who wants to pursue teaching and coaching as his degree. He is originally from Brooklyn, New York and has been in Florida for a few years now. He is a basketball player who has played with and against talent that is playing professionally overseas and in the NBA. He enjoys hanging out with family and friends, as well as playing or watching sports. He's also a huge fan of sneakers and collecting sneakers, having been a big "shoe head" since he was young. He is also interested in journalism and took this class to learn magazine work and see how it works and the procedures of making and editing a magazine.



Alison Sagirs came from a big city in New Jersey, but always felt at home in a small town. She knows Florida is not going to be her forever home, for her heart is somewhere cooler and away from everything. Like small town areas in Plymouth Mass where you drive down the road, and you see at least one person you know. Let's not forget her Patriots obsession, and her love for the sport. She aspires to be a teacher, and

have her own family with a farm. In middle school she was in a broadcasting class, where she helped do the school news, and film Romeo and Juliet for her school. In high school she made posters, and planned large events for her school. She was always a behind the scene type girl, she hates being the center of attention but loves to be involved.

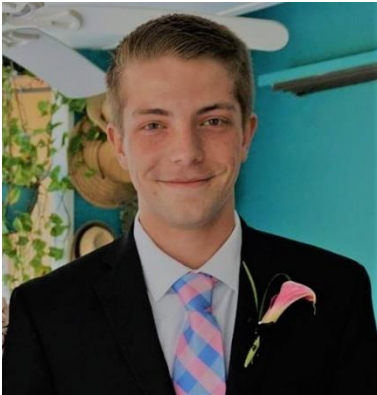


Nadia Schmalder was born in Queens, New York, and moved to North Port, Florida in 2006. In elementary school, she was involved in the editing of the school news productions, and ever since then she has had an interest in not only broadcasting, but journalism in itself. In high school, she went to a journalism camp at the University of Florida, and she knew that she had to go there and pursue that field. She now has decided that she wants to major in Public Relations and Political Science, with the

hopes of being a publicist in New York, for either a lobbying firm or a standard P.R. firm. She loves reading historical fiction and is eager to give writers and artists an outlet for their work.



Rickari Trevorah is a twenty year old young women and is currently a student at the State College of Florida Venice campus. She was born and raised in Manatee County Florida and resided there with her mother for the first nineteen years of her life. She now currently lives in North Port Florida. Rickari's interests are writing, film production, cosmetology, and musical and performing arts. She enjoys spending time with friends and family, getting to know new people and building relationships. Rickari plans to graduate from SCF either this Fall of 2017 or spring of 2018 with her Associates in Arts degree. After graduation, Rickari plans to attend Florida State University where she plans to be a creative writing major.



Matthew Wheeler is an aspiring broadcast journalist who has lived in the Sarasota County area for over a decade. His fascination with journalism began watching events such as the coverage of the Great Recession in 2008 and the 2009 floods that impacted the southeast United States. As he grew up, news, whether online or on TV, was something that interested him constantly. In late 2014, he was introduced to "Ram News", a daily news show that gave students at the Sarasota based Riverview High School a glimpse at what the school had to offer. The next year, he was promoted as a producer of the show. Matthew is also very much into the weather, and grew up watching The Weather Channel to get his daily dose of, you guessed it, weather. Matthew plans on getting his Bachelor's degree at the University of Florida in Broadcast Journalism, and be part of their student-run television news program in 2018.

Table of Contents

Art of Visual Intelligence by Timothy Poorender.....	1
Untitled by Stacey Hicks	3
Labyrinth by Macenzi Krause	4
Eartha Kitt by Jenna Harmon.....	5
Homer Knows by Bel.....	7
Untitled by Stacy Hicks	8
Marriage Markets, Matrimony, and Manipulation in Wharton’s “The Other Two” by A.A. Miles	9
A Gift by Kate Wilson	15
Rex by Macenzie Krause	19
Space Neighbors by Melanie Hope	26
The Doom Adventures of Rux and Clerk by Race Ganster ..	30
Untitled by Stacey Hicks	36
No Fear by Rickari Trevorah	37
Untitled Photos by Stacey Hicks	43
Contributor Biographies	44

Art of Visual Intelligence

by Timothy Poorender

I said,

it may be foolish, but it may be smart.

Either way, hey cupid, here's my heart.

Put it on the end of one of those arrows.

Send it off to wherever the weather and the air blows.

Before it hits,

the target, lift

up their hair, go:

“Feelings of love, he hopes you share those,

and feelings of hate he hopes you spare those.

He is scared those

feelings might leave you lone like scarecrows,

pharaohs, and

musical chair heroes.”

You said,

when it rains, it pours.

Baby boy, just stay indoors.

Because when you give, they just take some more,

and take, and me, I don't think you'll endure.

You said,

If you spent your whole life waiting on me,
It'd be the feeling of 88 degrees,
Inside a Nevada motel, a deep vacancy.

Your eyes said,

If I spent my whole life waiting on you,
it'd be just like debating the truth,
hoping one day that you'd finally concave to the proof.

Your smile said,

when it rains, it pours.
Baby boy, don't you stay indoors,
because when they give, don't you take no more,
don't take a thing, but me, what's yours.

•



Untitled by Stacey Hicks

Labyrinth

by Macenzi Krause

My bedroom is a celebrated Labyrinth,
A twisting, turning, dazzlingly confusing Mess.
Only I can comprehend the various trapdoors and hidden
lairs.

They've become long lost in a silky,
superfluous flow.

The way is bygone, old, forgotten,
If your try to enter here, Beware!

You just might find yourself trapped within the networking
web.

In this Labyrinth of mine, how the dark secrets lurk.

Still you're trying to Restrain them and Repress,
Smother and Suppress.

Really, don't you think it's like a looking glass,
Or maybe a sort of mirror?

A widow to my soul, but indecipherable...

Like a reflection of organized complexities and a
Composition of strangulated webs. I am now the Spider,
Please do not enter here unless.



Eartha Kitt

by Jenna Harmon

Eartha Kitt was at a Frat party
She sat at the bar and drank whiskey
Crowds filled the room
But she remained

A permanent fixture
She watches the collision of bodies
on the makeshift dance floor

Entranced
She didn't notice the dark figure
Slip the pill in her drink

They saw them drag Eartha up stairs
Slurring "Where are we going?"
Her pleading eyes boar
Into their souls

They turned away
While others called her a SLUT!
And branded into her skin
the word
Tainted

They all saw Eartha Kitt that night
The night they did
Nothing



Homer Knows

by Bel

I am a siren.
I am gentle
As a wisp of flame.

The song that flows
From my lips -
Alcoholic.

Homer, before,
Nods his head.

My appealing reflection
Is but an envelope
Deceiving the eyes.

I am soulful, yes,
As all.
But my verse is maddening.

Captains, consistent
In their portraits,
Resist me.
Tied to their masts.

I am sublime.
Yet - I am a siren.





