Blurring the lines between the Midwest and the world.
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### break away books

are novels.

are short stories.

are memoirs.

are creative nonfiction.

eschew neat and tidy endings.

are positioned on a national stage while retaining a Midwestern flavor.

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Series Editor: Michael Martone

We are currently seeking submissions for our Break Away Books series. Please review the submission and manuscript guidelines on our website ([http://tinyurl.com/iup-guidelines](http://tinyurl.com/iup-guidelines)) and direct all inquiries to Sarah Jacobi: [sjacobi@indiana.edu](mailto:sjacobi@indiana.edu).
THANKS TO THAT RAKISH ITALIC LEAN, Break Away Books and its streamlined logo of going take their cues from some very grand and some very Hoosier mythology. The slant rhyme and the racing bike tip us off to the iconic 1979 movie Breaking Away with its telling and very American conflict between staying and going. The movie speaks to that sensation of being stuck in place and going nowhere fast while at the same time being equipped with the means to move that will distance oneself from people and places one holds most dear. All the titles in the Break Away Books series worry this paradoxical dilemma of constant mobility verses restless stability. And the books accomplish this using a variety of literary genres—the novel, the memoir, the short story, the essay. These are re-imagined in innovative forms and customized styles to reconcile the notion that as Midwesterners we find ourselves in the heart of the country at the same time we feel ourselves to be in the middle of nowhere. The writers of Break Away Books draft their work in the grand tradition of the region—Vonnegut, Dreiser, Potter, Anderson, Tarkington—but then discover in each new work startling ways to lean forward, gear up, break away in ways that will leave the reader breathless.

MICHAEL MARTONE, Series Editor,
Break Away Books

Photo by Janine Crawley
“This book is funny as hell, and beneath its humor are contemporary grotesques who deepen our understanding of the human condition, making us look unflinchingly at the darker side of human nature and human loneliness, that universally felt alienation common to isolated, repressed Midwestern towns and therefore to almost any small town anywhere in the world.”

—Lex Williford, author of Macauley’s Thumb

Winesburg, Indiana
A Fork River Anthology
EDITED BY MICHAEL MARTONE AND BRYAN FURUNESS

In the mythical town of Winesburg, Indiana, there lives a cleaning lady who can conjure up the ghost of Billy Sunday, a lascivious holy man with an unusual fetish and a burgeoning flock, a park custodian who collects the scat left by aliens, and a night janitor learning to live with life’s mysteries, including the zombies in the cafeteria. Winesburg, Indiana, is a town full of stories of plans made and destroyed, of births and unexpected deaths, of remembered pasts and unexplored presents told to the reader by as interesting a cast of characters as one is likely to find in small town America. Brought to life by a lively group of Indiana writers, Winesburg, Indiana, is a place to discover something of what it means to be alive in our hyperactive century from stories that are deeply human, sometimes melancholy, and often damned funny.

MICHAEL MARTONE is Professor of English at the University of Alabama–Tuscaloosa. He is author of many books including *Four for a Quarter: Fictions* and *Double-wide: Collected Fiction of Michael Martone* (IUP, 2007). Martone was the winner of the 2013 National Indiana Authors Award.

BRYAN FURUNESS teaches at Butler University and is author of *The Lost Episodes of Revie Bryson.*

July 2015
232 pp.
paper 978-0-253-01688-1 $17.00
The Town of Winesburg operates under the weak-mayor system, always has. I am the city manager, a creature of the council charged by the council, five elected members, to keep the trash trucks running on time. There aren’t too many other municipal services to attend to. The fire department is volunteer. The county provides the police. There are the sewers of the town, and I maintain them myself and conduct the daily public tours. The sewers of Winesburg are vast, channeling one branch of the Fork River through underground chambers and pools roofed with vaulted ceilings tiled with ceramic-faced bricks. The sewers were the last public works project of the Wabash and Erie Canal before the canal bankrupted the state of Indiana. I mentioned tours but there aren’t that many tourists interested in sewers. I walk the tunnels alone, my footsteps on the paving stones echoing. The drip, drip, drip of the seeping water. The rapid splashing over the riprap. There is the landfill as well to manage, the heart-shaped hole where the fossiliferous limestone of the sewers was quarried, punched in the tableflat topography of a field north of Winesburg. We are located on the drained sandy bed of an ancient inland sea. Sea birds from the Great Lakes find their way to the pit, circle and dive down below the rim, emerging with beaks stuffed with human hair, for their nests, I guess. Indiana has complicated laws concerning the disposal of cut hair. Much of the state transships its hair here. A thriving cottage industry persists, that of locket making, using the spent anonymous hair to simulate the locks of a departed loved one. The lockets are afterthoughts, fictional keepsakes. The locket makers can be seen rummaging through the rubbish of the dump, collecting bags of damp felt. Winesburg was the first city in the country to install the emergency 911 telephone number. J. Edward Roush, member of the House of Representatives, was our congressman and was instrumental in establishing the system. I manage that too, taking a shift, at night usually, in the old switching room, to answer the calls of the citizens of Winesburg who more often than not do have something emerging. Usually not an acute emergency but more a chronic unrest. An anxiousness. Not a heart attack but a heartache. I listen. The switches, responding to the impulse of someone somewhere dialing, tsk and sigh and click. I manage. I am the city manager.
Sightings
Stories

B. J. HOLLARS

2014 AAUP PUBLIC AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARY SELECTION

B. J. Hollars’s short story collection offers ten thematically linked tales, all of which are out to subvert conventional notions of the Midwestern coming-of-age story. The stories feature an assemblage of Bigfoot believers, Civil War reenactors, misidentified Eskimos, and grief-stricken clowns, among other outcasts incapable of finding a place in their worlds. In these marvelous stories, we can join a family on a very 21st-century trip along the Oregon Trail, watch as a boy builds a brother from a vacuum cleaner, follow a sandlot baseball team as it struggles to overcome an invasion by its Native American neighbors, and experience how a high school basketball squad takes to Sasquatch roaming its court. This genre-bending collection charts a bizarre pathway through the thickets of life on the road to adulthood. Pushing the limits of realism, these stories capture the peculiar rites of passage of growing up Midwestern.

B. J. HOLLARS is author of two award-winning nonfiction books, Thirteen Loops: Race, Violence and the Last Lynching in America and Opening the Doors: The Desegregation of the University of Alabama and the Fight for Civil Rights in Tuscaloosa. He is Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

180 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00838-1 $16.00

“This collection masterfully shares stories about coming of age in the Midwest and demonstrates the author’s skill with well-crafted prose, true-to-life characters, and reflects on the time in one’s life that is worth nostalgia, even with all its anguish and social dysfunction.”

