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Energy

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Kaylee
Mallory Burnette



My Farewell Address

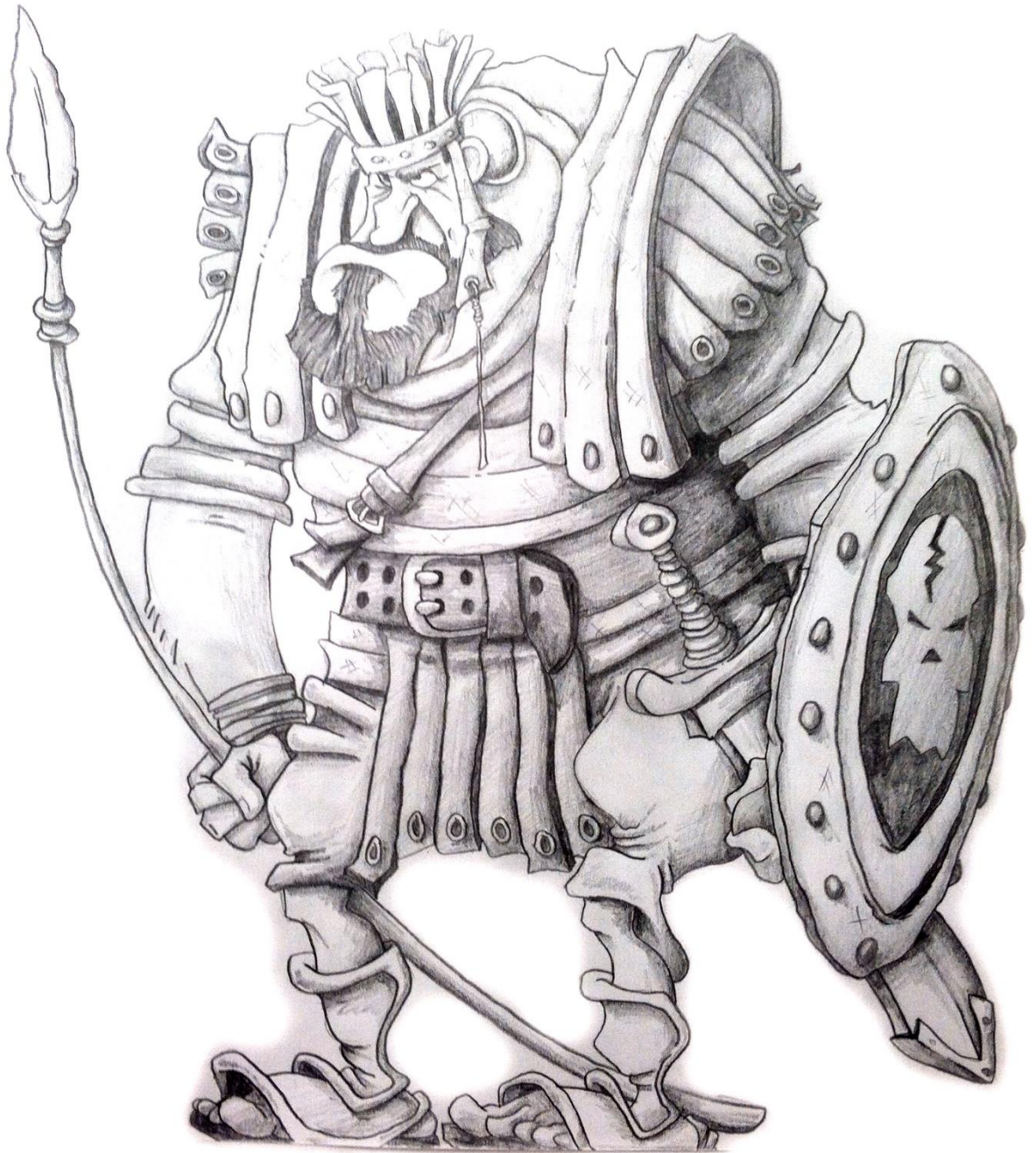
LeAnna W. Turner

I was awakened and someone called my name,
As I opened my eyes, my life was not the same.
I was beckoned with arms open wide,
Saying, "Come to me and walk by my side."

We walked through valleys, climbed hills and mountains,
Finally landing on that beautiful sea shore;
Oh how marvelous it was to reach this point,
To set sail to a land where storms will be no more.

So, I say to all my loved ones...
I'm going out so don't wait up,
Turn off the porch light 'cause it will be awhile;
I've started my journey with my best friend,
We're walking the King's highway mile by mile.

Live your lives, live it pure and holy,
Live your days as if it's your last;
Today is the day to surrender to Christ,
Don't wait and let another day pass.



Soldier
Danny Graham

Heroics

Tachmonite Butler

“The Adventures of Super Tach and the Super Group” was the title of the first story I ever attempted to write. I believe I started to write it a bit before the sixth grade. I remember – after years of pretending and wishing to be one – deciding that since I could not be a superhero in real life, I could be one on paper. Unfortunately, years have passed, and that story was never written. Even though I never got the chance to write that story, I did, however, become sort of a hero; strangely enough, it was during the worst week of my life.

I recall looking at the water that had filled the street outside of my uncle’s house. In the night, with no lights it looked a lot like the liquid void. Almost as if anyone would have stepped into the water would have disappeared into the abyss. It was a hopeless situation, and I figured that the weak should have disappeared so that the strong could have survived. So with my head out of the window of my uncle’s so-called weight/guest room on the second floor, I thought about jumping into that liquid void. Until, I looked up into the sky. And for the first time in my nineteen year existence, I noticed a sky full of stars. That star filled sky gave me a little hope. After a few moments of staring into the sky, I pulled my head back into the window, prayed, and then cried myself to sleep.

The next morning, I remember hearing on the radio a host say, that if anyone was listening to their broadcast, to get out of their homes and to seek shelter on higher ground. Moments later, my uncle, Lorenzo (everyone called him Renzo for short), came into the guest room and told us to get ready to leave. Then, we gathered the little that we needed from the house and whatever courage we could, and set out to walking the flooded streets. After walking out of the 2nd floor door and down the stairs. My uncle, my two younger brothers (Frank and Charles), a friend of the family, and I were in the cold water. The height of the water as we trudged toward the street was chest high. As we approached the street everyone had decided to take a moment to stand on the porch of the house that was in front of the one my uncle live in. At that time my uncle, had chosen me to walk around the block to find a place that was higher than the water. I ventured through the water, where at the highest the water was up to my neck.

After becoming separated from my Uncle Renzo and my brother Frank, Charles, the friend of the family, and I had made our way to Canal Street in search for the hotel where my Uncle Jenail's girlfriend Sunshine (though we called her Shine) was staying during the storm. About 15 to 20 minutes later we all made it to the hotel and managed to find our way to the room where Shine, her sister, her sister's boyfriend, and my little cousin were all staying. Our journey to high ground was over, or so we thought. I am not exactly how long it took. Suddenly, we heard from someone working at the hotel that we had to leave the building, because it was said that the water was going to get higher.

Upon hearing this, everyone in the room gathered what they could and went out the emergency exit to our destination, The Louisiana Superdome. We left the hotel, a mass of people, since everyone that was leaving the hotel was all going the same way, and trudged the water, which by this point to me became familiar to me, like I were walking around in a large pool. My group, the people that were in the room, along with a friend of Shine and her son, were two blocks from the hotel when Shine's friend suddenly realized that she had left something important back at the hotel room. So, she sent her son back to get the item, and my brother decided to follow.

A few moments had passed; I had gotten worried that something may have happened to them so I decided to go back to the hotel. I thought, I lost track of one brother already and I can't lose track of another. I had gotten back to the hotel and walked up to the floor where we had been when I saw the son of Shine's friend and my brother standing near a person in a wheelchair and two other women who were talking.

One woman was crying and the other woman was a worker at the hotel. She was explaining something to the other woman. As I got closer to ask why they were taking so long, they explained to me that the woman crying was the mother of the girl in the wheelchair. At that point, I looked over and saw the girl in the wheelchair was crying. I was suddenly filled with a great deal of sadness, and when I heard the little girl say that she did not want to die, the sadness overflowed into a bit of anger. I remember asking if there was anything that we could do to help the mother and her child.

As it turned out, there was a way to help them. I decided the son of the friend and I were going to take turns carefully holding the girl on our back and shoulders as we headed towards the Superdome. At least, that was the plan.

The young man started first carrying her on his back down the stairs. However, when we got to where the water met the stairs, I took over. The good news is that we had made it to the ground level so the water was not a concern. As we walked out into the street, I remember hearing the girl sobbing and saying that she was scared. So, I started talking to her in hopes that would help calm her down in the situation. I asked her things, like her name and age, if she prayed, and had a boyfriend, things just to keep her talking and try to lift her spirits.

We had finally made to where we had left everyone, standing before going back to the hotel. And as we did it just so happened that a military truck that was taking people to the Superdome drove up. We let the mother and her daughter board the truck, and we said our farewells. And as the military truck drove off into the distance, I was, for a moment, full of joy; I had felt really good that I was able to not only help someone, but I was able to give them hope, in was pretty much a hopeless situation. In that moment, I felt kind of like a hero. That moment lasted until Shine said it was time to head out. And I picked up my two year old cousin from the steps on the building we were standing around, and placed her on my shoulders and prepared to walk the flooded streets toward the Superdome.

The Girls

Anonymous

Ruby says wouldn't it be kind of fun for a bunch of us to smoke some pot? Ruby is like that. She says whatever pops in her head. Greta says the last time she smoked pot she stuck her hand down some guy's pants. I hope she had hand sanitizer in her purse. Ruby remembers why she hasn't smoked pot in a long time. It made her paranoid. I don't share any pot smoking anecdotes. I just have one. I ask if we would drive around on gravel roads while we smoke pot? I always like to plan ahead. I'm not very spontaneous. Greta wonders where we could get some pot. My mother said she would like to try pot. But she was heavy smoker, I don't think she would get the concept of passing it around. I wouldn't really care for putting my mouth on someone else's spit. I'm thinking I had rather have a whiskey and Coke. Or a margarita. We might have some drinks but I don't think we will be smoking dope. It's against the law. I pretty much follow rules. I challenge rules I think are stupid, but I don't like to break the law. Well, I do speed a lot. But when I get stopped, I don't make a lame excuse. The last time I got stopped, I just admitted that I always drag ass around, and I was late for a meeting. No sense lying.

Ruby is always saying things that scare me shitless, like telling the waitress not to spit in our food. Whoever says stuff like that? Ruby does. She used to be a waitress. I'm glad she was never my waitress. She talks about sex a lot. She doesn't have sex much, though. If she did, she would tell us all about it. I think some things are private, and sex is definitely one of those things. If I was ever in a fight, I would want Ruby on my side. She would bite your ear off or bang your face on the ground. She would enjoy it, too. I have to calm her down all the time. She doesn't like it when people don't follow the

golden rule. She gets real mad. And she don't forget. I say don't care what people you don't care about do. My medication helps me with that.

Greta gets all worked up about stuff, too. She makes my chest hurt. And sometimes she gets me worked up. I try to breathe and let it go. Greta is real talented. She makes things. All kinds of things. She can play the piano, too. She plays real peppy, like Aunt Bea after she took the tonic. Greta has a gun. She would use it. If she didn't shoot you, I think she would pistol whip you.

We have this big election coming up. I keep saying, you only get one vote. Vote the way you want to and leave everyone else alone. And quit worrying about the next Supreme Court judge. Greta is afraid they will take her gun away. She also worries about Mexicans crossing the border. I don't get it. She loves Mexican food. And she wouldn't do any of the jobs they are doing. Ruby doesn't think we should have a woman president. She thinks it's wrong, because of the Bible.

I had this secretary who claimed I slapped her five times. She was a big girl. I can't believe she would let me slap her one time, let alone five. I finally wore her down with kindness. In her resignation letter she said she had anxiety stemming from an uncontrollable urge to choke me. Sometimes I worry that everyone has that urge. I'm afraid if we all get high or drunk, them ladies are going to beat me to death. I'm not saying I'm not crazy, too. But I'm a calm crazy. Greta thinks I need to get worked up about stuff more. She thinks I bury my head in the sand. I don't care what kind of crazy shit you do, just do it at home.

View Along Königsallee
Dr. James Shemwell





Kleiner Kohn & Langer Franz
Dr. James Shemwell

Romerberg Eastern Row
Dr. James Shemwell



Oberes Schloss of Siegen
Dr. James Shemwell



Product Placement

Dustin Kemper

If Bem had not disobeyed his mother and stayed up past his bedtime, he never would have seen his father die, and a lot of things might have been different.

The ratings for the conflict on Namara's World had never been high, and by the time TransCorp sent Bem's father there, the Galactic Eye coverage had fallen all the way to channel nine hundred forty-five, and even that only in the post-prime hours. The footage came back to Earth grainy, roughly-processed, and delayed anywhere from two to three galactic standard days. The jungle moon's environment played hell with electronics. Rain and mud splattered even the best lenses. The phosphorescent fungal forests painted everything in tones of blue and violet. It was like watching a war fought by the light of a sleazy SexSim booth.

Not that many people were watching. Most of the time, war-world broadcasts kept the same sponsors for years, decades even, but the corps tossed sponsorship of the Namara's World broadcast between them like a live hand grenade. Bem had never seen anything like it: he primespon changed four or five times a week, NutriMilk to VitaSip to Crunch and back again.

Bem, on the other hand, was a constant. He watched faithfully on his ancient PalmTab, concealed under a blanket in case his mother looked in, earbuds inserted to deaden the sound of shouting and gunfire in the neighborhood. The broadcasts from the war-worlds were not meant to comfort children, but in the carnage onscreen Bem found distraction from the hell of the slums around him.

He never expected to see his father on the broadcast. Even a third rate war-world like Namara's had over three mil combatants, and glimpsing one man out of that mass during a half-hour broadcast wasn't very likely. It was enough for Bem to see Namara's World itself. It made him feel closer, even if dad had forbidden him from watching.

The night it happened Bem had almost fallen asleep, his eyelids growing heavy as he watched a MilBiologist demonstrate the toxicity of the Namara's World fungi. A sudden smash cut jerked him awake.

A buzzcam wove through pillars of pulsing fungus, following above and behind a line of soldiers in sealed battlesuits. There, at the very end, Bem saw his dad. He knew it had to be him because of the huge LiveAd blazoned across the shoulders of his armor – the green and yellow logo of the Addis Ababa Chargers. Dad had let Bem choose that one from the AdvertAll brochures, and though his mother threw a fit, said the sports clubs

paid nil for sponsorship, dad had only smiled and said: *The boy can't keep me here, Amara. At least let me keep him there.* Bem's mother had never won an argument against that smile.

A pattern of other LiveAds quilted dad's black battlesuit, practical and impersonal. A cow with four udders smiled on the small of his back, the black pattern on its white side spelling the word *NutriMilk*. On the back of each articulated tricep plate veiled women lounged atop sleek Nakatomi speeders. On his left thigh a bottle constantly poured electric blue liquid into a glass. Dozens of others, twitching and lunging at the viewing audience. Similar LiveAds danced on the armor of the other soldiers, covering them in writhing digital blankets.

The buzzcam patched in to the communication network with a click, feeding it to the listeners at home.

"They're close," the lieutenant at the front said. A holostandard jutted from her shoulders, expanding into a shimmering banner advertising contraceptive nanobots.

"How many, LT?"

"Lots. Two pods at least, maybe three. They're moving fast." The buzzcam zoomed in, showing the lieutenant's haggard face and hollow eyes through her faceplate. Above her, across the brow of a naked holographic woman, silvery text shimmered into being. *Just in case: Mist.*

"Camo on," the lieutenant said. "Take cover. Tangiers formation, watch your displays. Don't plug each other."

Bem leaned forward in the bed, licking his dry lips as the soldiers fanned across the fungal jungle to assume covering positions. They triggered their reactive camo with a series of soft sighs. The soldiers and their armor shimmered and faded from sight, but the LiveAds remained visible. They were only for the eye of the buzzcams, anyway. The effect transformed the soldiers into vague golems of twitching advertisements.

Bem watched the hollow creature he knew to be his father. The ads of the veiled women danced on their speeders as dad crossed himself. Bem felt a worm of dread thrash in his stomach.

A shriek like a chainsaw gnawing titanium burst from between the fungal trunks. Behind it came the creatures. Bem had seen the inhabitants of Namara's World many times, including under harsh fluorescents in a dissection special. He knew they were tall, spider-crab things with long, fluted faces, clusters of tentacles for manipulation and

feeding, rending claws and projectile weapons. They had a complex written language, found on tablets of carved graphite.

In that moment, watching the creatures swarm over his father, he forgot everything he knew about them. They became monsters, bogeyman, all the horrors of his youth.

The buzzcam dipped and darted as lasers, flamebolts, and projectile rounds whined through the air. Glowing toadstools dripped luminous goo from their bullet wounds. Massive branching fungi like stinkhorns burst into towers of violet flame. Fruiting bodies erupted, thickening the air into mist.

One of the soldiers shrieked: "They see through it! *They see through it.*"

Drawn by the sounds of battle, flocks of buzzcams swooped in, sharing and splicing feeds in real time to capture the carnage. Men and crabs died, their bodies shredded and boiled. Bem pressed his nose against the PalmTab, speechless with horror. The soldiers dropped camo to avoid friendly fire, but even then he couldn't find his father in the swirling chaos. All was a tangle of shrieking bodies and crashing fungus. Green and red blood splattered the undergrowth.

A sudden snap-cut to the aftermath of the battle. The buzzcams swept in low for dramatic shots, slow-panning over the carnage, and Bem saw his dad again. He lay back on a bed of smoldering fungus, smoke rising from his shattered armor, his cracked helmet discarded next to him. He was breathing in toxic spores that would kill him in minutes, but one look at the wreck of his body and Bem knew he wouldn't even last that long. Knew that dad, who had hoisted Bem onto his big shoulders and raced through the streets with him and carried him down the hall to tuck into bed, dad who dreamed big and talked about how they'd all leave the slums one day, dad the pillar, the living god, was only a man after all, a small and fragile thing, broken and dying before his eyes.

The mist of the fruiting bodies hung thick, obscuring dad's face, but he tried to speak. The buzzcam dipped lower, until dad's face hung in profile, lips barely visible above the rim of his armor.

"Bem." He gasped. "Bem. Remember-"

The audio stopped, replaced by dead air, the hum of white noise. Dad's lips still moved, but Bem could not read them through the veil of spores. The audio cut back in just as dad gave a wet, gurgling gasp. Blood sprayed the camera lens, blotting him out in a tide of crimson. The footage cut away to a distant vac-sealed outpost, where three women in fatigues ran through calisthenics.

Bem realized he'd been holding his breath and gasped. It hurt like raking loose gravel into his lungs. He held his breath for a moment, trembling, tears spilling from his eyes, and then the grief burst from him in a scream loud enough to rattle the thin tin walls.

#

Bem's mother didn't believe him, even after he'd downloaded the footage and played it for her. Maybe it was some other man, she said. Maybe you think you heard your name and you didn't. They haven't told us. You can't know. He saw from the sick sheen in her eyes that she didn't believe her own words, but he didn't fight her. When the official e-message arrived the next day, that made it real, irrevocable, and Bem had never been more sorry to be proven right.