Untitled by Stacy Hicks

Marriage Markets, Matrimony, and Manipulation in Wharton's "The Other Two"

by A.A Miles

The Industrial Revolution, despite pushing the world forward technologically, was a dark and difficult time for women. With innovation and progress happening all around them, women were still looked upon as second-class citizens, there to serve only their fathers and eventually husbands. Once Queen Victoria took the throne in England, women were re-branded in this new, young Queen's image. There was a sudden and immense societal pressure for women to be meek and modest, submissive and self-sacrificing. Women were to be perfectly passive Mother Mary figures, with no lives or thoughts outside their husbands'. This ideal "Angel in the House" paradigm was particularly pushed upon the middle class, where society's eyes were always watching women attempting to move up in the world, waiting for them to slip up. Popular writer of the time, Edith Wharton, was born into wealth and would have been well aware of the pressures of being (or appearing to be) an ideal wife and woman. Wharton was lucky enough to receive a superior education, and thus had the insight to be aware of the unfair situations women were placed in, and the hoops they must jump through to better their lives. In "The Other Two", Wharton uses symbolism and characterization to criticize the societal pressures put on women of the time period, as well as to explore how women might navigate the marriage power infrastructure.

Initially, Alice is looked upon by our narrator, Waythorn, as the ideal "Angelic" female. Her name alone suggests a naive, childlike figure, referencing Alice in Wonderland. Waythorn describes Alice as "serene... [with] perfectly balanced nerves [and] a soothing presence" (43). Despite her daughter facing a deadly disease, she turns to Waythorn

with a smile, never losing the “unperturbed gaiety” that first drew him to her (43). Waythorn is aware of Alice’s previous marriages, yet believes she has passed society’s tests and has remained an innocent creature, the victim of other, more brutish men than him. He argues that a “New York divorce is a diploma of virtue” and though some believe she should “remain in the role of injured wife” his views towards her past are far more sophisticated (44). His “amused confidence in her ability to justify herself” reveals that he believes her incapable of being anything but his own sweet girl (44). Alice, being a woman proved by society to be good and pure, cannot at first be viewed by Waythorn any differently. Her “childlike pleasure” in being with him is not questioned, she is from a “socially reigning family” and thus must be a good woman and wife (47, 43). She is not viewed as a complex human being with a past and her own thoughts and feelings, but like a doll, a plaything for Waythorn to possess and “enjoy the possession of” (48). Alice has successfully played this role for Waythorn, working her way up to a higher position in life. Because the rules of their society say she is a proper wife, and Waythorn is a proper gentleman functioning in said society, she has manipulated him into believing exactly what she wishes.

As Waythorn comes to face his wife’s past, it is revealed that she may be more like an Eve temptress than the angelic housewife he at first believed. Through each encounter with Alice’s ex-husbands, Waythorn emerges from the “outer darkness” of Alice’s vague former history (45). His first reaction upon meeting Varick reveals a lot about his character. Waythorn is disturbed that Varick is not more visibly broken up by his recent divorce from Alice. Her having “completely passed out of his life” so easily is interpreted by Waythorn as a flaw of Alice’s, not Varick’s (47). Waythorn views Alice as a prize rescued from a fellow suitor. But if said previous suitor no longer finds the prize valuable, what is its worth? To Waythorn, the prize has lost some of its luster. Since Varick, a fellow gentleman, and former lover of Alice, no longer desires Alice, Waythorn begins to question his

feelings as well. The opinions of other men, representing the male-driven society, have a huge sway over Waythorn. Instead of finding the flaws in himself for being so dependent on the opinions of others, or even Varick for casually forgetting a relationship (something he very strongly judges Alice for), he believes Alice to be at fault. As he continues having interactions with Varick and Haskett, he moves from thinking of Alice as “singularly soft and girlish” to “a woman who can shed her past like a man” (47, 54). He can no longer see her as his meek and chaste wife. Meeting her former flames makes her sexuality a grotesque reality. Her elasticity, once so attractive, now “sickens him” and he views her as “an old shoe...that too many feet had worn” (53). She is no longer the angelic housewife, but a sneaking snake, a wicked temptress, and used goods to boot! Waythorn is a product of his prudish society. He wants to believe Alice is a girl from a reputable family, who was treated ill by former brutes to be finally rescued by himself, a true gentleman. But once he understands the realities of her past, he sees her almost like a prostitute masquerading as his dream girl, a cherubic housewife. This reverses their roles, making Waythorn the victim and as such, he loses his dominance and male power. The funny thing is, Alice had her past all along, and it only became an issue for Waythorn when presented to him by the other male characters. Wharton is showing that despite Alice's ability to manipulate men, it is still a society governed solely by men, who pass the final judgement on women. Alice may be able to rise through the societal ranks of marriage by her own clever means, but the men in the story ultimately decide her fate.

After viewing Alice as an angel, then a she-devil, Waythorn believes she may instead be perfectly bred for matrimony. This discussion reveals more about him, still seeking any situation besides one where he is the victim of a powerful and manipulative woman. He does not ask Alice how she feels about any of this, or even inquire what her past relationships were truly like. Her thoughts and feelings are

meaningless, non-existent even. It never occurs to Waythorn to have a discussion of the marriage matters with her, he merely tries to spin the situation into a favorable one for him. Alice has “acquired the art” of being a wife through her past marriages, each one molding her more and more into Waythorn’s ideal wife (54). Haskett, being far from a gentleman, taught Alice to “worship good breeding” (54). He might not have been a brute, but his lack of status, money, and sophistication is seen as understandable reasons for divorce. Alice may have used Haskett then thrown him away, but she gained an appreciation for the finer things in life which makes her a more worthy wife for a gentleman like Waythorn. Varick being generally regarded as a cad taught her to “value the conjugal virtues” (54). She might have changed husbands with the flippancy of a change of weather, but now she is more desirable for Waythorn (54). She is no longer thought of as an old shoe, but her sexual experience does not make her a sensual human being, but more like a highly-rated sex doll. Alice’s entire life before Waythorn, once regarded as unsubstantial, is now viewed by him as a sort of wife boot-camp. He “passes into complete acceptance” of her past, not in accepting her as a being with unique experiences, but as a Frankenstein-like creature, traits pulled from both the angel and the temptress to create the perfect toy just for him. He even goes so far as to admit feeling “indebted to his predecessors [for making] his life easy if not inspiring” (54). Not feelings of respect for Alice and all she has been through to become the person he is in love with, but a respect for the men who “made her” who she is. This locker room male comradery is a critique on the boy’s club that was society at the time. It is as if Alice is a ball of clay, each husband shaping and reshaping her into this ideal thing, with no care or thought for her wants or needs. It is grotesque enough to believe one has modified a human for one’s own personal gain, but perhaps in the men working together to create this “idealized female” Wharton is criticizing male society as a whole joining together to decide how women should behave, without any opinions from women.