—Los Angeles Review of Books

Book Trailer
It was the summer of 1975, and we were supposed to be feeling good. Gerald Ford had just put an end to the war in Vietnam, and even more exciting, through the hail and the sideways rain, our hero, Bobby Unser, had somehow managed to be the first to limp his way past the checkered flag in Indy. Far less impressive was my own recent limping—completion of the seventh grade, an accomplishment whose only reward was leaving me stranded somewhere in the foggy terrain of my crushing adolescence, another casualty in a long line of those already infected.

Through no fault of their own, boys who had once been stars on their little league teams suddenly found themselves stretched and refashioned, stricken with nicknames like “string bean” and “crater face” with no signs of letting up. One morning they woke wholly dispossessed of coordination—their feet suddenly replaced with clown’s feet, their legs the legs of giraffes.

Our symptoms were no different than those faced by others our age, leading us to believe that our shared suffering was likely the result of some top-secret government conspiracy (someone had poisoned the water supply!), leaving us susceptible to growing older.

At the end of the school year, several of us began passing around a dog-eared copy of Stephen King’s Carrie, which we devoured partially for its pornography but mostly for its self-help. We took refuge in Carrie’s predicament, basking in her unbridled displays of strength. Even we boys who knew nothing of the mysteries of menstruation reveled in the possibility that we, too—while enduring the curse of our fading youth—might uncover our own secret powers.

We lived in a place called Indian Village, a small neighborhood constructed on the fringes of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Small, ranch style houses butted up alongside one another in an array of lime green and tangerine orange. They were modest homes—screen doors and back porches—with bird-covered mailboxes punctuating the property lines. The only characteristic that distinguished our neighborhood from the next (aside from the street names identified by Indian tribe) was the canvas teepee displayed in the grassy center of the neighborhood. We never really spent time there (much preferring our summer days dedicated to the icy waters of the Pocahontas Pool or the baseball field of Indian Village Elementary), but our neighborhood’s theme took on an entirely new meaning when the rental truck screeched to a halt on the corner of Kickapoo Drive.

I didn’t know anything about real, live Indians except for what the movies taught me—all that business about feathers and bows and arrows. And thanks, in part, to an R-rated flick I should never have seen, I’d also learned a thing or two about scalping; how for generations, Indians’ bone-handled blades had sliced over the still-warm bodies of white men, sawing across hairlines with one hand while pulling flesh tight with the other.

This gruesome image returned to me as soon as the tall, quiet man with the jet-black hair stepped from the rental truck. He threw open the doors and gave two sharp whistles, releasing his tribe into our otherwise near-perfect lives.
After losing her husband and daughter in an auto accident, 42-year-old Emma flies to Paris, discovers she has a twin brother whose existence she had not known about, and learns that her birth parents weren’t the Americans who raised her, but a White Russian film star of the 1920s and a French Stalinist. A story about identity and the shaping function of art, *My Life as a Silent Movie* presents a vividly rendered world and poses provocative questions on the relationship of art to life.

**JESSE LEE KERCHEVAL** is author of 12 books including *Brazil*, winner of the Ruthanne Wiley Memorial Novella Award; the poetry collection *Cinema Muto*, winner of the Crab Orchard Open Selection Award; and *The Alice Stories*, winner of the Prairie Schooner Fiction Book Prize. She teaches in the creative writing program at the University of Wisconsin.

220 pp.
paper 978-0-253-01024-7 $22.00

“In this sharply drawn chronicle of grief, a woman reassembles her identity through her father’s art and her brother’s tenuous offer of a new life. . . . Kercheval delves deeply into the rawest of emotions and the most wrenching of choices, richly detailing each twist and turn with grace.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*
I am on a plane looking down at the clouds. It could be any country below me, any ocean. Or at least the clouds let me pretend that’s true. I remember the first time I looked down from an airplane. I was a little girl, and I was crying because I was leaving France for America. I didn’t want to go. I also remember flying back to Paris with my husband and daughter, although that time my daughter was the one who sat by the window and discovered the clouds. And she was laughing. The trip was a family vacation and nothing more. I am trying to pretend I am still on that flight. It isn’t working. But I am going someplace, something I thought I might not do again. I am on my way, I hope, to find family. Family I did not know I had. Living family. But this story does not really begin on a plane. I don’t want to deceive you. It started three weeks ago. With two deaths.

Three weeks ago at six o’clock, I was in the kitchen cooking dinner. It was February, which meant it was already dark. The doorbell rang and sent me running down the stairs two at a time to answer. I thought it was the UPS guy at the door trying to get me to take some electronic gadget that my neighbors—lawyers who were never home—had ordered as a treat for themselves in compensation for their busy lives.

But it was the neighbor. When I opened the door, she grabbed my arm above my elbow, like we were about to have an argument and she was afraid I might punch her in the face. “There’s been an accident, Emma,” she said. “I saw your car in the intersection—just now, on my way home. I talked to the police.”

My car, I realized, our Subaru wagon, had my husband in it. Our daughter, eight, was in it, too, on her way home from her violin lesson.

My neighbor shook my arm.

My husband and daughter had been in the car. Now my neighbor, holding my arm tight, told me they were dead. My daughter who had played the violin. Her dad.

Just like that—I had a life, and then it was gone. I think of this part as a violent cartoon. The neighbor’s words hit me like a two by four across my stomach, then smack! on my head. Or maybe something less Warner Brothers, more bloody, more Japanese. A sword in the gut, then swish! A long flying blow to the neck, and my head tumbles through the air and lands in the snow bank just beyond our front steps.

Except that would have been a blessing. To be dead. To be dead like everyone else I loved in this world. In one minute, I went from the forty-two-year-old mom of a happy—I swear to God we were happy—family to a woman who wanted nothing in this life except to be done with it.
“Fans of Jeffrey Eugenides or Tatiana de Rosnay will appreciate her ability to capture the spirit of a time and place while asking serious social questions. However politically minded, though, this poignant and stirring novel is at its root a moving and passionate love story.”