While his mother and his sisters sobbed, hands joined at the splintery kitchen table, Bem sat on his bed, clearing away his constant flow of tears with angry swipes of his thumbs, watching the end of the recording over and over. Always his name, his father's broken body, and the infuriating white noise. He zoomed the footage in as far as he could, tried to read in the agonized motion of his father's lips the last message. It was useless: the footage was too grainy, the mist too thick. He tried and failed for hours, watching his father's face swallowed again and again in gouts of blood.

The next week, sleepless and tormented, Bem emptied out the small savings account his father had opened when he was born, a pitiful thing that had scarcely grown in twelve years, and ordered an official copy of the footage from the Galactic Eye. It looked a little sharper than the copy he'd pulled for himself, but this time the scene with his father was cut entirely, replaced by a cartoon hotdog warning troops about venereal disease.

It was not an accident. Bem's father had been a writer, before mother's injury had forced her out of work and driven the family to the slums. He had criticized augmented reality, penning a very controversial thesis on the growing monopoly of AdvertAll, SimAds, and ShowBizz. He must have spoken out against them, said something they found offensive enough to stifle.

His father's last words had not been lost, Bem knew. They had been taken.

#

Bem spent almost ten years washing dishes by day and fixing skimmers by night before he saved enough attend telecollege. Tens of thousands of dollars later, he was left with a degree that AdvertAll wouldn't accept. He hired on at ailing ShowBizz, which was

bleeding sponsors left and right, hoping that he could climb quickly, transfer to AdvertAll and get access to its sealed archives.

He had acquaintances, never friends. There were women, some serious, most not. They complained Bem never let them in. They were right. He never let anyone in. When he attended his mother's funeral, his sisters looked at him with poisoned, accusing eyes, and he had no words to explain his frequent absences. They could not understand. Dad hadn't spoken to them, after all.

For Bem there was the work, the task, the words. He had time for nothing else.

It took five years before AdvertAll bought out ShowBizz. SimAds had folded over a decade before. Now there was only AdvertAll, and the soft whines about the importance of competition quickly dwindled to nothing, as they always did. The monopoly welcomed Bem with open arms. He waited, and worked, and saved.

#

The restaurant was cathedral-quiet. A handful of late-afternoon diners picked listlessly at their food, most of them eating alone. An automated belt wound through the building's interior, laden with sweating plates of sushi, borscht, fried chicken. Bem grabbed one without looking and made his way to the booths at the back.

Bem had expected a chromed-up horror in mirrorshades, but the hacker wouldn't have looked out of place in his own office. He was gangly and pimply, pale in a nice, dark suit. He was all sharp angles.

"No names," the man said as Bem dropped into the seat across from him, as if he had expected Bem to treat him like a client.

Bem peeled his tongue from the roof of his dry mouth. "You have it?"

The hacker set a slim metal cylinder on the table, rolled it back and forth.

"Listen," the man said. As his jaw moved, Bem saw the seams that ran alongside his ears. An expensive ChangeFace - you didn't even notice the projection unless you were looking for it. "You'll meet a lot of hackers in this town'll tell you whatever you want to hear. I ain't one of those. It's not in my interest to lie about my product."

He tumbled the cylinder toward Bem with a flick of his index finger.

"Best be clear, my man. This ain't no magic wand. You ain't gonna sit across the road pissing in the bushes and pull data from AdvertAll. You gotta hook it up to the internal

network. And it ain't gonna cover your tracks either. They're gonna know when it happened, how it happened, and where it happened. It ain't far from there to you. So if you use this, you best have a hidey hole waiting on you unless you want to be fitted for a pair of bracelets."

Sheets of flame beat against Bem's face. He stared at the cylinder on the table as if it were a cyanide capsule. Which, in some sense, he supposed it was.

"I paid you over forty thousand dollars for this," Bem said. He wished his voice did not quiver. "And you're telling me I'm going to get caught if I use it?"

The hacker shrugged, an exaggerated motion that brought his knobby shoulders nearly to his ears.

"You get what you pay for, my man. No more, no less. You wanna drop four times the cash, I can kludge up a routine that'll backdate the time of intrusion and delete the security cam footage. Ten times that, and I could make you a digital ghost. But I'm guessing you ain't got that kind of money, and this is what your money gets. Take it or leave it."

"Take it or leave it?"

Bem's hands curled into fists. He thought of smashing them through the hacker's faceplate into the soft skin beneath, did nothing.

The pale man snorted. "It takes a certain type of man to find me. You want your answers. This will get them for you. I think you're willing to pay the price. Now am I right, or am I right?"

Bem swept the cylinder off the table and into his jacket pocket.

"That's what I thought." The hacker stood, flexing his shoulders and rolling his spindly neck as if he'd just finished an intense workout. "Now do me a favor, and if the pigs come asking where you got your toy, forget you ever met me. They won't find me anyway, but I'd really appreciate being spared the hassle. I was kind enough to warn you."

#

"Remember," Bem said, leaning back in his chair. "None of these decisions are final, Mr. Anders. You still have the next three weeks to revise them. Right up until the time of deployment."

“It’s a little overwhelming,” Anders said from the display screen. He was a thin man, freckled, his pale face lost beneath a shock of wispy red hair. Not exactly prime warrior stock, and his ad rates reflected that. “So the ads pay no matter what?”

“Yes, Mr. Anders. In addition to your enlistment fee, you can expect a regular bonus for the ads, provided your suit’s diagnostics confirm you have been displaying them on all augmented reality channels. That’s AdvertAll’s promise to you. You may draw better rates if your broadcast airs on the Galactic Eye.” Bem glanced down at his desk where his hands rested, checking the numerals that pulsed on the nail of his index finger. 4:53. Almost time.

“So what rates do I get?” Anders pressed.

“That’s dependent on a number of factors, Mr. Anders. The war-world on which you’re serving, your performance in battle, external aesthetics. Several of our member companies offer bonuses for speaking their slogan at specified moments: victories, particularly impressive kills, so on. If you look at our brochures, you may get an idea of the possibilities. Of course, behavior deemed a detriment to the brand could result in withdrawal of sponsorship...”

By the time Bem got Anders squared away, it was twenty till six and even the die-hards were trickling out of the office. Bem waited, sweating, turning down offers to go out for drinks or dancing, drumming his fingers on the edge of his desk. Inside him gears were grinding, steam building up without release. Screams clustered in the back of his mouth, threatening to dart free every time he spoke. Finally, feeling like a character in a spy vid, he retreated to one of the bathrooms and waited in a stall till the building went silent.

Bem emerged to find himself alone, the silence broken only by the idle hums of the servers and computers. Outside, a summer night settled over the Corridor. Bem stood by the window, steeling himself. In the distance he could see the pinprick lights where the slums where he’d grown up blended with Atlanta, became part of a corridor stretching all the way to Boston. From this distance all the lights looked the same, and he couldn’t see the rag-stuffed windows or hear the shrieks that passed through corrugated tin walls like they weren’t even there.

Dad had sworn he would get them out of the slums, and in twenty years of trying, Bem had managed to make it all of ten miles away. Only ten miles, but a universe apart. He had an apartment, a life that was comfortable. Sometimes he could forget how much he used to loathe AdvertAll, and that scared him most of all. He was afraid he would wake one day to discover that he hated himself. He was afraid that his father’s lost words would condemn the man he had become.

You're wasting time. He had a half hour before the night shift of janitors came in. He wouldn't get a better opportunity.

Bem fumbled in his briefcase until his fingers closed on the cool, oblong length of the cylinder.

#

It took the program in the cracker almost fifteen minutes to find the data and dump it to a drive. Namara's World had been a cooling ball of ash for nearly twenty years, but the records were still buried deep in AdvertAll's datavaults in case some advertising wunderkind should ever need to unearth and study them in the future.

Every second was an agony. Bem imagined the data as a living thing, a silver bird winging its way across space toward him. Maybe it was getting pulled all the way from the data complexes on Ceres, or even through the hyperwave receiver near Saturn. For all he knew, his bloody fingerprints streaked halfway across the galaxy.

When the cracker finished, Bem almost collapsed. Having the truth in his hands after years of searching was, more than anything, exhausting. Some internal muscle, clenched and trembling for years, had finally relaxed. His brain drowned in relief.

Bem wouldn't insult dad's memory by watching him die in this horrible office. He rode the elevator down to the fifth floor, smiled winningly at the security staff while mumbling about a late client, and took a maglev back home.

He wandered his small apartment as if he'd never entered it before, touching modular furniture and fake houseplants in a daze. All the detritus of his life surrounded him, and it was a pathetic thing to see – a few books, some rice-sized data drives, old photos and holos. The sum total of his existence could fit in a meter-square box, and when AdvertAll came for him, he'd lose even that.

That didn't matter. They could fine him, jail him, even kill him, but they couldn't take his father's last words. Not now.

Bem opened his father's AdvertAll file and queued up the Galactic Eye broadcast. It was the first time he'd seen it in its entirety since he was twelve, and as the images unspooled before his eyes he felt himself growing younger, years of calluses falling away to reveal a tender, pulsing core that had never grown up. He had denied himself so much, dreamed of this moment for so long. The old hurt bled inside him, fresh as that first night.

Onscreen men and crabs died. A vise tightened around Bem's chest, and then dad was there, dying in the undergrowth, dying and younger now than the man who watched him. His lips moved, and he spoke, and the sound did not fade.

Bem heard every word.

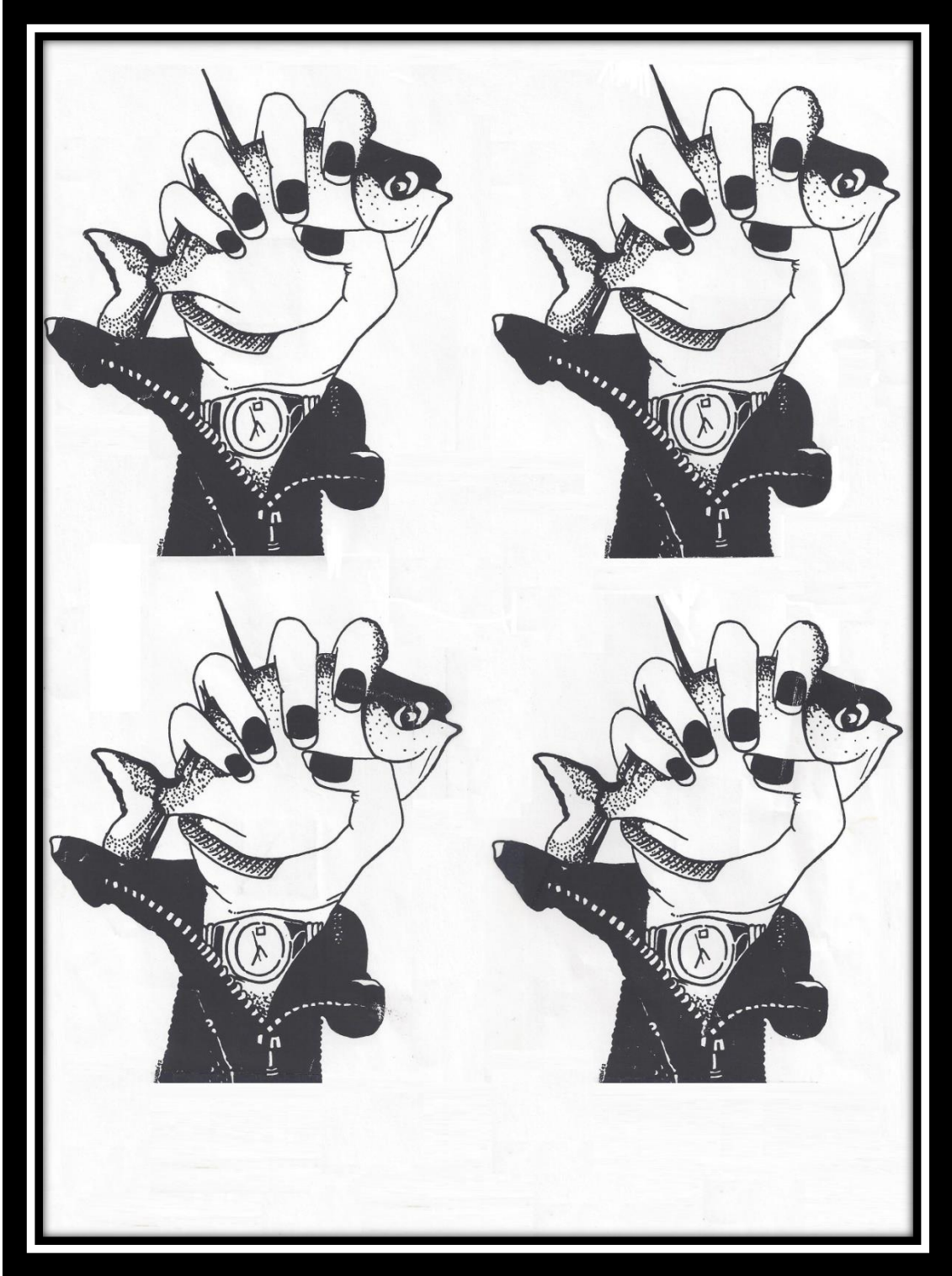
"The sponsors changed every night," he whispered. He began to sob, and then to laugh, and then to scream, and maybe the neighbors called the cops or maybe AdvertAll's security was that good, but either way Bem had only been screaming and breaking things for about ten minutes when they kicked the door down.

Cops in riot gear dragged him through the narrow doorway and down the hall. In the slums, nothing made people retreat into their shells faster than a police raid, but here it was a novelty. Apartment doors opened. People craned their heads to see the commotion. Bem felt a sudden rush of heat in his cheeks, a strange and sick pleasure at being the star. Perverse showmanship kicked in: he thrashed and shouted furious slogans at his viewing audience as the cops pulled him into the stairwell.

"Hope you enjoy the show!" He howled, drumming his feet against the stairs. "Mist: Just in case! Say it all with AdvertAll!"

But most of all, he repeated his father's last words, screaming them as the cops dragged him across the echoing atrium of his apartment building and into the waiting skimmer. He shouted them until his throat was raw and burning, even though he hadn't signed a mortality clause with AdvertAll like his father. Even though he had nothing to gain at all.

"Remember," he shrieked. He pounded his forehead against the reinforced glass windows of the police skimmer. Unlike his father, there was no competing sponsor to silence him. "Remember that *NutriMilk builds a perfect body.*"



Ghoti
Lance Morris

Stay, If Only for a Day

Tachmonite Butler

I wish I were a master of words
Then instead of clichés, I could explain
With unique metaphors and similes
What I think of you, instead of letting you walk by

Then you're gone, and I think I'll be just fine
Until I start to think about the color of your eyes

I am not sure what I want to say
But, I know it's not "I need you every day."
Because that's not specific enough, it's obsessive and needy.
I don't want you to see me like that,
All I want is for you to stay, if only for a day

I wonder if you know how attractive you are
Though beauty can be found nearby and far away
Yours is different, in a way that my adjectives can't explain
For they only lie, to hide its ignorance of what should be said

Then you're gone, and I am all right
Until I think that, I heard the sound of your voice

I as I sit here, I wish I could hear you call my name

If only once, and even if you're enraged.

Sitting her next to you is torture with a sweet peach scent

But with nothing worthy to say, I sigh and

Wish that you can stay, if only for a day

As moments pass

I wonder if it's ok to cry, I mean

It's not like it is the end of the world;

Yet, it feels as if though I've been burned.

Conflicted, by my wanting you here

Confused, by my willingness to let you go

I still don't understand the way I feel, since

I don't even know your name

I wonder if I ever find the nerve or words

To speak with you and pass time

And I could compliment the way you look

Without using phrases you have heard

So that maybe you will stay, if only for a day



Pappy's Heart
Layne Rayder

Seeing the *Gurdon* Light

Phillip Cameron Klein

The dark night hung about the quiet southern highway. With the windows down the lonely song of the gentle breeze pushed into the small green Karmann ghia. I felt free—free of responsibility, of stress, of all the shit that accompanies life. I looked over at Carla and saw the glowing embers of the tightly rolled joint alight her pursed lips and gradually fade into the soft features of her face. Her black hair was dancing with the wind like a gypsy dances with the devil. After a few long tokes, she handed me the small cigarette. I took a long, deep hit, held the sticky smoke in my lungs, and exhaled gently, trying to hold back the cough. That feeling rushed over me again—like the tissues of my body were suddenly transformed from muscle to marshmallow. It was finally a good day.

“Oh shit,” I came to a crossroads and felt suddenly lost. “I have no idea where we are.” I looked at Carla. Her look confirmed my suspicion that she was as clueless as I was.

“Don’t look at me,” she said slowly, “you’re driving. That’s why I hate to drive, I always get lost,” she looked around as I slowed the car. “Pull over there, by that light; I’ve got a map here somewhere.”

I did as she said. I pulled into the gravel parking lot of some small closed market. The sign over the door said “Oak Grove Gro.” In faded white letters, and suggested something more popular twenty years ago, when this was the main road. Since the expressway was built, a thousand stores like this one just wasted away on the side of a lonely road. “I guess we’re in Oak Grove,” I said as Carla examined the map. “Turner told me if I got on 67 when I left Arkadelphia, I’d take the first left and I be at his house.”

“I guess Turner’s as baked as you, Tom. Looks like he forgot about this one.” She looked up at me. I was always astonished that she could be so radiant in the dark of night. My very own dark angel. “Just keep going down that way,” she said pointing and leaned back in her seat.

The crunching gravel sound was steadily replaced by the hum of tires on blacktop. The little German engine ticked faster and faster as we gained speed. Then suddenly, a large black creature darted across the road. I swerved. The Firestones tasted the gravel of the shoulder, and I pushed the brake pedal through the floor. “What was that?” I looked hard in the direction it fled.

“I, I think it was a dog,” Carla answered quickly as she peered into the darkness. She continued through gasping breaths, “It was big, though. And it came out of nowhere. Did you see its eyes?”

“Yeah. I thought I was going to nail it.” I ran my hands through my hair, “Okay, I’m ready now.” I took a couple of deep breaths and pulled back onto the highway. “I

hope Turner's still up. I'd hate to go through all this shit and then not get to see this stupid 'ghost'."

My friend Turner first told me about the Gurdon Light about a year before. He was nearly as rational minded as I was, in my youth, so when he told me about a "ghost" that haunted the swamps of Gurdon, Arkansas, I knew it must be a joke. I never believed it existed, until I decided to make a detour on my way to Dallas one chilly summer night. I had wanted to see him anyway, so I decided to take him up on his offer to show me this mysterious phenomenon.

That Thursday had been one disaster after another, though. First, the bags could not be found anywhere. I knew I had put them in the closet, but they were somehow moved. I knew there must have been some logical explanation—I probably moved them in some spontaneous burst of spring-cleaning, but I couldn't remember. Then, as I was fishing my keys from under the fridge, I dropped my glass of water and cut my foot open. I was still tending it when Carla pulled into my driveway.

She walked in to find me, amidst clothes scattered about my floor, trying to bandage my foot with a blood soaked rag. She kept me together. A lot of people assumed we were lovers, because we spent more time together than apart, but our relationship was merely one of good friends. There had been times when there might have been some hint of romantic inclination, but both of us knew we were better as friends than as anything else. Now, she helped me reconcile the shambles I had created. She doctored my foot and as I got my shoes on, she cleaned up the broken glass and fished out my keys. I found the old leather bag my dad gave me under my bed along with my shoes. We packed the bag together, collecting various items from around the apartment.

"Where is your deodorant? I'm not going to go anywhere with you if you don't bring it."