Alice's character is mainly revealed through her interaction with the men, making her a symbol of all women struggling to adapt because they are socially weak. We view Alice through the eyes of Waythorn, viewing a woman as society would have viewed her at that time. We know little of her looks or personality, mainly that she is a sweet and delicate little thing. She knows what is expected of her as a female, and can play "Angel in the House" quite convincingly. Then, more like a chameleon than a snake, with each new husband she adapts her behavior accordingly, to best suit her new environment. This all reveals, in a very slight of hand way, that Alice has two very non-Angel characteristics: she is intelligent and she is cunning. She knows when to "tremble her lip" and make a man "feel himself a brute" (45). She knows that she must mask her real emotions, even after visiting her extremely ill only child. She knows how to navigate in and out of marriages without tarnishing her reputation. She knows how to work within and against the system to establish a comfortable and genteel life for herself and her daughter. Because of all this, Alice can be viewed as a coded feminist character. She may look "soft and girlish" in her husband's "bachelor library", but beneath the girlish facade, she is a strong female, taking power back however she can (47). She is totally comfortable in the bachelor pad because she's been in one before, subtly manipulating a man's mind, and if she needs to, she will be in a different one again.

Alice, like her namesake, finds herself trapped in a world where things are confusing, nonsensical, and unfair. In her Wonderland, the Caterpillar and Cheshire cat are men pushing and pulling her in all directions. Alice must retain her true self while acting as a mirror for the other characters, showing them what they wish to see in her. In a society run by men, she must tread very lightly to get what she needs and wants out of life, because her very treading is seen as an affront to the fabric of that society. Wharton treads lightly as well, not writing about a brazen female, flaunting her power and sexuality, but a subtle powerhouse, working within this constructed society, changing her colors

appropriately, and ultimately, cheating the system. Waythorn does not decide to divorce her, or throw her into a madhouse, but decides it is in his best interests to stay. The other ex-husbands do not speak ill of her, or drag her reputation through the mud, but maintain friendly relationships with her and Waythorn. Coming in “fresh and smiling at the end...with a charming gesture of hospitality”, Alice has truly fooled them all (56). Waythorn laughs at the end, thinking he has worked out his silly little wife. But it is actually Alice who has worked them all over, so the joke is on the men.



A Gift

by Kate Wilson

“Sammy, help me. Momma always told me I had a gift, but I don’t know what it is. I wanna be in the sea again. I wanna be free.” My knees were kneeling in the sand and my head was dropped down next to them. It was dark out. The only other noise was the sound of the waves hitting shore. Sammy was close to shore, but no one else could see him. This was the last night I was able to talk to him before they took me away.

At five, two men in white coats walk in my room and take me over to another room. It’s always the same lady sitting in the same chair, with the same fake smile. I hate her. “How does it feel to have demons running around in your head?” Every day she asks me the same question, and I give her the same answer. There’s always two men standing in front of the door, with one arm crossed over the other. The foster care sent me to the loony bin when they caught me sneaking out to the beach, and saw me for the fifth time talking to myself in the sea. They told me no one wants to adopt a crazy foster child. I really didn’t care. I knew I wasn’t crazy.

“Irvette did you hear me? Irvette? Are you seeing Sammy again? What is Sammy saying to you, Irvette?”

Sammy was the name the foster care heard me say when I was in the sea. I look up at her, and sprint for the door.

“Grab her!” The lady in the chair yells. The two men grab me by my arms before I can make it any further. I knew they were going to grab me. That’s why I ran. They always lock me back up in my room. I’d rather be there than be told I’m schizophrenic. That’s what all the doctors say I am. I never believe them, because momma said I have a gift.

Sammy was the dolphin that saved my life when I was five. A shark attacked my momma while we were swimming in the sea together. By the time Sammy got to us, there was

nothing left of my momma, and all I had was a cut on my leg. I still have a scar from it.

Three people wearing white coats come in my room at eight every night. Two of them hold me down while the other injects medicine into my left arm. Do I resist? No, this is the best part of the day. I can feel the injection shooting through my veins as my memories become more vivid.

"Whoa momma look at your legs they're so shiny. When I grow up will I have shiny legs like you?"

"Of course, you will, Irvette. You have a gift, which nobody else has."

Momma and I talked to sea horses, sang with starfishes, danced with jellyfish, raced the stingrays, and rode dolphins like people ride horses.

"Do you know what your name means, Irvette?"

"No momma."

"It means *friend of the sea*."

"What does that mean momma?"

"You and I are the same. One day, when the time is right I'll show you, my dear."

This was the conversation that constantly ran through my head, along with the vivid image of my momma swimming through the sea with her long glistening legs that radiated throughout the whole sea. I remember her always making me wear a snorkel so I can breathe under water.

"Momma where's your mask?"

She would smile, put me on her back with my arms around her neck, turn to me and say, "I can hold my breath for a long time."

Today was the day they move me up into the next stage of our rehab; it's the building next door. It's more intense but a shorter period of time. I'm getting closer to the end of this anguish.

"Get off of me, get me out of here! I'm not crazy! Sammy is my friend; he saved my life when a shark attacked my momma! I've always talked to Sammy, since I could first talk! Momma told me my first word was '*doffin*,' while pointing to Sammy. It's not my fault you don't know Sammy!"

everyone in the room gives each other a look that blatantly screamed, “This girl is out of her mind.” That was the first time I told them about Sammy, and the last.

“Get the ropes!” the men in the white coats shouted.

“Where’s her counselor? We need her counselor; the demons are running around in her head again.” The counselor was the lady in her chair who always asks me the same question. The lady I hate. For the first time since being here, my eyes begin to tear up. “Maybe I really am crazy.” I thought. I feel crazy, and everyone is telling me I’m crazy. I’ve never felt this way swimming in the sea with my momma.

“I can’t be here anymore. Get me out of here. I need to get out of here!” I said. The loony bin is supposed to make people better but it’s making me crazy. Four people with white coats walk in my room, carrying ropes. The counselor is following them. Three people are already holding me down. The counselor sits next to me and brings her face close to mine.

“Irvette, is Sammy back? Are you seeing Sammy? What is Sammy saying to you, Irvette? Is he hurting you?”

I throw my arms and legs in the air; my breath is getting heavier from throwing my body off the table, draining all my energy. I felt my head and body reach their threshold. I scream at the top of my lungs.

“Get her arms! Tie her legs!”

Tears were running down my face. I no longer knew what to think. “Are the doctors right, am I crazy?” I ask myself. “Is schizophrenia the gift momma said I had? How could she do this to me? Why wouldn’t momma just tell me I was sick?”

I lie flat on the table, with no movement in my eyes or mouth. I was so still I looked dead. I hear the counselor putting words together in the background. “Irvette, is Sammy hurting you? Irvette? Irvette? Has he taken over your body again?”

I picked my head up from the table and see my body tied down. I could see my scar from the shark. My legs were tied together. They looked like my mommas did when we would

swim in the sea. Before I knew it, I feel the needle enter my left arm, while my body completely let's go, and my eyes slowly roll to the back of my head, with my eye lids coming to a close.

"Do you know what your name means?"

"No momma"

"It means friend of the sea."

"What does that mean momma?"

"You and I are the same. One day, when the time is right I'll show you, my dear."

"Momma where's your mask?"

