

Young Writers Workshop ***History from Home***

June 15 – 19, 2020

**STATE HISTORICAL
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*Each student's object of inspiration precedes their historical fiction story.
An introduction for each object is provided by the student.*

There's a common adage that "a picture is worth a thousand words," and this year the young authors proved the theory true as they were tasked with writing about an historical photograph in a thousand words or less.

We all have taken photographs which we could easily relay the story behind—the who, what, where, when and why of what's happening in the picture. But in order to create a story around a photograph of a subject or person from a time period far removed from your own requires examination followed by research. You have to know how to read the photograph, how to employ visual literacy, and then dig into research to learn about what you observe. The young writers then created a fictional story by imagining life outside and beyond that singular historical moment captured on film. Their pictures inspired a thousand words.

In previous years the Young Writer's Workshop has been held at the museum where we have access to the museum vault, exhibits, additional museum staff, and the museum's research library. We spend our days in a room together discussing writing and sharing our work. We are able take an excursion outside the museum, write in a café, perform in the museum's auditorium and meet the authors' families and friends at the reception that follows. This traditional workshop format has worked well in the past because it allows us to use the museum's resources, learn from and about each other and socialize.

That obviously wasn't possible this year. Nevertheless, with reduced time together and without gathering in a physical room the students wrote personal, emotional, impactful stories that were all unique in style. Each writer had a distinctive, identifiable voice. This can be hard to accomplish when we have fewer students and work together in a classroom. That the writers in this year's program achieved this is a testament to the talent and hard work of these young authors.

And yet we called this workshop History at Home for a reason. Where you write can influence your work. What's going on in an author's life and in their larger world certainly influences what they write even if their subject matter is far removed and vastly differs from their own life. It's not a coincidence that many of the stories this year explore family, love, police corruption, protests for justice, and the comfort of returning home. And in many ways that's what makes them poignant, relatable and relevant. Through their stories these authors bring history to life for all of us. By making history feel a part of us. By bringing it home.

~Stephanie Hemphill

Brynn Almond



Photograph Information

The picture I chose was a photo of a tornado in a field outside of Twin Lakes, Iowa, on April 11, 1908. Because little information could be found about the twister itself, I turned my focus to 1908 lowan farm life, making this more fiction than historical.

Bending the Storm
Brynn Almond

Before the shadows even began to bounce around on the ground, before the night was chased away by the blazing sun, before even God awoke to serve his people, it happened again. Every day, the same thing. Milk. Feed. Eat. Wash, if the water was open. Never a change in the schedule.

Late, was I? I stared out of my brittle glass window. No crow of the rooster to wake me. Fog coated the grass, still glistening from dew. Was it time for my duties? There was no way to tell. Leaning over the edge of my worn oak bed, I sifted through the objects below me, my hands searching and navigating for my ages-old shoes. Was I to wake up Henry? Surely, his duties had a need to be done, as well. I gazed at his bed. Luckily he hadn't been snoring, but he was comfortable, sunk deep into slumber.

I pulled on my corduroy, snapping the buttons into place over my shoulders. I glanced at my bed, the mess concealed by a blanket. Mother would have gone mad if she had seen. "*Tidy is the only option*," she always said, words echoing through my head as I combed my play-stained hair. I dashed down the hall corridor. It couldn't have been the right time. But trusting my instincts was key, and not even the pitcher had been set out yet. The pitcher Mother filled with steamed milk and left for a fine breakfast. I had noticed, as I sprinted across the dirt towards the barn, that it was still tucked away in its cabinet.

It was also the moment I noticed the harsh wind. It slammed into my face, not a cold wind, but an intense breeze. *Strange. To fall asleep to a purely glorious setting*, my head told me. Now, it was biting my skin, clouds stacked and layered through the sky and fog coating the ground.

Despite the unflattering weather, I adjusted my straps, snatched my hat, and raced into the barn, where Goldie was mooing loudly, signaling discomfort.

"Goldie, everything is fine," I reassured her, squeezing out the warm milk. It *plink-plink-plinked* into the tin bucket below, guaranteeing us we would not go thirsty. But Goldie continued to moo uncontrollably. I patted her on the back, hurrying to finish up the milking. I dropped the bucket on the front stoop, where Mother would wake up and discover it. Peering up into the window, I spotted Henry, pulling on his ratted jacket. Leaning against the glass was Henrietta, her small frame lightweight enough to stand there. Henry lifted her under her arms, picking her up and leading her to the hall. Henrietta had earned her name from her close relationship with Henry. In her arms was Henna, her doll, which was now only fabric scraps, a tattered doll body held together by torn strands of yarn hair. She plopped Henna on the floor as she was lifted.

Concentrate. Remember, you have a job to do, I yelled to myself. I turned and dashed toward the fields, observing each and every plant, and yanking up the weeds and wilted cornstalks. It no longer had the value we needed. Tossing a dead stalk towards the ditch, I waited for Henry to come plant. And my timing was excellent. By the time I had pulled the last

weed, after what seemed like ages of crawling around, cold, rough raindrops began to pelt my face.

Holding my overalls over my face, I sprinted for home. My legs felt like they were being carried off by waves of rain. The small sprinkle became a pounding, pouring rain; puddles became oceans. I could barely see through the droplets.

“Hurry in! Hurry in!” I heard mother’s voice shout. The dry house looked so much more comforting, calling me towards it. I flopped into the house, my soaked frame landing on the solid floor. Mother, whose dress was already wettened, helped me off the ground, leaning me against the wicker chair.

“Oh my!” she exclaimed. “Terribly sorry you had to endure that.” Her skirt disappeared into the kitchen, the smell of warm milk wafting through the air as she stirred in the melted butter. Mother’s cream was nothing to turn away. It could warm your body up in a snap, its heavenly taste hanging on your tongue for hours afterwards. I sat up anxiously, eager for the cream only Mother could make. I felt bad for her, having to work the house for six people, one of whom was too young to work. Mother was always quite stressed, knowing it was all her job to turn Etta and Cousin Evie into proper women. I wished I could understand her pain. But my thoughts were interrupted by Evie’s voice of urgency, “Aunt.”

“Good Morning, Evie.” She added her flour.

“Aunt! Uncle told me there’s a twister coming for us.”

Mother sighed and dropped her spoon. “Well, Uncle Tobias can be a goop.” She gently clonked Evie on the head.

“No!” she cried. “Look outside. Toward the fields. It’s real.”

Father only better proved her case, barraging through the family room in an attempt to shove us all outside. “The storm cellar! To the storm cellar!” He scooped up Etta and burst out the back door.

Mother dropped her pitcher with a single word. “Come.”

“Where’s Henry?!” I cried, now realizing that he was nowhere to be found.

“There is no time to worry!” Mother shouted. “Outside. To the cellar. Hurry up!” She shoved us out the door with her strong arms.

It was a blizzard of rain. We trekked through the harsh storm, linking each other’s arms to keep us together. Mother led our pack, stumbling over the steps of the cellar.

Mother locked the door tightly.

Was it...the end for Henry?

“Mother! What about Henry?” I screamed into her intimidating face, which I could barely see through the darkness.

Etta wept miserably. She had left Henna behind.

Father lit a candle. “There was no time to find him.” He set it on a clay shelf. “It is my regret.”

I could feel tears building up in my eyes. Surely they felt them too, but showed no emotion. Henry had always been my rock, my best friend. And my parents were telling me I had to leave behind the times he comforted me, the times he helped when everything was just too difficult...the times when everybody’s last shred of hope had died out and Henry was the light in the dark?

My tears were interrupted by the shrill cries of the wind. I could feel swirling winds, like they had come to me, were seeping through the holes in the cellar door. Father yanked at the door handle, keeping it nicely shut to protect us.

This was the end for Henry.

I could now imagine him dashing through the plains towards us, screaming for mercy, but being crushed by a flying shred of who-knows-what. I wanted to curl up in the corner and cry.

This was one strong twister. But it could never take me down.

I stood up.

I could face it.

It was then that Father released his grip on the door, and I burst through, tears gone.

It was time to face the storm.

All alone.

I ran towards the funnel of swirling wind and dirt at full speed, my shoes ripping apart and picking up dust.

What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.

Dameon Borders



Photograph Information

The photo that inspired Dameon's story is a view on downtown Locust Street at night showing the Garden and Palace theaters in Des Moines, Iowa, taken around 1915.

...And Everything Goes Numb
Dameon Borders

Raymond Conway

Case log

April 16th, 1930

12:08 PM

These murders were starting to happen as often as rain. Myself and three other men stood over Dorothy Miller's body and I was the only one in the room that didn't look like it was business as usual. I might not have looked it, but as I stood there in my grey trench coat and black fedora, I was that poor girl's only hope of receiving justice. Especially since the police in this city were more worried about covering up their own crimes than putting criminals behind bars. Which is why I'm getting so much business nowadays. If you want a crime to be solved, you hire a PI, simple as that. In this particular case, a very rich man by the name of John Miller called so he could find out what happened to his daughter. Good thinking too, the police were already discussing closing up the scene and ruling it a burglary gone wrong. At first glance, that would seem like a logical conclusion, but I wasn't so sure. Several factors led me to believe that this was a more premeditated and carefully executed hit. It was too perfect a crime—all of Dorothy's neighbors were out the building at the time of the murder, and her body was only discovered when a friend came to visit and found her lying there. There was no forced entry or signs of a struggle, implying that the killer either had the jump on her, or knew the victim personally, as well as the fact that there were several valuable items left in the apartment undamaged, implying that the killer wasn't interested in stealing anything. Ms. Miller also looked to be preparing to go out on a date, but was interrupted. Her short blonde hair in a faux bob, but not completely done, red lipstick not completely put on, expensive looking red dress. My train of thought was interrupted by one of the cops. "Hey Ray, have you had a good enough look at the scene for Mr. Miller's liking?" It was my brother Floyd. He was a helpful enough guy, but didn't like me walking around his crime scenes. "No, but when do I ever get what I want?" I replied while lighting a cigarette. "Butt me, won't ya, and I'll let you stay a bit longer." I tossed him one and told him about the holes in the cops' story. "That very well may be but as it is we don't have a suspect," he said while turning around and walking back towards the other two cops. "Why don't you ankle on outta here soon, we got stuff to do," he said while examining the victim's bullet wound. So I headed down the stairs and back home.

11:28 PM

Although my hunch was well and good, it wasn't evidence, and I wouldn't be able to collect any at the scene since I was only a private investigator. If I wanted more on this case I'd need to come back that night, in a sense that wasn't strictly legal. My brother working on the force was enough to get me to the scene, but to actually get anything done I'd need to take matters into my own hands. So I stayed home and waited, put on some Jelly Roll Morton and made a few calls trying to get info on a possible lead I overheard the Bulls talking about when they thought I wasn't listening. Key word trying. Dorothy's boyfriend was a known bootlegger. I couldn't get a name, and the only info I could get was that nobody had seen him for a couple months now. I thought that it was possible that he did it, that'd explain the lack of signs of a struggle or forced entry, but that still left the fact that every potential witness to the crime was out of the building

at the time, and not a single person on the whole street heard the gunshot. If the boyfriend did it, he had help. Dorothy might have had a rich father, but the killer didn't seem interested in her possessions. Whatever the case, I'd need to go back to the scene to find out.

So after it got dark enough I drove back down to Locust street, past the theaters and up to the apartment building. I turned the doorknob and it opened effortlessly. It was unlocked. Strange considering how new and fancy the building was. As I stepped inside I noticed that none of the hallway lights were on, in fact, I don't think I saw any lights on in the whole building. I tried the nearby switch and nothing happened, so I continued. As I climbed the stairs I felt that something was wrong, I just couldn't put my finger on what it was exactly. As I reached the fifth floor I put my hand on my Smith and Wesson. Something seemed out of place, someone was somewhere they shouldn't have been, other than myself. I was a terrible shot, so it probably wasn't a smart idea to be packing heat, but since when do I ever do the smart thing? I rounded the corner and that feeling only grew stronger. As I approached the crime scene, it looked exactly how the coppers left it. I peeked my head around the open doorway, and couldn't make anything out. Suddenly I heard the distinct click of a Colt's barrel being slid back, and felt the back of my head get acquainted with the muzzle of that very same firearm.