"It's in the bathroom, I guess," I got up to get it and again felt the sharp pain the shard had inflicted. "I guess you want me to get my toothbrush, too, huh?" I said loudly to her in the other room.

"I don't care. They're your teeth, and I'm not going to be kissing you." She walked into the doorway smiling.

"I'll bring it just in case you get the urge."

When we finally got all my crap packed into the small back seat of her car, we headed on our way. I told Turner not to expect us too early, because Carla had to get a transcript sent from Henderson. We planned to stop in Arkadelphia for dinner, after we got her stuff done. Unfortunately, I had made us so late the transcript office was already closed when we got there. As we were leaving we ran into Ms. Denny, my old boss. I knew her at a distance with her vibrant white hair, fixed in a waved style that was popular in the early eighties. She was still the director of the student union despite the massive

changes the university had undergone. We talked for a few minutes, but gracefully dismissed ourselves, to get back on the road.

We were both starving. We stopped at the Mazzio's that used to be, but it was closed, so we settled for the new Burger King by the interstate. It was, of course, busy. Thursday night was little league night and every eight year old in southern Arkansas was at this small restaurant. By the time we got our messy burgers, it was already getting dark.

From the way the day was going, I almost wasn't surprised to find our left front tire flat. I had run over a nail either in the road or there, in the parking lot. I could see the small flat head looking at me with a crumpled grin. In the trunk, the spare was flat too, of course, so I took the wheel off and stood. I knew a guy who had had a tire repair shop on the other side of town years before, but I guess it had been too long because when I asked about it no one knew of it except for a tall man in the back of the room. He said he overheard me and knew whom I was talking about, but that Green's Tire had "gone to Kansas." I assumed he was talking about the big tornado that ripped through the town a few years before.

We talked for a minute and he went outside to look at my car. His grease stained hands and soiled gray uniform led me to assume that he was a man in the know. "Think I got a plug at the house," he looked at the offending nail. "Wait here, it's just round there," and he pointed indiscriminately down the road, got in his worn F-150, and drove away. I stood and looked at Carla. "What the hell was that?" I didn't know if he was going to help us, or what. Carla's tired shrug told me that she didn't either. We waited. We drank coffee and watched the crowd thin out. About an hour and a half later, Bruce (the name embroidered in the red and white patch on his chest) pulled back into the parking lot.

"Old lady's pitchin' a fit. Says, 'Why the hell you goin' back? Ain't you got enough shit to take care of here?' So I stood there and didn't say a damn word," he smiled. "I got out the back when the little one started bawling and Annie had to give up her bitching." He walked to the bed and lifted out a little 12-volt pump and pulled a plug kit from his darkened hip pocket. After a little magic with a pair of pliers and a licorice-stick looking plug, the steady putting of the little pump had us ready for the road a little before eleven that evening.

It probably didn't help that before we left town I pulled into the parking lot of a local park and rolled a couple of smooth joints from some choice bud I had purchased for the trip. The first hit was like a molting of hindrance, and, by the time it was roached, the night looked a lot clearer. I found myself enjoying the bean fields that flanked the highway, the long caterpillar-like irrigation machines, silos, and various sentinel farm machines despite the complications of the day. I was enjoying them so much I didn't realize that I was flying down the road at a paltry thirty-five miles per hour, until a rusted Ford pickup flew by hanging offensive gestures out the window. This wasn't getting us to Gurdon any faster.

“Do you believe in ghosts?” I asked Carla. I had suggested the journey without much consideration for what she thought. What if she was scared shitless about the dead?

“I don’t know. Sometimes I start thinking that they must be real, ‘cause I’ve seen so much freaky shit. Remember when we were all trippin’ and Tank conjured up that spirit?”

“We were all tripping. Sure we all saw shit, but that’s not what I’m talking about. I mean, some people get all freaked out about fucking with the dead. Like God is going to strike them dead for using a Ouija board or kicking over a gravestone. Do you think they get pissed about that kind of stuff? Do you think they can hurt you?”

“I don’t think so,” she turned and looked out the window. She didn’t say anything else for a while as we drove; she just looked blankly out the window, letting her loose silken hair be tossed around.

Finally, we pulled the little green car into Gurdon. It was nearly midnight; the streets were empty except a stray cat that navigated between, and in front of, the strand of similar two story buildings. I drove slowly through town, looking for the landmarks Turner had pointed out to find his house. We passed several small stores—Ferrel’s Hardware, City Drug, Family Cleaner’s—family operations that only exist in inconsequential rural outcroppings like this. We rolled bumpily over the tracks, found the tattered white picket fence, yellow house and gray van. Turner’s house. I walked up to the door, anxious about being stoned and knocking on the door after midnight, I kicked over an empty coffee can, setting off the redneck alarm. Last I knew he lived with his parents, and I didn’t want to talk to them as high as I was. As I lifted my hand to knock on the glass part of the door, I noticed the note scotch taped over a long crack in the window. I read it and went back to the car, again kicking the stupid can.

Carla had the door opened and was sitting only half in, I heard her gently laugh at my clumsiness. She was smoking a cigarette. “Wasn’t home, was he?”

“No. But he gave us directions. I guess he’s off getting laid somewhere. He says he’s sorry.” I held the note up to the pale blue streetlight to read it once more. “Damn it’s dark. I can’t see shit.” I slipped the note into my pocket and got into the car, “He says if we turn up there, we just drive till we get to the tracks.”

Carla climbed in, and we started moving again. I drove slowly, for there was a heavy fog that seemed to get thicker as we moved along. Carla tossed the butt of her Camel Light out the window. I watched through the rear view as it disappeared into the mist. “I didn’t even see it hit the ground.”

“It’s eerie. What’d he tell you about this place?” Carla rolled up her window. She crossed her arms and shivered. “It’s cold here,” she reached in the back and started digging around emerging with an old “Alma University” sweatshirt I’d found in the laundry. It *was* cold outside, too cold for it to be July in southern Arkansas. I fumbled

with the heater controls to generate some heat. If I had been a superstitious person, I'd have aborted this adventure. Too many things had gone wrong. It seemed that something was warning us—trying to stall us or keep us away.

“He said about twenty years ago a man—a hobo, I guess—was walking along the tracks with a lantern. It was a foggy night, like this, I suppose, and from the mist a train came bulleting at him. He got his foot caught in between the ties and he couldn't escape. In a panic he flung the lantern at the train as though it would somehow stop it, but of course it didn't.” I looked at her shivering, “That's what he said. That now his lantern floats around the swamp, warning people of the “ghost train” that killed him.”

“How'd you remember all that shit?”

“I'm a writer, remember? I can't forget a good story.”

The x-topped poles in the headlight's glare signified that we had made it to the tracks. I pulled onto the gravel shoulder and cut the engine. The darkness was amplified by the fog and chill. A shiver ran up my spine. “I guess we're here,” I looked at Carla and her green eyes caught the light of the instrument panel.

“Well, let's go,” she opened the door and got out. She fished out another smoke from her purse. The flame lit her face briefly, was pulled into the cigarette then went out.

I pulled my own box of Camels out of the console. “Toss me that light. I can't find mine.” She shut the door and handed me the lighter. “I guess we walk up the tracks and look on either side. The instructions weren't clear.”

We started walking. Carla twisted her fingers around mine, and I was glad. I pulled her closer to me as we walked. I wasn't scared, but anxious. I should have been scared.

We walked about a hundred yards, and Carla stopped, “Did you hear that? I heard something over there,” she pointed to the left of us.

“It's probably just some animal.” I looked anyway, searching the darkness. Then I saw it. There was a faint bluish-green light suspended between the trees. It bobbed like a tied balloon at first, illuminating only a small area around itself. “Do you see that?”

Carla saw it too, “Shit, that's beautiful. Do you see the halo around it?” Our eyes were fixed on the strange object when it began to move and pulsate.

It moved in and out of the small trees. Back and forth it floated. The pulsations were like heartbeats—rhythmically throbbing. It would fade, at times, to the point that I thought it would extinguish, then—BAM—it would look like an explosion. In its direction we could hear twigs breaking, and leaves crumble. Suddenly, it began to pulsate frantically, to dart back and forth. It came up to the edge of the woods, where the gravel began to incline to the tracks, and then shot back into them.

“What was that?” Carla jumped back startled. She put her other arm around me and dropped what was left of her cigarette. “I think it knows we’re here. It came right up to us.”

“Yeah,” I was trying to be rational but it was beginning to scare me too. “I’ve read about swamp gas that sometimes glows on foggy nights,” I cleared my throat and tried to sound reassuring. “That’s probably what it is.”

At that moment, an intense rumbling came from the mist. The tracks shook and the small rocks seemed to dance in some ritual celebration. The deadness and heaviness that the scene took on paralyzed us. We stood on the tracks, waiting for whatever was coming, to come. The light in the shadows shot from the side of the railway in the direction of the coming noise.

“It’s a train! Run!” I pulled her hand and tried to clear the embankment as the dark silhouette of the massive machine pursued us. I had a hard time getting Carla to move. I thought of the hobo’s foot, caught between the ties and pulled harder. “Come on!”

She turned her head toward me and I saw the flash of utter amazement in her cold jade eyes. We dove down the small slope, crashing through the weeds and rocks. I could feel them bite into my flesh and sting.

I stood up. The train was still rumbling past above us. It was so loud it took my breath straight out of my chest. Sparks flew from the metal wheels, falling as minute stars which were flung from the heavens. I looked around me, suddenly aware of where I was. Carla was lying next to me, but her long black hair covered her face. I looked down and noticed the contrast between the darkness of her hair, and the pale rocks she lay upon. I knelt beside her, “Carla, are you okay? Hey. Talk to me.” But there was no response. I grabbed her shoulders and pulled her into my lap. When I moved her I noticed that part of what I thought was hair on the rocks, stayed there. I knew what that was. I moved the hair from her face and found a growing dark spot just above her eyes.

I touched the spot and felt the fold of skin move to reveal an open wound. I tore my t-shirt off and pressed it against her head. With my other hand, I felt the front of her neck for a pulse. I couldn’t find one. I bent over her and listened. Breathing? Breathing, yes! She was not dead. I tied the shirt as tight as I could to stop the bleeding and picked her up.

I carried her back to the car when the train had finally passed. I was blasted back into reality and knew I had to do something. I put her into the car and drove, as fast as the little German car would go, back to Arkadelphia, where I knew there was a hospital.

Later, after he had gotten her all stitched up, we explained to the doctor what had happened. He was tall man, about thirty-five, with a shaved head, small round glasses, and a stethoscope around his neck. We told him everything, mostly. A dark shorthaired orderly was listening and interrupted.

“Didn’t you know it’s a bad night to go there?” she stepped closer and took her hands out of the pockets of her blue scrubs to add emphasis to her words. “Tonight is the anniversary of that man’s death. He was killed there,” pointing to some indistinct place, “exactly twenty-five years ago, tonight. They say he gets angriest on the anniversary. Ya’ll are lucky you didn’t get killed.” With that, she took the chart from the doctor, and left.

“I don’t know how you almost got run over by a train,” the doctor said, watching her leave, “those tracks haven’t been used for the last ten years. I don’t know what you saw, but it couldn’t have been a train.”

I think I had a pretty good idea what I saw. The Gurdon light illuminated more than just that foggy patch of woods. It lit a torch in me that would never be extinguished. It raised questions that I’d never be able to answer. And, it made me fall in love.

Leave Your Mark
James Hartley



Race and Identity in America

Deanita A. Hicks

What does it mean to be an American? What is American identity? Are some people more “American” than others? We may not all agree on the answers to these and related questions, but surely we can see that the concept of race and the biological fact of skin color play into the determination of what an American is or is not for many people. As a socially constructed category, race has had and now has many uses in American culture. It can be used to categorize and to exclude people, and it can help to form an individual or a group’s identity in both positive and negative ways. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W. E. B. DuBois tells readers that in his book lies an explanation of “the strange meaning of being black” in America, and he also accurately predicts that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.”¹ “Race” has indeed been an enduring factor in determining a number of key aspects of life in America from the time of slavery to today.

First, many historians and other scholars point out that race in the annals of human history is a “recent concept,” and that race and the ideologies surrounding it did not even exist prior to the 1600s.² Race is, in fact, a “cultural invention,” which evolved as the “dominant form of identity” in societies which used race to create the various levels of their social systems.³ Audrey Smedley argues that we need to look much deeper into “the reality of ‘race’ as identity in our society.” As are others, Smedley is concerned with the consequences of race as a primary way to identify humans. In her study, “

¹ W. E. B. DuBois. *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2003) 3.

² Audrey Smedley. “ ‘Race’ and the Construction of Human Identity.” *American Anthropologist* 100, no. 3 (Sept. 1998) : 690.

³ *Ibid.*

‘Race’ and the Construction of Human Identity,” she outlines in detail the various ways in which ancient peoples created their identities, and race was generally not a factor. She adds that in ancient times, peoples of varying cultures lived together mostly without undue strife, and that couples from different ethnic groups often intermarried for political and economic reasons.⁴

Many scholars point to the fact that race as a way to identify people came into being as a result of the Atlantic slave trade. Linda Gordon writes that “In the United States ‘race’ ” came into existence “in the context of slavery,” especially as a result of the wish of slave owners to keep as many of their slaves as they could by embracing the notion that “race” was a “matter primarily of *ancestry*, focused on blacks and whites.” Of course, by law, “even a ‘drop’ of black ‘blood’ ” made one black, and therefore, still a slave.⁵ Grace Elizabeth Hale also notes that before the 1800s, identifying people by race “was not an overarching or absolute category.”⁶ She adds that “Slavery . . . founded and fixed the meaning of blackness more than any transparent and transitional meaning of black skin founded the category of slavery.”⁷ “Whiteness” became much more significant as whites proclaimed a “new collectivity, the Confederacy” Emancipation, Hale says, called into question the meaning of citizenship in the absence of slavery, which had drawn distinct lines between the places of black people and white people.⁸

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Linda Gordon. *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999). 98.

⁶⁶ Grace Elizabeth Hale. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999). 4.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 5.

Noel Ignatiev, in his study of how the Irish “became” white, quotes Theodore Allen’s *The Invention of the White Race* to explain the concept of race construction in America. Allen says, that in 1619, at the first arrival of Africans in Virginia, no “white” people existed, and they would not for at least 60 more years.⁹ But, as Ignatiev argues, “The abolition of slavery called into question the existence of the white race as a social formation”¹⁰ According to Ignatiev, “America was well set up to teach” immigrants how important it was to have white skin.¹¹ Perhaps most telling of all, though, Ignatiev characterizes white supremacy in America not as “a flaw in American democracy but part of its definition”¹² Concurring with many other historians and scholars, Ignatiev argues that it is easy to conclude that the only reason humans are seen as members of “different races” is “because they have been assigned to them.”¹³ Hale notes that the “making of white racial identity, made its opposite, blackness” too.¹⁴ White “thinking” was inundated with essentialist concepts of race, partitioning people into “black and white” worlds.¹⁵ By the beginning of the 1900s, Hale points out, whites in America were “constructing modern racial identity. . . .”¹⁶ Race was the “crucial means” of making sense out of the newly expanded “meaning of America.”¹⁷ Consequently, segregation became “ ‘the problem of the color line,’ ” W. E. B. Dubois’ well-known “metaphor as well as policy of modern American life.”¹⁸ Even though we have made much progress

⁹ Noel Ignatiev. *How the Irish Became White*. (New York: Routledge, 1995). 215.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* , 130.

¹¹ *Ibid.* , 111.

¹² *Ibid.* , 79.

¹³ *Ibid.* , 1.

¹⁴ Hale., 30.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* , 22.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* , 8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* , 7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

in matters dealing with our attitudes about skin color, it is easy to see that not everyone necessarily feels like a full member of American society. This became abundantly clear in the wake of the September 11, attacks on America by foreign terrorists in 2001.

Although many Americans, especially white Americans, saw this tragedy as a time of bonding with each other as Americans, research shows that not all Americans saw the same thing or felt the same way about the attacks, and apparently, this had much to do with how people view America, its promise of freedom and equality for all, and the reality of freedom and equality for all.

Immediately after the initial impact of the 9/11 attacks began to sink in, Americans saw a huge outpouring of support and sympathy from around the world; after all, it was not just Americans who were killed and injured in the attacks. All over the media, Americans watched as Congress stood on the Capitol steps and sang “God Bless America,” hugging and crying as they talked about dropping partisanship and unifying because of their love and concern for America. We saw American flags waving all over, including at houses where they had never flown before. Church services across the country emphasized our great loss of life during the attacks. “[T]he prevailing opinion was that . . . Americans were forming a unified front against what was presented as a very visible and deviant enemy, personified by Osama bin Laden. The message . . . was that the solidarity arising from the attacks . . . transcended any previous racial or ethnic divisions” in America.¹⁹ Harlow and Dundes argue in “ ‘United We Stand:’ Responses to the September 11 Attacks in Black and White,” that since we can see the same event

¹⁹ Roxanna Harlow and Lauren Dundes. “ ‘United We Stand:’ Responses to the September 11 Attacks in Black and White.” *Sociological Perspectives* 47, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 439.

differently , responses to 9/11 showed that “racial tensions may persist,” even in times like the 9/11 tragedy, when we might expect all “races” to come together in national unity.²⁰

When Harlow and Dundes asked both black and white students about their responses to the show of unity and patriotism after the attacks, they got very different answers from black and white students. One white student’s answer, typified the responses of most white students by claiming “ ‘We’re all sharing the same pain. [It] showed me how close the United States was, how interconnected we were.’ ” However, the typical response of many black students when asked about unity and patriotism following the attacks, is illustrated in the response of Angela, a black student: “ ‘Why should we feel patriotic? For what? This is not our America, by no means. It’s not ours. We still fight for the rights to vote [The country is] not united. At all.’ ”²¹ Harlow and Dundes separated students into discussion groups of black and white students to ensure that each group could talk openly and honestly about their reactions to the patriotism and unity that many Americans felt the country showed after the attacks.

The authors of the study also cite the findings of Feagin and Sikes who studied middle-class African Americans. They argued that constant exposure to “racism will inevitably shape one’s worldview.” So blacks often operate from a different “paradigm” than that of whites, especially when it comes down to the areas of race and discrimination

²² Historically, “American” has meant “white.” The country was “built on an ideology

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid. , 440.

that valued white purity, and whiteness has historically been a prerequisite for what it means to be a ‘true’ American.”²³ Because of this, the color of one’s skin has been a factor in “who has access to the rights and privileges accorded to those who are American.”²⁴ Furthermore, “racism” is not just an “anomalous occurrence or a past memory,” but it is an ongoing, daily experience.²⁵ In their research, Harlow and Dundes also found that African Americans do not, on the whole, feel as patriotic as may whites, Latinos, and Asian Americans. In addition, blacks who had a strong connection to “their own ethnic group” were especially likely to indicate lower levels of patriotic feelings, but blacks who showed a preference for whites as opposed to their own ethnic groups were more patriotic. The authors deduced from these findings that the concept and use of race in America has profound effects on one’s identity as an American.²⁶

Also studying American national identity, Deborah J. Schildkraut argues that we need to study the various ideas about “what it means to be an American.”²⁷ She posits that even though “ethnoculturalism—the idea that American identity is defined by white Protestantism rooted in Northern European heritage and ancestry . . . has been widely criticized and challenged . . . ,” it still strongly influences what people see as “American.”²⁸ She adds that Americans have “overlearned” the stereotypes of the “image of an American as a white Christian,” and this affects the attitudes of many people in the

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 441.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Deborah J. Schildkraut. “The More Things Change . . . American Identity and Mass and Elite Responses to 9/11.”