The conversation was playing in my head again. Playing over and over again, like a broken record.

"I can hold my breath for a long time."

"I can hold my breath for a long time."

How could she hold her breath for so long; that's physically impossible?

"Whoa momma look at your legs they're so shiny. When I grow up will I have shiny legs like you?"

Her legs were elongated in the sea. She never separated them when she swam. Her body moved with the rhythm of the sea as if they were writing a song together. The way they glistened with every movement radiated the sea, and all the animals in it.

"It means friend of the sea."

"You and I are the same. One day, when the time is right I'll show you, my dear."

"You and I are the same. One day, when the time is right I'll show you, my dear."



Rex

by Macenzie Krause

The night that Joshua met Rex was permanently ingrained into his memory, like stone work chiseled into a mountain side. It was one of those nights that you don't forget, not even the smallest or the most insignificant details. Now, as Josh glared across the table at Rex, he replayed the night over and over again inside his head:

Josh had decided to spend the evening with his high school sweetheart of four years, MaryAnn Thomas. They went to Wal-Mart first, restocking all of their college school supplies for the upcoming semester that began in a few days. After stopping by their apartment to drop everything off, they hit dinner at a local sports bar. They indulged in the pleasure of sports, reggae music, hot wings, and fries, as they met up with a large group of rowdy friends. Drinks were passed out to everyone over twenty-one while the music blared and couples swayed on the overcrowded dance floor.

Much to MaryAnn's disappointment, she had to wait one more month before her drinking participation was considered legal. Josh, knowing how frustrating this was for her, had insisted on doing something fun and exciting after dinner was over. If she can't have a few drinks, he thought, she should still be able to do something a little bit crazy.

"Babe, it's almost Halloween!" he said. "Why don't we go grab some ice cream? We can take pictures with it inside that old, abandoned building."

"It's more like a shack, Josh."

"Oh, whatever. It'll be just like a haunted house. We'll have spiders, cobwebs, sweets, and everything else in between. Come on!"

Mary had agreed, of course, just as Josh knew she would. She had an intense and driving passion for both Halloween and anything that provided her with an adrenaline rush.

Within a few minutes they had their ice cream in hand and were trudging up the shack's dirty and dilapidated steps. Josh remembered a bone-chilling wind sweep over his entire body as the floorboards creaked beneath his feet. Perfect, he had thought, while looking over the dismal structure. If this didn't get Mary excited, nothing would.

However, as he reached out to open the door, Josh suddenly felt his sense of anticipation and nervous fear morph into dread. His fingers fumbled clumsily with the grimy door handle, which was wet with something other than water. It was sticky, warm, and thick with grit.

"Hurry up and get your flashlight out!" Mary's breath tickled the back of his neck as she pushed him forward. "I want to take a few pictures before our ice cream melts!"

She seemed completely unaware of his hesitation and revulsion. What was wrong with him? Mary was perfectly calm, so why wasn't he calm too?

Wanting to appear tough, Josh nodded and reluctantly stepped inside, determined to ignore the warning bells blaring in the back of his head. Goosebumps, heart racing, chills, and cold sweat. Deep breaths, he thought, everything is fine. It was just a dirty, one room shed, forgotten long ago and perfect for Halloween themed memories. Then, the door slammed shut behind them.

"Mary, that was you, right?"

"Stop playing around and turn on the light! You know you're not scary even when you're trying."

"But babe, that wasn't me." Josh jumped and continued fumbling with the flashlight.

"You're hilarious, really."

Finally, the light snapped on loudly and Mary screamed an earsplitting cry that ricocheted through the darkness. There, standing about an inch from Josh's face, was Rex.

He was a skeletal creature, but still humanlike in form, with soulless black eyes that swallowed his entire face. Sallow skin was stretched across his cheekbones and pulled into tight, cracking creases. It also protruded in certain areas, lumpy and grotesque looking beneath his dark circles.

But the thing that struck Josh the most about Rex was the smell. Decay seemed to seep from his very pores, enveloping and choking the space around him.

"I'm starving," Rex had said. Terrified and shocked, Josh had tried to back away, but the creature continued to move forward while breaking into a sort of chant.

"Please...Please. I'm ravenous, famished, hollow, empty, scraping, scratching, clawing. I'm HUNGRY! Give me more!"

This can't be real, Josh whispered to himself as the room shifted in and out of focus between his eyes. This was all just an elaborate, Halloween themed joke played on him and Mary by their friends. Josh started to laugh at the notion of all his unnecessary fear, but Mary drew in a sharp breath.

"You think it's funny, then, to be hungry? To starve?" The creature's face, begging for food seconds ago, had turned menacingly evil and glowered at Josh with a deadly intensity. "Well then, Joshua," Rex said, "you will be hungry, starving, and sickly too. And every time you satisfy this hunger, the person that you love the most will never have the pleasure of eating again!"

With that, the flashlight flickered out abruptly and left Josh and Mary in a complete, dense darkness. Breathing heavily, their nerves seemed to scrape against the empty silence and room's the filthy walls. Several minutes passed before Mary finally worked up the courage to speak.

"Josh, that was a prank, or a joke, wasn't it?"

"It had to have been," he said, reassuring not only her, but also himself. "But let's get out of here anyways. Now."

"Yeah. Yeah, ok."

Within an hour they had recovered from the shock, laughing at the disturbing incident while they drove back to their apartment. Josh disregarded Rex's warning as he and Mary ate their ice cream, wondering which of their friends had been behind the brilliant "trick or treat" scare. In fact, Josh wished that he had thought of it first.

Then, for the second time that night, things took a turn for the worst. With a bang there were sirens and voices,

mixed with twisted metal, blood, and glass. They had been t-boned in the middle of an intersection, hit at the exact moment that Josh had taken his first bite. And Mary had taken the impact.

His back digging into the hard gravel ground, Josh remembered looking up and seeing him again. Rex. He was there, smiling pleasantly, standing over Josh. And since that moment Rex had always been **there**; he was a constant and lingering companion. He breathed down his neck, in his ear, ceaselessly murmuring in that scratchy, defiled voice. Only Josh was able to see the apparition, or feel his life sucking presence. He was nails on a chalk board and a gnawing hunger.

Josh had wondered at first if he was going mad, or if Rex's curse was actually real. How could he be sure that Mary's accident wasn't just a horrible coincidence? An uncontrolled tragedy or a deadly fluke?

Further proof came after almost two full months of starvation, when Josh finally reached his breaking point. Driving himself to Golden Corral, he ate until he could hardly breathe while Rex observed him with a sardonic expression. Initially, everything seemed fine despite Rex's continued presence. However, the second that Josh had gotten home, he received a call from his mother. She had been diagnosed with stage four breast cancer that same day.

This confirmed to Josh that Rex was real and not just a figment of his imagination. He was a sadist and a murderer, responsible for both Mary and his mother's death. Soon, Josh thought, maybe his own death as well.

"You going to eat that?" Rex said, while leaning lazily across the kitchen counter.

