

2010-2011 Colton Review Literary Winners

On the eve of Celebrating Student Achievement Day, the Herald would like to celebrate and congratulate the winning literary pieces from its Meredith's literary magazine The Colton Review. Below the pieces are printed in full or in excerpt. The design of the magazine will be revealed on Celebrating Student Achievement Day during the Colton Review Reveal from 1:15 to 2 pm in the Carlyle Campbell Library. There the authors of these award-winning pieces will do readings of each work.

Poetry

First place, Michelle Metivier, "In parallel:"

When I was little,
before the world was made,
I stretched up on tip toes.
Like when I thought my grandma didn't love me,
like lying in bed that night.
When the light came in, sideways and white,
and mum gave me seconds,
and my sister stole my favorite toy.

When I was medium,
I learned to play the cello.
or rather, I found friends.
And I made a dream catcher for a boy,
and we touched palms.
I turned several corners that day,
noticing that you never go back to the beginning.

Between then, I startled,
slowly realized that all the people,
I've ever really loved, are dead.
And the numbers grow each day,
while mine drip steadily,
like rusted well water, brassy.

And a bit ago I was my mum,
tiny and permed and jubilant.
When I ran through airports,
and harassed my professors,
and made punctures when I walked.
I stooped low, occasionally,
and kissed old Mexican cheeks.

When I was withered,
a few lives ago,
I held leaves to my lips,
and wrote big words in the dirt
and prayed for knowledge,
of the curvature of the earth,
And hoped for rest, nearby.

Second Place, Meredith Fraser, "Cutlery"

Our lives have turned into kitchen knives
Sharpened and poised
To slice into the state of our relationship
That I cooked us for dinner
Our hands each wavering above our dinner forks
One bite away from tasting its decay
It all started with a folded napkin
The one you handed me to wipe away the stains of all
my dashed hopes
Too little too late
It's hard to wipe a surface clean with a soiled napkin
We ended with a spoon
Each of us scooped out the bowls in our heads
Until we scraped the bottom
You left with a rinse and a towel dry
One crusty speck left to stubbornly remind

Prose

First Place, Ashleigh Phillips, "Tanya" (an excerpt)

On the day we met, she told me she was named after the sexiest country music star that ever lived, and that she knew how to fire a gun, and that she was one hundred percent Cherokee. My mama said I was named after no one. We didn't have a gun in our house. I had blonde hair and blue eyes. I was so jealous of her that I asked God to forgive me when I said my prayers at night.

It was May. I would turn eight that August. She had just turned seven and was two heads shorter than me. When she invited me to her house for the first time, her daddy had just started fixing up the balcony. It looked out over Main Street. Her house was a tall, gray Victorian. It was the only Victorian on Main Street that had bits of lacy gingerbread trim missing. The wooden pieces were lying in the front yard like tired oleander blooms. The house was built when the town was booming. I had seen a picture of it in a brief history book of the county that someone had put together with care. The picture was black and white, but the caption below it said the house used to be painted robin's egg blue.

Inside her house, none of the windows had blinds or curtains. Instead, stained cotton sheets tried to block the sun. There was only one window in the living room and it didn't have a sheet. Her grandmother always sat there, pushed back in a recliner in the corner. Sunlight fell in on the left side of her face. The light made the floating specks of dead dust shine. With her heavy breaths, the sparkles would sway back and forth, circling her. Sometimes I'd make my way though the tides

of swirling shimmer to see how deep the wrinkles went around her eyes. When I was that close to her, I'd ask her grandmother about animal spirits. She had thick arms.

Her mama had big hips and talked sassy. Her daddy had a moustache and killed things. One time he killed a deer and her mama cooked it. She sneaked into the fridge because her daddy would yell when she opened it without his permission. She got up on her tip toes and pulled out a long Tupperware container. She slapped the meat in my hand and told me to eat with my fingers. She told me to not think about Bambi, just hush and eat it. I thought it tasted a little like beef, but it was dry.

Second Place, Amy Hruby, "Love of the Game?"

You see, there are really only three options. When you're on third base with one out left and a hitter who isn't your pinch your choices are pretty damn slim. I mean, you could run as soon as it cracks. Swish, whip, smack and bolt home. You might make it all the way. Pretty equal chances they say: 50% you get in, 50% you're out of luck. I've never been much for bets though. Don't have the head for numbers or the legs for risks. You've got to split too fast on the crack to get home. I'm pretty sure I'd get called out before I was safe.

Second choice they say is to stay on third--seems pretty simple to me. Third's a nice base and all--remember the beginning and see the end. Plus you get lots of action on third. First is too early and second's where you get comfortable. Third is where everything happens--but too many people always looking over to see what you're doing. That'll make you uncomfortable pretty fast. Who wants everybody analyzing all their steps? Stickin' to third may be safe, but it really won't last. Gotta get out of there eventually.

Nobody ever mentions the third choice, but I'm thinking it's the original one. Stuck on third--not fast enough to get home, not happy enough to stay--why doesn't anybody just leave the game? You can get to third anytime. A solid hit with a quick jog, a nice dash and a daring slide--a few glorious seconds--you're there. But then you're stuck. Can't stay 'cause it's third. Can't leave, you won't make it. Who needs the finish anyway? It only ends the game. After a bit sittin' on third, who really needs the game at all? You can't run away from her. You can't stick with her. They all know what you're thinking. Damn, they all know what I'm thinking. Gotta leave the game, because...you see...I'm pretty sure I don't love her anymore.

Swish. Whip. Smack.

Ask Gigi

Dear Gigi,

I started seeing this girl who told me she wasn't ready for a relationship and that she just wanted to hook up. We both agreed, but I started to get too close and attached over the course of the three months we spent together. I truly see myself with her forever, so I told her how I felt, but now she repeatedly tells me that I'm suffocating her and that I need to back off. Should I give her the space she needs just for awhile or forget about her altogether?

Sincerely,
Overly Obsessed

Dear Overly Obsessed,

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but since you are the one who betrayed the confines of the social contract by pursuing a relationship in lieu of a casual fling, you are ultimately the one responsible for correcting the issue. In this case, the easiest action to take would be to remove yourself from the situation. What's hard about "just hooking up," a phenomenon that has become much more common than formal "dating" in our generation, is the danger that one person ends up falling more in lust (or in love) than the other person as a result of all the physical fervor. In both heterosexual and homosexual relationships, problems arise when the boundary lines blur. Since you already told your girl how you felt and she clearly wasn't receptive to your feelings, give her the space she has requested and don't talk to her again anytime soon; nothing good will be gained by stalking her. Let her come to you, and your chances may improve for a romantic future beyond just fooling around.

Yours truly,
Gigi