Political Psychology 23, no. 3 (2002): 513.

²⁸ Ibid., 514.

United States toward people of color even as they rail against its exclusivity.²⁹

Schildkraut notes, along with others, that “old stereotypes” of American identity somewhat prevail today, and that these are hurtful to the country because they engender ethnic tensions and alienation of citizens of different skin colors. Even without terrorist attacks, the continuance of such stereotypes is a concern, especially as America’s makeup becomes more diversified. The 9/11 attacks call new attention to the questions of how whites view African American citizens and how African American citizens view their relationship to America. These questions are more significant than ever.³⁰

The question of how black and white people in America see each other and other people of color is a question we must attend to as Americans intent upon making the American Dream a reality for each person, regardless of the color of one’s skin. A national identity is also constructed just as race and other categories of classifying humans are. Frank Louis Rusciano writes about how national identity is constructed, in his study of 23 nations and national identity.³¹ He notes that the creation of a national identity comes about partly “from a negotiation between a nation’s *Selbstbild* (or the nation’s national consciousness, or the images its citizens have of their country) and a nation’s *Fremdbild* (or the nation’s perceived or actual international image in world opinion).”³² It is evident from this and other studies, that one’s identity as a citizen of a country is affected by what the citizens of the country say they believe in and what they

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid. , 531.

³¹ Frank Louis Rusciano. “The Construction of National Identity—A23 Nation Study.” *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (Sept. 2003): 361-366.

³² Ibid. , 361.

actually practice on a regular basis. For many African Americans, there is a disconnect between American notions of tolerance and diversity and what actually occurs between whites and non-whites in creating American identity.

Much of the problem of skin color and the cruelties and discrimination based on it in America's past and present can be traced to what DuBois called the "problem of the color line." In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Dubois recounts how those of the "other world," the white world, have asked him "How does it feel to be a problem?"³³ This question poignantly illustrates how many African Americans must have felt and still feel in some cases, almost daily in America. We hear about "the race problem" all throughout our history, and though times have definitely changed, many still speak of "the race problem" in America. DuBois says America allows the black person

no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One even feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.³⁴

DuBois spoke of the possibility of one to be "both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face."³⁵ Writing after Emancipation and Reconstruction, DuBois saw ahead that there would be no real American identity for blacks as long as stereotypical attitudes and beliefs about dark skin and aversion to dark skin lived in the hearts of white Americans. Today, as we witness the second term of our

³³ DuBois, 7.

³⁴ DuBois, 9.

³⁵ Ibid.

first African American President, we have to acknowledge that by our very use of the word “first” we are opening up more to the idea that maybe as racism’s flame dies out, all American citizens will eventually be made to feel like true American citizens and not “the race problem.” Problematizing skin color for hundreds of years has to leave a mark on the identities of those seen as “problems.” As Grace Elizabeth Hale so aptly puts it, if we can “make whiteness,” we can also unmake it.³⁶ She calls the fact that people of all colors “cannot truly embrace the range of North American humanity as their own . . . the collective cost” of making whiteness. She adds that as a nation, we have missed many opportunities because of our insistence on separating people by the color of their skin.³⁷ It is apparent that we have suffered huge setbacks and stagnation in America by refusing to give up the notion that a “true” American is a white Christian of European descent. We have made it difficult for people of color in America to realize the full potential of America, and we have sometimes adversely affected their self-identities as Americans.

Vetta L. Sanders Thompson and Maysa Akbar, who have studied and written about race and the construction of African American identity, define identity development as a “process by which an individual establishes a relationship to a reference group.” They add that when the “process is complete it has the potential to influence attitudes and behaviors through adoption of group values and goals.” According to the authors, it is essential “to understand the relationship between external social factors and interactions, and personal understandings that inform the identity.”³⁸

³⁶ Hale, , XII.

³⁷ Ibid. , 10.

³⁸ Vetta L. Sanders Thompson and Maysa Akbar. “The Understanding of Race and the Construction of African American Identity.” *Western Journal of Black Studies* (Summer 2003). http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_go2877/is_2_27/ai_n29060126.

Many African Americans have written and spoken of a kind of self-loathing or disgust that they have had to fight to establish an identity. They attribute this to the overarching racist attitudes with which American society is imbued. This makes sense in light of what much research dealing with identity illustrates. Thompson and Akbar note “Social identity theory suggests that group identity development is a cognitive process that uses social categories to define self,” and that some of these categories are, among others, “skin color, common history and oppression . . .”³⁹ Because of their shared history of oppression, many blacks develop their identities as individuals and members of the country with some influence from the past. And even if African Americans were not influenced by past oppression, the systems we have built in this country with exclusion of blacks in mind, would put them at a disadvantage in many cases. Our financial systems, educational systems, and political systems have been built with at least initial exclusion of people who did not fit the description of the white, Christian American. Even with new and fairer laws through the years and many improvements in our systems, we know that African Americans often experience them in different ways than white Americans do. The concept of race is ever present in the American mind. We see almost everything, to some extent, in terms of black and white. One of the most harmful aspects of our black versus white worldview is the toll it takes on the souls of many black persons who are, like everyone else, developing a self-identity, and in America, an American identity too. Racist attitudes also affect young white people who may be taught to hate others based on the color of their skin.

³⁹ Ibid.

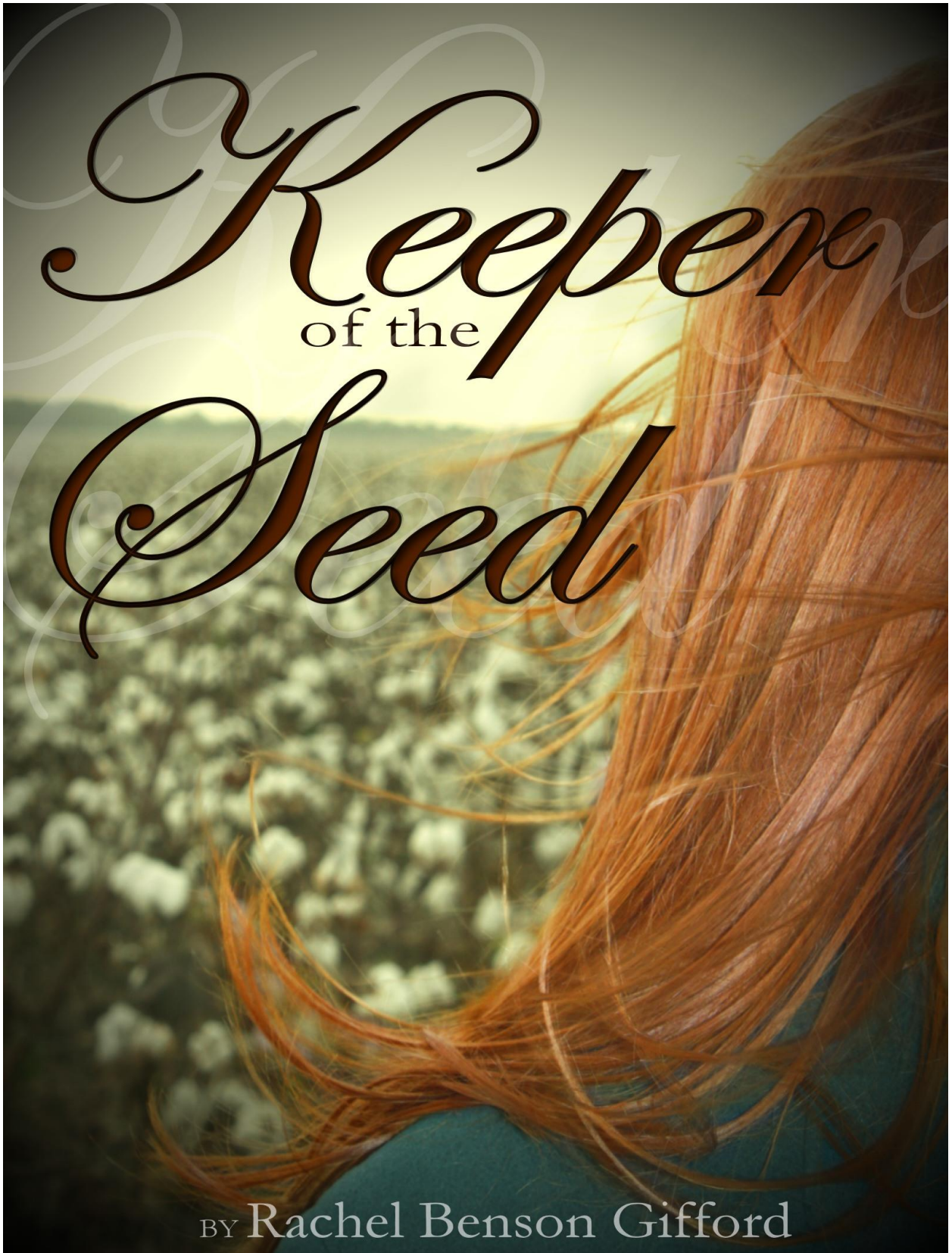
Langston Hughes once told a story of a young black poet which illustrates the kind of harm that rigid definitions of American identity can do. Hughes tells of the young man saying, “I want to write like a white poet”; meaning subconsciously, “I would like to be a white poet”; meaning behind that, “I would like to be white.”⁴⁰ Hughes was writing this in 1929, so many things have changed, but what he says elsewhere in the article tells why the racial past of America would affect African Americans so much. Speaking of the middle class African American family of his time, Hughes says the mother of the family often says, “ ‘Don’t be like niggers’ when the children are bad. A frequent phrase from the father is, ‘Look how well a white man does things.’ And so the word white comes to be unconsciously a symbol of all the virtues. It holds . . . beauty, morality, and money.” Later, in the same article, Hughes describes a woman he knows whom he says thinks “ ‘White is best’ after years of study under white teachers, a lifetime of white books, pictures, and papers, and white manners,[and] morals”⁴¹ I believe most African Americans today have much more pride and confidence in who they are, but Hughes makes a significant point about identity and how it is affected by attitudes and social conditions. What he describes is that construction of race by the almost invisibility of whiteness of which Hale speaks. In *Making Whiteness*, Hale vividly describes the many artifacts and other visuals such as photographs and cartoons that helped to shape America’s view of the African American. The “masks” that blacks had to wear as slaves and even later in American history, hid who they really were and created the image of how whites wanted to see black people so that the contrast between

⁴⁰ Langston Hughes. “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain.” (This article appeared in the June 23, 1926 edition of *The Nation*, but I got it at <http://www.thenation.com/doc/19260623/hughes>.)

⁴¹ Hughes.

black and white would be even starker. This image was bound to have harmful effects on the image that African Americans had of themselves too, and this has made it more difficult for many blacks to see themselves as fully realized citizens of America.

Hopefully, if we look back on history, correct some of the myths contained therein, and work on a future that includes all people in America, we can begin to undo some of the damage that making whiteness has done. Perhaps someday, all African Americans and other people of color will feel that they are full citizens of America. We must see skin color, if we note it at all, as a biological difference, not as a fact that determines our identities, and to a large extent, our destinies.



Chapter 1



I was thinking of my Swedish family when I pulled into a parking spot, gathered my attaché case, and headed for the office. Sweden, and the secrets it held for me, were always a part of my thoughts. Today was like most every other day, as the horrific last year of my life replayed through my head while I engaged in minimal office duties. I was just in the middle of checking my e-mails when the phone rang.

“Hello... Sarah White,” I spoke.

“Hey Sarah, it’s Collin,” came the familiar voice of our mailroom clerk. I always thought it was ironic that FedEx had a mailroom, never mind the fact that much of our mail came in via the US Postal Service. Collin was the mail distributor for our office building as well as the supply clerk—perfect set up because both services shared a large space on the bottom floor with a large dock and substantial storage.

“Oh, hey Collin. What’s up?”

“Well, you’ve sort of got a package here.”

“Sort of?”

“Yeah, well...it’s a heavy box from the Universidad de Costa Rica and addressed to a Dr. Ben Ericsson, but in care of you at our address here.” His accent as he pronounced the University of Costa Rica would have been funny if I had not been so confused by the entirety of his information.

“That’s strange.”

“Do you know a Dr. Ben Ericsson?”

“Not so much anymore,” I answered honestly, somewhat taken aback by the news. “Ben’s my brother. He lives in Lubbock, Texas.”

“Oh,” he said surprised. “A doctor huh, cool. Would you like me to bring this up to you? I can take it to your vehicle if you want, ‘cause it’s kinda heavy, Sarah.”

I wondered if Collin would have been as impressed if he knew my brother held a Ph.D. in plant physiology rather than an MD. “Does it say what it is?”

“No.”

“Um, let me call my brother and find out why he’s getting packages at my workplace. Will it be okay just to leave it down in the supply room until I find out what to do with it?”

“Sure, I’ll leave a sticky note on it so that no one will bring it up to your office ‘til you say to.”

“Thanks Collin.”

After hanging up, I decided to call my brother to solve the mystery of the heavy package from Costa Rica. We hadn’t talked in months, so the arrival of a package at work was even more baffling. After four rings, the answering machine picked up with no elaborate message, just my brother’s voice saying, “Not in...leave your number and I’ll call back.”

Feeling a little irritated by not only the mystery mail, but also the abrupt message, I decided to be just as direct. I reeled off my ten digit cell phone number. Then, in reference to his message’s promise of calling back, I added a disbelieving, “We’ll see.”

He rarely returned calls, so I rarely made them anymore. I was also irritated that he would have something shipped to me at work without prior notice, much less approval. I was sure it was some research thing. He probably wanted me to hand deliver the package to some special lab in Memphis, but a little direction would be nice. Maybe it was a gift? Maybe he was planning to be in Memphis himself? Whatever, I didn’t have time to ponder the odd nuances of my eccentric brother.

###

After another long day, I laid back in the warm bath water letting all but my nose submerge. The sound of my breathing was magnified by the water surrounding my ears. I squinted my closed eyes in a vain effort to push my memories outside the sound of the muffled breaths. For a few brief moments, I could block them. But the moments were far too brief for real comfort, and then the searing pain was back. I counted each breath with exaggerated focus and wished that the water would wash away the knowledge surrounding me. I wanted to lift myself from the tub and let my sorrow, my grief, my reality swirl down the drain with the clouded water.

It had been almost a year ago that I found myself both widowed and orphaned, and it had happened in a span of just four short years. How could this be? Truly the past fifteen years have dealt me more blows than I would have thought possible to handle.

I remember so vividly the first real death experience that was so hard to accept. The cancer had only taken nine months to rip my mother out of my life. Now, a year after my husband’s death, I continue to struggle to just get through this hollow life with a sense of purpose. In an extremely selfish way, I have always been grateful that my mother had not died suddenly, unexpectedly. At a cost to her of much pain, I was able to spend hours of quality time with her, helping her, saying all the things to her that I wanted to say, showing her how much I loved her.

Sudden death is worse...just too painful. Horrid shock can cut through a person’s heart much deeper than the slow realization of impending loss. There is no time for healing to begin as the cut continues to deepen. Just like jumping into cold water can cause cardiac arrest while easing into the same water is just staggeringly uncomfortable. I have lived through both—easing into the water and being shoved into it, and now I feel like the after-affect is drowning me. It is a year later and the shock still surfaces.

My dad died just three years after my mother...her cancer killed him too. His misery in a life without her made his death almost a blessing...or maybe I was just still numb, over losing her, to really feel. Thinking of my mother always brings me back to the piercing truth that she was far better in that role than I can ever be. If only I had been strong enough years ago to deserve the gifts I had been given, then maybe the latest fate would be different. Still, love and life don't always seem to blend well together, and I cannot undo my past.

Only the two little faces with his brown eyes and the dream of another held me above the water. I would not leave them too. I had no idea of anything else, but of that I was completely sure. I wrapped my mind around their faces and closed my eyes. My children had been my buoy in this ocean of despair. They held me afloat when everything else sank. I inhaled deeply at the firmness of that thought—an act which almost negated it. Instantly my mouth opened and water burned my nostrils and raped my lungs. I splashed myself upright and croaked out a series of coughs that sent water spewing from my mouth and nose. My throat seared and my ears popped. I must have been flaying loudly in the huge tub because I suddenly felt someone grasp my shoulders, pull me forward roughly, and begin beating my back.

“Sarah! BREATHE!”

I shook, maybe because the upper portion of my body was so suddenly introduced to the cool air of the room or maybe from the fear of what had just happened. Either way, I was very much awake and no longer in my reverie.

“I'm okay,” I coughed. “I must have drifted to sleep,” I said hoarsely as I tried to cover myself with a wash cloth.

She sighed deeply, concern registering in her piercing blue eyes, “I was just coming to check on you, thank God. Are you sure you're okay?”

“Yeah,” I forced a tight smile for my best friend. “Thanks Meredith,” I added as I glanced at her sitting on the edge of my bathtub with her shirt soaking wet.

She sighed and rose from her seat before heading to the linen closet where she retrieved a towel for herself and another one for me.

“An Agent Cooley stopped by. He left his card...said that he wanted to speak with you.” She looked concerned as she turned to the vanity to look in the mirror and began wiping her shirt, offering me a bit of privacy. While her back was to me, I stood and wrung out my hair, wrapped the towel around my body and stepped out of the tub.

“What did he want?” I asked, baffled.

She shrugged, “He said he was following up on a Lubbock case and was looking for Ben. It didn't seem urgent.”

“They're probably in need of an agricultural expert for some kind of trial,” I guessed.

“I have no idea, but he left his card just in case you hear from him.”

“You know, a package for Ben was sent to my office today,” I said as I considered the coincidence.

“Really, what was it?” She asked.

I shrugged my shoulders. “I don’t know. It’s addressed to Ben. It’s still in the mailroom. I tried to call him to find out what it was, but naturally he didn’t answer.”

“I’d open it before I called Agent Cooley...just to see what it is.”

“Did you tell him about the letter?” I asked.

“No,” she said. “Maybe you should try Ben...”

“No. I left him a message,” I sighed, squeezing the bridge of my nose with my thumb and forefinger. “What time is it anyway?”

She had turned to lean against the vanity, facing me now. “It’s around nine.” She tilted her head as if she were inspecting my reaction. “You okay, really?”

“Yeah,” I laughed with no humor.

“So, what now?” she asked softly.

“I’ve got work to do,” I said.

“Sarah, that’s all you’ve done for the past year. Don’t you think it’s time to take a little break?”

“Well, at least I can do most of it from home. I don’t think I could make that drive to Memphis everyday anymore.” I sighed. “It’s too much for you to keep coming here too.” I said to my best friend who had spent every bit of her free time running to tend to me and the kids.

She smiled softly, “It’s been almost a year, and you’re getting worse rather than better. I’m here as an intervention, and I’m here as long as you need me.”

“Intervention can’t bring the dead back to life—it won’t help me,” I chided, but then offered my gratitude. “I’ll never be able to tell you how much I appreciate you, and I promise to get out of this funk. It’s just that time was supposed to be the healer of all things bad, and I think it actually makes things worse.”

She nodded, “Well, maybe we can do something tomorrow to take your mind off things...We have plans,” she said excitedly.

“Tomorrow is Friday, we have to work.”

“I’ve already talked with Roy and you have the day off, just like I do.”

“No photo-shoot tomorrow?” I asked my carefree photographer friend.

