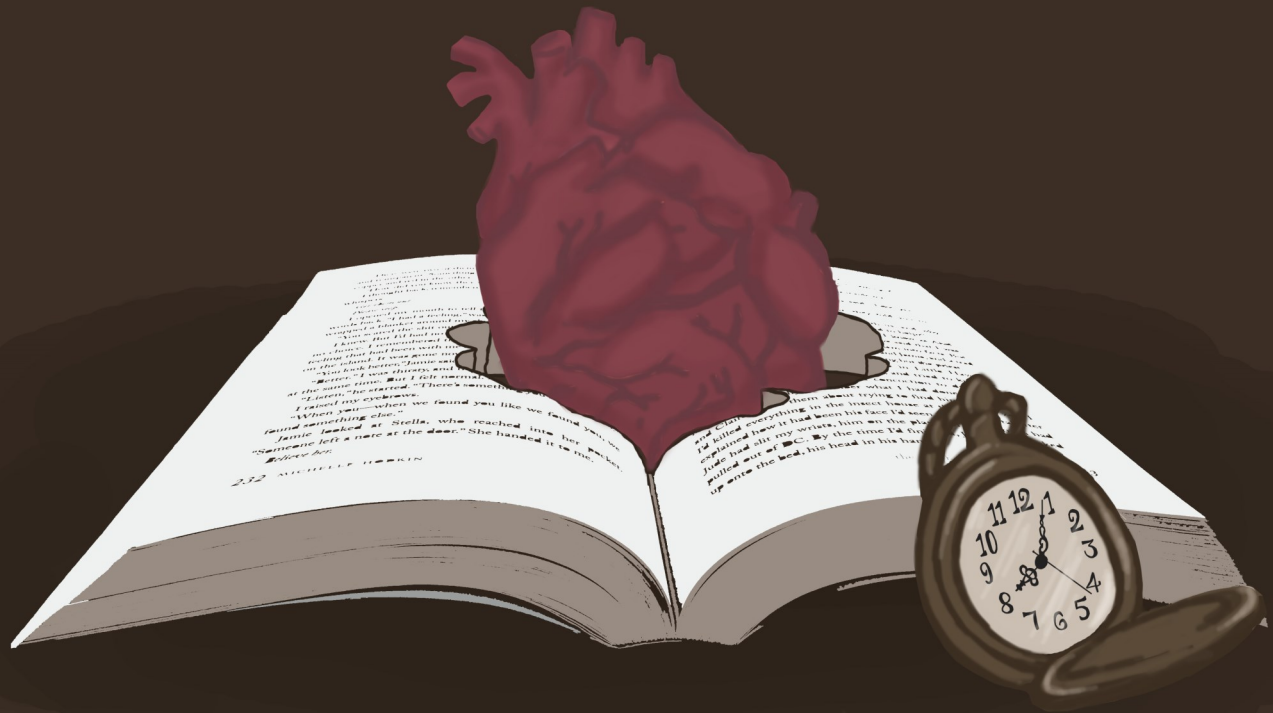


The Time Keeper Review



EHS Literary Journal

Cover Art
by
Josie Forbes

Table of Contents

Short Fiction

Copper by Betty Baez

It's Not Me by Josie Forbes

Sleep by Jessica Shaw

Streets of Phoenix by Betty Baez

Poetry

Broken Mirrors by Alainna Tate

Music by Lara Nelson

What Are You Looking For? by Liam Meinhart

Short Non-Fiction

I Will Never Close My Ears to the Rain by Betty Baez

Too Many People by Raye Hollinshead

Copper

by Betty Baez

She lowered herself to the ground, drew in a deep breath, and prepared herself for the horrors of war. The field was silent, the remnants of magic from a prior skirmish still tingling in her hands.

It was time.

She mustered up every ounce of courage and ferocity in her massive copper frame and rose up with a roar that shook the battle field. The sky seemed to shatter as the clouds dissipated, the open air echoed her fearsome cry, and the ground shook.

It rumbled with the pounding feet of many kingsmen who would not return that night, for they were fighting a dragon that day.

It's Not Me

by Josie Forbes

It's late and the chill of the night air brushes against my skin, shivers engulfing my body. We've been driving all day and my dad decides to book us a room at a bed and breakfast right off the highway.

I grab my bags from the back of the car and lug them to the door of the building. Struggling, I push the heavy doors open. A musty scent trying to be covered up by cheap air fresheners hits me as I step in. Looking around, I see a dull but friendly lobby. A tired woman is slumped behind the front counter.