"Make one move and you'll be taking the big sleep," somebody said in a deep voice, as if they were trying to sound tougher than they were. I stood there for a minute before he ordered me to turn around and put my hands up. I complied as he lowered the gun to his hip, still pointed at my head. As I looked at him, he gave me a look as though he were twice the size he actually was, though he looked about 5'10" and in his early twenties. "Who are you and why shouldn't I send you up to Jesus?" he said, raising his gun a bit. "I'm not a cop, if that's what you're asking?" I said in an attempt to calm him down a bit. "I was asking for your name," he said, prodding me in the chest. "Phil Riley," I lied. He prodded me in the chest again. "You a gumshoe or somethin'," he said, waving his gun around. "Something like that," I said, taking a few steps back. He advanced on me, raising his gun to my neck. "Well then I don't need you sticking your nose in places it don't belong, you hear," he threatened. "Sure, kid, I'll just turn heel and leave then if you don't mind." I took another step back "You know, I think, I'll just put an end to your troublemaking right now!" he yelled. I quickly knocked the gun out of his hands. As the Colt slid down the hallway and into the stairway, I grabbed a loose pipe off the ground and delivered a swift knock to his head. He went down almost immediately. I'd need to be quick if I wanted to collect my evidence. It looked like someone else was interested in this case other than myself, and it wouldn't be long until they found out I was following the trail. I confiscated the kid's firearm and searched his pockets. I found his wallet. Inside he had a slip of paper with a phone number. Underneath the number the name Frank Jones was written. I put the paper in my pocket and threw the wallet on the ground before entering the crime scene. The apartment was extremely nice, despite the clothing and furniture strewn about the room. It had nice velvet curtains, a cute wallpaper, comfortable furniture, and a beautiful rug now stained with blood. And at the center of it all was the outline of a woman's body. I searched around the living area for a moment before finding a smashed photograph lying face down on the ground. In the picture was Dorothy Miller sitting in a speakeasy next to a well-dressed man with dark hair, black rimmed glasses sitting on his large nose, and a scar stretching from the left side of his mouth to his ear. I assumed this was Dorothy's bootlegger boyfriend. I took the picture and put it in my pocket before searching the room a bit more. Eventually I moved to the bedroom area. This area was mostly untouched but I did notice an

open gun safe under the bed. It was empty aside from a small ammo box containing .45 ACP. It was missing one bullet. Possible murder weapon?

I then moved to the kitchen. After doing a basic search of the cabinets and cupboards, I found a loose panel in one of the floor cupboards. It sagged where a bag of flour sat on top of it. I moved the flour and lifted up the panel. Under the panel was a secret compartment containing a metal box. I removed it and opened the lid. Inside the box was \$5000 in \$100 dollar bills. At this point I heard a car engine right outside the window. I looked out and saw a man exiting a vehicle with some sort of weapon. I quickly grabbed the cash box, dashed out the door, and ran to the other end of the hallway from the staircase. Couldn't go out the way I came in. I'd need to find another way out. At the end of the hallway was a window with fire escape access. I lifted up the heavy window and climbed through just as I heard the person walking up the stairs. For a minute I crouched behind the wall and looked through the window to catch a glimpse of whoever was walking up the stairs. There was just enough light to make out a tall burly silhouette carrying a machinegun. I then quietly descended five stories down the fire escape and made it to my car. I proceeded to drive home, taking the back alleys and driving with my headlights off.

April 17th

11:23 AM

After getting home last night, I called a few friends and found out the name of Ms. Miller's boyfriend, Frank Jones. With this knowledge and the evidence I've collected from last night, I've created a theory. I believe that Miller and Jones were preparing to go out on a date, when Frank showed up to her apartment early, upset about something, possibly Dorothy being unfaithful? From what I've heard about her, Dorothy sounded fun for a night out, but a relationship with her sounded about as stable as the economy. Anyway, as Dorothy continues to do her hair and makeup, Frank made his way to the bed and opened her gun safe, took out the gun, loaded a bullet into the magazine, and shot her in anger then trashed the apartment in a primal rage before booking it out the door and heading back to his hideout when he supposed the police would be heading his way. But, in his haste Jones forgot the cash box under the cupboard, and had to send someone to retrieve it later, who I then ran into. It still doesn't explain how everyone on the floor was just inexplicably out of the house when this all happened, but that admittedly could just be chalked down to coincidence. I'll follow up on this lead tomorrow, I'm taking today off.

April 18th

12:34 PM

I told Mr. Miller my hypothesis and he was eager to go to the police immediately and have Frank Jones arrested, but I convinced him to hold off until I found Frank and talked to him myself. It won't be easy finding him, since he's been in hiding for a couple months now. If he caught wind that the police were looking for him, he'd take off and they'd never catch him. As a token of appreciation, Mr. Miller bought me a fancy new fedora. I accepted, but it's a bit too dapper looking for my taste. I'll probably just hand it off to my brother or something, he likes expensive crap like that.

8:05 PM

I called Floyd, and he told me that a theater on Locust called 'The Palace' was owned by Frank Jones, and could have a speakeasy in a back room. So I headed down to the theater, used a password that I bought off some shady kid in an alley, and was led through a storage closet into a backroom speakeasy. It matched the picture I recovered from Dorothy's apartment. I sat down and listened in on some goons running their mouths about their bossman, yapping on about illegal activities like nobody could hear them. It wasn't long till the bigshot himself walked in. He looked younger than he did in the picture, only a bit older than the kid I encountered outside the apartment. Frank walked up to the bar and sat down beside me and ordered a drink. He sat there sipping on it for a while, and I pretended to mind my own business, before he turned and said plainly, "So you're the guy who knocked out one of my men outside my girlfriend's apartment?" I was a bit surprised but didn't show it. I waited a moment and replied, "I've got no idea what you're talking about." He lit a cigarette and said, "Don't get wise with me, I know who you are. You're that private dick that's been sticking his nose in my girlfriend's apartment." I kept a blank expression on my face. "Alright, suppose I was, why would I come in here?" I said aloofly. He took a drag on his cigarette before turning to me and saying, "Cause you think I had Dot killed, and Jack Miller wants you to think I did it. But I didn't." I paused for a moment and took a drink. "If I was this private eye you're talking about, wouldn't that be exactly what I'd expect you to say?" He let out a short laugh and replied, "I'm sure It would be, but I can prove my innocence." "How's that?" I said as I finished my drink. Frank motioned the bartender to pour me another and looked me in the eye. "Jack Miller had his own daughter bumped off and hired you so you could pin it on me." That time I showed my surprise. "Oh, baloney," I said in disbelief. Frank said, "Let me show you something, Slick." He motioned for the bartender to bring him something. The bartender went into a back room, came out with a yellow envelope, and set it in front of me. "Take that home with you. It's got everything you'll need to solve this thing." I picked up the envelope for a second and set it back down. "How do I know you're not lying to me?" I said suspiciously. "Just look inside when you get home. All I'm trying to do is make sure you know your onions," he said as he stood back up and left. I ended up doing the same a moment later. I didn't trust him. Mr. Miller wasn't the type of guy to do something like that, and Frank didn't seem like the most trustworthy guy. So when I walked into my apartment I set the folder on my desk and went to bed.

April 19th

6:07 AM

I woke up to the phone ringing. I got up and answered it. It was Mr. Miller wanting a progress report on Frank Jones. He was getting very impatient and wanted the case solved soon. I agreed to meet with him and give him the report in person. I got ready for the day, but before I walked out the door I stopped at my desk. I looked at the envelope for a moment and decided to take it with me. I slid it, as well as the notebook containing my case notes into my inside coat pocket and walked out the door. As I left my apartment building and walked through the parking lot towards my car I heard gunshots. I quickly ducked behind a nearby parked car and heard three more gunshots as the windows and windshield of the car I used for cover shattered. I scrambled for better cover behind a short brick wall. I had my revolver in hand and peeked over the wall for a second to get a better look at my attacker. I looked around for a moment but heard more gunshots and ducked down before I could catch a glimpse of him. As I ducked down a bullet zipped over my head and knocked off my hat. I sat there for a moment

before letting out a phony death scream. It was actually pretty convincing, I was surprised. After a moment the attacker walked around the wall to admire his work. As soon as he came into view I unloaded all six rounds into his chest. The big lug fell to the ground and dropped his tommy gun. I let out a sigh of relief and stood up. It wasn't long until the police came and took me in for questioning.

7:10 AM

After a while of sitting in an interrogation room with some fancy bracelets on, my brother walked in and closed the door behind him. He sat down and gave me a look. I smirked and asked, "What's that for? You're not gonna go all third degree on me, are ya?" He kept the look on me for another second and replied, "What do you think it's for? You've killed a man." He sat there crossing his arms and still giving me that nasty look. I defended myself saying, "It was self-defense. I didn't start anything. That's what you bought me that thing for anyway, wasn't it?" He shook his head. "You should've turned this case over to the PD a while ago, Ray. If you did, this never would've happened. You wouldn't've needed it. And this guy wouldn't be dead." I gave him an annoyed look. "I'm not crying any tears over some goon with a machine gun that tried to put me in the ground." He uncrossed his arms and said, "He's still a human being." I kept that look on him. "Tell that to your boys when they open fire on some scared kid trying to walk home from work." Floyd looked as if he was about to say something, but another cop opened the door.

8:00 AM

After waiting an hour in this dull room not really knowing what I'm waiting for, Floyd comes back into the room in a better mood than before. I ask him "You letting me go now?" He doesn't respond. He unlocks the handcuffs and leads me out the door. "Where do you have my stuff locked up?" I asked. He was silent for a moment before saying, "We had a look at your stuff. We saw the case file and the chief thinks that you have enough to convict John Miller." I was shocked. "What!?" I asked.

Dashiell Coyier



Photograph Information

The photograph I chose was a picture of the surveying crew for the Boone Mound excavation. The Boone Mound was an Indian burial mound that housed skeletons, pottery, and other unique artifacts. Compacted dirt and other methods allowed these artifacts to be preserved throughout long periods of time. The excavation was led by archaeologist Dr. Van Hyning. There was no specified date on the photograph, but from looking at some newspapers from the time, it took place around 1905-1911.

Mystery of the Mound
Dashiell Coyier

May 2, 1908

Leaning back in his cushioned chair, Mr. Morris scanned his morning newspaper, the Times-Republican with his coffee induced eyes. "Ah-ha," Morris mumbled as a heading caught his attention - "Mystery of the Mound". Scrutinizing the section, Morris read about Dr. Van Hyning, head archaeologist of the Boone Mound excavation. His team found many unique artifacts including perfectly preserved skeletons and pottery. This Indian burial mound perfectly preserved the antiques and skeletons through layers of compacted dirt, preventing the harmful infiltration of rain and floodwater.

At around noon, Morris was walking down the street to get some groceries for his evening meal. To get to the market, he passed the City Hall which was abuzz with activity about news from the Boone Mound. At the center of the commotion, stood the overconfident and boasting lead archaeologist, Dr. Van Hyning. He and his team were showing off flashy pieces to the public, getting praise and admiration from the civilians. Morris shrugged it off, deeming it unimportant, as he continued along for his groceries.

On Mr. Morris' walk back to his house, he again saw Van Hyning, this time packing up his artifacts, and getting ready to retire for the evening. Dr. Van Hyning walked down the steps of the City Hall and entered his Ford Model T.