“The beauty of being self-employed—you can take time off whenever you want.” She laughed. She hadn’t felt the need to use her teaching degree after college. Instead, she chose a career in something she enjoyed. It was quite a switch for her in the beginning. As a former beauty queen, she had always been on the other side of the camera, but her artistry in her

chosen career was evident. She was an excellent photographer bringing high wages and staying as busy as she wanted.

“Okay,” I agreed. “A day with you is always a pleasure, and I could use some time off, I guess.” True and loyal, Meredith was more than a friend. She was a sister. I smiled my thanks and watched as she heaved herself away from the vanity and headed toward the door.

“You’re not alone. You know that,” it was a statement spoken matter of fact. “I’m here for you, and....you still have Ben you know.”

Why did she have to always bring the subject back to Ben? “Don’t,” I said firmly. Aside from a few holiday visits, contact with my brother had been limited to cordial formalities for the past fifteen years. We were no longer close. I missed my brother, I missed everything.

I thought back to the last time I saw him—at my husband’s funeral. Ben had come from Lubbock and stoically stood with me and my six year old twins Luke and Bess as the preacher tried to bring closure to a life too early. As soon as the service was over, Ben left without a return visit and only a call just before Christmas. Then, a couple of weeks ago, I received an odd letter from him.

Sarah,

I am so very sorry about the cards you’ve been dealt. I know it still hurts. I think about you all often and want so badly to come see you and the kids, but there are some things going on here that prevent me from doing so. I wish I could explain, and I will try to later. I’m still sorry about Christmas, I was in South America. I wish I could see you, but you’ve been through enough and I don’t want you to have to endure any additional pressure because of me.

Wasn’t life so easy when we were kids? I often think of our summers and all the peace and serenity that we had. Carl von Linné had quite a home! It’s a beautiful heritage we have. Try to think of the beautiful memories, Sis, maybe they can bring you some happiness as you continue to cope with your loss. I do love you.

Ben

The words were a mystery. Reliving our summer trips to my father’s homeland of Sweden was an odd thing for him to write about. Or maybe it wasn’t. It had been so long since we had really talked that I didn’t think I knew him anymore. Maybe years in a lab had finally taken its toll on his sanity. At any rate, I couldn’t process it right now. My own mind was teetering on the verge of lunacy without me trying to understand the minutiae of my only brother.

“Okay, get some rest.” Meredith said as she left the room.

Certainly I counted her friendship as one of my greatest blessings. Steadfast and strong, she and I had bonded our first year of college and the friendship had endured its fair share of hardships. My children may be the buoy keeping me afloat, but Meredith was the lifeline reeling me to shore and pulling me out of the water.

After she left, I looked down at myself in disgust. Over the years, inactivity had changed my body from its once athletic frame, to an out of shape gob. Although I had gained a good thirty pounds since college, it had all dropped off over the past year. My desire, to attend to my body, however, had died long ago.

My dingy, muddy- red hair was a far cry from the once shiny, sun-streaked auburn that used to frame my face. And my face...it no longer reflected a natural glow. There was no longer even a hint that I had once been a lifeguard, an athlete, a health junkie. Now, my green eyes were just lost in the dark circles surrounding them, and my skin looked harsh. What had I done to myself? No, what had I not done to myself? "Everything," I sighed.

At just an inch shy of six feet tall, I had spent the greater part of my life as an athlete. From the time I was a child, I enjoyed playing outdoors with my brother and his friends. His two years age advantage didn't cause him to exclude me from his life as it often does siblings. Maybe he included me because we lived out in the country where any type of human contact was appreciated, even if it was your lanky, little sister.

Ben and I could never have passed for siblings. We stood about the same height—tall for a girl, and average for a guy. He was always a bit stout growing up, while I had been very thin. His deep chestnut hair was more beautiful than anything that could be produced from a bottle. He favored my mother and had her beautiful golden brown eyes, but I was more of a mixture of my parents—a true mixture, not having individual features of either but a blend of features. My mother had a darker skin tone while my father was fair, and I was a blend of the two with a medium golden complexion. My brother and I looked nothing alike, but we had always been close...had been.

Playing softball and basketball, running track and swimming, I had been the poster child for healthy living. But the day my collegiate career as a basketball player ended, so did my workouts. Now here I sit, in my beautiful bathroom in my beautiful house with my beautiful children asleep in their beautiful bedrooms as my beautiful friend ponders a way to help me. Sitting here surrounded by so much beauty, I feel so ugly.

I stood and slipped on a soft robe. I took a deep sigh and left the marble walls behind me. As I opened the double doors that led into the master suite, my eyes were drawn to a flashing red light on the nightstand. I rarely checked the answering machine—that was usually something that he would do, but the past year had begun the process of teaching me a new kind of norm. So, for whatever reason, I perched myself on the edge of the bed and leaned over the answering machine to push the little red button.

"Sarah..." Electricity ran through me at the sound of the voice, which by all rights, should be foreign to me by now. *"I'm trying to reach Sarah Ericsson...um, White. Sarah, this is Tim...Tim Randall. If this is the right number, Sarah, can you please return my call?"* My heart stopped each time I heard my name come from the machine. *"My number is ..."* I listened as he reeled off the ten digit number. *"Sarah, I know it's been a long time...umm, I...it's just really*

important that I talk with you. Sarah, please call me back.” There was a sense of urgency to the message that left me spinning.

What in the world! My head began to swim, and I struggled to make sense of the strange call. The air burned my throat as I breathed and the room turned fuzzy. It had been more than fifteen years since I last heard that voice. I was still trying to process it, when I heard her clear her throat. I turned to see Meredith, at the bedroom door, with her wide eyes glaring into mine.

“OH. MY. GOD.” She spoke each word slowly, softly. “Are you,” she paused to clear her throat again, “going to call him back?”

I couldn’t answer. I had to run back to the white marble room to throw up.

Old Country Music and John Deere Tractors

Mallory Burnette

When my grandfather passed last summer, the most striking realization was the obituary and how mechanical and empty it sounded. Here was a perfectly shaped article, brief, to allow room for the other almost nameless “old” people who appear in the obituaries every week. His obituary was conventionally beautiful, a consolation to sitting across from his empty chair, annoyed by his deafening silence that was louder than any voice in the room. Even as I type “when my grandfather passed,” I know I’m lying, watering down the loss in an effort to fit back in with society and carry on with the living.

My grandfather didn’t pass. My Papa died. It was and still is personal. To systematically wrap up a death in a socially acceptable period of grief is maddening. My papa cannot be wrapped up and stored away. Not now, not ever. My papa sings every George Jones song I hear. He drives every John Deere mower I pass. To think that because tears no longer fall on a regular basis means that he is gone is the biggest, ugliest fallacy, second only to nameless obituaries. Until it was my family name typed out in that awful, generic font, I never thought much about the people listed in the obituary pages. Despite my aspirations of being considered educated and worldly while maintaining a humbled sense of empathy, I realized I was the embodiment of arrogance, relatively unaffected by others’ losses. Those other obituaries were more than dead grandfathers.

He was not my grandfather, a hollow title. He was not a once a month obligatory visit. He was not an old man detached from the world. He was Papa. He loved easily and was the most uncomplicated person I have ever known. His starched button-ups and crisp, creased Wranglers contradicted his easy-going demeanor. The slow drawl. The

crooked back and meandering gait that carried him from the back porch to the shed to rig up a trailer to pull us behind the lawn mower. The pranks he'd orchestrate. The maniacal laughter that would come from him when he got truly "tickled" after hearing a joke. All of these characteristics added up to a perfect simplicity, a simplicity not implying simple-mindedness. Papa was smart, primarily self-taught, and made life, the most complex puzzle, easy.

The casual strumming of his guitar and his deep voice echoed throughout the house and lulled any bad moods to sleep. He was the classic country song played during a boring string of "Luke Randy What's-His-Face" new country on the radio. He was a comedian who cracked up at cartoons and proudly recited hilarious limericks. He was the peaceful encouragement who gave me the best advice out of the embarrassing amount of people who tried to teach me to drive. He walked around with Christmas bows on his bald head to make everyone laugh during the holidays. He was the one who once said, "life is never so bad if I can find some little something to laugh at every day, and that always happens."

None of his best attributes were conducive to an obituary, but maybe that's how you know you've done life right. An obituary could never recreate his impression of Muttley, the laughing dog from one of my favorite Saturday morning cartoons. An obituary could never properly illustrate the love he had for his wife, children, and grandchildren. He is gone, but not really. His unmoved truck in the driveway still elicits a brief feeling of breathing through a tiny straw after running a marathon. But then it's gone. He is just as much still there as the truck itself, and like him, perhaps *because of*

him, I make it a point to find some little something to laugh at every day. It makes all the difference in “wrapping up” the grief.

FAREWELL SWAMP ANGEL

Dr. Jillian Hartley

While many people bypassed swamps for land they considered more desirable, a rare group of migrants wandered into the Missouri Bootheel for centuries prior to drainage. The swamp appealed to people who sought solace away from civilization. High water levels in the lowlands provided a crude transportation network for the region's early inhabitants. In addition, the water prevented mass settlement, something that often appealed to this particular demographic. The unhealthy reputation of a disease-ridden and marshy terrain deterred many, but it also provided a level of protection for those who resided peacefully in the hardwood swamp created by the Mississippi River's alluvial floodplain. These inhabitants, or "Swamp Angels," acclimated to the lush environment of the Bootheel lowlands. They existed with the environment until the formation of the Little River Drainage District in the early twentieth century altered the landscape by providing stability to a once untamed flood plain.

Swamps all around the country attracted inhabitants who sometimes used the wetlands for shelter and solitude. For example, Creek refugees fled from English settlers during the colonial period and found solace in the Florida Everglades. The Spanish referred to them as Cimarron or "runaways." The name Seminole derives from this Spanish label. These Seminoles found protection in the undeveloped marshlands for decades and welcomed other runaways, including slaves. They existed in relative peace until the United States ordered their removal by way of the Indian Removal Act in 1830. Many Seminoles refused to leave and this led to series of battles with the army that began in the mid-1830s and lasted until the late 1850s. Around fifteen hundred Seminoles perished as

a result of the conflict. While the federal government relocated approximately five thousand Seminoles to Indian Territory, the swamps provided cover for those who hid from the federal government and continued living in the thick overgrown areas long after the army departed.⁴² The lush vegetation and water made it more difficult to force the removal of the Seminole. The fact that swamps were also considered to be less desirable places to live also gave the Seminole who stayed additional protection — for few outsiders wanted to live there.

Swamps often attracted people who did not wish to live in the midst of civilization. Since they had a reputation for being unhealthy and unkempt, swamps provided a level of protection against population growth. Like the Everglades, the Great Dismal Swamp that encompasses the border of Virginia and North Carolina attracted runaway slaves, many of who were so detached from civilization that they probably lived for many years before finding out about emancipation after the Civil War, not that it would have greatly affected their lifestyle. Some referred to them as maroons, a term derived from the same Spanish word that gave the name to the Seminole tribe. To others, they were called fugitives and river vagabonds. This strange breed of human sought only to remove himself from a system created by governing, a structure that required some form of submission.⁴³

⁴² William Loren Katz, “Black Indians in the South,” in *Major Problems in American Environmental History*, ed. Carolyn Merchant (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012), 133-35; Kent R. Rasmussen, ed., *American Indian Tribes* (Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 2000), 62, 218; Holly Atkins, “Florida’s Famous Seminole Leaders,” *St. Petersburg Times*, May 20, 2002; Cameron B. Strang, “Violence, Ethnicity, and Human Remains during the Second Seminole War,” *Journal of American History* 100 (March 2014): 986-88. Strang asserts that the Seminoles already had close ties with their Creek brethren, and the encroachment of the United States Army led to a even stronger sense of unity.

⁴³ Sylviane A. Diouf, *Slavery’s Exiles: The Story of the American Maroons* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 209-12.

Although the Bootheel of Missouri did not serve as a common refuge for runaways, it did attract people who wanted to live away from settled cities. The Bootheel did have some exposed fertile farmland on the higher ground, and some of its earliest settlers practiced subsistence agriculture on such tracts. The St. Francis and Little Rivers flowed through the area providing commercial opportunities such as selling or trading goods to people passing by on riverboats and houseboats. While this form of mercantilism did not promote major settlements, it probably exposed residents to an eclectic mix of river vagabonds.

The “Swamp Angels” lived and often thrived in this environment, preferring to stay away from “civilized” towns and cities. Even those who practiced agriculture had to do so by adjusting to the alluvial floodplain. Nehemiah Blake worked for the Langdon family in the lowlands near the Little River in the mid-1800s. Employed to plant and harvest cotton, Blake contracted malaria on at least two occasions. In his personal diary, Blake noted the frustration of fluctuating water levels. The conditions for those who practiced farming in the lowlands prevented a secure growing season, although their attempts proved that the fertility of the soil sometimes made it worth the risk. Still, these residents of the Bootheel’s southernmost counties, where the land was the wettest and the population was the smallest, generally sustained themselves by living off the animals, fish, and birds that inhabited the dense swamplands. Like many others, Blake chose not to remain in the Missouri Bootheel.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Philip Blake, *A Bootheel Diary: The Lives and Times of Nehemiah Blake and Sarah Warren Blake* (Camden, ME: Red Oaks Books, 2001), 45-47, 66, 83-84, 118-20, 136, 142.

The seclusion of swamps adds an element of mystery to those who lived there prior to mass settlement. In the case of the Missouri Bootheel, water covered much of the lowlands throughout the year, and in one particular section of Dunklin County, tales of a light that danced around in the dark became common after reclamation. The Senath Light, which is sometimes referred to as the Arbyrd Light, is swamp gas that locals and travelers witnessed for most of the twentieth century. Residents tell many stories about the light, and they are often intertwined with the history of the Bootheel. The tales attribute the activity to a ghostly presence, possibly associated with the hanging of a slave or the death of a jaded lover, rather than a natural occurrence of swamp gas. Stories of the Senath Light have been passed down through generations, with most of the sightings occurring after reclamation when the population increased in the lowlands. Perhaps there were more people to witness the light, which was easier to see after deforestation.⁴⁵

Whether the Swamp Angels paid particular attention to the swamp gas is unknown. Each angel was often busy, “finding peace and a certain brand of contentment in his



This is a pumpkin ash that grows in Big Oak State Park in Mississippi County, Missouri. Locals purchased about a thousand acres of land in the 1930s to help preserve the region's nature heritage. A cutover cypress forest. Dated February 21, 1917. *Author's collection.*
Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.

bacon, corn pone, ‘game in season,’ his hounds, his ‘fiddle,’ a judicious supply of quinine and

⁴⁵ The author “witnessed” the light circa 1994. Local residents saw the light often in the mid-twentieth century. My maternal grandmother, Una Hall, lived near a ditch and claims that the light appeared often when her children were small. That would be in the 1940s and early 1950s. According to her, the intensity of the light faded as the years progressed and that it actually moved to another location.

much whiskey.”⁴⁶ Along with hosting the mosquitos that transmitted yellow fever, the swamps provided cover for the more reclusive characters who did not wish to live by the clock. These people made homes in the swamps, often living on a small houseboat or structures on the higher ground. They were a part of the swamp, so desperate to evade all



that civilization would bring — the need to control, tame, and probably worst of all, tax. The lack of infrastructure was appealing for it

signified less intrusion, and, therefore, less confusion. The forms of subjugation that accompanied development went against the nature of Swamp Angels. They acclimated to the Bootheel’s wilderness, which was untamed with only a few exceptions.⁴⁷

Those living in the swamplands of the Bootheel came from a variety of backgrounds. Native Americans once constructed mounds to cope with rising waters, and it is likely that some descendants of earlier inhabitants still lived in the lowlands. Some European and American settlers eventually moved to the lowlands, though they faced numerous challenges because they did not have the resources to drain the land. They had little

⁴⁶ Francis William White, “The Passing of the Swamp Angel,” *The White Book* 1 no. 1 (Southeast Missouri’s Monthly Magazine, August 1913) found in Gary Lane McDowell, “Local Agencies and Land Development by Drainage: The Case of ‘Swampeast’ Missouri” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 315.

⁴⁷ Arthur Morgan to Otto Kochtitzky, August 10, 1908, Little River Drainage District Records, Special Collections and Archives, Kent Library, Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau; Blake, 136, 142.

choice but to coexist with the wilderness. These settlers had to learn to embrace the elements and forgo luxuries in order to survive. Although early settlers in the Bootheel lived far away from most large towns, a few small settlements near the rivers facilitated minimal trade and some contact with the outside world.⁴⁸

Settlement in the Bootheel was sparse because few people had the money or desire to purchase land there prior to the Civil War. With few exceptions, most people did not want to settle in an unpredictable region that they believed to be unhealthy and uninhabitable. It took a valuable commodity to lure potential investors and prompt railroad entrepreneurs to lay tracks into sparsely populated areas. Timber companies became interested in the region in the 1870s and 1880s. The expansion of railroads allowed them access to more secluded areas, some known only to those reclusive Swamp Angels. Subsequently, timber companies deforested the region and the railroads introduced a level of modernity that was often followed by more inhabitants and infrastructure.

What remained in the Bootheel was cutover land that would have appeared bleak to most onlookers. To the Swamp Angels who prized the wilderness, commercial timber operations forever changed the hardwood forest environment that was the habitat of the game and pheasant populations that sustained them. Subsequently, the natural rivers and creeks became riddled with floating logs that made their way to mills to be cut and shipped outside of the Bootheel. Stumps remained where large hardwoods once towered, relics of the great trees that took decades to grow. Deforestation robbed the Bootheel of a

⁴⁸ Nicolas de Finiels, *An Account of Upper Louisiana* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 10, 21, 31-40.

precious natural resource. It helped, however, to expose its most valuable attribute — something never exploited on a large scale by earlier inhabitants — its fertile soil.⁴⁹

Deforestation destroyed the Swamp Angels' home. The environmental consequences for those living in the Bootheel were great — especially to those who preferred to live in an isolated swamp. The Swamp Angels began to disappear — whether they left or acclimated to their new environment is left to speculation, for it was not in their nature to keep many records. The end of their tenure in the Bootheel was further signaled when the very timber companies that cut the trees decided to invest in a major reclamation project that would forever tame the region. While timber mills often relocated after deforestation, the two largest timber companies, Himmelberger-Harrison and Wisconsin Lumber Company, backed the development of a drainage system that would allow for greater use of the Mississippi River's northernmost alluvial flood plain in Missouri. The demand for fertile farmland had been going on for centuries. It was the type of demand that usually led to the destruction of wilderness, and the industrial revolution that occurred after the Civil War made a project of the LRDD's magnitude possible.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ McDowell, 199-200; Marshall Scott Legan, "Popular Reactions to the New Madrid Earthquakes, 1811-1812," *Filson Club History Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (1976): 60-61; Wayne Viitanen, "The Winter the Mississippi Ran Backwards," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 71, no. 1 (January 1973): 57.

⁵⁰ Thomas Jefferson, "Notes on the State of Virginia," in *Major Problems in American Environmental History*, ed. Carolyn Merchant (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012), 142. Thomas Jefferson's "The Agrarian Ideal" expanded westward with the country's development — then it backtracked to the Missouri Bootheel in the early twentieth century.



A park named after Sterling Price Reynolds, an original LRDD board member sits next to the floodwall in Caruthersville.
Author's collection.

