

THE
CONUNDRUM

Volume 4

2010



THE
CONUNDRUM
Volume 4 2010

HONORS SCHOLASTIC SOCIETY

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North Miami Campus

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello everyone,

First and foremost, I would like to thank everyone who submitted their artwork, poetry and other writings because without you this would not be possible. My number one goal was to get this issue out, and we made it happen, and I am so proud to be a part of this.

I would like to thank everyone who submitted; The Conundrum staff; and Professors Carol Koris, Petas Bonaparte, and Michelle Garcia for all of your support. Everyone was so helpful and excited about this issue, and it shows in the final product. It was an absolute pleasure working with you all.

Sincerely,

Candice N. Durham
Co-Editor-in-Chief

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‘O Love

Wherefore must I heal all the Blind
that are lost in a world so Mean
and show them the Chains that do so Bind
their Minds and Souls from all to be seen
in a world full of Love with no Hate?
It is sometimes a Burden on mine part
to show them the light and open the gate
that leads them to Love and a Happy Heart
O Fates, heal all the Blind and the Sick
help them to see and to dream again;
make them Alive and allow them to pick
A much better Life than that thy art in.
Hope I that she willst sure Try
to stand up to her Mother and not just cry.

Mickael Pierce & Christina Reeder



Poetic Justice

I feel like I lay down my life between these lines, only to be shot down continually;
I always say never mind the un-given support and continue to express myself lyrically.

But when I have so much to say and I feel as if no one is hearing me
My pen starts to bleed as red as the shiniest fruit from the highest apple tree.

Why is it that you'd rather listen to, watch or read shit that's only bringing you down?
Why not take notice of a positive message? Is it because I'm not as well renowned?

Amateur or not, I feel just as strongly about my words poured out onto this paper daily;
When I write that final word...I feel like I'm about to walk down a dark alley.

What should I expect? Lyrical acclaim or utter disappointment from my #1 and only one fan;
Day and night I wonder if I should commit lyrical suicide or just start working on a poetic retirement plan.

When my poems are not read I feel like an innocent detainee;
Though no one is listening...I wonder will there ever be any poetic justice for me.

Anonymous



Technology Ruins Love

I wake up in the morning, all I want is you alone
You wake up, look at me, and then go straight to your phone
Then I go to the kitchen and begin to cook
You grab your computer and log on to Facebook
At lunch time I say “Let’s meet at my place”
You walk in the door and go straight to Myspace
At night I try to talk to you about both of your lives
But it doesn’t last long because of Desperate Housewives.
In the car I try to start an intellectual conversation
But instead you turn up the volume on our favorite radio station
Technology keeps pushing everyone further and further apart
I guess one day someone will just go online to find the key to my
heart.

Calvin Smith

That Four-Letter Word

Love-

Since the moment that I saw you, I knew you were the one,
Staring at your beautiful eyes, glistening in the sun.

You had the personality of perfection,
There were no errors in detection.

Love-

I thought that we'd be a whole forever,
But from me, you only chose to sever.
You lied, you cheated, you broke my heart,
Only leaving me lonely, bitter and tart.

Love-

I will not have this feeling again,
Not in a year, or even in ten.
For I will not give anybody the chance,
Why feel like my heart's been pierced with a lance?

Love-

Anonymous



When You're Gone...

The days seem endless
While the nights are torturous
To imagine the feel...
The feel of your sensitive touch
The delightful and sensual caress of your finger tips
To have it all, forever, would be my sin
Listening to your deepest breaths
Like the loudest winds from a mountain high
Dreaming of laying with you forever
Feeling aroused by the smell of your natural scent
Enduring you, your life, your soul
That the way you walk makes me vulnerable;
Weakens me
That your look makes me fall;
Strengthen me.
That your voice takes me far away from reality;
I'm living in my own fantasy.
Allow me to show you the power of true honesty and love
Allow me to act as your drug and indulgence
For you are my fix and my temptation.
The reason why my heart feels.
Let me sin and punish me with your touch
For my blood rushes at the sound of your heartbeat
And my skin shrivels when I think of your smile.
The days seem endless while the nights are torturous,
I imagine your feel, your touch, the sensation and your warmth in
me...
As my heart weeps when you're gone.

Sheila M. Vasquez



An Everlasting Love

Every night, when I cuddle in bed
I contemplate the love we've exchanged
If not, I feel lonely, hopeless, and sad
'Cause you fill me with a joy I've never had

Without you I'm incomplete
We are one, there's no deceit
No doubts are in between
We are definitely meant to be

If feels like a fairy tale
It's perfect, no ails
I feel like a princess with a wonderful charm
That takes care of me and does no harm

What you show me is more than love
It's our road to heaven above
Hand in hand we keep each other secure
Keeping our love and faith strong and pure

Every day my feelings mature
If I had to wait for you, my heart will endure
'Cause I know that when we'd meet again
Our love will be much greater than

May God bless our souls
And help us accomplish our goals
Let's pray that together we'll always be
With an everlasting love that'll never cease.



You Are

Your smile, your joy, happiness, laughter...all...infectious.
And you...you encourage me, persuade me...no you...refocus me,
almost revolutionize me

My blood is like Glade scented oil running through my veins in and
out of my heart and you are the candle that warms me.

You are the bearer of joyous occasions and the bringer of all things
good in my life currently.

Happiness is the most complicated and complex algebraic, logarithmic,
geometric equation that when calculated always equates to you.