Josh's mind snapped back to the present as he realized that Rex was speaking to him. Between the two of them sat a small bowl of cereal, freshly poured and untouched.

"I don't know Rex, are you going to eat it?"

"No." His voice was flat, monotone, dead. Kind of like Josh's own voice had become over that last few months.

In fact, the longer that Josh had known Rex, the more like him he had become. His stomach began to rumble and groan loudly, as though in agreement to this thought. This only served to remind Josh of his continued and prolonged starvation.

Sighing, he pulled his hands roughly through his unkempt hair and swept it away from his eyes. To Rex's pleasure, and Josh's dismay, a handful of the dull brown strands broke away with a sharp crackling sound. Rex chuckled softly, but all Josh could do was stare. This was only additional evidence towards his continued mental, physical, and emotional deterioration. I am dying, Josh thought, and the truth of this notion finally struck him.

His skin was dry, his hair was falling out, his bones were brittle, and his body was skeleton-like. His heart struggled to pump beneath his chest, and was irregular, pounding, and uncomfortable. On top of these things, Rex had stolen even more from Josh, including his loved ones, his friends, his personality, and his passion for life. He had become drained of all outside interests and all joy.

Josh's mind could now only comprehend how hungry he was, how skinny he was, and how much he wanted to eat, but couldn't.

Rex, the disgusting monster, needed complete control over every action, thought, and breath that Josh took. He had wiggled and wormed his way into being Josh's one and only friend, while still remaining his worst enemy. He was an addictive and murderous obsession, like an abusive relationship that you just can't seem to escape.

Rex, apparently bored, began playing with the now soggy cereal and swirled it around the bowl with his spoon.

"Rex, what do you want?" Josh said.

"Nothing. I don't need anything."

"I know that you don't need anything, Rex, but what do you want?"

The devil looked up as though he was confused.

"Nothing."

"Then why are you fricking here???" Josh said, completely at his wits end. "Because I'm starving. Are you happy, Rex? I am literally starving to death! How much longer are you going to plague and torture my life?"

"Joshua, you know the price," Rex said. His stare was as calm and emotionless as ever. He was heartless, inexpressive, and utterly unmoving.

There are never any loopholes with him, Josh thought hopelessly, while his stomach continuing to churn and moan. He could feel himself slowly being emptied until nothing else remained. And yet, still Rex would be there, hovering over his emaciated skeleton. He would lead Josh slowly to the grave and most likely to whatever was beyond.

Abruptly, a thought sprang into Josh's mind. What if there was a loophole after all? One that neither he, nor Rex had ever imagined or dreamed of before?

Rex had said that the person who Josh loved the most would die each time he ate, but who would that person be now? Mary was gone, his mother was dead, and Josh had not spoken to anyone else in months. He had refused to see any of his other family members and friends out of either fear or insanity. The only person left was, Rex...

Could it really be that simple? To eat Rex to his own death?

Josh slid the bowl of cereal closer to his chest and picked up the spoon with shaking hands. His mouth began salivating uncontrollably as his body cried out for food, nourishment, food. Rex just looked up at Josh, seemingly unconcerned and completely unaware of his fast approaching doom. His demonic face seemed to say, "If you really want to kill someone else, be my guest." And oh, how Josh did.

Plunging the spoon into his mouth, Josh experienced a burst of flavors that he had been deprived of for far too long. This time Rex looked up again, Josh discerned recognition in his eyes. His breath caught, his nostrils flared, and his heart could be seen pumping erratically beneath his sallow skin. Fear dawned inside his soulless face as he began to choke and gasp.

Josh couldn't move, sitting rooted on the spot as his tormenter's frame struck the ground a sickening thud.

"I can't believe it, I can't believe it." It was the only thing he could think.

Laughing and crying and screaming, Josh jumped up and yelled to anyone who could hear him:

"Screw you, Rex! Anorexia, Rex, screw you! I'm free!"



Space Neighbors

by Melanie Hope

Herald has changed ever since the Martians landed here. At first there were only a dozen or so. Then they started to arrive in hordes. Their abnormally proportioned bodies and slimy artichoke colored skin took getting used to. They claimed to want peace and the world leaders didn't seem to mind the avoidance of a world war.

"The damn Martians won't stop staring at me!"

He's at it again. We can't go anywhere without him ranting about them.

"Those bug-eyed freaks come to *our* planet and they're looking at me like I'm the weird one."

"Honey, let's just get our groceries and go. You're being paranoid."

The drive home is quiet. My once kind, compassionate man is becoming an intolerable bigot. It's not like they've done anything to wrong us. I'd be lying if I said their appearances were less than grotesque but they seem nice enough.

By the time we reach home, Herald's temper has cooled. That's when I notice the moving van. Our eyes are glued to the van in hopes of scoping out our new neighbors. The next-door house has been empty for years and I am excited for fresh faces.

"Oh! I hope they're a nice couple."

"Don't get your hopes up dear."

"Let go over and say hi."

"Who does that anymore? This isn't the fifties."

My rebuttal is lost when my eyes spot the bulbous headed creatures grabbing furniture from the van.

"Herald honey, your right. Let's just go inside."

"You've got to be kidding me. In my fucking neighborhood."

I grab the bags and head inside. The front door slams shut behind me and I see Herald etching a path into the wood floors as he paces.

“Next thing you know they’ll wanna be goddamn roommates.”

He stands and peaks through the blinds, almost like he expects them to burst through our door.

He’s still standing there by the time I go to bed.

“Those freaks are up to something. There are too many lights on in that house. Don’t they know how much electricity costs these days.”

“Come to bed. It’s not like they’re going anywhere.”

His mouth morphs into an eerie smirk and a chill runs down my spine.

“We’ll see about that.”

I go to sleep hoping that smirk doesn’t haunt my dreams.

Herald stopped working. He spends most of his days watching the neighbors. Though I try to fight them, the thoughts of leaving him are becoming more and more enticing.

“You know the Wilsons had the Martians over for tea the other day and they say they’re a lovely couple.”

“Don’t you see Mary? They have everyone hypnotized. The other day the Montgomery family went in and they never came out!”

“You probably fell asleep before they left. In any case, I’m sorry you feel that way, because I invited them over for dinner and they will be here any minute.”

“What?! If you think I’m going to stand here and let those *things* in my house your insane.”

“Then leave.”

The room becomes quiet and he returns to his post and starts mumbling under his breath. The ringing of the doorbell finally breaks the awkward silence.

I let them in and Herald storms off towards the bedroom. The Martians just stare and I end up eating dinner alone with them. They don't really say much the whole meal. It's probably Herald's fault.

When I start serving cherry pie, Herald joins us. His face trapped in a permanent scowl as he sags into the chair next to me.

"So, have you seen the Montgomery couple recently, because I haven't seen them around in days?"

Shocked from my husband's outburst, all I can do is watch.

The Martians look towards one another before what I can assume is the woman answers.

"Yes. When they were over a couple nights ago they mentioned going on a long family vacation. They said they might be gone for... a while."

The way she said "a while" made me want to curl under a blanket and hide but I shook it off and pertained the feeling to Herald's delusional rantings getting to me.