The formation of the Little River Drainage District introduced a permanent structure to the area. This type of construction was foreign to many of the Swamp Angels in the lowland areas, although it is difficult to know how many of them took jobs as wage laborers in the timber or railway industries prior to reclamation.

The stability provided by reclaiming the Bootheel was not the norm for these people. The project began after much of the forest was already gone. The LRDD hired contractors who brought in dredges capable of moving and relocating tons of earth. Within about a decade, these machines and hundreds of workers had forever altered the course of the lowlands by controlling its water.

The potential to profit from the land eventually determined the fate of the Bootheel and its inhabitants, regardless of whether they approved of the LRDD. To effectively “tame” the Mississippi River’s alluvial flood plain, landowners found a way to divert much of the water that had flowed into the region and to manage the water that remained. Prior to



The LRDD maintains control over the floodway ditches, and the Missouri Conservation Department conserves the small portion of swampland in Hornersville.

Author’s collection.

the formation of the LRDD, the Little River Basin, which ran through Scott, Stoddard, New Madrid, Pemiscot, and Dunklin Counties, flooded most of the lowland areas.⁵¹

The dense vegetation in this basin resulted from

the land’s fertility and ample water supply — two factors that defined the environment of the former swamp. Its connecting streams ran near small river towns, including Gideon, Kennett, and Hornersville. The early inhabitants of these communities used the waterways as a mode of transportation, for fishing, and some commercial activities. It naturally moved at a slow pace and, until reclamation, residents used it without any oversight.

⁵¹ Robert S. Douglass, *History of Southeast Missouri* (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), 560; Otto Kochtitzky, *The Story of a Busy Life* (Cape Girardeau: Ramfre Press, 1957), 21, 26-27, 38, 50-55.

The dredging of the Little River and the digging of the floodway ditches altered the river for local residents, and hindered those who existed along with the river and had little need to control it. The 624 miles of ditches and channels dug by the LRDD lowered all of the water levels. More importantly, the LRDD had the legal authority to control them. The authority that accompanied the reclamation of the region ended the use of the Little River for commercial purposes as evidenced by the Mississippi River Commission's



A floodway ditch meets the Little River at the riverfront in Hornersville.

Author's collection.

declaration that the floodways were “unnavigable” as a result of drainage. The change in classification had consequences for residents, especially those who used it for commercial purposes. Even for those who did not use it for trading, the change in classification

signaled structure and oversight, especially for people who once used it without hindrance.⁵²

The LRDD channels and ditches tamed the alluvial flood plain and helped to nurture the seeds of civilization in the Bootheel. The Swamp Angels' wilderness was first disrupted by the timber industry and was now being completely transformed by a major

⁵² Letter from the Chief of Engineers of the U.S. Army to the War Department, April 10, 1909, Mississippi River Commission Records, Kansas City Federal Records Center, Kansas City; B.F. Burns, “Methods and Costs of Location Surveys for the Little River Drainage District, Missouri,” *Engineering and Contracting* 47 (January 1917): 56.

engineering feat. Moreover, reclamation led to population growth. For decades, the state and counties struggled to find willing buyers for acreage in the lowlands. Successful reclamation provided the necessary stability to lure more people to the region.

Landowners, in particular, needed labor to farm the newly exposed and fertile soil. The agricultural sector of the United States economy was hit hard in the 1920s and 1930s, but an ample number of sharecroppers and farm laborers migrated to the Bootheel in search of work. The counties affected the most by the LRDD — New Madrid, Stoddard, Scott, Pemiscot, and Dunklin — witnessed an increase of population from 137,751 in 1920 to 194,987 in 1940, an increase of nearly 60,000 residents. The organization and infrastructure that came with population growth signaled the final blow to the Swamp

This arch was erected in 1924 along US Highway 61 on the border of Pemiscot County, Missouri, and Mississippi County, Arkansas. It is a monument to the first major highway connecting Southeast Missouri to Northeast Arkansas.

Author's collection.

Angels.⁵³ Large-scale agriculture became the mainstay of the region's economy and the labor it attracted during the

LRDD project and the years immediately following led to more radical changes in the Bootheel's landscape.

⁵³ Thomas R. Glennon, "Some Aspects of the Population Geography of the Missouri Bootheel" (master's thesis, Southern Illinois University, 1962), 21-23; Sam T. Bratton, "Land Utilization in the St. Francis Basin," *Economic Geography* 6, no. 4 (October 1930): 374; Ronald Yersak, *An Economic and Population Study for the Bootheel Regional Planning Commission of Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972), 13-14; McDowell, 315-16.



Construction of the floodways, coupled with population growth, placed a greater demand on the taxpayers of the Bootheel to provide additional infrastructure, including roads and schools.

Civilization requires contributions from almost all citizens to provide reliable access to public services. To sustain the agricultural revolution they were experiencing, Bootheel counties had to invest in better roads. Prior to drainage, it was difficult to construct reliable roads in many areas because of overflow, but reliable drainage made the construction of roads easier, and better roads meant access to towns and cities in the Bootheel. It also made it easier for residents to drive to larger cities, including Cape Girardeau and Memphis.⁵⁴

Foreseeing a need to develop infrastructure, in 1912 Dunklin County passed a \$1,000,000 bond initiative to fund roads. The *Dexter Statesman* reported signs covering store windows in support of the measure.⁵⁵ Residents approved the measure, and by 1921 a paved road opened connecting Caruthersville, Hayti, and Kennett, three of the main towns in Dunklin and Pemiscot counties. The *Hayti Herald* tied the roads to the LRDD project by boasting “Expecting [sic] the completion of the Panama Canal, connecting the

⁵⁴ “The Good Roads Bond Issue,” *Weekly Tribune and Cape County Herald*, May 19, 1916; “To Petition Court for Good Roads: Delegation of Cape Girardeau Men Explain Plan to County Court Monday,” *Weekly Tribune and Cape County Herald*, March 8, 1918.

⁵⁵ “Dunklin County Does Herself Proud on Bonds,” *Dexter Statesman*, January 23, 1920.

Atlantic to the Pacific, no other ditch-digging project undertaken by the American people as a whole, or in part, has required such engineering feats.”⁵⁶ Residents of both counties lined up and drove the twenty-mile stretch of road. Celebratory activities in Kennett included the reading of a letter from Otto Kochtitzky, free watermelon, and live music. The Chamber of Commerce invited Louis Houck to attend the event, but he declined, citing his advanced age.

Dunklin and Pemiscot counties were the southernmost in the Bootheel and had the smallest populations prior to drainage. Now each stood to gain in resources and wealth because of the LRDD. Reliable infrastructure, including roads, made the area more attractive to farm workers and their families during the 1920s and 1930s.⁵⁷ As migrants came from the South, Midwest, and Appalachia regions, the Bootheel developed settlements that were not dependent on a river-based economy or the availability of a limited natural resource like timber. In addition, population expansion and demand for land increased the potential tax revenue for the LRDD. In 1880, the population of the Bootheel was around 53,000. By 1930, it was over 170,000, tripling in a fifty-year period. The population in Dunklin County in 1900, prior to drainage, was 21,706. By 1930, it rose to 35,799. Pemiscot County’s population was 12,115 in 1900, and it tripled to 37,284 by 1930.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ “Big Road Meeting,” *Hayti Herald*, August 25, 1921. When US Highway 61 came through in the mid-1920s, the road crossed over it at Hayti. This gave drivers easy access to drive northbound toward Cape Girardeau and St. Louis, and southbound toward Blytheville and Memphis.

⁵⁷ Robert Higgs, “The Boll Weevil, The Cotton Economy, and Black Migration: 1910-1930,” *Agricultural History* 50, no. 2 (April 1976): 335-39.

⁵⁸ Bonnie Stepenoff, “The Last Tree Cut Down,” *Missouri Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (October 1995): 70-72; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900*; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Thirteenth*

Some of the migrants who came to the region during the timber boom in the late nineteenth century migrated from the Appalachian Mountains, where only a few decades prior well-established mills had deforested their homeland. Many of these workers were of Scots-Irish descent, a common trait in Appalachia. They brought strong ancestral and kinship ties with them to the Bootheel. Residents also came to the region from the Midwest, most notably Illinois and Indiana, where the timber industry and reclamation efforts began a few decades prior to draining the Bootheel.⁵⁹

The fertile farmlands of the Bootheel also attracted many settlers from the South – some of whom fled from rich land in Mississippi to escape the cotton boll weevil that hit the Deep South in the early 1900s. By 1915, the boll weevil made its way to Northeast Arkansas, but it did not do as much damage in the Bootheel because cotton was not the area’s major cash crop during the epidemic. The Midwesterners brought corn and wheat to the rich region, and although cotton grew well, it was not until after drainage that cotton became the main crop of the Bootheel. The soil was similar to that of the Yazoo Delta in Mississippi, an area with rich farmland that had been highly productive for over half a century. Southerners from Mississippi brought additional knowledge of cotton production to Southeast Missouri, and the rich soil nurtured the seeds and produced high

Census of the United States: 1910; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920*; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*.

⁵⁹ *Articles of Incorporation of the Himmelberger-Harrison Lumber Company*, March 10, 1902, Himmelberger-Harrison Lumber Company Papers, ca. 1906-1958, R1259, The State Historical Society of Missouri, Rolla; Douglas, 646; Kochtitzky, 77, 107-08, 114; Michael A. Urban, “An Uninhabited Waste: Transforming the Grand Prairie in Nineteenth Century Illinois, USA” *Journal of Historical Geography* 31, no. 4 (October 2005): 657; Audrey J. Horning, “Myth, Migration, and Material Culture: Archaeology and the Ulster Influence on Appalachia,” *Historical Archaeology* 36, no. 4 (2002): 129-32.

yields. By the 1930s, cotton was the most lucrative crop, especially in the two lowest counties, Dunklin and Pemiscot.⁶⁰



This is a schoolhouse at Cotton Plant near Hornersville in Dunklin County. Primary levels were taught in this building during the 1930s and 40s.
Author's collection.

A larger and more structured population in the lower counties required schools, stores, and even entertainment. The pattern of development that followed in the Bootheel allowed for the growth of existing towns. Residents passed millages to pay for new schools and to expand existing schoolhouses. As early as 1915, the *Hayti Herald*

⁶⁰ Barton W. Currie, "The Backbone of America: Farming in the Drainage District of Arkansas," *The Country Gentleman* (February 1915): 10-11; Glennon, 68-71; McDowell, 325; Stepenoff, "The Last Tree Cut Down," 67-68; Mikko Saikku, "Faulkner and the 'Doomed Wilderness' of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta," *Mississippi Quarterly* 58, no. 3 & 4 (Summer/Fall 2005): 530-32; Higgs, 335-39. The boll weevil reduced cotton production in some southern states by nearly 40 percent between the years 1910 and 1919. This period coincided with the reclamation of the Missouri Bootheel.

reported that to accommodate the growing population an additional tax was necessary to add on to a school built in 1901. This trend continued in the 1920s and 30s. Small schoolhouses popped up in remote areas to address the educational needs of children whose parents were landowners, sharecroppers, and farm laborer. Most of the smaller schoolhouses had teachers who instructed students at the primary level. It was not uncommon to find segregated schools in the Bootheel. In fact, the town of Deering originally had segregated facilities throughout the entire town, including schools.⁶¹ The larger towns had high schools that the rural populace could attend if they had reliable transportation. Many of the teens chose, however, to work on the farm rather than attend



This church building
school

high school.⁶²

The population of the Bootheel grew in the 1920s because adequate drainage made the area attractive to farm laborers

and sharecroppers. While this was a difficult time for farmers in the United States, the Bootheel experienced growth and prosperity because of its fertility. This growth led to more opportunities in small towns for sharecroppers and farm laborers. These people frequented towns for shopping and entertainment. Bootheel towns often only had a few

⁶¹ Ophelia R. Wade, *Deering Plantation: Sixty Thousand Acres in the Bootheel of Missouri* (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 1999), 168-70.

⁶² *Hayti Herald*, January 21, 1915. Population growth also affected Cape Girardeau. The city had to levy an additional school tax in 1917. See *Weekly Tribune and Cape County Herald*, April 5, 1917.

streets, with Main Street being the center of activity. Main Street was typically littered with stores and shops. Five and dime stores carried everything from clothing to toys, while drugstores sold medicine, local newspapers, and other sundries. Residents required some form of entertainment and it came in the way of opera houses and theaters. Most of the towns had working theaters by the early 1930s. The Kennett Palace Theater opened in 1927, and although it has gone through a number of renovations, it continues to have single showings of movies.⁶³



The Kennett Palace Cinema opened in 1927.
Author's collection.

Sharecroppers and farm laborers typically lived in the country near the land they worked, but most would travel into town on Saturdays to shop or see a movie. The towns' merchants

took advantage of their busiest day of the week. Una Rogers Hall, who moved to the Bootheel in the mid-1930s, remembers visiting the Richmond Theater, one of two in the town of Senath. She also recalls merchants in the town participating in a lottery every Saturday. Local business owners would donate prizes and call out the number of a lucky

⁶³ Laura Ford, "Local Owners Open Kennett Cinema," *Daily Dunklin Democrat*, May 27, 2014.

ticket holder. These trips to town were necessary for shopping, but they were as much about mingling as they were about buying goods.⁶⁴



Main streets had thriving businesses including banks, theaters, and retail stores by the early 1920s that provided jobs outside of the agricultural sector. The population growth that followed the LRDD

The tall building was first erected in 1903 as a furniture store, but was re the Richmond T the city hall. published by t



project also allowed for the development of some successful industry in the region. In Kennett, the Ely & Walker Shirt Factory opened in 1923 and continued to make additions throughout the 1930s to meet consumer demands. The company made clothing, mainly from cotton, and operated until the mid-1980s.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Hall, interview; Glennon, 68-71.

⁶⁵ National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, United States Department of Interior: National Park Service, November 6, 2007.

Kennett was already a major hub in Dunklin County prior to the formation of the LRDD. By 1911, it had a well-developed town square and a city hall.⁶⁶ The Kennett Square was home to many businesses including barbershops, hardware, clothing, jewelry, and furniture stores. The growth in population during the LRDD project and in the 1920s increased the number of businesses on the square. While the square had fewer hardware stores by the end of the decade, many other businesses appeared to cater to residents including filling stations and several drug stores. The square was a place to shop, go to a movie, and socialize. The city even erected a bandstand next to the courthouse.

While towns and cities popped up to accommodate a growing demand for supplies and government, most sharecroppers and farm laborers lived in small homes in the country that were often built by large landowners to lure laborers to come and work for them. The residence was often a part of their compensation. The homes usually had two to four rooms and sometimes a lean-to on the side.⁶⁷

Even though some towns hosted entertainment in theaters, many residents relied on their front porches for socializing. The Bootheel did not have reliable electricity until the Rural Electrification Administration introduced it in the late 1930s, so it was sometimes cooler for residents to sit on the front porches, which became laboratories for the eclectic mix of Bootheel residents to share talents and influence each other. Robert L. Hall can remember his father, Robert Edgar Hall, playing the piano and other stringed instruments,

⁶⁶ Kennett's population grew from 3,033 in 1910 to 6,335 in 1940. See U.S. Census 1910 and 1940.

⁶⁷ A lean-to was a structure added on to the side of house for additional space. See Maxwell Williams and C. Ray Brassieur, "From Two Mules to Twelve-row Equipment: A Oral History Interview with Maxwell Williams, Bootheel Farm Manager," *Missouri Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (October 1996): 66-67



The Hall house was built in 1915 by Robert Edgar and Martha Hall. Photo taken in June 2015.
Author's collection.

something he learned to do at a school for the blind in St. Louis. The blind landowner once found a way to harness electricity from a windmill to power a radio, and the Hall house had access to hillbilly and race music for a short

time.⁶⁸ The Hall house was a popular stop-off point for neighbors, since the home had a rather long front porch to accommodate family and friends.

While many people had to travel to town for shopping, large landowners often



Eastwood Memorial in Kennett was built in 1925.
Author's collection.

maintained a small store that carried essential sundries and basic items like flour, cornmeal, and dried



⁶⁸ Ibid. Robert Lee Hall, interview by author, Paragould, AR, July 13, 2009; Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin, *Southern Music/American Music* (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 5-8.

noodles. While often judged negatively, these stores offered credit to sharecroppers and farm laborers who frequently were without cash. A landowner typically kept a ledger of the amount owed and deducted it from the farm worker's share of the crop in the fall.⁶⁹

Churches were also a mainstay in the rural landscape. Aside from schools and downtown areas, people socialized at religious gatherings. Like schools, churches were built in town and sometimes in the country, near agricultural workers. The churches were almost all Protestant denominations, with a few Catholic churches in the larger towns,

St. Cecilia's Parish in Kennett was built in 1923.
Author's collection.

including Kennett.⁷⁰ Most Bootheel residents had a house of worship within walking distance, even if it was not their preferred faith. Una Hall recalled living close to a Pentecostal Church, but remarked that the behavior of many attendees was not to her liking. After the introduction of electricity to the region, she became acquainted with the Church of Christ from listening to a weekly broadcast by a preacher in Blytheville, Arkansas.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Hall, interview; Susan A. Mann, "Sharecropping in the Cotton South: A Case of Uneven Development in Agriculture," *Rural Sociology* 49, no. 3 (October 1984): 417-20.

⁷⁰ St. Cecilia's Parish was founded in 1923. See the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Diosc.org, accessed April 1, 2015.

⁷¹ Hall, interview.

The populations of towns grew, even those that were considered large for the time period. Caruthersville experienced major growth during and after the LRDD project. The river town's population was 2,315 in 1900. By 1920, it reached 4,750.



The Bank of Caruthersville was built in 1934.
Author's Collection.



Caruthersville was also the location of a violent incident against two African American men. Prior to the creation of the LRDD, the nonwhite population of the Bootheel was a small fraction of the white population. In 1910, the total population was around 134,000. The African American population was 6,300 in 1910 and grew to over 7,500 by 1920, more than half of whom resided in Pemiscot County.

African Americans were among the thousands of migrants who came to the Bootheel in search of work during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The localized influx of non-white workers created competition for jobs that sometimes led to racial tension. This was especially true near Caruthersville where African Americans provided a substantial percentage of the farm labor.⁷²

⁷² John Solomon Otto, *The Final Frontiers: 1880-1930* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 1999), 48; Yersak, 14.

In October 1911, Caruthersville police arrested A.B. Rich and Ben Woods for harassment after two white women accused the black men of walking too near them. A mob formed and seized the men from jail. Newspapers, including the *Hayti Herald*, reported that the body of A.B. Rich was subsequently found on the banks of the Mississippi River. Ben Woods, also known as “High Pockets,” managed to escape the mob and reportedly fled to Tennessee. H. C. Garrett, Caruthersville mayor, told reporters that he would only pursue legal action against the mob if “someone can prove that a mistake was made in killing the Negro Rich.”⁷³ In other words, the dead man would have to be proven innocent of harassing the women before the police would arrest any of his killers.