—Booklist

An American Tune
A Novel
BARBARA SHOUP

While reluctantly accompanying her husband and daughter to freshman orientation at Indiana University, Nora Quillen hears someone call her name, a name she has not heard in more than 25 years. Not even her husband knows that back in the ’60s she was Jane Barth, a student deeply involved in the antiwar movement. An American Tune moves back and forth in time, telling the story of Jane, a girl from a working-class family who fled town after she was complicit in a deadly bombing, and Nora, the woman she became, a wife and mother living a quiet life in northern Michigan. An achingly poignant account of a family crushed under the weight of suppressed truths, An American Tune illuminates the irrevocability of our choices and how those choices come to compose the tune of our lives.

BARBARA SHOUP is author of six novels and co-author of two books about the creative process. Her short fiction, poetry, essays, and interviews have appeared in The Writer and the New York Times travel section and her young adult novels, Wish You Were Here and Stranded in Harmony, were selected as American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults. She was the winner of the 2012 Regional Indiana Authors Award.

328 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00742-1 $19.00
Nora Quillin sat on a bench in People’s Park, considering what was lost. The Book Nook was gone and, with it, long, rainy afternoons browsing the cluttered shelves, breathing in the smell of paper and ink. The Oxford Shop, Redwood and Ross, the Peddler were gone, and all the beautiful blue and yellow oxford shirts, the matching Villager skirts and sweaters. Knee socks, the warmth of them on bitter winter mornings.

The SAE house was gone, its big lawn, where you could always count on seeing at least a few cute guys throwing a football, was now a parking lot; the old stadium, the spinning silver spokes of Little 500 bicycle wheels on its cinder track had vanished into green space. There was a Burger King in the Commons, and the Gables, where a young Hoagy Carmichael once sat in a back booth dreaming music, had been gutted and transformed into a Roly Poly Sandwich Shop.

People’s Park itself was nothing like it had been in 1970, when students claimed the site after the storefront buildings that once stood there were razed in a fire. In the spirit of Berkeley’s People’s Park, they brought shovels, lumber, paint, flats of vegetables and flowers, and set out to shape the half-block of mud. Anyone could plant anything, they said. There’d be benches and tables, a playground for children, kiosks announcing every kind of happening. It would be a friendly place, where you could listen to music, fly kites, blow bubbles. Get high. That same spring, Nora remembered—the night Nixon announced he was sending troops into Cambodia—some of the protestors marching from Dunn Meadow toward the courthouse downtown had picked up rocks unearthed from the digging and thrown them, breaking windows in some of the shops on Kirkwood Street.

The warm spring night came back to her, the smell of newly turned earth mingling with sweat and patchouli and marijuana. Chanting overlaid by shouts and laughter, the sound of glass shattering—Tom grabbing a drunk fraternity boy and wrestling a rock from his hand.

But she wasn’t going to think about Tom. There was no use in it—and, besides, it was Claire’s turn now. Soon her daughter would step into a whole new life here, as she herself had done so many years before.
“*What This River Keeps* bears comparison to the best work of Steinbeck—in this case we’re given the vivid portrayal of the common working men and women of rural Indiana juxtaposed against great forces, without pity or hope, but without true defeat, though they may well lose all in the end.”

—Kent Haruf, author of *Plainsong*

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**What This River Keeps**

*A Novel*

**GREG SCHWIPPS**

In the rolling hills of southern Indiana, an elderly couple copes with the fear that their river bottom farm—the only home they’ve ever known—will be taken from them through an act of eminent domain. The river flowing through their land, where the old man has fished nearly every day of his life, may be dammed to form a reservoir. Their son, meanwhile, sinks deeper into troubles of his own, struggling to determine his place in a new romantic relationship and the duty he owes to his family’s legacy. *What This River Keeps* is a beautiful and heartfelt novel that reflects upon what it means to love a place and a family, and the sometimes staggering cost of that love.

**GREG SCHWIPPS** is author (with Peter Kaminsky) of *Fishing for Dummies* and his short fiction has appeared in *Esquire*. In 2010, he was the winner of the Emerging Indiana Authors Award. He teaches creative writing at DePauw University.

350 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00236-5 $22.00
THE TWO OLD MEN slept on the bank of the dirty flooded river, and from above they would’ve appeared as dead men-corpses washed ashore and left to rot in the coming sun. The river, swollen and thick in the predawn light, looked capable of carrying bodies along with its load of sticks, spinning logs and bottles. Here and there floated a child’s ball, a doll’s head. The men were not yet dead, but the morning’s heat hadn’t arrived to revive them from their jagged sleep. In a small depression in the sand between their prone forms smoke crept from a chunk of wood. Both men lay partially covered by sleeping bags, and they reposed with pieces of clothing knotted under their heads. They slept as men who had spent many nights on riverbanks. They slept on the sand that the river had carried for miles and for centuries and they slept on the earth as if they belonged to it.

Even in his sleep Frank was aware of his spine. He opened his eyes and his back woke up with him, and its pain yawned and grew. Above him was the soft gray light of early morning. His backbone felt as cold and dead as a lead pipe, like rigor mortis had set in and fused the vertebrae together. The pain hadn’t been a dream. Waking up to it was like feeling the first cold splashes of rain from a storm that had been thundering just over the ridge for hours—a confirmation.

Clouds of mist hung over the current, a ghost river flowing. Above the woods around them the fog wasn’t there, only the pale light of sunrise, but wherever the water ran the mist rose. He lay on his back and studied the sky. It was always strange to be given sight again, after staring into darkness all night long. But now different birds called. He’d been paying so much attention to this particular place it was as if he’d never known another life. Maybe he’d been here, on this riverbank, forever. Maybe he didn’t have a wife, a son, a farm? Of course he did. It was time to get up again.

He looked over at Chub. Across the fire—it was still smoldering in the heavy dew—Chub lay stretched out like a side of beef. His mouth hung open and a cloud of gnats suspended over his face. Some were walking across his cheek, and Frank wondered how anyone could sleep through such a distraction. He took a hand out from his sleeping bag, picked up a smooth pebble, and threw it in Chub’s direction. It hit his bag with a soft pop. Chub slept on. Frank threw another pebble and this one hit him in his thick neck. Chub’s eyes opened slowly and deliberately and a giant hand came up and wiped at the gnats around his eyes and hairy brows.
Reply All
Stories
ROBIN HEMLEY

Reply All, the third collection of award-winning and widely anthologized short stories by Robin Hemley, takes a humorous, edgy, and frank look at the human art of deception and self-deception. A father accepts, without question, the many duplicate saint relics that appear in front of his cave everyday; a translator tricks Magellan by falsely translating a local chief’s words of welcome; an apple salesman a long way from home thinks he’s fallen in love; a search committee believes in its own nobility by hiring a minority writer; a cheating couple broadcast their affair to an entire listserv; a talk show host interviews the dead and hopes to learn their secrets. The ways in which humans fool themselves are infinite, and while these stories illustrate this sad fact in sometimes excruciating detail, the aim is not to skewer the misdirected, but to commiserate with them and blush in recognition.