Morris then remembered something, he needed to get a building license for a new diner under construction in Des Moines. As he approached the doorway into the City Hall, Morris noticed something on the steps: a glass vial containing a luxurious ring and small jewelry. They were speckled in dirt likely from the Boone Mound, but in some places, they shined in the light and looked particularly elegant. There was a tag on the lid, it read: \$40.00. Morris was puzzled by this, why would there be a price tag on artifacts like this, they weren't on sale, they were to be on display at a museum? Morris then came to the only plausible conclusion, someone was stealing artifacts from the Boone Mound and selling them for profit. There were many people involved in the Boone Mound operation, but the one with the most access was likely the culprit: Dr. Van Hyning.

May 3, 1908

The following morning, Mr. Morris met a friend who was helping on the Boone Mound excavation. His name was John, and Morris had known him since they attended Boone High School. As they took seats at a restaurant in downtown Boone, Morris started the conversation saying, "I found this Boone Mound artifact with a price tag on it, isn't that strange?" John shrugged it off, avoiding the question saying, "Not really." "Why not?" Morris pressed. "Well, I doubt it even is from the Boone Mound. To be honest, I think you should just forget about it, it's bound to be nothing," responded John. The conversation ended as the food came, but Morris knew John was hiding something—was he part of the operation? Taking more of a passive-aggressive tone, Morris asked, "What time does the Boone Mound excavation finish for the day?" John answered, "Four o'clock." Yes, Morris thought, *this is the information I need to catch Van Hyning!* Morris then took notice of John's gloomy attitude. Ever since his railroad company went bankrupt, John had been down and unenthusiastic. *Did he need some cash?* Morris thought.

Three hours later, Morris checked his watch - four o'clock. Van Hyning would likely be leaving the Boone Mound momentarily. Morris started to get bored, tired, and frustrated. *Where is Van Hyning?* Morris thought. *Has he even left the Boone Mound?* Then Morris saw him, Van Hyning was at the steering wheel, directing his Ford like a military general, stone-faced with no emotion. "There it is," Morris mumbled, starting his engines to trail Van Hyning. Morris' once drowsy and unconfident attitude was now the opposite, as he sat alert and sharp for the upcoming moment. About eight hours earlier, Morris informed the Boone law enforcement of how he suspected Van Hyning for stealing artifacts from the mound. They were unsure at first, but when Morris showed them the price tag on the jewelry, they could only agree. When talking with the officers, Morris devised a game plan, they were to separate into even sectors and patrol the streets in that area. Since Van Hyning would likely ride through a few sections in total, multiple people would be trailing him at the end.

This plan was now in action, Van Hyning now had two people on his tail, Morris and an officer. Van Hyning's Model T decelerated as it met up with another car, the buyer. Van Hyning got out of his vehicle and opened the trunk, exposing dozens of priceless valuables, each with a tag marking their worth. The buyer opened the front door and stepped out of his vehicle, it was none other than John, Morris' lifelong friend who he met for lunch earlier in the day. Suddenly, the whole area was swarmed with newly motorized police wagons, a definite upgrade from the traditional horse and buggy. The officers arrested Van Hyning and unfortunately John as well. Morris felt guilty, had he just wronged his own friend, gotten him arrested, and sent to jail?

May 4, 1908

Leaning back in his cushioned chair, Mr. Morris scanned his newspaper, the Times-Republican with his coffee induced eyes. "Ah-ha," Morris mumbled spotting a headline that read: "Price Tags on Priceless Artifacts: Boone Mound Conspiracy." Morris smiled to himself as he read the column, then he came across his one wrongdoing, his lifelong friend, John.

Ellis Coyier



Photograph Information

My photo depicts three children dressed up in nice clothing holding string instruments. The photo was taken around 1880 in Marshalltown, IA. The children's names were Percy, Sidney, and Howard.

The Vernon Children Stringtet
Ellis Coyier

“Come on kids we’re going to be late,” explodes my mother as she throws herself down the stairs. “Percy grab the instruments.”

“Gee whiz,” I respond trying to calm my crazed mother.

“Ok kids, the horse and buggy are leaving, with or without you,” my mother threatens.

“We’re coming,” shouts Howard.

“Waiiiit!” my sister, Sidney screams.

“Scrooch so we all can fit. Ok, is everyone in the buggy?” questions mother. Without waiting for an answer, the horse gallops away.

It’s August 19th, 1881. My name is Percy Vernon. I am six years old. I have a twin brother, Howard, and I have a younger sister, Sidney. My siblings and I are talented young musicians. We’re on our way to an audition to perform with the Forepaugh Circus in Marshalltown, Iowa. *The Vernon Children Stringtet*, I think, pretending to hear the Ringmaster announcing us to the world.

“Act name?” asks Eugene, the Ringmaster. We arrive at the Big Top for our audition.

“Vernon Children Stringtet,” responds Mother.

“Oh yeah, your audition will be in a few minutes.”

At that Howard, Sidney, and I unpack our instruments, warm-up, and play a few notes.

“Vernon Children Stringtet, it’s time for your audition!” We make our way to the stage and start the act. Some of the songs we play are famous tunes, and others are ones we had composed ourselves.

After we finish playing a few songs, Eugene starts to talk, “Gee! I like your music, but I want to add an oomph to the act. Maybe we could light you on fire or put you on the back of lions, ya know, something like that.”

“Yeah,” I respond scared of what he said.

“And, we would like to have you join the Traveling Forepaugh Circus,” Eugene adds.

“Great, when do we start,” I ask. Knowing my future is performing in the circus.

“Tonight,” Eugene laughs, “We then will make our way across Iowa and the USA.”

“Well, I don’t know about that,” worries, Mother, while twiddling her fingers.

As we tour the Big Top we take in the strange circus life. There are so many extravagant acts: trapeze artists, ventriloquists, clowns, knife throwers, strange animals, people of all shapes and sizes, and much more.

A few hours later, Eugene comes into our tent, “So we’re going to light you on fire for the act, and you will be riding on the top of elephants as you play your songs, does that sound good?”

My mother responds in a nervous manner, “Well no, I don’t want my kids to be lit on fire.”

“So no fire, but here is a compromise, the knife thrower will throw knives at them?”

“No, no, no. That’s a dotty idea. I just want them to be safe.”

“Ok fine, how about riding an elephant walking on a wire suspended above the ground then?”

“No, no, no. Not another nutty idea! Just riding on an elephant,” my mom demands. As Eugene nods in agreement.

“Ok then, the show is tonight at eight o’clock,” Eugene agrees while leaving the tent, “Make sure to dress up and be prepared.”

At around seven o’clock, Eugene calls a meeting in the Big Top.

“Ok, y’all here is the rundown for the show. First, I will announce the circus. The first act is the animals. Then the trapeze act... and the Vernon Children Stringtet is third,” Eugene carries on talking about the acts for a few more minutes. “Ok then, we will run through the acts once.”

Being in the circus is like being in a different world. People from all around the globe meet up in one place. Everybody is so unique and different.

Then, it is our turn for the rehearsal. Sidney, Howard, and I play our classical tunes. It seems the other acts are surprised by our talent at such a young age. We are all dressed up in razzle-dazzle uniforms and the elephants we ride on are dressed in matching razzmatazz draperies.

“Great job children, you will definitely surprise the audience,” exclaims Eugene. The other acts also applaud us.

We watch the other acts perform. My favorites are the jugglers and knife throwers. After we finish running through the acts once, it’s showtime. The audience is starting to fill in. I’m so excited to perform for so many people.

After what seems like an eternity of waiting, it is time to start the show.

I can hear the Ringmaster behind the curtain, “Welcome everyone, today we will show you the unexpected, the unbelievable, the unique, the dangerous, and the extreme. Everyone, get ready for the ride ahead. And now, the first act, the Animals from Afar.”

Elephants, giraffes, zebras, lions, birds, sloths, monkeys, bears, tigers, cheetahs, crocodiles, and snakes are all let out of their cages and it turns into the madness of many noises and colors. A cacophony of screeches, barks, and growls fill the tent.

Sooner rather than later, it is our turn to perform. We venture to the front stage and all eyes fall on us. We perform and the audience loves it. The smooth tunes fill the tent, contrasting the harsh animal noises from before. After the mighty applause, we exit the stage. Eugene and our mother meet us.

“That show was a spanking real corker, a lally-cooler!” Eugene exclaims. “So would you like to travel with us?”

“Yeah!” I spark in quickly. My siblings nod in agreement.

“Well, we’ll have to chew the rag about this,” chips in my mother.

“Stop being a pantywaist and answer the question!” exclaims Eugene.

“Please Mom, please,” pleads my sister.

“No, I only let you play in this one performance, that was the deal, I don’t want ya runnin’ round with the circus, you’ll get in the soup,” stammers Mother. I see the deep disappointment on my siblings’ faces.

“Rats,” I murmur.

Just after midnight, I sneak out of bed and stumble through the dark to wake my siblings. I say, "Come on, this our chance to join the circus, let's skedaddle!"

Mila Grothus



Photograph Information

My photograph was taken in 1915. It is a picture of Unique, Garden, and Palace theatres on Locust Street in Des Moines. It also shows many other buildings, and a lot of street lights. There are also about three automobiles parked in the street, but it's hard to see them because it's taken at night. The streets and sidewalks are also very wet, so it's either been raining, or is still raining.

The Theater Girl
Mila Grothus

Della Thompson peeked around the corner of Locust Street and Grand Avenue.

Drat, she thought. *Why does Margaret appear everywhere I go?*

While her parents had said she could go to see “Anna Karenina” with her best friends, Lillian and Ruby, her worry-wart older sister would have been appalled that she had even read the book at “such a young age”. Margaret’s idea of a young age was a sophomore in high school, and Della was a freshman. She also thought that silent films were dreadfully boring. Thankfully, Margaret disappeared into the clothing store with some of her college friends, and Della scurried down the wet sidewalk using the street lights for guidance to reach the Palace Theatre. She, Lillian, and Ruby each paid their seven cents for tickets, and went in to watch the movie.

Della pushed her key into the lock, turned it, and opened the door. The apartment was deserted, which didn’t surprise her. Her little brother, William, was next door at the Watson’s, Dad was working late, Margaret was still out, and Mom was already in bed. She was sorting through mail that her father had been too lazy to even put on the table that morning, when a letter from the Military Branch of the United Kingdom caught her eye. Trembling, she opened it, and read.

Dear Mrs. Thompson,

We are sorry to write back to you so late, and even more sorry to inform you that your brother, Lieutenant Colonel Walter Hills, was injured in the Battle of Gallipoli and recently died while receiving treatment. Please write back if you and your family would like to be present at the reading of his will, and the English government will be more than happy to send you boat tickets to travel.

Sincerely,

Richard Smith

Secretary for the English Army

Della dropped the letter and the envelope, and her mother came out. She could tell she had just gone to sleep, which surprised her because it was almost 10:30.

“Hi honey,” she said, squinting. “How was the movie.”

“Fine,” Della said, tears welling up in her eyes.

Her mother pulled her into a hug. “Sweetheart, was it really that bad?”

“No, it was fine.” Della sobbed, “Uncle Walter’s dead.”

Then, her mother pulled her in tighter, and the two of them sobbed together.

The next morning, the five of them were seated around the hickory table in the kitchen. Mom, Dad, Margaret, Della, and William. Annie, the family’s border collie, was in her dog bed, but she didn’t understand the recent events.

“So let me get this straight,” Margaret began. “Uncle Walter was wounded in the Battle of Gallipoli — which is still going on — and died while receiving treatment recently.”

“That’s what the letter said,” Dad replied.

William was playing with his teddy bear, and not paying any attention to what they were saying.

“Willy,” Dad coaxed. “Could you at least pay attention to what we’re saying?”

Willy shook his head, and squeezed his bear tight.