Reporting the incident, the *Scott County Kicker* listed it as one of several where African Americans were the targets of white aggression. According to the *Kicker’s* account, two “Negro” men were walking on the same road that the white women took home and frightened them by their mere presence. The police arrested Rich and Woods and took them to jail. Composed, according to the *Kicker*, of “Cave Dwellers and Barbarians of that Capitalist Jungle,” the mob went to the jail, somehow got the keys, and took both of the men to the river. The *Kicker* asserted that the authorities did not arrest any white man for the crime of killing A.B. Rich. It also mentioned several other incidents, including the arrest of an African American man in Kennett who authorities had to sneak out of jail and relocated to Cape Girardeau County before a mob could seize

⁷³ *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, October 11, 1911; *Bryan Daily Eagle and Pilot*, October 11, 1911; *Omaha Daily Bee*, October 13, 1911; “Another Mob,” *Hayti Herald*, October 19, 1911.

him.⁷⁴ The agricultural haven that the LRDD manufactured in the Bootheel was not immune to many of the prejudices brought by the people who settled there. Incidents such as these occurred in many rural areas in the south during the early twentieth century.⁷⁵

Despite these tensions, the lure of the region's "new land" continued to attract both black and white farm workers from the Deep South, the Appalachians, and the Midwest. Even though many farmers did not fare well during the 1920s, landowners in the Bootheel exploited the highly productive soil by growing vast amounts of cotton. The demand for cotton decreased in the 1920s, however, resulting in falling prices.⁷⁶ Like most areas reliant almost solely on agriculture, the Bootheel suffered from these lower prices, and the plight of landowners became very serious and many of them were unable to pay their drainage taxes. The amounts of land farmed by tenants increased as smaller landowners were unable to continue paying for their land and lost it in foreclosure. Large insurance companies and banks acquired many of these foreclosures. In turn, if they were not able to sell the land to recoup losses, they hired managers to oversee operations on behalf of the company. This led to fewer landowners and a higher rate in tenant farming. In New Madrid County, where Himmelberger-Harrison Lumber Company sold thousands of acres to smaller landowners during the project, tenancy reached nearly 90 percent during the depression. Despite lower crop prices and foreclosures, more laborers

⁷⁴ "Reaping the Whirlwind," *Scott County Kicker*, October 21, 1911.

⁷⁵ Stewart L. Tolnay and E.M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930* (Champaign: Illinois University Press, 1995), 2-5.

⁷⁶ Julian Roche, *The International Cotton Trade* (Cambridge: Woodhead Publishing, 1994), 198.

continued moving to the Bootheel. Economic instability threatened the structured environment only recently introduced to the region.⁷⁷



This is the first community building in Senath. It provided refuge for many residents outside of town during the 1937 flood. Flooding was not a major issue prior to reclamation because most early residents became accustomed to rising waters from the rivers. The river rose gradually. It was not until after reclamation with the construction of levees that detrimental flooding occurred.

Author's collection.

The LRDD suffered as many landowners struggled to pay their drainage taxes. The district relied on taxation for bond payments and system maintenance. It was a very different style of living from that of the area's first inhabitants.

Infrastructure required

funding, and without it, the region would revert to swampland. According to Otto Kochtitzky, the man who drafted the initial plan to drain the region, most landowners were able to pay taxes until 1926, when hard economic times spread. Arrearages increased in the years that followed, and by 1930 the delinquency rate was more than 60 percent. Unable to weather this revenue collapse, the LRDD defaulted on its obligations to bondholders about three weeks before the stock market crashed in 1929. It was the first major threat to the stability of this manufactured environment. Without steady tax revenue, the district could not fulfill its obligations to bondholders and debtors, and

⁷⁷ Richard S. Kirkendall, *A History of Missouri: Volume 5* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986) 55-56; Kochtitzky, 168; Ledger Book Numbers 46, 49, 50, 51, and 75, Himmelberger-Harrison Collection, State Historical Society of Missouri, Rolla.

failure to maintain ditches could bring about the end of an era and the resurrection of Swamp Angels.⁷⁸

In just a few decades, the LRDD had transformed a swamp into a manufactured environment that relied on tax revenue. The land of the Swamp Angels, untamed and free from regulation, was now home to thousands of people who moved there to find work. Prior to drainage, the Swamp Angels existed within a wilderness. The people who migrated to the Bootheel during and after reclamation sought no such life. They sought the man-made agricultural environment sustained by the LRDD. Economic uncertainties now threatened the structure, and without maintenance and upkeep, it is doubtful that residents would remain to witness the Mississippi River and its tributaries reclaim the flood plain.

The LRDD reclaimed a half million acres of prime land that was so important to the agricultural sector of the country's economy that the federal government would not allow the drainage system to falter. Farmland was a precious commodity, and it became even more valuable when the Dust Bowl hit the Great Plains in the mid-1930s.⁷⁹ Intervention from the federal government saved the region from making the slow transition back to a swamp, ensuring that the area would continue to be "civilized" as opposed to how it was prior to development when the Swamp Angels thrived with so little oversight.

Representatives from the Department of Agriculture met with the LRDD Board of Supervisors and devised an economic plan for rehabilitating the district. It allowed

⁷⁸ Glennon, 68-71; United States Department of Agriculture, *Plan for the Rehabilitation for the Little River Drainage District* (June 1933), 3-7; Stepenoff, "The Last Tree," 72; Kirkendall, 55-56; Kochtitzky, 168.

⁷⁹ William Cronon, "Telling Stories About Ecology," *Journal of American History* 78 (March 1992): 1352-54.

landowners who did not have enough money to pay only a fraction of their tax liability, and it placed a higher burden on wealthier owners. The Civilian Conservation Corps worked to dredge and maintain ditches in the 1930s. The economic restructuring of the district and the labor provided by the CCC prevented the region from reverting back to swampland.⁸⁰

The LRDD introduced structure and stability to the Missouri Bootheel. The Swamp Angels could not endure such structure, as the environment changed from a wilderness to one that required constant control and structure. Like the Senath Light, Swamp Angels are shrouded in mystery, near legendary creatures of a bygone era. Even though most of the swamp disappeared a century ago, some people still report not-so-reliable sightings of the Senath light, and perhaps on occasion, a Swamp Angel living near a river — away from the paved roads, school houses, and organized religion.⁸¹ A few remnants of the swamp remain with traces of a few angels around. Big Lake in Northwest Mississippi County, Arkansas, provides a catchment for water from the LRDD. As the last vestige of the environment that once covered much of the Missouri lowlands, it serves as a reminder of the habitat that once attracted those few settlers who existed in a state of wilderness. Along the St. Francis River, remnants of small houses built up on stilts still remain unkempt and ragged. If there are Swamp Angels left in the Bootheel, they are likely

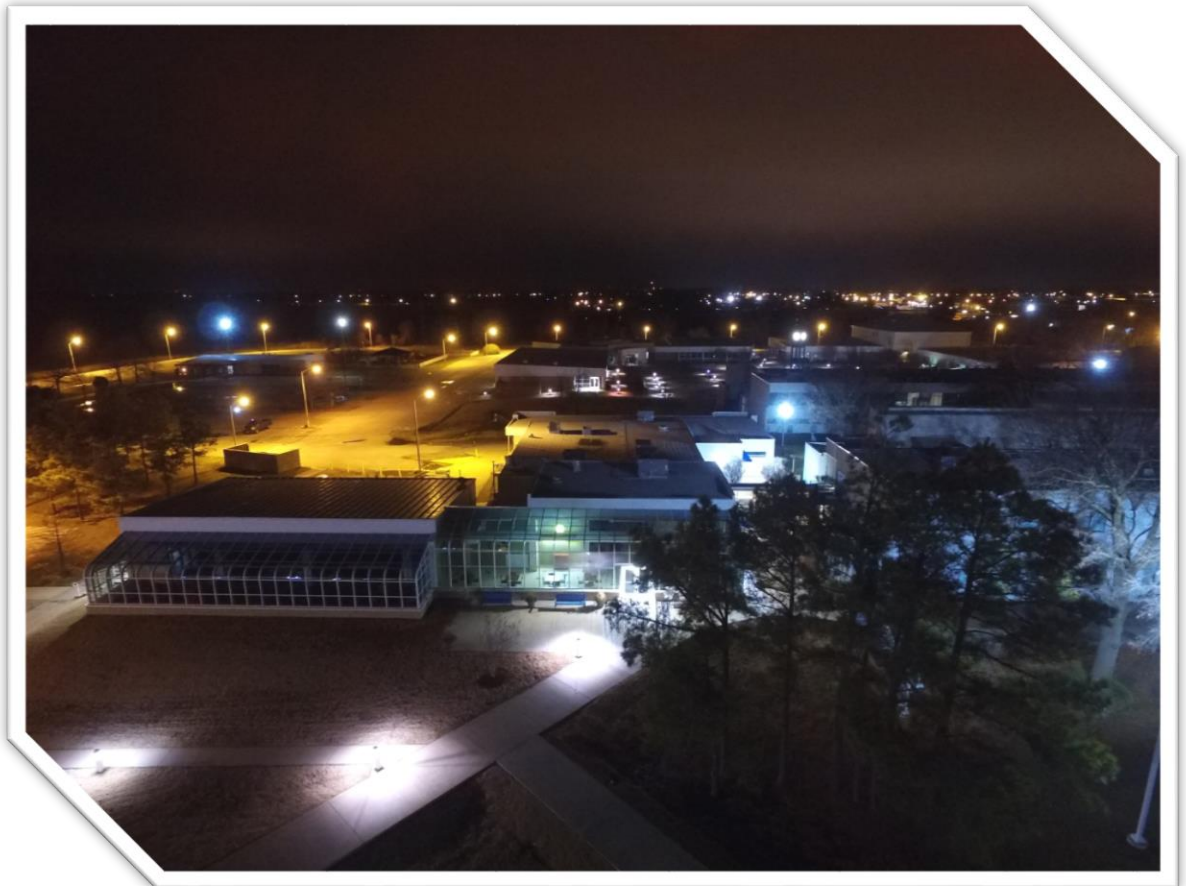
⁸⁰ *Plan for the Rehabilitation*, 2-7; Bonnie Stepenoff, “Archives and Historic Preservation: The Case of the CCC,” *Midwestern Archivist* 13, no. 2 (1988): 78-79.

⁸¹ “Ghost Hunters Investigate the Senath Light,” KAIT 8 Jonesboro, kait8.com, accessed October 31, 2006.

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living in similar structures, still basking in the glory of having few daily regimens and little need for contact with outsiders.

Drone #2
Danny Kennedy



Drone #3
Danny Kennedy & James Hartley



January 15

Julie Dorris

On the fourth anniversary of my Grandma's death,
I asked my mom how she was doing.
She smiled and told me that she felt funny.
She said it was the strangest feeling not having a momma anymore.
Her words broke me, but my face didn't show it.
Her look hit me harder than anything she said to me afterward.
I knew nothing I could say would help.
I was somewhat paralyzed by this thought,
the waiting that was almost reassuring me that my time of realization would come.
I could only inarticulately reply "It must feel weird."
But she quickly added, "I hope you get the chance to know it one day,"
as she read my mind like only she can do.
And since I am a mother, too, I understood her words.
I knew what she was saying to me.
The fear every parent carries.
The thought of life without my mom is unconscionable,
but the thought of parents outliving their children is downright unbearable.
What an existential dilemma that gives us no choice anyway.

She and I sat in silence and both of us thought about that day in August.
Some strangers' blood transfused throughout my Grandmother's hardened arteries
six different times in the days leading up to her death.
She would scratch out words on an undersized, pocket notepad,
since the tubes down her throat wouldn't let her say what her eyes did.
Her notes urged us to let her die.
No one listened until she became unconscious,
laughing out childhood memories and moaning for Jesus.

Later that night, I still have her bloody, desperate mouth on my mind
as I look at my nakedness, boldly reflected by the glass,
surrounded by the comforts of the home I've made.
Under my pale skin, my obviously visible veins stretch a blue Live Oak across my chest,
and I follow their lines from shoulders to wrists.
My body given to me from her and her daughter.
What have I given to my daughters, I ask my dead grandmother?
The reflection is of my face, but there is no doubt it is her eyes looking back at me.
My mind can't separate my grandmother from my mother,
my mother from me,
my girls from myself.
Yet, we are all separate,
individual branches of the same root system,
watered by our grandmothers before us.

(continued)

The ones who cracked their knuckles in the dry winter to chop wood for us to have fire.
The ones who wrung the necks of chickens to feed us.
The ones who taught us how to love and live long before school would.
I hope my girls remember these women,
even if they don't know their names
or the days of their deaths.
But I want them to see our connection,
how much my mother and I are her mother
and how much my beautiful girls are all of us.

Historical and Performance Considerations for W.A. Mozart's Vesperae solennes de Confessore, K. 339
Keith Hearnberger

Abstract

The Historical and Performance Considerations for W.A. Mozart's Vesperae solennes de Confessore, K. 339 is a scholarly document that is written to help further the knowledge and educational value of W. A. Mozart's (1756-1791) lesser-known sacred works. The Vespers of 1780 (K. 339) provides more dramatic contrasts of tonality and texture, and the dramatic melodies illustrate the superior levels of charm and graceful Viennese choral writing that only Mozart could possess. This document will offer suggestions for both historical and performance considerations, while also suggesting the educational impact that Mozart's music can have on developing a quality choral ensemble.

Chapter 1

Introduction & Historical Considerations

Posterity has turned W.A. Mozart into an 'icon' the 'image of music,' (Taurskin & Gibbs, 2013) for several reasons. The amazing quality and productivity of such a short life span and the musical versatility and realm of his musical gifts as both a performer and composer have attributed to this deserved reputation. Composing music just after his fifth birthday for the harpsichord, spanning thirty-five years to his last composition of an unfinished Requiem mass, Mozart left behind a legacy of epitomization of classical grace and form. This legacy was so vast and his musical compositions were so numerous that it wasn't until 1862 that Ludwig von Köchels's chronological catalogue was finally published. Touring and entertaining European royalty and nobility, religious leaders, and dumbfounding the music scene was a great portion of

Mozart's reputation. Despite Mozart's musical genius, he also was known to be temperamental and felt that his music was far superior to that of his contemporaries (Solomon, 1995). This arrogance and extravagance lead to most of his personal struggles and ultimately his demise. While leaving this legacy, he also helped thrust music into new realms of beauty, grace, and harmonic justice that has long served as a standard of musical perfection within the Western Art Music tradition (Downs, 1992).

The service of Vespers is one of the eight services that make up the Office Hours--one of the two "official" liturgical prayers of the Roman Catholic Church, the other being the Mass. The *Vesperae solennes de Confessore*, K.339 by W.A. Mozart consists of six movements, five of which set the texts of the five psalms normally used for Sunday Vespers. The sixth movement is a setting of the New Testament canticle, *Magnificat*, which is part of every Vespers service.

A comparison between a liturgical Vespers service and the Mozart piece shows that besides the five psalms and canticle, liturgical Vespers includes antiphons, orations, scripture reading and intercessory prayers. Traditional music of Vespers, including that for the psalms and canticles, consists mostly of chants and psalm tones. There does not seem to be a direct or obvious relationship between any of the movements of the *Solemn Vespers* and the chants and psalm tones that were prescribed for a Confessor's Vesper Service. In a more general way, however, Karl Geiringer feels that in the *Solemn Vespers* Mozart ". . . adopts a concise and rather severe style, using themes which bear a certain resemblance to melodies of Gregorian chant" (Geiringer, 1969). Unfortunately, he does not go on to explain his comment. However, a brief analysis of the melodic content of the psalm tones shows extensive use of stepwise motion, the interval of a major or minor third, and repeated notes (the reciting tones), which is similar to the style of chant.

Historical Considerations

In August of 1777 when he was twenty-one, Mozart resigned his position in Salzburg and set out to pursue his musical career elsewhere. However, after sixteen months of travel in which he was unsuccessful in acquiring an appointment, he returned to Salzburg, where a better position was open to him than when he departed. In the new post, he would still be *Konzertmeister*, but elevated to court organist with accompanying duties, rather than violinist as before. The post included a salary increase from his previous position in Salzburg as well as generous leaves. Mozart remained in Salzburg from January 1779 until November 1780. On November 5 he departed from Salzburg to produce his *opera seria*, *Idomeneo*. It was during this time in Salzburg that Mozart composed the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore*, K. 339.

Most scholars concur that the *Solemn Vespers* can only be dated to the year 1780, since there is no hint as to the identity of the confessor or saint given in Mozart's manuscript.

However, in an article written in *The Choral Journal*, 1985, "For What Confessor Saint Did Mozart Compose His *Vesperae solennes de Confessore*, K. 339?," Richard Trame argues for an exact date. His argument is based on information he discovered in the 1964 revised edition of the Kochel *Verzeichnis*, and on the premise that Kochel numbers were assigned according to premier performance dates. He argues as follows. Mozart composed four great C-major choral compositions in 1779-1780: the *Coronation Mass*, K. 317, the *Vesperae de Dominica*, K. 321, the *Missa sollemnis in C*, K. 337, and the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore non Pontifice*, (this is the full title) K. 339. According to H. C. Robbins Landon, the *Coronation Mass* was first performed in the Salzburg Cathedral on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1779, and received the title "Coronation" because it was later performed during coronation ceremonies for Emperor Leopold II in 1790, and Emperor Francis I in 1792 (McCollum, 1995). Trame argues that the *Vesperae*

de Dominica was first performed on the same Easter Sunday in the evening. Next, Robbins Landon further asserts that the *Missa solemnis in C*, (Mass for Archbishop Colloredo), K. 337, was also composed for services on Easter Sunday, but in 1780. Since the *Symphony No. 34 in C*, K. 338 was first performed in Salzburg on August 29, 1780, and has the only Kochel number between the *Missa solemnis in C* (K. 337), and the *Solemn Vespers*, (K. 339), Trame believes that the *Solemn Vespers* was composed for the feast of a saint that falls between August 29 and November 5, when Mozart left for Munich.

He goes on to say that given Mozart's past record for prolonged unsanctioned absences from his duties, it is entirely possible that he sought a way to gain favor with Archbishop Colloredo before asking for leave to travel to Munich with his opera *Idomeneo*. Archbishop Colloredo's Christian name was *Hieronymus*, or Jerome. As a Prince of the Church, Colloredo's nameday would have been celebrated by the people of his jurisdiction with much rejoicing and a great deal of ceremony. Furthermore, St. Jerome is the only Non-Bishop confessor [] whose feast day falls between August 29 and November 4. Therefore, it would seem very likely that the first performance of the *Solemn Vespers* took place at Salzburg Cathedral on the Feast of St. Jerome, September 30, 1780.

Mozart was known throughout his life as a virtuosic musician and talented composer (Grout, 2014). Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Mozart's compositional talent was his ability to create masterpieces in every genre of music that was prevalent during his lifetime. No composer before or after him has been so widely successful in the realms of Western Art music. While Mozart's heart was in instrumental music and his opera, he did devote compositions to sacred music. This sacred music was always conformed to the desires of the patron commissioning the music (typically the religious patrons by whom he was employed).

Chapter 2

Performance Considerations

Mozart uses various keys for the different movements of the piece. The tonic key is C major, this being the key of both the first and last movements. The second movement, *Confitebor* is in Eb major, the relative major of the parallel minor of the tonic key. The third movement, *Beatus vir* is in G major, dominant of C major. The fourth movement, *Laudate pueri* is in D minor, supertonic, and the fifth movement, *Laudate Dominum* is in F major, relative major of D minor, and subdominant of C major. The keys then are a progression from the tonic to the dominant, and back again to the tonic.

Meter and Tempo Indications

In addition to the contrasting keys, contrasting meters are also used throughout the piece. Generally speaking, there is alternation between triple and duple meter in successive movements. The one exception to this pattern is in the *Laudate Dominum* which is in the compound duple meter of 6/8 instead of triple meter.