ROBIN HEMLEY is Director of the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa and author of eight books. His essays and fiction have been published in the New York Times, New York Magazine, and the Chicago Tribune.

World excluding British Commonwealth (minus Canada) and Europe
218 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00180-1 $19.00

“In an exciting return to fiction, Hemley, touching and funny, creates sympathetic characters who are deeply flawed but just as deeply human.”

—Booklist
“HOOT ME IF I EVER GET OLD,” E.K. told Stribley as they left the taxi and entered one of the clubs that lined both sides of the street. The place was called Dodge City. To Stribley, E.K. was already old, even grandfatherly in bearing, but he had a youthful smile and energetic eyes.

They entered a cavernous room bursting with strobe lights briefly illuminating small packs of white men and Asians facing a stage where women were dressed in cowgirl outfits. Some of the women wore white hats and some black, and all had holsters. Some had their tops off, some more than that. Some wore only holsters. All wore stiletto cowboy boots. That’s where the Western theme ended.

They sat at an empty table and a swarm of girls from the stage and all corners of the room milled around them, three finally taking seats beside them. A waitress appeared and E.K. ordered San Miguel beers for both of them and the three women ordered tequilas and ice teas.

E.K. considered Stribley one of the firm’s more promising younger associates—that’s what he told him when he offered him the opportunity to come along. E.K. had done his mission in the Philippines thirty years ago and had been coming back ever since. He looked to be in his late fifties now, or early sixties; he still had a full head of hair, and a beard streaked in three different colors: white, silver, and a smidgeon of black. The beard was well trimmed, but it was nearly the length of a prophet’s. In Salt Lake City, E.K. seemed the model of propriety. He drank occasionally but he didn’t smoke and the harshest curse he uttered in public was “Heck!” At the company picnic, E.K. had teared up when speaking of his experience volunteering for Habitat for Humanity.

“What are we doing here?” Stribley asked presently.

“Staying awake. Staying alive. Getting on local time.”

Every ten minutes, the women were served drinks and a waitress came over and asked E.K. to sign a slip, which he did each time, studying the slip of paper scrupulously before signing it.

Stribley’s girl, if you could call her that—she seemed to think she was his girl—hung on his shoulder and smiled at him. He suspected she didn’t speak English.

They had meetings scheduled tomorrow morning. “Hit the ground running” was E.K.’s motto. All Stribley could imagine was the feel of a pillow cushioning his head. “Shouldn’t we be up early?” Stribley asked.

“Early? Hell, it is early and we’re up. Relax. You’re half a world away from all your worries.”
The Last Studebaker
A Novel
ROBIN HEMLEY

In 1963, when Lois Kulwicki’s father loses his job at Studebaker along with hundreds of other workers, he acts as if he has just been promoted. He buys a new car (the only non-Studebaker he’s ever purchased) and takes his family on vacation. On the way home, Mom dumps Dad at a Stuckey’s, and that’s the last they see of him.

Thirty years later, Lois has a family of her own, as fractured as her childhood family. Divorced but still living with her ex, she decides to move out with her two daughters and start over but then a stranger named Henry enters their lives. Out of this ersatz family, Lois tries to recover something of what she lost, beginning with a search for her abandoned father. The Last Studebaker is a warmly comic tale of lives changed forever, after the last Studebaker rolled off of the assembly line.

ROBIN HEMLEY is Director of the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa and author of ten books. His essays and fiction have been published in the New York Times, New York Magazine, and the Chicago Tribune.

258 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00012-5 $19.00

“Robin Hemley has infused just the right amount of humor and pathos into his exploration of how people discover and maintain connections in these bewildering times.”
—Cathy A. Coleman, New York Times Book Review

Podcast
YOU COULD HAVE PAVED your driveway with Willy’s voice, which was smoother than dirt, but not as even as asphalt. The gravel in it made him sound naturally surly, even when he said hello.

Lois did her best to ignore him. After all, he was her ex-husband. But here they were, rocking like good friends on the porch swing, drinking whiskey out of paper cups, the dogs resting at their feet. Willy drank more than his share while Lois stared into the grayness of the dirt road in front of their yard.

In the field across the road, a ruby light blinked on top of the radio tower, and somewhere overhead she could hear the buzzing of a small plane. Her head felt soggy with liquor. Her thoughts wouldn’t focus, but banged away at her forehead like the bugs batting the screen door. She could hardly pay attention to what Willy said.

She and Willy had finally come to an understanding. More like Willy’s understanding. He’d told her she had to be out of the house in a week because “my girl wants to move in and there’s not room enough for two in the barn.” Willy had set up his own bachelor quarters out there.

“That’s not true,” Lois said. “I know of at least two empty stalls. And there’s plenty of hay.”

Willy laughed. “Afraid she wouldn’t like that,” he said. “She’s not a horse. The last horse I dated was back in high school. Velma Parkinson.”

“Velma,” Lois said.

“It shouldn’t surprise you,” he said.

“It doesn’t,” she said, but it did. “It’s your house. You can do what you like.”

“You still have money left, so that shouldn’t worry you.”

“It doesn’t,” she said.

What worried her was the coldness in his voice, like she was an employee being terminated, like there was nothing personal, but he just wasn’t turning a profit.

“You were the one who wanted this in the first place,” he said.

“I know.”

Lois surveyed the heap of Studebakers in front of the barn. Willy had been reconditioning the cars for the last seventeen years. Reconditioning in the sense that a wrecked ship eventually becomes indistinguishable from a coral reef. His aims seemed pretty hazy. He didn’t actually want to fix or sell them, though that’s what he claimed. Sheer accumulation seemed to be the goal. Willy was the king of rusted Studebakers. At least thirty of them sat out there, and none in one piece. Sometimes she thought he wanted to see how much of an eyesore he could create in one lifetime.
The Swan
A Novel

JIM COHEE

Ten-year-old Aaron Cooper has witnessed the death of his younger sister, Pookie, and the trauma has left him unwilling to speak. Aaron copes with life’s challenges by disappearing into his own imagination, envisioning being captain of the Kon Tiki, driving his sled in the snowy Klondike, and tiger hunting in India. He is guarded by secret friends like deposed Hungarian Count Blurtz Shemshaian and Blurtz’s wonder dog, Nipper, who protect him from the creature from the Black Lagoon—who hides in Aaron’s closet at night. The tales he constructs for himself, the real life stories he is witness to, and his mother’s desperate efforts to bring her son back from the brink, all come to a head at an emotional family dinner. Set in Indianapolis in 1957, The Swan is a fictional memoir about enduring love and the weighty nature of mortality.