Margaret pulled Della into a deep hug that was usually reserved for their brother. “I saw ‘Anna Karenina’ was showing at Garden Theater,” she said. “Do you want to go see it?”

Della sniffled. “Sure.”

The movie was just as good as the first time Della had seen it, but not nearly as good as the book. Then, Margaret dragged her to the clothing store next door, and they managed to find a cotton dress that she would wear to the hearing, assuming Mom overcame her grief.

The next Monday, Della stopped at Garden Theater on her way home from school. There weren’t any other good movies that she would have been allowed to watch, so she just hung out for a couple hours, bought a bunch of candy and popcorn to eat. When the workers asked her to leave, she didn’t want to go to her sad apartment in the capital of Iowa, so she went Palace Theater. And when they asked her to leave, she went to Unique Theater. After the same thing happened there, she went into the clothing store next door, even though she had forbidden herself from going there ever since Ruby had made her try on that awful salmon-colored dress. It had even seemed to smell like the revolting fish. She left crying because she had seen a dress that reminded her of the one Uncle Walter had given her on her seventh birthday, and then a blouse he had sent her mother for Christmas last year.

Della did the same thing every day after school, and spent as much time out of the apartment on the weekends as she could doing the same thing until someone figured out who she was, and called her parents.

“Della,” her father said when she came home one night.

“Della, why are you hanging out at the theatres after school and on the weekends?” her mother added.

Della stuttered. “I... I...”

Della paused. “I don’t know.”

Her father looked at her like she had just told him she had a boyfriend. “Well then, I guess that you won’t...”

Della burst into tears. “No, you wouldn’t!”

Her mother put a hand on his arm. “John, that’s a little too harsh.”

“I’m sorry,” Della sniffled between sobs. “I guess it seems so sad at home, so I try not to be around as much. And that the movies were my last happy memory before all this.”

Her parents paused, and then pulled her into a warm embrace. It felt better than warm chocolate chip cookies had when she was four years old.

“Oh sweetie,” her mother cooed. “We should have known.”

“We know this is hard on you,” her father said, stroking her hair, which she had not let him do since the day she turned ten. “This is hard on all of us. So we’re going to have to pull through this together.”

And then, Della held on, vowing never to visit the theatres again and to never let go.

Hollin Hansen



Photograph Introduction

This is a picture of employees at a soup kitchen in 1945. Soup kitchens usually served soup for free or less than usual, for the people who were affected by the war.

Soup Kitchen
Hollin Hansen

“Are you ok, Melody?”

“What do you mean?” I knew what she meant, but I didn’t want to talk about it. I didn’t want to think about it.

“Let’s go. We need to get to the soup kitchen or else my mom will get mad.” I walked fast, passing Sarah. Sarah rolled her eyes and smiled. She ran to catch up with me.

We ran so fast, we were entirely out of breath when we got to the soup kitchen.

“Good heavens, are you both ill?” My mother asked when we came in.

“No, we’re fine Mrs. Williams.”

“If you say so. Well, are you going to help me?” We joined her and added water to the soup to make more since there were so many people.

“Seriously, what’s wrong Melody? You can tell me.”

“I was just thinking about the war.”

“Melody, the war is over. Hitler’s dead. You don’t have to keep thinking about it.”

“But, over 80,000,000 people. More than 80,000,000 people died, all because of Hitler.”

“You’re thinking about Daniel, aren’t you?”

I nodded. I bit my tongue to keep from crying. I couldn’t believe how many people died. And one of them happened to be my brother.

“How’s Phillip?”

“Uh, good I guess.” Of course, my other brother isn’t good, he cared so much about me and my brother. It’s probably harder for him than me. I know he’s thinking that he could have protected Daniel, but I know he couldn’t.

“Get to work, a bunch of people are waiting!” My mother yelled at us. We worked faster and were finally able to go home for supper. My family and I had meatloaf. We didn’t do very much. I knew what we were all thinking. We’d known that Daniel was dead for four months, but we still didn’t believe it.

I got up and went to my room. I tried reading, but I kept thinking about if the war ended four months earlier, or if the person who shot Daniel, instead shot the person next to Daniel.

I can't talk to anyone in my family about this. My dad's trying to ignore it, my mom can't think about Daniel without breaking into tears, and my brother blames himself. I can't talk to Sarah because she doesn't understand. She doesn't have any siblings. But I know she's trying.

I fall asleep after a little while.

I woke up the next day like normal, went downstairs, had breakfast. I got a shirt and shorts then I went to go change in the bathroom.

Everything was like usual, walked to school with Sarah, took our seats, and the class began. Our teacher was talking about algebra. Sarah and I were passing notes about how confused we were when the door opened. I turned around to find Jack Davis. He used to go to our school but, because of the war, he had left a while ago, but now, I guess he came back.

He took his seat as if it were completely normal, and our teacher acted like it was too. We just continued our class as normal.

I was completely unfocused until it was finally time for lunch. I sat with Sarah and another one of my friends, Karen.

"I can't believe Jack's here," I stated.

"Me neither," Sarah agreed. "I didn't think he'd come back after what happened."

"What happened?" I asked.

"Melody, you know, don't you?" Karen said.

"No, I don't."

"His father died," Karen told us.

"But- I mean, how?"

"War," Karen said as if it was obvious. "And since his mother was already dead, I heard Jack lives with his aunt now."

"That's so- that's terrible."

Karen rolled her eyes. "I honestly couldn't care less about what happens to Jack Davis because I've hated him since I was five."

"Karen, if your father died wouldn't you want people to care that that happened to you?" Sarah asked.

“Not if it was Jack caring.”

Lunch was over and we walked back to our seats and continued our day as usual. I probably won't get a very good grade on our next English test because the whole time I was just thinking about what happened to Jack's family. His mother died when he was ten, and now his dad too. I can't imagine having to move away from my house, even if my family wasn't there anymore.

Before I knew it class was over and everyone was getting out of their desks. I got up, but I was still thinking about Jack. I guess I was really focused on thinking about him because I bumped into a desk on my way out. Luckily, most people had already gone outside, so no one saw me bump into a desk.

I walked outside where Sarah was waiting for me. As I was walking up to them, someone tapped me on the shoulder. I turned around to find Jack.

“Oh hi, Jack.”

“Hi, I just wanted to say that I heard about your brother. I'm really sorry.”

“Oh, thanks. And, I'm sorry about your father.”

I could tell he started thinking about that and didn't know what to say.

“So... what are you doing today?”

“Uh, I'm not sure.”

“Do you want to join me? My mother has a soup kitchen and we could always use more people.”

“Sure.”

Sarah, Jack, and I walked to the soup kitchen. We did the things we usually did, but it didn't take as long, since Jack was there.

Jack had to leave, and Sarah and I left after a while.

“Hey, Melody?” Sarah asked.

“Yeah?”

“I was just thinking that today, you didn't seem sad.”

“Yeah, I guess hearing that someone else has the same problems as me helped.”

“I’m glad, It's good to see you happy again.”

Keelin Hansen



Photograph Introduction

My picture was a picture of Iowan WWI soldiers in line arriving at a camp. Some have their suitcases and one is holding an American flag. I decided to write a story about a soldier and his family.

Returning Home
Keelin Hansen

I never wanted this to happen. I didn't see it coming. I didn't think it would happen to our family. It's one of those things where it's so awful that you assume it wouldn't occur. At least, not to someone you love.

"Ruth! Get down here and practice your lessons!" Mother shouted from the living room for the third time. I sighed and bent the corner of page 79 of *Anne of the Island*. If I could have, I would have been perfectly content in my room, sprawled out on my bed, reading.

I rolled out of bed, groaning and grumbling. Mother had insisted on me taking music lessons, but if I'm being truly honest, I didn't enjoy them much. Mother was my teacher, and a very strict one.

I trudged down the steps and took my seat at the piano. I fumbled around, trying to find my favorite book with the only songs I actually found pleasure in. Still not wanting to practice, I turned to Mother. "Anna invited me to go wading in the creek. I said I'd be there at 1:00."

"You'll just have to be a little late. You know music comes before play."

I knew if I got this done quickly, I might make it to Anna's house on time, so I did what Mother asked. I played a few songs, glancing at the clock above the mantle every so often. When the clock finally struck 12:45, I hurried to the door, disregarding my music sheets.

I slipped on my shoes and waved goodbye to Mother, then rushed out the door and down the street. I ran as fast as my legs would take me.

When I came to her house, I went up to the door and just as I was about to knock on it as she opened it to reveal her smiling face. "Finally!" she exclaimed. "You're here!"

"Sorry I was late. Mother made me do a few things before I could come."

"It's fine, but let's go already!" she laughed.

"Alright, alright, I'm coming." Anna didn't even bother grabbing her shoes, she just darted out the door. I was already out of breath from running to her house, but I sprinted after her anyway.

We quickly reached the creek and I slipped off my shoes and socks and stepped into the cold water.

"Do you ever miss him?" she asked me.

"What? Who?"

“Andy.”

My brother. He left for the first world war a few months before and I hadn't seen him in what seemed like an eternity. “Of course I miss him. It's not the same without him.”

She sighed. “I know what you mean.” Her older brother, Leo, had also enlisted in the war. They were best friends and had been since they were knee-high.

“It's got to be past 5:00,” Anna said after a while. “We best get home.”

I nodded in agreement then put my socks and shoes back on. We ran back home together and we said goodbye when we reached her house. Suddenly I was alone again.

When I got home, I took my shoes off again and set them on the porch. They were still a little wet and muddy and I knew Mother would have a fit if I were to bring them into the house.

The second I came in, I could tell something was wrong. I saw Mother and Father in the kitchen and heard them yelling and Mother's face was damp with tears. I walked slowly down the hallway, listening.

“You shouldn't have let him go!” Mother shouted.

“I didn't have a choice, Harriet! It wasn't our decision, it was his.” Mother stopped fighting him then. She just sank into the chair and buried her face in her hands.

My family seemed to break when Andy left. Mother and Father were always worrying and never seemed to be quite the same. They never got as excited or smiled quite as big. And me. I couldn't bear to see him leave and I could never read the newspaper because I knew whatever they were reporting on could be happening to him.

“What's wrong?” I interrupted. Father looked at me like he hadn't seen me standing there, but didn't say anything. “It's Andy, isn't it?”

“Come here, Honey,” Mother said to me. For a moment, I felt like I couldn't breathe. Pain shot through my body and worry swirled in my head.

“Is he alive?” I asked as I walked to her. “Please tell me he didn't die,” I begged her. Tears slid down my cheeks, but I tried my best to hold it in.

“He's alive, praise God. However... he is in a hospital. He's going to be coming back home for a while.”

“What happened?”

“We aren't sure yet. They did tell us much in the note we received. We don't even know the extent of his injuries.”

Father thrust the envelope back down on the table. "You would think-" The rest of his words were mumbled, too low for me to hear.

"When will he be home?" I asked.

"In a few weeks," Mother told me. I felt helpless. I just sat there beside Mother and prayed that Andy would get well soon and come home safe and sound.

A few weeks later, my family and I stood at the train station, awaiting Andy's return.

When the train finally arrived, people started climbing off of the train and filing their way through the crowd to find their families. But I didn't see Andy.

I squinted my eyes, trying to find him. Then I spotted him. I saw his beaming face and big smile. His curly dark hair waved in the wind. Then I glanced down at his leg. He only had one whole leg. His other stopped just above where his knee used to be and he was sitting in a wheelchair.

I swallowed hard. This couldn't have happened, not to Andy.

"Andy!" Mother called as she rushed to his side. She kissed his head and hugged him tight. Father followed her, but I stayed back. I was frozen in shock.

Andy noticed and started to wheel over to me. "Ruthie!" he said, happy to see me. I smiled.

"I missed you," I told him as I hugged him.

"I missed you too. I miss home more than ever." We stood in silence for a moment and I stared at the ground.