In the late Baroque, specific tempo indications were very rare, and often used simply to indicate a departure from what was considered the norm, for example, unusually fast or slow, or a tempo change within a movement. Early in the Classic period descriptive tempo indications came to be the rule. Indeed the spectrum of terms that we still use today, from adagio and largo to presto, quickly came into use. In the *Solemn Vespers* Mozart uses the following tempo indications (Table 5).

Table 5 – Tempo indications in the Solemn Vespers

Movement one, <i>Dixit</i>	Allegro vivace
Movement two, <i>Confitebor</i>	Allegro
Movement three, <i>Beatus vir</i>	Allegro vivace
Movement four, <i>Laudate pueri</i>	No tempo
Movement five, <i>Laudate Dominum</i>	Andante ma un poco sostenuto
Movement six, <i>Magnificat</i>	Adagio/Allegro

Since the assigning of specific metronome markings was not the standard practice of the time, it is difficult to know just exactly what the above terms meant in actual performance. In 1802, Koch's *Musickalisches Lexicon* indicated the following concerning tempo indications:

Adagio, moderately slow... calls for a particularly finely-drawn performance, partly because the slow tempo emphasizes every turn which does not correspond to the ruling sentiment, and partly because the music will become boring and unpleasant if the tempo is not maintained with sufficient momentum... the Adagio must be performed with very fine nuances and a very noticeable blending of the tones...

Andante, moving walking. This term indicates a pace midway between fast and slow. When this term is not used for characteristic pieces, such as processions, marches, etc., then it applies to pieces in which the sentiments of calmness, quiet and contentment are embodied. Here the tones should neither drag nor bleed into each other as much as in Adagio, nor be as accentuated and separated as in the Allegro.

Allegro, quick... moderately quick tempo... The performance of an allegro calls for a firm tone quality, a simple and clear delivery, the notes themselves in this tempo being connected only when expressly indicated or when a prominent cantabile section appears; otherwise,

the tones are generally separated rather decisively... without prejudice to the value of the so-called accented notes (Koch, 1802).

Likewise, “Turk, 1789, gives 4 main speeds—very fast, moderately fast, moderately slow, and very slow—and lists many modifications within these categories.” According to Curt Sachs in Rhythm and Tempo: A Study in Music History ,

... tempo has always been intimately connected with the degree of classicistic or anti-classicistic attitude within a given country, time or style. Classicism, it is true, appears in numberless shades. But all of them, whatever they are, share one leading quality—moderation. In terms of tempo, this means the first place abstention from any extreme in speed and in slowness. Germany, less classicistic than her neighbors, would then have a wider range in tempo (Sachs, 1953).

It is clear that choosing a proper tempo for a work from the Classic Period is a major task for the conductor, and should only be done after careful study of performance practices of the period, as well as the score itself, and any factors related to a *specific* performance, such as size of orchestra and choir, and acoustics in the performance space. Another consideration is the prevailing rhythmic subdivision of the various movements. For example, in the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* the orchestral writing is almost continuously presented in eighth and sixteenth-note divisions, and the choral writing as well, although not quite as consistently. To apply the tempo guides given on a modern metronome without careful analysis of the rhythmic subdivisions of each movement could result in a tempo far too fast or slow for the proper projection of the eighth and sixteenth notes. My own preferences are give in Table 6 below.

Table 6 – Suggested tempos for the *Solemn Vespers*

<i>Dixit</i> – allegro vivace	q = 132-136
<i>Confitebor</i> – allegro	q = 90-96
<i>Beatus vir</i> – allegro vivace	q = 132-136
<i>Laudate pueri</i> – no temp indication	h = 92-96
<i>Laudate Dominum</i> – andante ma un poco sostenuto	e = 100-104
<i>Magnificat</i> – adagio/allegro	q= 42-46/ q = 90-96

Handling of the *Gloria Patri*

The *Gloria Patri* is a doxology that traditionally ends each of the psalms and the *Magnificat* canticle of a Vespers service. According to Ivor Keys, “Liturgically, its function is to subsume all the disparate and originally individual sentiments of the texts with a general hymn of praise, and in the case of the psalms to bring them from their Old Testament milieu into the infinite horizons of Christianity” (McCollum, 1995). It translates into English as follows: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.” Certainly the position of the *Gloria Patri* at the end of each psalm, plus the text “...as it was in the beginning...” lend itself well to the various types of musical recapitulation required by the forms used in the *Solemn Vespers*. However, Mozart does not use the text as the deciding factor in where to start these recapitulations. In three of the six movements, the beginning of the recapitulation (or its equivalent) coincides with the beginning of the *Gloria Patri*. These movements are the *Dixit* (measure 117), the *Beatus vir* (measure 140),

and the *Laudate Dominum*, written in the style of an opera aria, the return of the A section is not a literal repeat, but rather a modified version, and sung by chorus this time instead of soprano soloist.

In the *Confitebor*, the recapitulation actually begins with the second phrase of *Gloria Patri* text (measure 81). The first phrase of text accompanies a cadential transition (Bb) leading back to the tonic key of Eb. In the *Laudate pueri*, the fugal recapitulation begins at measure 91, while the *Gloria Patri* text does not occur until 43 measures later at 124. By this time both the fugue subject and the second theme group have been recapitulated, and here the fugue subject is stated simultaneously as written and in inversion (bass and alto voices respectively), followed by the answer with the same treatment (tenor and soprano). In the *Magnificat*, the recapitulation begins at measure 54, and the *Gloria Patri* text at measure 75.

Problems of Performance

In addition to tempo, ornamentation, and other technical matters, there is another consideration to address when one decides to mount a performance of the *Solemn Vespers*, and that is a certain “sameness” about the movements (with the exception of the *Laudate Dominum*) in terms of tempo, texture and dynamics. There is also the matter of the huge amount of continuous energy needed to perform these movements well.

One possible solution to this problem is to use some of the elements from the traditional Vespers service that are not included in the *Solemn Vespers* itself. For instance, in a traditional Vespers service, each psalm and the *Magnificat* is preceded and followed by an antiphon. That is six antiphons all-together as the same one is used both at the beginning and the end of a given psalm. The correct antiphons can be located in the *Liber usualis*, along with their psalm tones, and chanted perhaps by a schola before and after their respective movements. Using a short

scripture reading (chapter) and hymn between the final psalm and the *Magnificat* could also be considered.

We know that Mozart held his Vespers in high regard since he once asked his father, in a letter dated 12 March 1783, to send the two works to him in Vienna so that he could show them to Baron Gottfried van Swieten. The Office hymns designated as *Vesperae de Dominica* K. 321 and *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* K. 339 both call for four vocal parts, two violins, two clarini, kettledrums, basses (violoncello, double bass and bassoon), three trombones and organ. They contain settings of Psalms 109 (*Dixit*), 110 (*Confitebor*), 111 (*Beatus vir*), 112 (*Laudate pueri*), 116 (*Laudate Dominum*) and of the *Magnificat* canticle. Each of the Psalms forms an autonomous unit; the Doxology at the end is derived from the themes of the various Psalms (Shrock, 2009).

The restrictions in the instrumentation found in Salzburg church music are clearly reflected in Mozart's Vespers as well as in his Salzburg masses (Garretson, 1993). The conciseness required in the musical mass form by the Prince Archbishop also determined the compact structure of the vespers Psalms. Some of the texts are even superimposed in the contrapuntal passages. The contrapuntal writing in Psalm 112 (*Laudate pueri*) follows the Italian and South-German Tradition, in which this Psalm – undoubtedly because of its text – was generally composed in the *stile antico*. This Psalm contrasts with the other Vespers pieces, particularly the *Laudate Dominum*, a vivid example of touch. Mozart maintained the special status of the 112th Psalm, which was widely recognized in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The cyclical unity of the Vespers is rounded off by the *Magnificat*, a canticle whose key and spirit return to the musical concept of the opening Psalm. The general mood of the canticle, just like that of the various Psalms, is more strongly pronounced in K. 339 than in the first

Vespers. Owing to the liturgical situation in Salzburg, the two Vespers are based on the same texts. Likewise, the expressive character of the various Psalms, as well as their sequence within the works, are also the same. They differ in that K. 321 is more closely bound to the text, while K. 339 weaves a more subtle and expressive musical texture on the basis of the text and its interpretation. Each of the Psalm settings is complete in itself. They could be used not only cyclically in the Office, but also individually, some Psalms being sung polyphonically, while others were sung in plainsong or borrowed from the works of other composers (Keys, 1980).

The nucleus of the instrumentation for the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* consists of violins I and II, cello and bass, with organ and bassoon generally doubling the cello and string bass line, and trombones doubling alto, tenor and bass parts. Trumpets and timpani are used in the first and last movements only, largely in the capacity of rhythmic punctuation, and in the fifth movement the bassoon has an independent obbligato part.

The *colla parte* playing of the trombones is a tradition of long standing stemming from the cantata practice of the 17th century. It was also commonly found in Salzburg. However, a number of contemporary copies of parts, e. g. those of the Lambach monastery which contain Leopold Mozart's annotations, do not specify any trombone parts. When performing the works today, the trombones which do not have a part of their own in the surviving autographs can be omitted if need be, but at the cost of the characteristic tone and color (McCollam, 1995).

In the performance practice of Mozart's day, the bassoon played along with the basses; if it was intended to follow the violoncello part when the cello and double bass are divided, then this is indicated expressly. Neither the scores nor the parts suggest a division of the bassoons. They too can be omitted today if necessary, since the parts are often labeled "ad libitum."

Chapter 3

Musical Analysis of the Vespers

Three of the six movements of the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* (Nos. 1, 2, and 6), will be classified in this analysis as sonata form, due to the SHMRG parametric analysis, they can be divided into sections that clearly resemble exposition, development and recapitulation. However, it must be understood that not *all* of the elements of sonata form are present in any of these movements, and therefore the term is somewhat loosely applied here. Movement no. 3 takes its form from the text it sets. Movement no. 4 is for the most part a Baroque type fugue, and no. 5 is in the style of an operatic aria, but again none of these movements remain strictly within the confines of the form in question. The overall form of the *Vesperae* then, can be described as asymmetrical, and can be diagrammed as A, A, B, C, D, A.

SHMRG : Parametric Analysis System

I) Dixit (*see Appendix, p. 2, for Dixit score*)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	Tonality: C Major Medium: Chorus/Vocal Quartet/Orchestra
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	Significant Cadence Points: mm. 22; mm. 50; mm. 116; mm. 128; mm. 150; mm. 163-164 Functional Harmony: C-d-C-G-a-C-G-C
Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	Phrase Range: Phrases are grouped in ‘themes’ 6 to 10 measures with an antecedent phrase followed by a consequent phrase; as the movement evolves through Sonata Allegro Form, the phrases diminish anywhere from 4 to 11 measures all mimicking earlier stated themes Contour: Melody typically remains with Soprano voice and has multiple steps/leaps;

	Texture: fluctuates between homophony/polyphony and voice coupling throughout the movement for both choir and quartet
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 2+2;2+8;2+6;2+2
Growth: Formal Design	Sonata-Allegro Form Exposition: mm. 1-50 Development: mm. 51-128 Recapitulation: mm. 129-150 Coda: 151-164

II) Confitebor (*see Appendix, p. 13, for Confitebor score*)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	Tonality: Eb Major Medium: Chorus/Vocal Quartet/Orchestra
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	Significant Cadence Points: mm. 9; mm. 20-23; mm.35 ; mm. 57; mm. 75; mm. 88, mm. 101-102 Functional Harmony: Eb-Bb-c-Ab-g-Eb-Bb-Eb
Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	Phrase Range: Phrases are grouped in ‘themes’ in 9 measures with 4-5 measure transitions between themes. as the movement evolves through quasi Sonata Allegro Form, the phrases diminish to 6-8 measures all mimicking earlier stated themes except for new themes (in similar measure numbers) Contour: Melody typically remains with Soprano voices and has multiple steps/leaps; Also is imitative at parts with voices entering at 2-6 beats apart Texture: primarily homophonic for choral parts; polyphonic for quartet parts; few vocal imitation for choral sections
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 9+5; 6+3+7; 7+8+5; 4+3; 4+4
Growth: Formal Design	Sonata-Allegro Form (loose) Exposition: mm. 1-34 Development: mm. 35-80 Recapitulation: mm. 81-102

III) Beatus Vir (*see Appendix, p. 24, for Beatus score*)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	Tonality: G Major Medium: Chorus/Vocal Quartet/Orchestra
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	Significant Cadence Points: mm. 17; mm. 29; mm. 42; mm. 58; mm. 74; mm. 89; mm.103; mm. 114; mm. 125; mm. 139; mm. 153; mm. 166; mm. 177; mm. 190 Functional Harmony: G-C-G-D-e-c-g-G-e-d-C-G
Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	Phrase Range: Phrases are grouped in accordance with the text of the Psalm for which it is based (thus why it's a derivative of Sonata Allegro Form) Contour: Melody typically remains with Soprano voices and has multiple steps/leaps; Texture: fluctuates between homophony/polyphony and voice coupling throughout the movement
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 6+6; 7+5; 9+14 (3+6 & 7+7); 6+6; 6+6; 4+4; 6+6; 8+6; 5+5; 6+6; 5+5
Growth: Formal Design	Sonata-Allegro Form (<i>Derived</i>) Exposition: mm. 1-558 Middle Section: mm. 59-139 (<i>can NOT be called a development due to the music is NEW to the movement</i>) Recapitulation: mm. 140-190

IV): Laudate Pueri (*see Appendix, p. 38, for Laudate Pueri score*)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	Tonality: d minor Medium: Chorus/Orchestra
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	Significant Cadence Points: mm. 26; mm. 40; mm. 49; mm. 69; mm. 80; mm. 90; mm. 123; mm. 131; mm. 159; mm. 184 Functional Harmony: d-A-d-F-g-Bb-A-d

Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	<p>Phrase Range: grouped in fugal subject/answer style with countersubject-like motives</p> <p>Contour: Subject fluctuates voices and has multiple steps/leaps;</p> <p>Texture: Polyphonic with occasional voice double homophony</p>
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 4+4; 2+2 (fugal)7+7; 4+4
Growth: Formal Design	<p>Fugue/Sonata Movement Form</p> <p>Exposition: mm. 1-49</p> <p>Development: mm. 50-90</p> <p>Recapitulation: mm. 91-160</p> <p><i>**Loosely identified as the above sections, most are standard fugal expositions**</i></p>

V) Laudate Dominum (see Appendix, p. 48, for Laudate Dominum score)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	<p>Tonality: F Major</p> <p>Medium: Soprano Solo/Chorus/Orchestra</p>
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	<p>Significant Cadence Points: mm. 15; mm.24; mm. 32; mm. 42; mm. 53; mm. 61; mm69; mm 71</p> <p>Functional Harmony: F-C-F-C-F</p>
Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	<p>Phrase Range: da Capo Aria style, phrasing grouped at the dictation of the Aria with choral/orchestral accompaniment</p> <p>Contour: Melody typically remains with Soprano solo voice with very expressive range</p> <p>Texture: Soprano Solo, with Homophonic passages for chorus.</p>
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 4+4; 3+3; 1+1
Growth: Formal Design	<p>Da Capo Aria</p> <p>[Ritornello/A/Ritornello/A'/Ritornello]</p> <p>[B/B']</p> <p>[Da capo/coda]</p> <p>A Section : mm. 1-42</p> <p>B Section: mm. 43-62</p> <p>A Section: 63-72</p>

VI): Magnificat (*see Appendix p. 54, for Magnificat Score*)

Sound: Tonality(Mode/ Key); Medium	Tonality: C Major Medium: Chorus/Vocal Quartet/Orchestra
Harmony: Cadence points; Functional Harmony	Significant Cadence Points: mm. 5; mm. 10; mm. 18; mm. 26; mm. 33; mm. 47; mm. 53; mm. 58; mm. 74; mm. 81; mm 96; mm. 100 Functional Harmony: C-G-C-D-G-A-F-C-G-C
Melody: Phrase Range; Contour; Texture	Phrase Range: The opening phrase (introduction) is 5 measures long and represents a fanfare; The second part, as in the 1 st movement, phrases are grouped in ‘themes’ 6 to 10 measures with an antecedent phrase followed by a consequent phrase; as the movement evolves through quasi Sonata Allegro Form, the phrases diminish anywhere from 4 to 11 measures all mimicking earlier stated themes Contour: Melody typically remains with Soprano voices and has multiple steps/leaps; Texture: fluctuates between homophony/polyphony for both chorus and vocal quartet
Rhythm: Phrase Length	Phrase Length: 3+2; 4+6; 4+4; 6+7; 3+2; 4+4+4; 3+4; 6+5; 5+5
Growth: Formal Design	Sonata-Allegro Form (with introduction) Introduction: mm. 1-5 Exposition: mm. 6-33 Development: mm. 34-53 Recapitulation: mm. 54-81 Coda: 82-100

Chapter 4

Concluding Considerations

Vesperae solennes de Confessore, K. 339 is a work of splendid beauty, grace, and dignity. The work requires a conductor that is dedicated to musical excellence, and is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve this excellence. The teaching methodology that would be required to ensure integrity to not only the choral music of W.A. Mozart, but to the art of Choral/Orchestral music would need to be one of thorough rehearsal preparation. The key element for an equipped choral conductor is the well prepared, studied, and marked choral and orchestral score. The next essential element would be a commitment to diction to avoid diction problems. The diction of this work, since the Latin is unfamiliar outside of the Gloria Patri, is essential for the singers to embrace as a tool to help them master the notes. Count speaking, or rhythmic chanting of the text, ensures that the singers are equipped with the syllabic stresses required to perform the work. The melody and harmony of the music also can prove challenging, due to the wide vocal range demanded of the singers. All singers, no matter if the event is collaboration or singers from one ensemble must commit to these two important items to ensure a pleasurable music making experience.

Arranging an orchestra for this work is a very accessible task, if budgetary support is present. Depending on the geography of the ensemble(s) performing the work, it is recommended that a director utilize their own faculty/personnel to supply the orchestra; however it is quite acceptable to reach out to other areas and institutions to hire quality players. Musical excellence should be the center of the conductors planning schema for the performance from the inception of the work, to its final performance.

Conclusion

From the preceding chapters we can see that in his setting of the *Vesperae solennes de Confessore*, rather than the entire form of liturgical Vespers, Mozart set the *ordinary* parts of the service: the five psalms, which were used each Sunday, and the *Magnificat*, a part of every Vespers service. This is the same practice composers follow when composing a Mass setting. As to the music itself, only in the most general terms can it be speculated that Mozart may have been influenced by traditional church music of his time.

What Mozart did in his setting of the *Solemn Vespers* was simply to follow the compositional practices of his time. This is especially clear in his choice of forms for the individual movements: three with influence of symphonic sonata form, one taking its form from its text, one a predominantly *stile antico* fugue, and one in the style of a beautiful Italian aria. This blend of the conservative and modern, plus the inclusion of instrumental forms in choral works was a common hallmark of Austrian composers in the Classic period. Furthermore, the brevity of the movements as well as the virtual absence of text repetition reflects the influence of Mozart's employer, Count Colloredo.

There is no question that the piece was performed as part of actual liturgical services in Mozart's day, not as a concert piece. The various prayers, antiphons and readings not included in his composition would simply have been chanted or read in the usual fashion. Today the possibility of such a service is limited. For one thing, today the Office Hours are prayed regularly only in religious communities or privately by individuals. For another, although the piece is concise, it is challenging to any size choir, and requires the same amount of time and care in preparation for performance.

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