JIM COHEE is a freelance writer, based in San Francisco, who has written for Lonely Planet. The Swan is his first novel.

136 pp.
paper 978-0-253-22343-2 $14.95

“Alternately funny, entertaining, and heartbreaking, The Swan is a fictional memoir about love, death and what a family can—and cannot—endure.”
—Publishers Weekly
I ran the path around the swing set in the side yard, ran with pinwheeling arms, my mind gone in dreams of baseball triumphs, and I supplied the sound for my phantom radio, the exhilarated play-by-play and, behind that, the intergalactic whisper of amazed and joyful fans—a whisper, but huge. Pentecostal frenzies gripped the stadium when I snapped fly balls out of the air in right field and threw runners out at home. I also recoiled from the blows of boxers while I ran, then counterpunched and pow! I decked them and circled the ring with raised arms—my manager wept—while thousands in darkened halls stood and cheered.

I leapt from couch arms and crashed a million times better than anyone in the world. I could slide in stocking feet on floors farther than anyone, and I could skate on the ice at Holcomb Gardens in tennis shoes and play hockey with a broom. I could fold myself behind couches and under beds and never be found.

I rescued people. I fell through a million bolts of cloth into black space in dreams. I caught spies. I wrestled snakes. Drove dog teams. Sailed rolling shark-infested seas on my log raft—winds whined like electric motors in the shrouds. I shot leaping tigers out of black air at midnight while pitiful Indian villagers wept in fear. I persuaded a Greek goddess to rescue Christ while grasshoppers buzzed in Muncie cornfields.

I laughed at fate. I saved the world. I knew all about my double on another planet, whose name was Noraa Repooc.

After my little sister, Pookie, died in the car crash, I developed a weird astronomical theory about my family. They weren’t mine—they were space-traveling actors.

I walked right to the edge of the White River, though my mother told me millions of little boys were buried there, drowned. I lowered myself on bridge piers to the landing and looked at cupped gray water. I talked to myself. Heard human voices in the hum of refrigerator motors and the ring of water pipes. Read messages in radio tower lights, whose imperturbable red pulse in Indiana night skies watched over all children and was wiser, more calming, and more kind than God.

I had two secret friends—protectors (though they slept when Pookie died) and spymasters invisible to my faux family—the ruined Hungarian count Blurtz Shemshoian and Blurtz’s wonder dog, the miniature dachshund Nipper.

I stole ice cream from my brother, and he never knew.
Claire and Jim were friends, lovers, and sometimes enemies for 27 years. In order to get health insurance, they finally married, calling their anniversary the “It Means Absolutely Nothing” day. Then Jim was diagnosed with cancer. With ever-decreasing odds of survival, punctuated by arcs of false hope, Jim’s deteriorating health altered their well-established independence as they became caregiver and patient, sharing intimacy as close as their own breaths. A year and a half into their marriage, Jim died from lung/brain cancer. Sustained by good dogs and gardening through the two years of madness that followed, Claire soldiered through home repairs, career disaster, genealogy quests, and “dating for seniors” trying to build a better life on the debris of her old one. *Leave the Dogs at Home* maps and plays with the stages of grief. Delightfully confessional, it challenges persistent, yet outdated, societal norms about relationships, and finds relief in whimsy, pop culture, and renewed spirituality.

CLAIRE ARBOGAST is a graduate of Indiana University. She gardens, walks with dogs, and writes in Bloomington, Indiana. Her website is www.ClaireArbogast.com

July 2015
238 pp.
paper 978-0-253-01719-2 $17.00

"By the time I finished reading *Leave the Dogs at Home*, I felt sure I was holding a future classic. The best thing about Claire Arbogast, besides her wonderful writing, is her hard-headed sense of intimacy and her stubborn determination to live a life of love—whatever craziness and jury-rigging that might require from the heart."

—Bob Shacochis, author of *The Woman Who Lost Her Soul*
WE DIDN’T LIVE TOGETHER until Jim started dying, but that wasn’t the plan. It was unseasonably warm for November; the first icy fingers of winter 2004 momentarily unclenched when I took the final turn of my long commute onto the southern Indiana country road. It was dark already, and I’d been focused on taking off my pointy-toed shoes, heating up the pot of chicken vegetable soup, and prioritizing my weekend chores when I saw an unexpected bright white light shining through the pines. I turned in to the driveway to discover the glaring halogen spotlights mounted on the front of the pole barn shining onto Jim’s pickup, which was backed up to the pale blue metal building. Every light was on and intensity spilled into the night through the two open overhead doors.

Gawking as I slowly drove by the barn, I pulled into the garage. As I got out, our black mutt dogs, Lila and Diggity, burst in from the night to dance dog hellos and to pull me across the broad, black asphalt lot to the pole barn. My tight suit and heels wanted to go the opposite direction, toward dinner and house slippers, but that would have to wait.

When I had left in the morning for work, the barn had been empty except for lawn mowers and leftover fencing. My shovels, tiller, and tomato cages were stored out back in the garden shed. The pole barn had always been reserved for Jim. Now hulking equipment—saws, a drill press, and grinders—created an industrial walkway that channeled me, through darting dogs, to the enclosed workshop he had built inside. The thick wooden double doors leading into the workshop were ajar, and Jim was sitting in his green swivel chair surrounded by a jumble of hammers, screwdrivers, files, and a thicket of cardboard boxes. The blazing lights caught his almost auburn, hopefully combed-over hair. A sheen of exhaustion coated his washed-out face.

“Why didn’t you tell me you were moving in?” I asked in amazement. “I would have helped you. You could have waited until the weekend.”

“I didn’t need help,” he said dismissively.
“This is a compelling story, one that deserves being far better known than it is... It is clear, well organized, and rises here and there to a quiet grandeur... It is much more than a labor of love, for his love is backed by solid industry and intellectual craft.”