"That's funny. Seems like an odd time for a vacation considering Alex had mentioned getting a new job a week ago."

"Well that seems like a celebration enough."

A silent conversation passes between the Martian couple.

Then, in one fluid motion, they stand up and leave our house.

That night I make Herald sleep on the couch.

Just as I'm about to drift off to sleep, a loud crash from the living room startles me. I grab my robe and cautiously leave the safety of my bed.

When I come to the living room, I find it completely empty. Blankets and pillows are tossed about the couch. A wedding picture lay smashed on the wood floors. The front door stands ajar as soft breeze drifts in through the opening.

After that night, I never saw Herald again, and the neighbor's lights remained off.



The Doom Adventures of Rux and Clerk

by Race Ganster

I named him Clerk, built just like a 14-year-old boy like me, round yellow eyes with black centers and a mouth one like the screen of an old heart monitor. I didn't like tech that much, I'd much rather be outside climbing trees or skipping rocks over all the rivers around. Seems almost everyone else would rather be on SitTechs, a jet-black mask to fit over your entire face and put you into the world you want, your idea of a utopia, "Your perfect paradise," read the SitTech boxes. Clerk was a personality robot, meant to match your personality, a bit off from what my parents thought to be me, but our differences make us a better team. It's just us now, we fight to survive, technology has overcome the people and the real reality, trapped so deep into the world they created they forget the world around them. When it first started happening it would be on the news, man forgets to feed baby after days of Sit-Tech, or people found dead of starvation in their cars using them while driving.

My mother was one of them, she died of starvation, I'm not sure what world she wanted to be in, or if I was in it. I tried to get her attention and feed her, but you couldn't get the mask off her face. She just laid there comfortably on her bed as I stared at my own reflection in the mask. The mask was dreary, sleek and black, fitted to each person. It surrounds your entire face and around your head, sucks in and steams rolls out from the seams, I know because I watched my mom put on hers. Sit-Techs were made for adults, 21 and up. There weren't any small sized ones for kids like me anyway, but older kids eventually figured out a way through curiosity, they are trapped too now. Almost like a drug that almost everyone soon became a victim to.

Clerk and I now wander the barren highways of forgotten cars looking for usable fuel and a battery to get my dad's car working, we needed to get out, food was running out and almost everyone in my town was dead or trapped, I don't think I've seen a living person in 6 months, but we have heard of life recently. Clerk's radio picked up a signal coming from somewhere

in Colorado a couple days ago, reaching out to people seeking a place free from SitTechs, running water, even electricity. This sounded like paradise to me, the voice on the radio sounded like a little girl. Clerk calculates and says the trip would take weeks if we walked and we didn't have enough food to last us that long, and my dad hasn't come back from the grocery store in months, we went back there to look a few months ago, nothing, no food either, just lonely bodies still standing with SitTechs on their faces not even seeing us pick their pockets for their keys in hopes of a running vehicle, some just lay dead in the isle, ironic they starve. With my parents and all people around me gone, I had to take care of myself and Clerk, luckily, he ran on solar power, no problem as we are outside all day, just haven't seen a running car in about 6 months either. Clerk and I usually set off in the morning to give enough power to Clerk to get back, I had a bike with pegs on the back that Clerk rode and I hung on, keeping a .22 I found in Ms. Delphi's bedroom resting on Clerk's shoulders in case we got lucky and saw a deer. We rode for about a mile until we came up on a box-truck crashed into the median of a highway, the truck had a trailer attached reading Sweeties, we hoped for food and fuel. We parked the bike alongside driver side tire, I opened the door maybe to find some communications devices to send back a radio signal and the body of the driver fell out, along with his SitTech tangled around his neck covered in dried blood, his eyes hollowed and teeth gone, skin tightly wrapped around his skull. His plaid tucked-in shirt has black stains, and his blue jeans hang loose around his waist. Trying to hold my self together and look for a radio Clerk noticed we hit jackpot, the tank had some salvageable fuel in it, hopefully not tarnished by time. Using an old 1 gallon jug, I filled the jug with fuel and remembered to grab the battery, it seemed good and terminals were clean, battery and fuel in the front basket on the bike and we set off back home. I looked back at that body that fell from the truck as his hollowed eyes seemed to looked back at me.

"Don't look at it Rux, it won't help you." Clerk said.

"How do you think his eyes got hollowed like that?"

"I'm not sure, his brain there no blood, like he dried up or something."

"Dry? how?"

“Yes, his face at least, my processors are having a hard time making sense of the readings, he was still wearing clothes and I don’t have features like Docbots do, maybe soon we can add the programming, it may come of use”

“Agreed, another mission for another time, let’s get back, there’s something I must see.”

I thought about the truck driver and his face the entire ride home. I’ve never seen a SitTech off someone’s face after they have died. I wondered how his face got the way it did, something wasn’t right and I had to rip a SitTech off someone’s face to see if the result was the same. My mother had never left her bed because of these cursed black masks, and if there is one thing I have always wanted to do was rip that SitTech off her face. Riding back to my old home I placed my bike on the steps I once did after school, the sound of the screen door sends birds out though the broken ceiling, sunlight touched down on the weathered wooden floors, as some water dripped from the hole making new life in the house. Each of our footsteps echoed through the halls, I walk up to her room to find her in the same place she left herself, SitTech still set firmly over her face, the window still open from when I last left her, giving her fresh air because the power had gone out and dad still hadn’t returned. I use my pocket knife to pry open the mask, holding one hand over my mouth trying to ignore the horrid smell of my mother’s decaying body and room, sadly couldn’t do the same for my eyes. Dust and dead skin fly in every direction as tired to pry my rusty knife through the mask, after trying countless times and getting angry I decided to wedge the blade under her chin and broke her jaw, part of the blade breaks off into my mother’s cheek. The mask finally gives, and a cloud of smoke dispersed from the mask.

Deep hollowed eyes stare back at me, once filled with a blue sky now empty with a stream of yellowish red fluid running out of her eye sockets and dripping onto the pillow leaving a stain next to all her black hair that had fallen out. Most of her nose had broken off, and it was dripping as well, revealing the splintered nasal cavity behind it, I assumed my blade hit it. I then looked at the SitTechs and noticed the tubes that your eyes fit into, suction like holes fitted for ears, nose, and mouth.

“SitTechs are literally sucking the life out of people.” I thought.

“I’ll need her clothes off to do a proper reading.”

I used the remaining broken end of my knife to tear her cloths, rip by rip I saw her hairless body wrapped tightly around a skeleton unravel, I didn’t need Clerk’s readings to see this body is dry.

“I think it’s best we leave tomorrow, we have what we need, I can’t see this anymore, I need paradise.”

We left our old home without looking back and went to Ms. Delphi’s house, it was for sale for a long time so the house was vacant, no dead bodies in beds. We had fuel and the battery we needed to get going. The morning after was gloomy, a low fog seemed to roll over my neighborhood as Clerk and I rested, we had only a gallon of fuel and needed to go back to the truck and syphon more, bringing extra jugs to fill up with. Battery and fuel in the station wagon starts up the 1st try, a mile in we started come up on the same truck from the day before, as we gain closer and I start to slow down to stop looked for the driver and he was gone. “Clerk, the truck driver is gone!”