I wander over to some wilted flowers while my parents check in. I pull out my Polaroid camera, contorting my body to get the very best angle. Once satisfied with my picture, I turn to see a hallway light flickering above an empty corridor. Again perfecting my angle, I snap another picture, this time of the hallway. I begin to shake the picture and watch as it appears before my eyes. In the picture there's something noticeably different. Instead of an image of an empty hallway, before me was a picture of a dark figure standing, staring at me. I rub my eyes, certain my tiredness is affecting my vision. Looking back at the Polaroid, the dark figure is gone.

My mom's voice snaps me out of my thoughts. Once again lugging my bag through the narrow and eerie halls, we arrive at our door. My dad steps back slightly. The door is cracked open. Worried, my dad turns on the light and takes out his

pocket knife. They don't let me near the room until it's completely checked over. After looking in every possible nook and cranny, my parents allow me into the room. I hardly unpack, seeing that we'll only be here for tonight.

My parents decide to go to the mini store in the lobby and get some breakfast foods for the morning. They want to get on the road as soon as possible, so we aren't eating a large breakfast. As I'm getting dressed to go to bed, I get a feeling that I'm being watched. I shake my head and return to getting around. The room is small and the blinds are closed. It's impossible for someone to see me. I crawl into the scratchy, hard bed while the covers feel quite the opposite—fluffy and soft. I drift off, feeling safe under the duvet.

It's an odd time of the night when I wake up, feeling uneasy. I uncover my eyes to check my surroundings. A pair of eyes look back at me. I'm frozen in my place. I open my mouth to scream but nothing comes out. I'm paralyzed with fear. Slowly the figure lurks closer and I break from the shock. A blood curdling scream escapes my mouth and I jump to my parent's bed. When I turn back the figure is gone.

My parents wake up, frightened and worried. I try to explain what happened between my frantic breaths. My dad gets up to show that everything is locked. I promise that I know what I saw but they don't believe me. They tell me to go back

to sleep, and that it was a dream. Hesitantly, I return to my bed. I toss and turn, not being able to go to sleep. The feeling of being watched haunts me, making me unable to go back to sleep. The feeling of being watched haunts me, making me feel as if something bad is going to happen. Finally I feel myself losing consciousness, but for the wrong reason. I open my eyes to see the figure again, his hands around my neck. I begin to flail my arms in attempt to get my parents attention, but I don't succeed.

I feel my life slowly fading.

Darkness overcomes me. A familiar chill hits me.

I'm outside the bed and breakfast, completely unharmed. It's still night and I begin to approach the entrance. As I go through the doors, I notice I'm not where I was earlier today. The walls are covered in scratches and marks. The musty scent is now an awful stench. The flowers are now completely dead, and the hallway lights are off. I slowly make my way to our room to see the door open again. The lights are on, and I can hear crying. In the distance I can make out the sound of sirens. I go into the room to see my parents holding me.

But this me they are holding is different.

It's lifeless and unpleasant.

It's not the friendly little social butterfly that it once was.

It's not me.

Sleep

by Jessica Shaw

It's loud. There's crying. Is it me? I think it's me. I want to stop.

I want to stop everything forever. Forever.

“I don't want to die...please don't let me die!”

That was me. That was a lie. Why am I lying? Shut up. Just shut up.

I see blue. I think it's the sky. Am I outside? It's so peaceful.

“Please help me!”

No. Not outside. It's a window. I still see blue. It's late. I should go home soon.

He'll be angry.

“Don't let him in. Get a guard. She can't see him!”

Not my voice. I don't know that voice. Where did it go? I don't know. I hear screaming. And crying. Is it me again? I don't know. I don't know.

I'm laying down. I want to sleep. Why don't they let me sleep? I'm so tired. So tired.

I want to sleep.

“Am I going to die?”

“No. You're going to be just fine.”

“Good.”

Bad. I want to fall asleep. What will happen? I know. I know. I want it.

“I'll go to sleep. I'll be okay.”

She shakes my arm. She? Nurse. Has to be a nurse. I look down. A needle. In my hand, right there in my hand. When did they do this? I don't know. I hate needles. I want it out. Now. NOW.

“DON'T DO THAT!”

I hear screaming. And beeping. And crying. It hurts. I want to stop hurting. I want to sleep. I know.

“I'm so sorry. So sorry. I want to sleep. Please let me sleep. Please. Please. Sleep. I'm sorry.”