—David Hamilton, author of Deep River: A Memoir of a Missouri Farm

Looking After Minidoka
An American Memoir

NEIL NAKADATE

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During World War II, 110,000 Japanese Americans were removed from their homes and incarcerated by the US government. In Looking After Minidoka the “internment camp” years become a prism for understanding three generations of Japanese American life, from immigration to the end of the twentieth century. Nakadate blends history, poetry, rescued memory, and family stories in an American narrative of hope and disappointment, language and education, employment and social standing, prejudice and pain, communal values and personal dreams.

NEIL NAKADATE is Emeritus Professor of English, Iowa State University.

236 pp., 19 b&w illus.
paper 978-0-253-01102-2 $20.00
My father was—in an intuitive, assertive, and surprisingly uncomplicated way—an American boy. When introduced for the first time he would simply say, “I was born here. My mom and pop were born in Japan.” This was important for him to clarify, and depending on the situation it was a description, an explanation, an argument, or a dare. He was neither oblivious nor unconflicted about being both Japanese and American, but he believed deeply in “America,” knew that he wanted live an American story. And in a society that would repeatedly ask a Nisei boy both to explain himself and prove he belonged there he was determined to claim his story for himself.

By contrast, my mother was a Nisei girl, born five years before the United States would ratify women’s suffrage, to parents raised in an oppressively patriarchal culture. Nisei women were doubly “sheltered”—some might say circumscribed—first by Japanese tradition and then by American discouragement of personal success and public or professional lives for women. A full-time job might be an early, temporary opportunity for a woman to avoid idle hands and to help her parents and siblings, but a career was hardly to be imagined. A “working woman” was often the sad creature who had lost or couldn’t find a husband, or the “damaged” woman who emerged from a failed marriage. Higher education was the stuff of dreams. Nisei men might be encouraged, even groomed to go to college, and they might be allowed to venture from the West Coast, but Nisei women belonged close to home. Stretching before Meriko Marumoto was a girlhood made up of lessons in the arts of domesticity, then courtship, marriage, and a family. Beauty and intelligence (she and her sister had both) could make the dance more interesting than otherwise, but in the end a Nisei woman was supposed to be a wife and mother—a “homemaker.”

Of course, my parents’ aspirations and restrictions were shared by a generation of Americans. But as Nisei, my parents shared with the first American-born generations of many other immigrant groups a difficult, pivotal role: even as children they found themselves translating America for their non-citizen, non-English-speaking parents, and translating their parents for other people. Sometimes the translation was literal and simple, moving deftly from one language to the other in speaking to teachers or sales clerks. Sometimes it was an attempt to translate a concept or behavior that had no counterpart in the other language or culture. Occasionally it even involved matters of law. The Nisei and their parents were growing to understand America at the same time. (Eventually the Nisei would also find themselves bridging the gap between their old-country parents and their “all-American” children, the Sansei.)
Are we responsible for, and to, those forces that have formed us—our families, friends, and communities? Where do we leave off and others begin? In *The Tribal Knot*, Rebecca McClanahan looks for answers in the history of her family. Poring over letters, artifacts, and documents that span more than a century, she discovers a tribe of hardscrabble Midwest farmers, hunters, trappers, and laborers struggling to hold tight to the ties that bind them, through poverty, war, political upheavals, illness and accident, filicide and suicide, economic depressions, personal crises, and global disasters. Like the practitioners of Victorian “hair art” who wove strands of family members’ hair into a single design, McClanahan braids her ancestors’ stories into a single intimate narrative of her search to understand herself and her place in the family’s complex past.

REBECCA MCCLANAHAN, the author of nine previous books, including *The Riddle Song* and *Other Rememberings*, which won the Glasgow award in nonfiction, is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, the Wood Prize from Poetry, and fellowships from New York Foundation for the Arts and the North Carolina Arts Council.

344 pp., 35 b&w illus. paper 978-0-253-00859-6 $22.00
LAST NIGHT ALL THE ROSES OPENED, their yellow petals filling the dream
arb or and spilling onto the bed. I woke in our home three states away from
Indiana, my arms spread wide and empty across the quilt. Donald was
already up, brewing the coffee I love—does anything taste finer than the first sip of
the day? “Good coffee,” I say to my cup each morning, as if to commend it for a task
well done. “Good life,” I often think. Then why this present-tense loneliness, a palpable
homesickness for lives I never lived, for places that bloomed and faded so long ago? It
has been many years since Briarwood passed out of our family’s hands, two decades
since the Circle S farm was emptied and auctioned. Two decades since the first letters
began arriving in the mail—a shoebox here, a padded envelope there, until after several
years my desk was piled high with documents. Letters and postcards and telegrams and
water-stained schoolbooks and photographs and diaries and newspaper clippings and
calling cards and hospital bills and tax notices and grocery lists and affidavits and wills
and marriage announcements and death notices and unused checks and farm ledgers
and audio tapes and handmade valentines cut raggedly by a child’s hand—a great-
uncle’s hand—more than a century ago.

“I thought you might want these things,” my mother said. “For your writing.” It’s true, I’d
always written about family in one way or another. Hard to avoid the subject when you’re
one of six living children, an aunt to fifteen and a great-aunt to (at last count) thirteen.
For years I’d been nosy about other people’s lives, begging details from uncles, aunts,
grandparents, and cousins. There’s one like me in every family, I suppose: the cemetery
haunter, archive junkie, keeper of all things outdated and moldy, professional prober.
“Tell me about the time,” you begin, urging them on, grabbing up the juiciest morsels, the
funniest lines, aiming your high beam into the dark places—what secret will be revealed?

Then one day you open a century-old letter and realize that you know nothing. The
questions you’ve been asking aren’t the ones that matter. To answer your own needs,
complete your own stories, you’ve assembled a supporting cast and assigned them
cameo roles: the busybody aunt, the silent father, the jovial, drunken uncle, the nurturing
grandmother. The truth of their lives is wider, deeper than you’d ever imagined.
The Glimpse Traveler
MARIANNE BORUCH

When she joins a pair of hitchhikers on a trip to California, a young Midwestern woman embarks on a journey about memory and knowledge, beauty and realization. This true story, set in 1971, recounts a fateful, nine-day trip into the American counterculture that begins on a whim and quickly becomes a mission to unravel a tragic mystery. The narrator’s path leads her to Berkeley, San Francisco, Mill Valley, Big Sur, and finally to an abandoned resort motel, now become a down-on-its-luck commune in the desert of southern Colorado. Neither a memoir about private misery, nor a shocking exposé of life in a turbulent era, The Glimpse Traveler describes with wry humor and deep feeling what it was like to witness a peculiar and impossibly rich time.