“He is, but I don’t see any traces of the body being dragged, but footsteps are going....”

Before Clerk could finish he had already floored the station wagon in reverse to go back to Ms. Delphi’s house. with my worst fear in my head at this moment, the fog grew thicker as we raced back into our neighborhood. I saw Clerk’s scanners detected more movement up ahead, The fog wasn’t clearing, our visibility was only a few feet, Clerk flicks on the bright lights in the car and suddenly stops the station wagon, “My motion detectors are reading the movement just 200 feet in front of us.”

“So why did you stop?”

“Because the movement is moving towards us faster now.”

Shaking, I made sure my .22 was loaded, I pulled the charging handle back, opened the sunroof and rested the weapon on the roof hoping for a clearer view, it wasn’t. The fog was thick and still, no birds chirped and didn’t seem any life existed besides me. Then a roar of what sounded like deep echoed wind flooded the air. My body shaking as I hear footsteps race towards us, the echo grows louder, the footsteps grew faster. A

figure starts to appear in the depths of fog, arms hanging low and bouncing aimlessly as the creature sprints, the howling didn't stop, as soon as the creature reaches the light of the station wagons high beams, it stops, the head twitches and the figure still barely visible, the creature slowly creeps closer and closer as I noticed empty eyes stare into me, I froze. Dead in my place, as did she. My mother, she stood there somehow staring at me. Fluids still running out of her sockets as the reflection of the high beams bounces off the blade still wedge under her chin, her dry naked skin still tightly wrapped around her bones and face, she stood arms hung low almost touching ground, panting for air violently when she belts out another howl and starts to sprint towards the station wagon, just only about 100 feet away.

"Mom! Don't! Mom!" I screamed along.

I knew in my head she was gone, she always was, but I kept calling her, shaking as she gained closer my trigger finger never did. just 15 feet in front of station wagon Clerk grabs the rifle and shoots, the shot fires through her head making another hollowed hole to stare into, her body feel and the echoing of her howl ceased and the echo of the gun shot was all that remained.

To be continued...





Untitled by Stacey Hicks



No Fear

by Rickari Trevorah

“Help! Somebody please help me! I’m about to have a baby and need a cab!”

I stumbled upon a pregnant woman behind a dumpster. One of her legs was bent in an unnatural position, clearly broken. I dropped my bags and ran to her as fast as I could.

“Ma’am, why are you not in a hospital?” I said.

The woman was in too great of pain to answer my question directly. “I’m having this baby *now*. There is no time to make it. Please, help me!”

I wanted to cry. I was two blocks away from home. So close to avoiding this situation.

The women looked at me through tears, “What’s your name?”

“Winifred, and yours?”

She didn’t answer, “Winifred, do you have any experience with delivering babies?”

“I-I was practicing medicine for four years. But it’s not my calling. I can’t do this ma’am, I’m not made for this. Yes, yes I have experience delivering babies”.

“I’m Meredith, looks like fate has called you back to medicine tonight Winifred- ahhh!” Another contraction. This baby was coming and fast.

“Okay, Meredith, I said, you’re going to have to try and not move your leg as much as possible to avoid the pain from it. It’s broken.” Thankfully she had on a dress, I lifted it, “you’re about three centimeters dilated, you’re going to have to start pushing soon.” I stabilized her body and prepared her for pushing, naturally, she cried out again in pain. “How did you end up out here?”

“I was on my way to the super market. My husband, late from work as usual had the car and I was hungry. I knew better than taking the back alley, but it would have saved me ten minutes. A man mugged me, stole my purse, when he only found ten dollars in cash, he kicked my knee inward and I fell. I must have fallen hard because my water broke, and I began having contractions. The man ran away with my ten dollars”.

I didn't respond. Nothing seemed right to say. I just looked at her. *How can people be so cruel?* “Why aren't you in medical school anymore?” Meredith asked.

I knew it wouldn't be long before the famous question would be asked. Even the name brought me so much shame. *Medical school*. A place where I *did not* belong. It is my only desire in life to help people. But what if there were one person that I cannot help? Someone who I cannot save? How would I live with that?

“I'm not cut out for it”.

Meredith protested, “But four years, that is a big chunk of your life. Don't you think you owe yourself the pleasure of putting to practice all those years of leaning?”

I responded slowly. “Timothy, Little Timothy. He was four years old. His heart began to fail and he was rushed to the E.R. I was close to the end of my fourth year, close to applying to a master's program in medicine. I was shadowing Dr. Foster, who specialized in cardiovascular surgery. He trusted me, I had done so well the past year. Answering every question right, being a big help in the operating room. But when little Timothy came in, I froze. The fear in his mother's eyes, the pain in his father's, and the sweet, innocence in Timothy's. Dr. Foster asked me like he always does, “What do we do next”? And I froze. I knew the answer, but I couldn't say it. I had never had a child's life in my

hands. Dr. Foster asked me one more time and I still didn't answer. With Timothy's life on the line, Dr. Foster and other medical doctors rushed Timothy off and I just stood there, dumbfounded. I just...*stood there.*"

Meredith was silent for some time. "So, what are you doing now?" Did she really care to know? Maybe she was trying to keep her mind off the excruciating pain of her bent in leg.

"I am now an economics major. I still have an impact on the betterment of people, but not directly. If anything happens to anyone, it's not directly my fault. I have more time for a social life. Economics doesn't require nearly as much studying time as medical school did. I can sleep in more, I do not have to spend most of my days watching people who've fought months for their lives die like all the fighting were in vain. And I have more time to do things that I enjoy"

Meredith did not look convinced. "And fate just so has it that on your way home to your 'fun college life', you stumbled upon a woman in labor. What things exactly, *do* you enjoy Winifred?"

I crossed my legs. I could tell Meredith was trying to avoid her pain. We were both still bracing for the next contraction. "You know, I said, I like to go to the beach, and read and hang out with friends and watch movies..."

Meredith gave me a look that said I was only fooling myself. "What do you wake up and fall asleep thinking about every day Winifred? What is it that you find yourself talking about all the time? What is it that you really want to do and enjoy doing it?"

"I-

"C'mon, what is it?"

Hot, fat tears began to roll down my now dirty cheeks. “I want to help people! I want to practice medicine! I want to be surrounded by doctors who know what they are doing and love doing it. I want to spend every day in a cold hospital. I love the smell of it, I love the rush I get when people enter that emergency room and I know that I can save a life and make a family’s day better. I love giving the families good news about their loved ones. I love the medical jokes only us medical people get, I love going to class and soaking all the wisdom and knowledge from my professors, I love dissecting the donated bodies and practicing surgical procedures on them I love that I have the skills and abilities to save a life. I want to be a doctor!” I was wailing. I was shocked at myself. This wasn’t me, to cry in front of a stranger. But Meredith wasn’t a stranger. She was fate, and I was angry. I was scared.