"Ar- Are you alright?" I asked him, my voice breaking. Tears filled my eyes.

"I'm alright. I'm going to be fine," he assured me. He paused. "Ruthie?"

"Hm?"

"I'm fine. I'm still me." It was then when I realized, he was alright. If he was alright, so was I. He was alive, at home with his family, and he was smiling. That was what mattered most.

Margo Keller



Photograph Information

Nellie Verne Walker was a well-known sculptor as seen in a photograph taken in 1904. The photo shows her creating Iowa's governor, Albert B. Cummins, in the attic of Iowa's state capitol building. I decided to alter the situation by changing the relationship between the artist and the sculpture itself. I was able to include dialogue about the frustrations of women who longed for careers but were not able to succeed due to the imbalance of power between genders. I enjoyed researching this fascinating topic, and I hope you appreciate my interpretation.

The Exhibit, 1904
Margo Keller

The eyes. There were most definitely two of them, and they were watched often by others. Their gaze was forever fixated on something that did not exist, or at least as far as anyone could tell, and they very much resembled those of a human except for their bronze material. Despite being made of metal, the eyes had quickly garnered attention throughout the exhibit.

All who had peered into the statue's eyes had left with their own shocked into a permanent gape, confounded by what they had witnessed. A few of the onlookers went to their graves swearing profusely that the eyes had moved, following them as a hunter does to its prey. Others seemed to feel a sense of dread as they passed the statue, and tears would often slide down their cheeks as they paused to stare. Regardless, it was certain that this statue was unlike any other.

Delphia understood why the crowds feared her artwork, as she had sculpted the statue herself. It had been a daunting task, as the sculpture was crafted to resemble her own father, a man known for his greed.

The state fair's art exhibit was lit with bulbs that flickered as if surrounded by an unseen wind. The light reminded Delphia of a memory that she had attempted to bury deep beneath others. At long last it was pulled to the forefront of her mind, swallowing reality and dragging her back to a night of tears that dropped like rain...the rain of a storm.

Delphia laid her head between her fingers as the elaborate updo of her hair was torn from its ties, falling around her cheeks. A flash lit up her studio, turning the room all white as if the sun had ignored the rules of time and risen through the night's darkness. She was plunged

back into dim lighting as it left in an instant. Only the studio's flickering lamp was left to light her desk. Her unfinished statues cast black silhouettes behind them and they crept along the room's aged walls with every flash.

She was nearly done with her father's sculpture but found that she lacked the strength to continue further. Delphia could not bring herself to touch his unfinished image or work above his familiar face. Her fingers clenched themselves into a tight fist as she was suddenly cornered by memories of him. She waved them away, knowing that she would find none containing fondness for such a cruel man.

Delphia rubbed the salty remnants of liquid from her eyes and cheeks as her mouth released a heavy sigh. Regardless of how she felt, the sculpture needed to be finished soon, or else all of her efforts would be for not.

She should have begun her work, but instead, Delphia released a breath of exhaustion, slowing her exhales until she sunk into turmoil infused sleep. Her head hit the polished wood of her desk as lack of consciousness snuffed gravity from her limbs.

"Oh, Delphia!" called the singsong voice of a man. His words interwove with the sleep that clogged her ears and covered her eyes, forcing Delphia away from blissful nothing...and to mysterious something. As soon as she was able to form blurry lines and colors into objects, Delphia realized the dangerous situation that she had awoken to. She sat upright, her muscles tense with fear. "Angel Cake, why don't you turn around and face me?" Ever so slowly, Delphia followed the voice's command. Her wooden chair screamed as it dragged against the floor, scraping the ground with movement.

"F-father..." she whispered. The air felt still as she faced the voice that beckoned her forward.

“Oh, how I’ve missed those big brown eyes of yours, Delphia,” he said, tenderly. Or at least, it seemed that he had spoken, despite being a statue of bronze and not a man of flesh.

Delphia’s chest tightened as she feared for her own sanity. It appeared to her that this statue was not only moving but talking through her father’s tongue. She attempted to convince herself that this was all a dream, but somehow the statue’s genuine eyes told her otherwise. Her body refused to move, and so she continued to sit through her rising tides of dread.

“Why are you...here?” she asked, quietly. The statue seemed more lifelike than possible, moving about the room with ease. She watched bronze mold itself as the sculpture grinned.

“My dear,” he spoke, words carelessly leaping from his lips. “Is it not obvious? You’ve always been a bit daft with your foolish exploits and whatnot, but I must admit that I was wrong about you!” Delphia paused as she felt her brows crease into jagged arches. After all this time, that was what her father had to say?

“How dare you speak to me!” she cried, rising from her seat and standing tall. “Even now you remain ignorant of your mistakes, acting as if we might communicate on stable terms! Despite death, you’ve still managed to drag me down, filling my days with your terrible image.” She left a gap in her accusations, gasping for air as she awaited his reply. He offered none. “During life you tore away art as soon as it met your sight, destroying Mother’s career and almost dragging mine down in the process! Just as the world discovered mother’s talent, we discovered your insecurity...and you discovered just how far your privileges spanned.”

“Regardless,” he muttered as his metal foot stepped closer. “I’ve changed my views! Listen to me, Delphia, you don’t understand!” His fingers sent chills down her skin as he grasped her trembling shoulders, forcing them to a stop. “Your...art. It’s what has allowed for

me to exist again! I've admitted that I was wrong about you and your...mother. I shouldn't have lied about her loyalty to me, but that was simply before I had recognized my misconceptions!" Delphia deciphered his words through her exhausted mind, searching desperately for the will to forgive. She could not find it.

"Once again, you've proven me right," she spat. He raised a brow in confusion. "You've never wished for my success. You would have preferred for me to stay silent and motionless, a lovely decoration to lay your eyes upon after a day of work or a summer's outing. Now you speak to me with what you think is love...but you have never possessed the ability to care for those beneath you." He remained quiet, watching Delphia without response. "Speak!" She ordered, enraged that even now her voice seemed unheard.

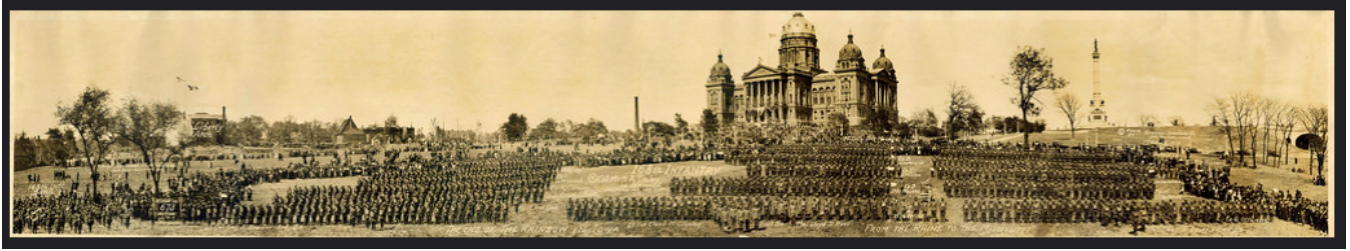
Delphia leaned close, her eyes brimming with emotion as she searched his bronze face for answers. But...he was still. Awfully still, and devoid of his lifelike features. Ever so slowly, she set her fingers upon his cheek, noticing that they maintained the stiff nature of metal.

She walked as if through a daydream, gliding across the studio and twisting the rusted handle of her bedroom door. As she fell onto her misshapen bed, she fell too from her father and their frightening confrontation.

Delphia opened her eyes again, relieved to find the exhibit still before her. Its lights sent out a steady glow as she lifted her gaze, noticing that the entire room seemed brighter. She clutched her chest, relieved that the remembrance was over, but unnerved by the recurrence of a memory that she had attempted to bury deep. Perhaps she had imagined the conversation, or dreamt up the exchange altogether. From a great distance, the statue appeared small and metallic. It was likely an item of observation, and nothing more.

As she grabbed her bag and turned to leave through the exhibit's glass doors, something caught her eye. Delphia's blood ran cold as she looked upon the statue a final time. Even from a great distance, anyone could tell that the statue had winked.

Wesley McDowell



Photograph Information

The photograph I chose was a photograph of the 168th infantry “Rainbow Division” assembled in front of the Iowa Capitol building after coming home from battle on the German front in WWI around 1918-1919. I decided to visualize this in the Second Battle of the Marne where the Allies repelled the German offensive thereby insuring the safety of Paris. I did extensive research ensuring that as many of the facts used in this short story are as true as possible.

Among the Fallen
Wesley McDowell

William Parrish was woken by the heart rate monitor in his hospital room. He looked around at his friends and family and realized how lucky he was. Throughout his 94 years he had accumulated quite a hoard of friends and family all of whom were here in his room or out in the hall. As he slowly slipped once more into sleep there in his death bed he began to recollect his last moments with his father 75 years ago...

As he viewed no man's land through his regulation binoculars gunshots rang out echoing across the plain, popping like firecrackers. They drew William back to those hot July days where his father, Joseph, first taught him how to cook a steak. Now, William wondered if he would ever see his home again. When the National Guard recruiter came to their home in Des Moines they had both joined up to the distress of his mother. He snapped himself back to reality with the reminder that they were the only thing stopping the Germans from getting to Paris. Now as he sat dug in the trench with the Fourth French Army he began wishing he could have just one more nice family dinner. They'd been here ever since the battle started on July 18th.

"Hey Will," came a voice from behind him. He turned and saw his father, tall and proud, standing in front of him.

"Hey Dad," Will replied, happy for a distraction from the overwhelming amount of hatred imbued into every bullet fired. He was so lucky to have his dad here with him and would go to the ends of the earth to make sure he was safe.

"That's 2nd Lieutenant Parish to you!" his father scolded jokingly. "What are you up to?"

"We've been ordered to fire the machine-guns frequently so the Germans don't realize how scarcely manned we are".

"That's smart, hopefully it works."

Both were completely oblivious to the German offensive just now being set into motion. Suddenly a commotion started up at the top of the hill.

An Allied scout crested the hill, no older than Will and just as inexperienced. "Where is General Rawlson?!" he shouted.

"He went to the second line to make sure its fortified well," answered Will's father.

"Why do you need to know?"

"The Germans are advancing with their infantry! We need to retreat to the second line!" the scout cried.

"But we haven't received any orders from Rawlson yet," Will said reverting back to his basic training.

His father chimed in, "Son, this is part of the Generals plan. This is a sacrificial line to lower their defenses."

"But if we retreat then the German artillery can fire on us from their lines."

"It's the only way Will, we have to risk it." his father replied. And then the clouds descended.

“Mustard gas!” the scout screamed. “We have to make it to the second line now!” They began to climb out the back of the trench. Will looked to his left and right and saw men rushing around the first line hurriedly snapping on their gas masks and rushing around with their Enfield rifles blazing and their bayonets charging at their enemy, barely visible in the lethal gas.

“We need to stay and fight!” Will shouted above the tumult, inspired by those brave men so willing to give their lives for their nation.

“No!” the scout responded. “We need to get word to the General that the plan has been set into motion.”

“Will!” his father yelled. “Stop arguing and move your--” His sentence was cut short by a bullet piercing his side. Will stood there, dumbfounded, unable to comprehend the gravity of what had just happened. He was brought back to the moment at hand by the screams of the scout.

“We have to get him to the second line. He’s not safe here!” the scout shouted in Will’s face.

“I’ll cover you!” Will roared with a ferocity he had never experienced before.

“No Will!” His father said wincing with pain. Will never heard him. He sprinted to the trench and snagged a nearby machine-gun from another fallen hero. He began to fire relentlessly at nearly anything that moved in the yellow gas slowly lifting. As hazel fires burned in his eye sockets he was oblivious to the bullets whizzing past his head and a few even grazing his skin tearing into his flesh ripping holes through the uniform he wore with pride. After a few moments of this vicious onslaught from both sides and his unbridled rage slowly diminishing Will began to realize he could no longer keep up this frenzied pace.