MARIANNE BORUCH, a poet, is Professor of English at Purdue University. She has published several poetry collections and two books of essays, and her work has appeared in the New Yorker, the Nation, and elsewhere. She has won two Pushcart Prizes, the Parnassus Terrence DePres Award, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation.

240 pp.
paper 978-0-253-22344-9 $19.95
HERE’S RAIN AND THERE’S RAIN. Maybe there’s a difference at the edge of a continent. Late afternoon when we entered the cabin. I didn’t know the guy. A friend of a friend of a friend bent over the old phonograph—a record player we called them as kids, small and nearly square, with dull silver buckles, a plastic handle, worn leatherette skin. The kind you lower the arm and bring the needle down yourself. Like sparking a flame, that quick broken note before it takes and follows the groove of the record, into music.

We stood and listened to him listening. I have no idea: jazz or a slow ballad, some rock star burning out in a year or two. So many scratches, the wash of static, the rain outside. How the ear gets past all that, and surrenders. Or his hunger, so deeply tangled. Had I ever seen such pleasure? The moment just before, how it really sounded.

I was 20, traveling into glimpses. No matter what, he said, you have to hear it.

No plan that Thursday but a big breakfast—eggs, toast. The classic college boyfriend’s apartment: milling about and underfoot, one or two other boys and their maybe girls. A straggly neighbor born Harold, called Chug, forever turning up to make a point then stopping mid-sentence. Someone’s cousin crashed there for week. Someone’s half-sister from Cincinnati figuring out her life. Not to mention the dog, the cat, and nothing picked up off the floor, no sink or toilet cleaned in how long. Books read and loved and passed on, dope smoked or on a windowsill, nesting in a small plastic bag. Jokes bad and repeated, nice talking to ya, we’d say to end any blowhard’s rant, laughing.

Then my boyfriend Jack, at the stove, frying potatoes, onions for omelets; meet Frances, she’s the one—I told you—hitchhiking west. Day after tomorrow. Early Saturday, right Frances? For a week or so. Then coming back.

She turned to me, this stranger: hey, want to go?

What? Was it a thought before I said it? No, my yes. Which—in the parlance of the day—was a shrug and a sure.

Almost spring, 1971. I couldn’t look her in the eye.
Confessions of a Guilty Freelancer
WILLIAM O’ROURKE

William O’Rourke’s singular view of American life over the past 40 years shines forth in these short essays on subjects personal, political, and literary, which reveal a man of keen intellect and wide-ranging interests. They embrace everything from the state of the nation after 9/11 to the author’s encounter with rap, from the masterminds of political makeovers to the rich variety of contemporary American writing. His reviews illuminate both the books themselves and the times in which we live, and his personal reflections engage even the most fearful events with a special humor and gentle pathos. Readers will find this richly rewarding volume difficult to put down.

WILLIAM O’ROURKE, a former columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times, is author of The Meekness of Isaac, Idle Hands, Criminal Tendencies, and Notts, and five works of nonfiction. He is editor of On the Job: Fiction about Work by Contemporary American Writers and (with John Matthias) of the collection Notre Dame Review: The First Ten Years.

384 pp.
paper 978-0-253-00181-8 $29.00

“Those who enjoy a good romp through some of our country’s most pivotal times in the company of an astute observer who is unafraid to offer a penetrating, and sometimes scathing, critique of the state of the nation, will find themselves well matched.”

—ForeWord Reviews

Podcast
I AM STRUCK BY THE FACT that this may be the first time in my fifty-two years of life I have written “Dear Dad,” addressed only you in a letter, not both you and mom, father and mother, parents. “Dear Folks.” I have used that one a lot, not that I have written so many letters all these years.

When you and mom had your fiftieth wedding anniversary, like any good writer/professor, I did some research: I stood at a greeting card display and read many examples of the form most often used on such occasions: expressions of best wishes written by professionals, people being paid for their words—and what words! public endearments, scraps of diary entries, treacly testimonials. My hands were sticky with sap from the experience. But some important themes emerged clearly: the cards for the early years, minor milestones, were always full of encouragement; those for twenty-five years of marriage were thick with celebration; but those for the fiftieth anniversary all glowed with amazement. Fifty years a couple! Who could believe it? I would have offered that fact as my chief excuse for never writing to you directly before.

So: Dear Dad. There is something powerful in the singularity, since I now feel the weight of never having used it before. I have been looking for a photograph of you and me together, just us two, for the last year and haven’t turned one up. I expected there to be one at least—just me, a kid in your arms. I noticed, the absence of a picture on my mind, that I have a number of photos of me with my son, Joe, your grandchild. The one I like the best is the snapshot of me holding him in the delivery room, the “birthing” room, some preternatural light beaming out of my eyes, taken by the doctor who delivered him.

Finding no photograph of us alone was troubling, because many memories I revisit are of us together, alone. My mind is filled with those snapshots. Us late at night in a car, you at work delivering a critical part to an anxiously idled factory, me along for the ride, you bringing them salvation, a bearing that would allow everything, those massive buildings, those giant machines, to start up again, to throb and hum.

And our talking alone, the infrequent brief conversations, their brevity and rarity making them indelible. They were often about work; times I let you down; the one time you hit me, so shocked at my impudence, complaining about the adequacy of a favor to me you had arranged. Even then I thought I deserved to be slapped. And the time, at sixteen, I flattened the side of the new car, which provoked no violence at all, but mainly silence and disappointment.
This Is Only a Test
B. J. HOLLARS

On April 27, 2011, just days after learning of their pregnancy, B. J. Hollars, his wife, and their future son endured the onslaught of an EF-4 tornado. There, while huddled in a bathtub in their Alabama home, mortality flashed before their eyes. With the last of his computer battery, Hollars began recounting the experience, and would continue to do so in the following years, writing his way out of one disaster only to find himself caught up in another. Tornadoes, drownings, and nuclear catastrophes force him to acknowledge the inexplicable, while he attempts to overcome his greatest fear—the impossibility of protecting his newborn son from the world’s cruelties. Hollars creates a constellation of grief, tapping into the rarely acknowledged intersection between fatherhood and fear, sacrifice and safety, and the humbling effect of losing control of our lives.