Meredith grabbed my hand, “Winifred, you will win, and you will lose. You will fail, and you will succeed, but we all have a calling in this world. We all have something to offer the world and if we hold back out of fear, we are not only depriving ourselves of happiness, but the world of being a better place. In your case, people from living. People will die. You are a doctor, not God. You cannot save every life, but for the ones that you can save, they need you to go back to medical school.”

Meredith was right. I knew that my calling would eventually pin me down. There was no escaping. I just kept crying. I didn’t want to face my fears. I didn’t want to be one responsible for someone lying on their death bed.

I wiped my face with my shirt. “Thank you”, I said.

Meredith smiled. “Plus, you would be miserable as an economist, you’re too emotional.”

We both laughed and then Meredith groaned in pain.

“Meredith!”

“ARRGGG!” Her eyes got big and she nearly broke my hand that was still in hers. She tried to scoot up, but this quickly reminded her of her broken leg and she cried out in more pain. I looked up her dress again.

“I can see his head! He’s coming! Meredith, I need you to give a good push!” She cried out in pain. “Come on, another one! One more Meredith, you’re almost there!” With one last cry, out came a little baby girl. She was covered in goop. I reached into my purse, grabbed my pocket-knife and cut off the umbilical cord and wrapped her in my sweater I had on. “She’s beautiful Meredith. Congratulations, you’ve got yourself a baby girl.” Meredith smiled, and I handed the perfect, crying baby to her. Now that the baby was out, I could head to a payphone. “I will be right back Meredith. I’m going to go call an ambulance”.

“Hello, yes um, I just helped a woman give birth behind a dumpster – yes she’s still there – she’s behind the bar on Main Street between 8th Avenue and Fred’s Jewelry – okay, thank you”.

I quickly headed back to the woman. The ambulance would be here in less than ten minutes according to the man on the phone.

Meredith was singing to her baby.

“The ambulance is on their way, I assured her, and I’m going to stay here until they arrive”.

Meredith grabbed my hand and squeezed it, looking up at me she said, “Great job Winifred. You are going to make a great doctor.” I smiled this time, not afraid to accept my fate.

“And you know,” Meredith said, “Your name is so unique, what does it mean?”

“It means peaceful friend. It’s supposed to have derived from England.”

Before Meredith could respond, we heard the ambulance and saw the beaming lights. I ran out from behind the dumpster and yelled out to the ambulance once it stopped. “She’s back here! She’s behind here! Hurry, quick, I think she’s losing a lot of blood!”

The paramedics pulled the body carrier out of the back of the ambulance truck and rushed it to where I directed. I watched the paramedics gently grab the baby from Meredith and lift her onto the body carrier. I asked if I could come with them.

“Please do” said Meredith. I looked at one of the paramedics. He gave me a head nod indicating it was okay for her to come along.

Once we were all settled, and all was still in the paramedic truck, I asked “Meredith, what are you going to name the baby?”

She looked at me and smiled. Winifred, you have been such an angel to my daughter and me. And when people ask her what her name is, I want her to be able to tell this story. I’m going to name her after you. Peaceful friend”.

I was honored. Who would want to name their child after me? I knew that Meredith and I would have a beautiful, great friendship after this, and I couldn’t wait to get to know little Winifred.





Untitled Photos by Stacey Hicks



Contributor Biographies

My name is **Jenna Harmon (writing as Melanie Hope)**. I am attending SCF for my nursing degree. I love to read and have just realized I enjoy writing stories and poems. I am currently in Professor Ford's Creative Writing class. I hope to get my degree within the next two or three years and feel I might continue writing after that.

Macenzie Krause is a senior in high school and a dual enrolled student at State College of Florida's Venice Campus. She plans to graduate high school with an Associate of Arts Degree, and she has already completed 54 out of her required 60 credits. After graduation, Macenzie plans to attend a 4-year university and earn a B.A. in English, as well as a Master's Degree in Social Work. She currently plays high school volleyball for Port Charlotte High, and is looking to continue playing at the collegiate level as well.

Bel: As a college student, I pursue the study of the mind, inspired by the developed individual. As a child, I aspired to be an author. As an adult, I use literature to keep me sane in a seemingly mad world.

Race Ganster: Post apocalyptic wasteland over turned by SitTechs, a type of virtual reality headset fitted for each person, the devices have consumed everyone who has been fitted to one. The tales and stories about one boy and his friend robot looking for their own paradise away from the stresses of the new world apocalyptic dealing with Skinwalkers, tribes, and no adults. Scarce knowledge of the previous and known world the solar powered robot and Rux venture off finding ways to survive and defend themselves. Enjoy!

My name is **Summer (writing as Kate Wilson)**, and I'm 21 years old. I am taking Dr. Ford this semester for creative writing, and we write a lot of fun short stories. I am also a part of Elektraphrog, and I love it.

My name is **Rickari Trevorah**. I was born and raised in Manatee County Florida. I graduated from Manatee High School in 2015 and will be graduating from the State College of Florida in December of 2017. I have been passionate about writing since I was in the third grade. I enjoy writing fictional drama, romance, and mystery. Once I graduate from SCF, I will be transferring to Florida State University where I will study creative writing and continue pursuing my writing passion.

A. A. Miles is on her final semester at SCF and plans to go on to study Literature. She is originally from Baltimore, MD and now resides in Venice, FL. She enjoys live music, reading Modern American literature, nonfiction and history, and spending lazy days at the beach.

You (Yes! You!) Can Earn a Certificate in Digital Publishing!

This is 18 Credits of Awesome!

This is an extraordinary new certificate program that is cutting edge and interdisciplinary!

Program Goal

The purpose of this program is to prepare students (yes! Even you!) with hands-on training in new media and digital publications. This program focuses on the skills necessary to work on print and digital publications, work in social media and digital marketing, or work in layout, design, and editing fields. The skills in this program are transferable to both local and national level publications. This program includes editing, programming, and graphic design courses.

Core Requirements:

- CGS 2820C: Web Page Development (3 Credits)
- CRW 2001: Creative Writing I (3 Credits)
- GRA 1100C: Introduction to Computer Graphics (3 Credits)
- JOU 1440L: College Magazine Production I (3 Credits)

Choice of two courses (6 credits total) from

- GRA 1206C: Typography (3 Credits)
- GRA 2121C: Communication Design (3 Credits)
- GRA 2150C: Photoshop (3 Credits)
- ENC 2210: Technical Communication (3 Credits)
- JOU 1441: College Magazine Production II
- MMC 2949: Internship in Mass Communications (3 Credits)
- PGY1800C: Digital Imaging I (3 Credits)

Contact Professor Masucci at masuccm@scf.edu
for more information.



**Are You Interested in
Writing and Publishing?**

Join **Elektraphrog!**

JOU 1440L CRN: 20501 (3 Credits)

Blended - Monday/Wednesday

11-11:53 am

on the Venice Campus

<http://elektraphrog.scf.edu>