He started walking backwards while firing and then broke into a full sprint never looking back, his only goal was to make it to the aid station buried deep into the second line of trenches. Bullets ripping the air around him he crawled on the bodies of his fallen comrades. He tripped over a sandbag and fell into the trench. He walked leaning on everything in sight finally stumbling into the aid station. He had no sooner made it to the entrance that darkness crept into the edges of his mind and he passed out.

As consciousness worked its way back into Will he slowly rose and looked around, gaining understanding of his surroundings. He was laying down on one of the stretchers used as beds in the aid station. How had he gotten here? He grabbed a passing medic by the arm. “Why am I here?” he inquired sternly.

“We found you unconscious near the entrance a few minutes after the Germans began their attack,” the medic replied without looking up from his clipboard, as if this were a common occurrence.

Will reeled as he slowly remembered what had happened. He looked around in desperation. Nearly all the cots were empty. “Where is he?!” Will screamed at anyone who would listen “Where is my father?!”

“He’s gone. Left us a while ago I’m afraid,” the medic replied now looking up with a compassionate look. Will felt like the world was collapsing around him. Nothing could have possibly prepared him for this moment. His father Joseph was his driving force, what helped

him go on, without him could Will do anything? He suddenly felt a presence beside him. He turned hopefully half-expecting to see his father.

“Hello,” the scout said.

“What happened?” Will inquired desperate for any news on his father’s fate.

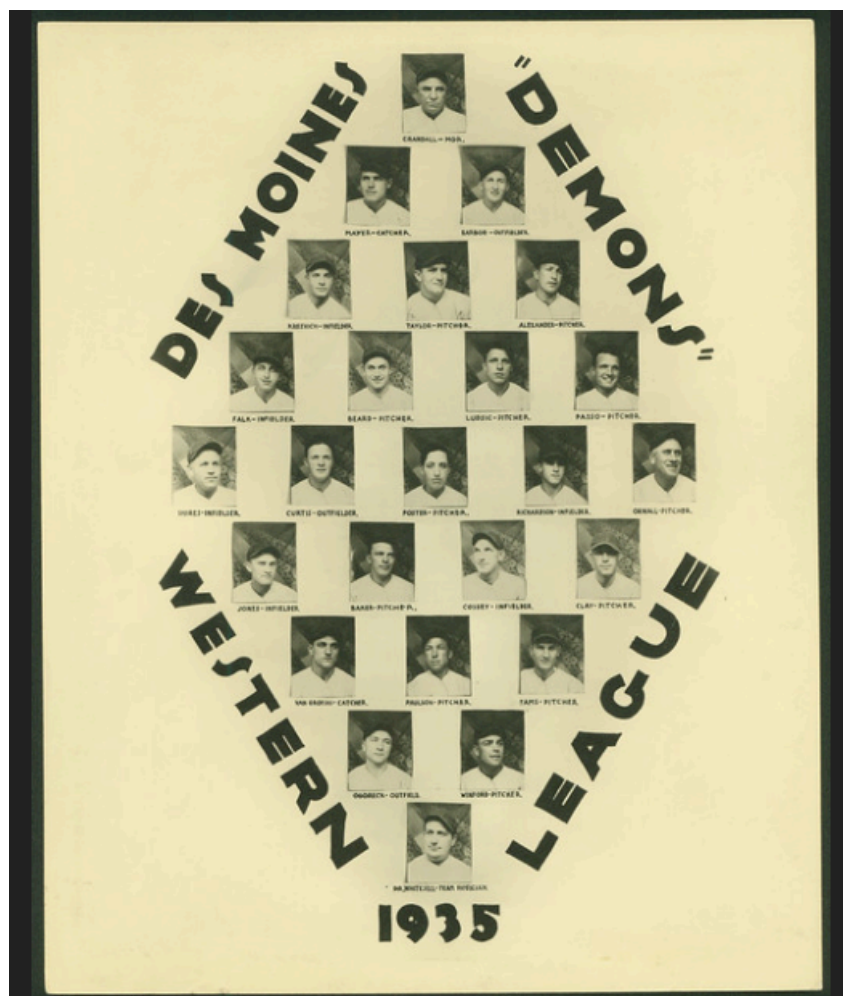
“We just barely made it Will. We wouldn’t have made it without you,” he said with a bit of a chuckle.

“Then where is my dad?” Will asked, utterly confused.

“Command shipped out all the wounded to Paris by taxi-cab after we repelled the German offensive,” he replied giving Will the hope he so desperately craved. Hope that fed Will and sustained him. Hope that fueled the fire inside him. Hope that kept him alive. Will, utterly content with the safety of his father realized how tired he truly was. He began to drift slowly into sleep once more...

William woke again in his hospital room to the presence of someone beside him. He turned over and looked his best friend in the eyes and uttered with his final breath, “Thank you.” And as he slipped into the silent sleep of death the only thing he could think, was that he was utterly content. And Bill knowing fully well that Will couldn’t hear him said as he was leaving, “We wouldn’t have made it without you.”

Bryn Mineck



Photograph Information

My photo was of all the players in a 1935 baseball team. All it had was the person's picture, their last name, and what position they played. So I researched the rest. All the people I mention are real people on the team, but I don't know if the personalities I gave them are accurate. This story takes place in 1935, so I researched some slang from the 30s.

Untitled Story about The 1935 Des Moines Demons
Bryn Mineck

My name is Auggie Luther. Right now I might be squat, but soon I'll be in all of your history books. I know it. I can already see the headlines in the *Des Moines Register*: "Baseball Star August Luther Takes his Team to Victory Once Again!," "Star Pitcher August Luther Strikes 4 out in a row!," "Des Moines Native Auggie Luther is Everyone's Favorite Ball Player!"

All those titles are so vivid in my head. I know it's gonna happen. It's gotta. I work hard. My pitches are fierce. My batting is reasonable. Coach likes me. The rest of the Demons like me as well. Except for, of course, Howard Taylor and his gang.

We're sworn to rivalry.

It all began when Howie and I were young and all the boys in the area put together a little baseball team. He and I were pals back then, so we wanted to be on the same team. But we both wanted to be the pitcher.

"Why can't I!?" I had whined.

"Cause you always get to pitch!" Howie had screamed.

Long story short, he got to pitch that day, which sparked my anger. And, well, I may have tackled him. We were only eight and ten, but we thought we were quite mature. Our mothers, who were all inside having tea, came running to the backyard and cleaning me and Howie up.

I know it's a bit of a dingy reason to be feuding, but neither of us have been able to forgive each other for something these days I can hardly remember. After all, it was fourteen years ago. I'm a man now.

I don't call Howard Taylor, Howie, to his face anymore. I'm no longer friends with him. We both got our own now.

On my side, we got the Good Demons. My best pal Ted Mayer, our catcher, Ken Richardson, outfield, and Peter Falkowski, infield, better known as Falk. On Howie's side, we got the Devils. Bobby Cole, outfield, Clinton Jones, infield, and of course, the biggest Bootlick of them all, Peter Fleming.

But of course, for good and bad Demons, today was such a big day. Semi-finals. We're going up against the Detroit Tigers. Pfft. What a uncoordinated name. Even our name is better. I bet our team is too. I bet on it.

"AAUUUGIEEE!" My little sister, Patty, screamed from the door. "TIME TO GOOOO!"

"Patricia! No yelling in the house!" my mother scolds.

I grab my sack with my bat and glove. "Comin, Patty!"

We all hop in the mobile from 1919. Sixteen year-old car, but it's all we can afford. Depression hit my family pretty hard. My Pops starts to drive and the mobile creeks as it starts to move.

Our neighborhood streets are flooding with cars like ours. I see Ted from across the street. "GO DEMONS!!" I chant to him. He smiles. It feels like a parade, just for us.

The ballpark is quite a long ways. So I need something to keep us occupied.

"Patty, let's look outside to the beautiful Iowa cornfields!"

"Hooray!!"

That's when I spot the most beautiful car I've ever seen. A silver 1934 model Rolls Royce, with an engine that roars as smooth as a cat's fur. Then, I recognize the boy inside in the passenger side. Andy Smith, Detroit Tiger. What a blow. I heard from Coach Crandall his family was hardly effected by the depression.

Smith stuck his head out of the top and screamed "TIGERS RULE!" and without warning, he chucks eggs at our car.

Patty screams. I cover her head as I yell at them to screw themselves. They zoom past us, laughing, like this is something they do day-to-day. I burn with fury. "Some day," I announce, "I'm gonna own a Rolls Royce. And I'll throw eggs at him."

"Watch it, son," Pops mutters. "Don't wanna make promises you can't keep."

"You'll see, Pops," I say as I look out the window. "You'll all see."

We arrive with a *screeeech* from the mobile to a packed ball park. I beam, but stop myself. I'm a man. I can't beam. But I admire how many people are here to see me pitch.

I chuckle. Those Tigers are gonna regret even showin' up.

"It's a BEAUTIFUL day for a ball game, and folks do we have a show for you today!" the announcing man, Bob's voice crackles through the speakers, and goes through his weekly script.

As Bob advertises Petey's Hot Dogs, Coach Crandall gives us a pep talk.

"OK men, who's ready to kill some Tigers?"

We all nod and laugh.

"So, here's the thing..." Coach begins. "I kinda bet my pal James on this and told him you would win.. So it would help your coach out a lot if you... win."

This isn't the first time Coach has bet on us. One time he bet his Hot Squat, and he ended up having to give it to his mama. We usually don't let him down, but occasionally we do lose. That's usually when Taylor pitches, if someone's gonna take the rap.

We all nod and promise to do our best, and then it's time for field placement for the first inning. Also known as the time when Howie and I are worst enemies.

"Michael, Falk, Thomas, Turpin, outfield, Mayer catching, Kreevich, shortstop, Cole 1st base, Hudson, 2nd, Jones 3rd, and pitching..."

Howie and I throw each other some gruesome looks.

"...Umm, let's go with Taylor with this inning."

Howie dances around with glee before running onto the field. *What a gracious winner.* I think sarcastically.

I sit under the Demon's tent all through the first inning outraged. Taylor isn't striking out anybody. I hear almost a rhythmic crack of the bat.

After the inning is done, I decide to give Taylor a piece of my mind. "What was that, ya old crumb?" I yell at him as he ties his shoe.

"I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about, Luther."

"The pitching!" I say, irritated. "There were no strike outs!"

"Don't hate the player," he says, putting his hand on my shoulder like I am a child. "Hate the game."

"Don't touch me!" I snap. "I'm pitching next inning, and I'll show you what it SHOULD be like, ya crumb."

As it turns out, I don't pitch next inning, I get... outfield. OUTFIELD. I'm a pitcher, not a center-fielder! I did take out two Tigers on pop flies, but it doesn't have the same glory. And you know what? Taylor gets to pitch the inning after that, as well! I fume with anger.

Soon, it's the last inning, and coach is getting antsy. "It's 5 to 4, Luther," Coach tells me, panicked. "5 TO 4!"

"Relax," I coax. "If you let me pitch this inning, we'll win without a doubt!"

I'm in the game. I just know it. He's gonna have to let me pitch if I promise that.

"I... Sorry, Luther, but Taylor's gonna take this one. You can just stay here."

I stand in shock as he walks away.

"HOLD ON!" I yell at coach. "What's going on?" He stops in his tracks and turns around.

"Ok, don't tell anyone," Coach whispers, "but, Taylor's been giving me money so he could pitch. I really need the money, Luther, you know that, and you know how rich his dad is."

He walks away, looking like he thought he'd said too much, and I'm left there, with nothing to do but... just accept this?

The rest of the inning goes exactly like the last. Throw, run. Throw, run. Until the second to last batter is up.

The Tiger steps up to the plate. Taylor and his rich boy hand throw a curveball.