B. J. HOLLARS is author of two award-winning nonfiction books, Thirteen Loops: Race, Violence and the Last Lynching in America and Opening the Doors: The Desegregation of the University of Alabama and the Fight for Civil Rights in Tuscaloosa, as well as Sightings (IUP, 2013) and Dispatches from the Drownings: Reporting the Fiction of Nonfiction. He is Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

February 2016
120 pp.
paper 978-0-253-01817-5 $17.00

“This Is Only a Test exposes our fears—real and fake, invented and imbedded—of disasters. Through Hollars’s own experiences, research, and rememberings, he examines how our fears are often unfounded or inflated, even created. B. J. Hollars is in a field all of his own.”

—Jill Talbot, author of The Way We Weren’t: A Memoir

Book Club Guide
LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY WIFE and my dog and our bathtub. How just minutes prior to the storm—minutes prior to peeling the cushions from the couch and positioning them over our heads—my dog and I stood barefoot in the grass staring up at a swirling sky.

She began to bark at it.

“Quiet,” I hissed. “No barking at tornadoes.”

I pulled the dog back inside, checked the television, but it wasn’t until the power cut out that we were prompted to enter the tub. The meteorologist—who would become a god that day—had just switched from radar screen to video feed, and in those final seconds before we were plunged into darkness, the TV revealed a single gray cloud narrowing as if sucked toward the ground through a straw.

Flashback to the tornado drills of my youth—folded face-to-butt in the bowels of Lindley Elementary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Face down and neck covered, in the rare moments when the drills turned real, I’d steal a glance at our lion mascot painted on the school’s cinderblock walls, hoping he might protect us.

Just days before, during a pep rally, our principal had made one thing clear: “Nobody messes with the Lions!”

Not even tornadoes? I wondered.

Back in the tub now, and there are no lions anywhere, just a dog that for the first time in her life is subdued. We are all humbled that day, but she is the first, her quivering head tucked tightly beneath my knee.

Here, in the bathtub, our privacy is on display: my dandruff shampoo, my wife’s pink disposable razor. To the left of these things sits our mango mandarin body wash, which I wonder if we’ll ever use again.

My wife’s voice overpowers this wondering, overpowers the sound of the tree limbs scraping the bathroom window as well.

“I had to interview a Vietnam vet once,” she says from her place beneath a couch cushion. “Back in high school. For social studies. I drove all the way out to his house, and it was when we were having all those really big storms, remember? And so I got there and he said he’d forgotten I was coming. He said his son’s home had just gotten blown away and our meeting had slipped his mind.”

She’d never found the proper time to tell me this story, but that late afternoon, trapped in a tub, I’ve at last become a perfect audience.

“We rode around in his golf cart,” she continues. “He told me of the destruction he’d seen.”

My wife, dog, and I pull closer into our bunker, awaiting what will later be called the second most deadly weather outbreak in recorded history.

Yet somehow, through some luck, we are the glass eye in the storm that sees nothing. And we are the deaf ear, too, hearing only the drip, drip, drip of the rusted showerhead.
“Thoughtful and insightful, Rafferty deftly and playfully weaves cultural and personal narrative into a book that is not just enlightening, but a pure pleasure to read. Rafferty is an excellent guide down the rabbit hole and into this wonderland of physical objects our culture has built to help us remember both disaster and heroism.”

—Sheryl St. Germain, author of Navigating Disaster: Sixteen Essays of Love and a Song of Despair

Hallow This Ground
COLIN RAFFERTY

Beginning outside the boarded-up windows of Columbine High School and ending almost twelve years later on the fields of Shiloh National Military Park, Hallow This Ground revolves around monuments and memorials—physical structures that mark the intersection of time and place. In the ways they invite us to interact with them, these sites teach us to recognize our ties to the past. Colin Rafferty explores places as familiar as his hometown of Kansas City and as alien as the concentration camps of Poland in an attempt to understand not only our common histories, but also his own past, present, and future. Rafferty blends the travel essay with the lyric, the memoir with the analytic, in this meditation on the ways personal histories intersect with History, and how those intersections affect the way we understand and interact with Place.

COLIN RAFFERTY teaches creative writing at the University of Mary Washington.

February 2016
160 pp.
paper 978-0-253-01907-3 $16.00
ON THE 8TH OF NOVEMBER, 1975, a storm forms in Oklahoma and begins moving northeast, picking up speed and intensity. The next day, it passes over Kansas City, over the older suburb of Mission, on the Kansas side of the state line, over a brown house on Nall Avenue where my parents, Tom and Kathie Rafferty, live. Maybe my mother, twenty-five years old and six months pregnant with her first child—me—looks up at the darkening sky and worries. Maybe she feels me moving inside her, pushing her abdomen outwards, growing and moving each day. Maybe she stays inside the entire day, unaware of the system passing overhead, not knowing or even caring where it comes from or where it will go.

Ships are certainly far from her mind on this day in Kansas City. She and my father rarely cross the Missouri River, the only major body of water for hundreds of miles. The storm will pass over her, my father, and me, and move onwards, growing and moving towards Iowa and Wisconsin. Two days after it forms, the storm will arrive at the Great Lakes, bringing with it heavy rains and gale force winds, all the power it has carried since its birth in Oklahoma. Not long after the storm passes over us, it will strike down 29 men, drowning them in their ship in the middle of the largest lake in the Western Hemisphere, leaving their bodies floating inside the ship, still wrapped in their lifejackets. Then it will continue over Canada, its power fading, until it dissipates, vanishes into the thin air from which it formed.

Whitefish Point is, quite literally, the end of the road. At the town of Paradise, Michigan state highway 123 turns westwards towards Tahquamenon Falls State Park, and a Chippewa County road, marked as a thin gray line on the state map, continues northward until it ends in the parking lot of Whitefish Point’s biggest tourist attraction, the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum. The coast of Lake Superior is just a few yards away.

I have traveled to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to see a monument that I cannot see: the memorial to the 29 men who died on the Edmund Fitzgerald when it sank in a storm on Lake Superior on November 10, 1975. Twenty years later, divers seventeen miles off of Whitefish Point brought up the ship’s bell, polished off two decades of rust so that it gleamed again, and hung it as the centerpiece of the Museum’s collection.

But they realized that in removing that bell, they would leave an absence in the ship’s wreckage, and they refused to disturb the grave. So they cast another bell, the same shape and size as the Fitzgerald’s original, and engraved the names of the men who died on it. Then, after the first bell had been brought up, they lowered down the new bell, and divers with acetylene torches welded it in its place.
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