What did I say? I don't know. I can't hear. It's loud. Where is the noise coming from? I don't know. I want to sleep.

Streets of Phoenix

by Betty Baez

I used to spend my days wandering about the busy streets of Phoenix, throwing my cares away and finding myself back at home countless hours later. I used to dittle lazily at wooden figurines and sing sweet songs to the birds at dawn. It all seemed so lackluster then, so worthless- a way to watch the days go by.

But now I yearn for those days, those simpler times when I could sit out on my front porch and watch the clouds roll on by. When I could imagine what lovely scent wound its way from the bakeries downtown to my cozy abode.

Now I just...survive. Dig grit and grime out of my boots and pray to whatever's up there in that great, big, terrifying sky that I'll live to see another day.

Another day in this rotten, lonely household, where the songbirds are silent, the figurines are eaten away by the radiation in the air, and those Phoenix streets lay lonely and dark.

Broken Mirrors

by Alainna Tate

i stare mesmerized
before me sits a broken mirror
it's an antique
it's old and well loved
but also damaged
someone or something
has caused great harm
either knowingly
or just because
i want to know
'who hurt you'
i wish i could mend you
take your broken pieces
and chipped edges
and put them together
oh how i wish i could
'who were you before'
before they hurt you
before you were left with a distorted image
of what was once beautiful
and happy
'let me fix you'
let me try

Music

by Lara Nelson

Music.

Music fills my hollow core

It mends my tattered soul

It thrives on the barren surfaces

of my heart

It thrums my heartstrings and

flows euphoria through my veins

It's rhythm reverberates

through my core

And for once,

I feel

Complete.

What Are You Looking For?

By Liam Meinhart

What are you looking for?

Child of tears,

Child of sorrow?

Don't you know?

Haven't you heard?

There might not be a tomorrow.

What are you looking for?

Man of age,

Man of work

Don't you know?

Haven't you heard?

Your value doesn't come from what you're worth

What are you looking for?

Woman of practice

Woman of style

Don't you know?

Haven't you heard?

For every foot a man walks, you must walk a mile.

What are we looking for?

Does anyone know?

Does anyone care?

Do we all just want to leave behind some proof?

Proof that we lived, proof that we were there?

I Will Never Close My Ears to the Rain

by Betty Baez

I will never close my ears to the rain, nor my hands to the Earth, nor my heart to the grass.

I love the rain far too much to tell her she is not worth every minute of my attention.

I feel for the Earth with her soft winds, her steady rumblings, and her salty oceanside tears.

I bend to the grass, whose blades reach out everyday and greet me with the sweetest nighttime sonnets.

I will never close my senses to the small wonders of this world, for they offer such great pleasures if one only stops to admire them.

Too Many People

by Raye Hollinshead

I hold my breath. Walking through a crowd is suffocating—but intoxicating, like you never know what’s going to happen. But I can’t stop to take in the sight of all the weird fashion and overhear the conversations, I don’t have time. I brush through some people who push me, but only after scoffing. ‘If you don’t want to be interrupted then go somewhere else, jeez!’ I think to myself.

“Too many people, too many people,” I mumble under my breath.

I push through more and a salesman catches my arm. I tell him I don’t want what he’s selling, but he still grips me. I have to listen to a whole speech about how paper inner soles are better than the others. When he is finally done I force a smile on my face and tell him I don’t want them for the hundredth time.

I check my watch: 7:05. I have 25 minutes to get through here. While I’m distracted by my watch, a little girl pulls on my pant leg. “Mister, Mister, I don’t know where my mommy is, can you help?”

I can’t refuse a lost 4-year-old, so I say yes. I tell her to get on my back so I don’t lose her myself. I run extra fast through the crowd. I get to the help desk and tell them the situation. They announce on the loudspeaker, “Would the mother who lost her 4-year-old daughter come to the help center please?”

I wait for the mom with the little girl. Finally, the mom shows up crying and hugs

her daughter. She thanks me. I tell her it's the least I can do.

I start rushing through the crowd again. People in a conversation keep getting in the way. I yell at them to move and they look at me like they don't understand what I'm saying. I sigh and go around.

I can't breathe,...it's so suffocating. I start to hyperventilate, I look into my bag and grab my inhaler and take a few puffs of it and stop to breathe.

Stupid social anxiety. I keep pushing through and exit the crowd I look behind me,. "Too many people for one place." I check my watch and I still have five minutes to check into work.