"STRIKE ONE!"

He threw a strike?

"STRIKE TWO!"

This is a miracle. We might actually strike someone out. Now I'm praying. "Please. Please Howie."

Then I hear a crack of a bat.

"OWWWW!"

I look over to see the ball has hit him right in the mouth. Fleming runs to his rescue. Howie's bleeding everywhere. For the first time in years, I feel bad for Howard Taylor. As he's helped off the field, he leans over to me and says, "Go."

"Go where?"

"I'm sorry for stealing your time. You deserve it. Go pitch!" He yells.

So I do.

I go to the bloodstained pitching base and take a deep breath. I chuck a ball with nothing but hope.

"STRIKE!"

My confidence grows. I throw a hard curveball.

“STRIKE TWO!”

“C’mon, Auggie!” I look up to my little sis in the stands, jumping up and down. I’m doing this for her. For Mom and Pops. For me.

I look at that Tiger hard in the eyes. And with all the hope in the world, I let go of the ball that could change the Demons forever.

And then, the sound none of us want to hear, is heard by the whole ball park.

Crack!

“HOME RUN!” Bob’s voice bellows.

My heart sinks as the Tiger runs all the bases. It’s now 7 to 4, and the game is over. I stand in the middle of the field, frozen. I just let my whole team down. I let Coach down. Who knew what he’d just lost?

“So, I’m assuming Coach told you?” I hear from a voice behind me. It’s Howard Taylor.

“Bout what?”

“Me.”

“Oh.. uh yeah he did.”

He looks down to his cleats. “Sorry about that,” he mutters . “I just wanted to prove I was more than just a stack of Lincolns.”

“So you did that by... bribing people with money?”

He chuckles. “My algorithm wasn’t the best, Auggie.”

Howie hadn’t called me Auggie in years.

We talk for a while, and agree to give our friendship another shot. And it’s safe to say I’m quite cheery to have a pal back like that. In fact, Ted, Howie and I are all gonna go to a clip joint and listen to some swing. Patty’s proud of me even though I lost, and that’s all I ask for. So overall, we didn’t win. But it don’t matter. I don’t need a Rolls Royce, or a big fancy house. I just need people who care about me, and doing the sport I love.

Anika Shetye



Photograph Information

For my picture I chose the parade that was held during the convention of the Iowa Equal Suffrage Association in Boone. This went on for two days, and it went on for less than an hour. They decided to do a parade that year because the convention wasn't getting enough attention. People didn't think it would work because they had already been fighting for women's rights for about sixty years now. There were other movements going on, and wars, so it kept being put off.

The Parade
Anika Shetye

October 28, 1908

I started the day as usual, making breakfast, trying to ditch the nervous feeling building up in my stomach. Today was the Suffrage Parade protesting for women's rights to vote. As my mother came down the stairs, she greeted my father and nodded at me. My father was against women voting, and if we were going to the parade, we had to do so in secret to avoid his wrath. Most people who were in favor of women voting believed that the extra votes would get closer to prohibit the sale of alcohol. This was starting to become a big thing called the Temperance movement. Those who were with the church, like my father, who was a music director, believed in drinking in controlled amounts, which gave them another reason to stand against us voting.

The parade was to start at a quarter to noon. Until then, we had to keep Father busy.

"Hello, Samantha," he said smiling.

"Good morning Father."

"Are you alright? You seem jumpy."

"I'm fine," I said trying to mask my uneasiness.

"So," my mother chimed in saving me. "What time is your meeting with the men from the church?"

"8:00 a.m. sharp. I will be back in time for dinner."

This seemed to catch Mother's attention. "Good," she said shifting in her seat at the table. She had to find a way to stall him after his meeting so we could go to protest. "Will you please go to the store and pick up the things from my list?"

He looked at her slowly. "Why can't you go instead? It is your job after all."

"Well, yes but I thought that since you were already in town, it would be easier."

After giving her a skeptical look, he reluctantly agreed. "Very well then. I'll go, but expect me back at around 1:00."

That was more than enough time to go to the parade and still come home in time to make dinner. We finished our meal, and father left right on time.

We continued our day as normal, cooking, cleaning, and then we left. We arrived with about two minutes to spare. It was warm and colorful outside with the autumn leaves falling down from the trees. There were more than a hundred people coming together at the corner of 7th and Carol street. It looked amazing with a small brass band and people carrying large white banners with fancy purple and gold lettering. Leading the group was Dr. Anna Howard Shaw the woman who would speak later at the event. This was a much bigger change than what had been done years ago. Before, there were hardly any people showing up with no fancy banners or anything. Many people didn't come and it was hard to fight for what we believed in. A parade was held this year, going on for two days, because we needed to get many people's attention. We marched until we got to 8th street and that's when the different people spoke, like Dr. Shaw. I met up with my friend on the steps. It was hard to find her because everyone was wearing hats, coats that went down to our knees, long skirts, and gloves. We chatted a bit and I left with Mother to start marching again. We marched five blocks after that, and though it was short, I could definitely tell that it changed a lot of people's minds.

After the parade, we hurried home and made dinner. When my father came home he didn't seem to be in a good mood. He never tried to stop the protests, though if he ever found out that we went, I don't know what we would do. We ate dinner in silence and carried on with our day. I went to bed, and luckily the next morning, Father had to go out of town. We marched again and then it made me realize that I want to keep marching until we finally get what we want.

When we got home, Father was sitting at the table waiting for us. He knew.

"Hello Sam," he said calmly.

"What are you doing home so soon?" I asked nervously.

"Well yesterday, you were acting so strange I figured something had happened. So I followed you and your mother to the parade."

"Oh. Well. I-"

"I'm so proud of you," He interrupted, a smile emerging from his face. Mother and I glanced at each other. I was so confused.

"What do you mean you're proud of me? You've spent years telling me that it's not my place and not to get mixed up in these movements and marches. How are **you** proud of me?"

"I went to the parade, and seeing you fight for what you believed in, hearing those speakers, I realized how wrong I was. The men from the church, have their minds fixed on not letting women vote. I'm sorry."

For some reason I didn't believe him. How could he have changed the mindset he's had for years in one day? The next day Father went to his church meeting. He listed out all of the points the speakers had made and tried to get the other men to change their minds, but instead he came home frustrated he couldn't change their minds, but he kept trying day after day. This made me realize something. The parade actually inspired people. It was working.

It might not have be now, but soon enough, if we keep marching, we will get to vote for governors, and presidents.

Yatharth Sirohi



Photograph Information

My image is of the Iowa capital being built in 1880. In the photo, most of the capital has been built except for the main golden dome.

Capitol Fire
Yatharth Sirohi

Just as he had finished working his eight hours, it started to rain. A bad omen.

One day Later

He was going into the streetcar to transport himself back to the hotel he had been staying at for the last few weeks. Eric was one of the engineers coming from all over Iowa to help design the new capital building. He was a former detective for the Chicago police department who had moved to Iowa and started designing buildings. When he had gotten bored with his other job, he went to Iowa State College, liked the state, and settled here. Even then however he had ended up doing some random investigations just about every week. "My cat is missing", "My neighbor stole my whatever." They were amusing sometimes and broke up the otherwise monotonous weeks he normally had. There weren't any big cases for him anymore. He lived in a small town up North. Eric was the man in charge of designing the central golden dome. Today he was worried though, he had to submit plans for the dome by next week so that the construction could start. His problem was that they were now on the fourth lead architect in fifteen years. It was getting quite annoying. For every single architect, he had to redesign the dome and make some useless modifications. Then, right when they were about to build it, a new architect came along. After thinking through all of this Eric sighed and looked out the small window of his compartment. Covered with dust it was difficult to see outside but he could make out the unmistakable flickering of red and orange fire. Jumping up from his seat Eric roughly shoved people and sprinted through the narrow aisle of the streetcar. Upon reaching the front he told the conductor to stop and that he needed to get out now! The conductor complied and Eric quickly dished out some money from his suit pocket and started running towards the capital.

When he reached the capital building, Eric leaned on his knees panting when one of his assistants came to him. "Hello, sir, what made you come back so quickly? You didn't forget any papers or belongings? I checked that for you."

"Yes I know that, and you should know that I never forget things of importance," Eric replied, "And as for why I came back, I saw the clear flickering outline of fire. Explain."

"Well, as you know sir, the fire happened right when the workers from inside and outside the capital were being released. It looked like someone from one of the darker areas dropped their lamp near one of the lumber crates. But don't worry, It is under control now."

"Interesting," Eric thought, his old detective skills already had him thinking about possibilities.

"We also don't know if the person who dropped it dropped it on purpose or by accident. They are currently doing an investigation into it."

"Tell them not to try. The person who dropped it dropped it on purpose, not on accident. It is really quite obvious if you think about it. First of all, they did it in the day, meaning that they

wouldn't have needed the lamp in the first place. And second, the workers' contracts state that they have to immediately quench with water any fire they are using upon leaving the building. However, that does not mean that we will not try to find the culprit and their intention. Now I want you to go to whoever is currently leading the investigation and tell them to let me handle it, not the team that they assigned. Then I want you to go to my desk and take out the briefcase hidden inside of it and meet me at the crime scene."

"Yes Sir," his assistant said, looking nervous and briskly setting off to complete the tasks.

After that conversation, Eric headed to the crime scene, sat on a log, looked around, and thought about what there was to see. The fire had reduced the oil and lantern to an orange lump of metal which looked like nobody would be touching it soon. All the people had cleared out of the area and about another hundred yards past that. The capital was undamaged, minus a couple of scorch marks on the marble and granite here and there. The positioning of the lamp on the wood made it look like it was quite hastily placed. So, the culprit wasn't trying to damage the capital. The culprit also did it after most of the engineers and architects had left. That wasn't the most helpful clue.

"Sir, is this the right briefcase?" the assistant yelled as he ran up to Eric.

Eric nodded grimly.

"Open it up and hand me the weekly schedule," Eric ordered. Following that Eric's assistant, Henry, handed Eric the schedule with a slightly nervous look on his face. "Well, according to the schedule here it seems that nobody should even have a lantern at all. Do you know if anyone got special permission?"

"Yes, I think that one of the workers working in the House of Representatives room had gotten special permission to apply lightning in the storage space," Henry told him feeling quite a bit nervous.

"This is striking me as quite odd. According to these papers, nobody was supposed to have a lantern yet you are saying someone got special permission. You also are starting to look quite nervous Henry."

"Yes, it is making me slightly nervous if we have someone like this out on the loose. He could destroy the entire capital with his carelessness."

"Carelessness, we know that the person did it on purpose. Well, turn around looks like I found out who's going to jail for a fun few years."

"Who? There is no one behind us."

"You may as well admit it. You started the fire to cause massive panic right when I was gone. Then in that panic, you would sneak over to where the Gold Leaf that we were planning to use for the capital, steal it, and get out of state as soon as possible. You thought that I wouldn't

notice how shocked you were when I came, Your nervous expression during every conversation, your hesitation when you passed me the schedule. No complaining or saying anything, and Henry, you really need to be more deceitful next time.”

Keaton Steger



Photograph Information

I decided on this picture of a train full of soldiers leaving for Camp Dodge in Keota, IA on June 24, 1916 to represent my story in the more symbolic, metaphorical sense. The train symbolizes life's journey, and how it can derail or go off track, even though the end destination is still there in our minds. And this train of life takes my main character on a difficult and unpleasant journey to find acceptance and understanding within himself and of this world.

The Body Is a Vessel for the Soul
Keaton Steger

Sitting alone in the large empty house, the house where Magdalene and he planned on raising many, many children, William sobbed. He sat there in regret, thinking of her as he twirled the simple, silver wedding band around in his hand. Then the flashbacks began... terrible, brutal, bloody flashbacks. The one that struck him first was the most painful...

Standing on the beach, waiting in one of the numerous lines of soldiers, were William and Patrick. Aside from the thousands of soldiers crowding the beach waiting to evacuate aboard one of the many massive warships, destroyers, cruisers, or small civilian boats that sat just off the shoreline; Patrick thought Dunkirk looked nice this time of day. Though both were still wary of a possible incoming attack, they still hoped they would be the lucky ones who could evacuate before the Germans pushed any further into France.

But before long on that cold day in late May, planes bearing the dreaded symbol of the Axis, bore down on the beaches of Dunkirk with no mercy; killing at least 68,000 soldiers of the BEF. When the first planes flew in, William made a dash to one of the small fishing boats housing some ten other soldiers. Patrick decidedly tried to run after William but got tripped up by a horde of others running swiftly back towards the town. As he lay there in the sand, struggling to get back to his feet, he was hit in the chest with a round of bullets from a passing plane. Patrick fell stiffly to the ground, and William consequently made a mad dash back to him. When he got to Patrick, lying in blood-stained sand, William simply stared down at him in utter disbelief and stuttered through a steady stream of tears, "What did they do!? What did they do to you!? Why-", but Patrick didn't let William get the last word and with all the strength he could muster, lifted his head to give William a kiss. Surprised but pleased, William kissed him back, and though Patrick's lips tasted of sea salt and blood, he didn't care; this was all William needed in this moment; requited love.

And as he watched Patrick's life force slowly drift away in his arms, William vowed he would die with his lover. He laid himself down beside Patrick's body and held tightly to his hand. Even in death, he would not part with the one he loved.

But William was woken from his stupor to find a fellow soldier carrying him quickly to a different fishing boat than the one he had gotten in prior to Patrick's death. William made sure to take a last look at Patrick's body, but it was gone, blending in now with the crowd of other bloody bodies on the bombed-out beach. When William got to this new boat, he leapt out of the soldier's arms to lie down on the floor. This boat only had five soldiers in it, and two of them seemed to be laughing at him. They didn't care, they didn't know his pain, they didn't have to see their beloved die right in front of them, they didn't have to let go of someone they held so close, William thought jealously.

He stood up and walked towards one of them, stumbling, as the boat road over the harsh waves of the seemingly endless English Channel. "What are you laughing at, a**holes?" "Look at you mate, you've got an ear off, quit wasting your time talking. Oh, and would you look at

that Edward, it can speak!?” “Yeah, I see it Johnny. You’ve got a bad one soldier, all mangled and torn. Ha! I wouldn’t want to be you! I didn’t get one scratch on me.” This soldier, who William now knew was Edward, had it coming for him. But first, he had to see if what the two were talking about was true, that one of his ears was missing. William reached up and touched his left ear, it was still there. Then he tried to find his right, but all he came into contact with was wet, warm blood and an immense, unfathomable pain. The boat hit another big wave and William hit a wall, knocking him unconscious.

When he came to, he was in an army hospital on England's southern coast. It didn't really feel like waking up though, as he could see only black. There was a tight bandage wrapped around the middle of his head, probably to keep his right ear intact, he thought. He could still hear well enough through his left ear, the scuffling of nurses' shoes on the hospital room floor and a doctor's voice droning on about something...

William awoke from the flashback to fall back into another less painful, easy memory...

Here William was, leaning over his top bunk in a nameless army barrack. Patrick was sitting across from him on another top bunk. They were laughing while playing cards. William and Patrick joked sometimes that they could beat anyone else in their entire regiment at poker. Other times, when the soldiers had had a long day of fighting, many would relax by writing letters to loved ones or read whatever books they could find to keep their mind off of things. But sometimes no form of entertainment can distract soldiers facing war and the barracks would be filled with the conflicts of often loud and rowdy men and there were many times when the only thing William and Patrick could find to do on a dreary day was sneak off to a bathroom and kiss to pass the time away.

William woke up from this most pleasant flashback, now with a smile on his face, but then he remembered Patrick's death, and the stress of that soon overwhelmed him. He knew what he had to do, and it wasn't like he wanted to do it, but he had to, he had to end it all, all the pain and suffering he'd gone through.

William got some rope from the shed, which he'd used prior to fashion a tire swing on the old oak tree in his backyard that he'd planned for the kids to use when they got older. He then grabbed a ladder.

Heading downstairs to the basement, he thought about what it would do to Magdalene to see him like this, but he couldn't bear the thought of living the rest of his life alone, not being able to ever truly fulfill his longing for the right partner, who he now realized had never been Magdalene, the woman who gave him wonderful dreams he will never regret having. He realized it had always been Patrick, the man he knew understood him more than anyone ever could, and the one person who he needed in more ways than he could even understand. He placed the ladder below a high ceiling beam, and tied the rope twice around the heavy wood. He brought a dining room chair down into the basement, and tightened the noose around his neck. He stepped down off the chair, struggling to gain a foothold on anything he could, before he took his last breaths, and his body went limp...

William wakes in a mesmerizing field of wildflowers, shimmering in the summer sun, all golden bronze, under a bright blue sky. Before exploring this new land, he touches his right ear, and then laughs uncontrollably as he realizes, it's back. Looking around, across the field he sees some cherry trees, and behind them, a large green army tent. Recognizing it immediately, he hurries toward it, tripping through the daisies and forget-me-nots, to open the flimsy flap door. Inside, sitting atop a bunk bed with his uniform on and cards in-hand...

Is Patrick, in all his handsome glory, with a radiant smile and beautiful blonde hair.

William runs to him, climbing up the metal ladder, and plopping himself down next to Patrick, who's still smiling from ear to ear...

They share a long-awaited kiss.

Sydney Thompson



Photograph Information

My photo is a black and white of eight women, seven of those women have violins and one of them has a cello. This photo is from 1900 it is of the Highland Park College Ladies' Orchestra. The Highland Park College Ladies' Orchestra was from Des Moines. But when this photo was taken they were in Cherokee, Iowa. Cherokee was an important town. It held the county courthouse and the state hospital.

How I Wanted to Play
Sydney Thompson

“Rosalie it’s time to go,” Mother said as I put on my hat with light blue ribbons. I ran down the stairs and me, Mother, and Father went to get in our black Model T. It took a long time to get to where we were going. When we finally got there we went in and got what father and mother said where good seats. As the eight women played Beethoven’s 9th Symphony, I fell in love with the sound that the violin made. I was inspired. I wanted to play violin. When I got home I told Mother and Father that I wanted to play the violin. They said maybe when I was older. I begged them to let me. They finally gave in, and I finally got what I wanted, to play.

Zoe Zhang



Photograph Information

My photograph was a picture of the parade hosted by the Iowa Women's Suffrage Association during their convention in Boone, Iowa. Leading the parade was Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, president of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association.

Rights at Last
Zoe Zhang

She sat, enraged by the words appearing on the paper in front of her. "Votes of women can accomplish no more than votes of men. Why waste time, money and energy without a result?" it advertised.

"This is just so wrong!" she finally sputtered.

"What's on the news today, Mary?" her sister Elizabeth asked.

"Look Ellie, women like me have been asking for the right to vote for a long time now, but the government just won't give them to us!"

"Why?"

"Ellie, there is something you must understand. We, as women of the United States, must band together as one to overcome the unjust system taking place in Washington D.C. We must confront the leaders that are creating these unreasonable policies without the thought of women in mind."

Other women like Mary had been actively fighting for the right to vote for almost sixty years, but nothing was getting accomplished. So when she heard of a small group of women holding a rally for women's rights in Boone, Iowa, Mary told her sister, "I must attend. I will do my part in the battle to achieve rights for all."

The morning of the protest, Mary read the newspaper expecting to find a famous women's suffrage leader like Susan B. Anthony's writing in the column. To her surprise, she saw a man's name with the caption : Anti-Suffragist Robert Davis on his thoughts about the suffrage movement.

The Des Moines Register

Reporter: Why do you think that the women's rights activists are doing the wrong thing with their peaceful protests?

Bob : *Women's Suffrage, I believe, will ruin our western civilization. It may come in my grandchildren's time, but I certainly hope that it won't come in mine.*

Reporter : What makes you think that women should not be gifted with the right to vote?

Bob: *Because 80% of the women that are eligible to vote are married and would only double their husbands' votes.*

As she continued to read the man's interview, her at- first shock turned into anger as the man repeatedly said false statements about the suffragists. Then, he said that he was going to meet the women at the rally, and tell them to go home. After reading Robert's section in the news, Mary decided that it was time to change some people's minds.

Mary contacted the organizers of the march, Eleanor Elizabeth Gordon and Rowena Edward Stevens to see what she needed to do to prepare for the protest. They replied that

attendants of the march could bring signs, posters and anything that represented how they felt about women's rights. So Mary decided to make a poster for the parade. It stated "Taxation Without Representation is Tyranny - as true now as in 1776." She was tired of paying taxes but not getting the right to vote just because she was a woman. She believed that every person, no matter what gender, should be allowed to vote. Little did she know that Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, President of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association would be there, leading the parade.

Mary arrived at the rally, and as the newspaper stated, Robert was there. He was a very tall man, with a suit and a mustache. He walked, leaving an aroma of mint in the air. Mary was about to tell him about her anger with his article. But it was love at first sight. So instead, she held herself back and told him instead, "I'm here to attend the rally. Are you also in support of women's rights?" She asked, pretending not to have read the newspaper.

"Young lady, perhaps you have been mistaken. Women's rights should not be allowed because you have no authority in this country." She became irritated by his comment, but could tell he was hiding something.

He stared at her, clearly smitten as well. "Anyways, disregarding this matter, would you like to go to dinner with me tonight?"

Dinner with a handsome lad was something Mary would never pass up. And, she would learn his secret and somehow convince him to support the women's suffrage movement.

"Only with regulation." Mary replied. "You will leave the parade, I will participate in the protest, and I'll meet you at dinner."

"It's a done deal. I'll meet you at the Fairview Tavern at 6."

Mary joined the hundreds of women lined up at 7th and Carroll ready to participate in the parade. They marched down the streets holding signs and banners with only one clear purpose in mind : voting rights for all. Dr. Shaw led the way as they marched their way down the street until they came across the intersection of 8th and Story streets. There, they came to a stop as Anna stepped onto the podium and addressed her crowd in the form of an open - air meeting. After she finished speaking, the women marched back up five blocks to the start of their route. Mary looked back at what she and hundreds of women had accomplished over the last couple of hours and said to herself, this rally I just attended will spark the action of more women, feeling betrayed by the United States government, to speak up and express their thoughts. And sure enough it did.

That night, Mary drove herself to the restaurant. There, Mary and Bob sat at a booth without the a word. At last, Mary broke the silence.

"Can you tell me the truth on why you don't support the suffrage movement?"

"I just don't like the idea of women's voting rights for all."

"I can tell you're hiding something."

"The truth is, I grew up being taught that women should not be given voting rights. My father was an Anti- Suffragist and he taught me his way. But I think that women should be given the right to vote. I'm just scared by what my father's going to say."

"You can stand up to him. Tell him that what he thinks is wrong and that change will need to happen."

"You're right. I will talk to him tonight. Dinner again next Friday at 6?"

“Of Course.”

“Ellie! Look! Our suffrage parade was a success! It attracted national attention, and it also inspired other women like me to hold parades!”

“So does that mean that you will get to vote soon?”

“I hope so. I hope that the nation’s government will see the anger and frustration of the women of the country.” Mary, Bob, and Ellie were watching their dreams unfold in front of them.

With the Boone Parade being one of the first Women’s suffrage protests in the United States, it inspired other state and national leaders to consider organizing parades of their own, including Alice Paul’s infamous 1913 parade in Washington, D.C.

In the winter of 1920, Mary lined up with thousands of other women at the voting booth to cast their votes. The United States had finally allowed women to vote and Mary was proud. She finally felt represented in her country.