Your words....so complex that you could give Webster a run for his
money. Your mind so bright, so clever that words seem to just lay
down together to form lyrical art for you, just as lovers lay down
between pink satin sheets.

Your soul, heart and spirit so pure that virgins, innocent babes and
even angels look up to you.

“You are the edification of MY soul!” and the guiding light of my
inspiration.

You are the unyielding, never ending, everlasting continuation of my
joetic justice; that accidental ‘J’ instead of a ‘P’...the typo I can never
erase and the error spell check never saw

You are the sole definition of every word oozing from my mind,
springing from my lips and spilling into the world around us. You are
what you never knew you were to me...

Candice Durham

Dearest Samuel

Dearest Samuel: The Love that I hath lost,
the sweet surrender I possessed hast passed.
I knew not what thy love would cost,
I thought Forever it must last.
Tricked into a false pact, made by others
to marry one I did not love, forced to comply,
they watched me each day, ordered by my mother.
I swear, my love, it was not my choice to lie.
Each day I ponder where I went wrong,
not confiding in you as I ought.
Why did I choose to wait so long?
All his money, his Life nor my Love has bought.
One question, my love, then this moment shall pass,
What cause had the Baron to breathe his last?

Mickael Pierce & Christina Reeder

Praying for the Impossible: Blessing of Unusual Perfection

So she was right, and so was he... “When you’re down to nothing, God is up to something; the faithful see the invisible, believe the incredible, and receive the impossible,” right?

I once departed from a place of loving security, passion and a never ending trail of beautifully sweet memories to come to a place where infatuation with my entire being was guaranteed, and love, care and constant companionship were my hopeless soul’s job requirements.

Slowly losing my faith in God, his being clawing at everything I once believed in. True love, happiness, redemption and the hope that one day that white picket fence will surround my loving home and not my guarded heart.

This relationship... no, scratch that...these relations could only qualify in the eyes of God as nothing more than a lesson learned. It meant NOTHING...I was up to...NOTHING...he left me feeling like... NOTHING...he means....NOTHING, never more, never again will I ever settle for less than my worth!

God allowed me to go through this for a reason...reasons that took me so long to understand, comprehend and accept. Walking around with a growing chip on my shoulder, blaming my father for a year’s worth of rape upon my heart and soul. But now I can clearly see the invisible reasons behind the aching, throbbing, almost pulsating agony I tolerated for no apparent reason.

Listening to him whisper sweet NOTHINGS in my ear and pulling me further away from the truth...but then yearning to see you again just so you could poetically...no...“joetically” justify my feelings for you and direct my eyes to your northern star, guiding me back home. Lifting up not only my head, but my spirit as well. All of this, and I still refused to see the light, let you sway me, follow my heart...and I could go on and on...

When God placed you in my life I knew that he was up to something. A guy like you with a girl such as me? We were a portrait of unusual perfection. You made me whole, believing in me, and giving me the hope I needed to know that one day I will be the Candice I want to be. I began to believe in the incredible with you because only with this unbelievably unique and refreshing soul did I share a connection that I never thought was possible.

Though I could never speak for you...I would like to think that I enticed you, brought to you passion and a vibrant sense of existence, but exceeding all else I complemented your crazy. Filling your cup of red kool-aid so that a life all brand new to you would be one worth living.

Traveling along winding countryside on gorgeous autumn days; sitting outside hand in hand talking; or just feeling each other's increasing pulses as we became us and not just you and me. I remember our little spot and...yours; every day and especially every night we shared were incredible, were they not? Every tiny morsel of nothing that we did together was utterly incredible, and I never thought that it would be possible.

While I was being stripped down to almost nothing, God was always up to something; I regained my faith and was shown the invisible. We shared the incredible, and one day I pray that I'll once again receive the impossible blessing of unusual perfection even if it's not with you.

Candice Durham

Dear Anybody,

A boy once told me that he was "in love" with me.
Feeling completely overwhelmed and out of the loop I told him the truth,
That I loved him but I wasn't "in love."
And what a scary and unfamiliar phrase.
It is a phrase that many girls long to hear & I heard it,
For the first time in my life.
I wondered how it felt to be in love,
Or more importantly how can HE be "in love" with ME.
I think it is completely and utterly absurd.
I just wanted the chance,
The chance to be me & give me to him.
I was content with having him love me.
It's all I ever wanted as naive as it sounds.
But he went beyond that & I am still in disbelief.
I am waiting for the moment that it all turns sour & he admits that it was all in my head.
Something like "if you wish for something so much you end up believing it."
He constantly reminds me that he loves me.
I never thought I'd hear it from a boy so much.
Constantly he reminds me that he does & sometimes I just wanna cry,
Cry because I love him,
UNCONDITIONALLY.
And right when I'm falling I have to catch myself because I know I'll get hurt.
I've half-assed everything until now that I just can't.
I want to unmake the barriers that I've made for so long.
But how?
He asks me to undo this persona of dominance because it belongs to him,
But I need it too.
He disagrees.
He wants me to be a girl.



I can't be a girl.
I've fought too much to be a girl.
But I need him.
Yes I'll live without him but not by choice,
I won't.
I need his warmth, his scent, and his touch.
When he's here I can feel the love & the care.
I don't know what's going to happen next.
I just know that "I....LOVE....HIM".

Marly Antigua







My Alter Ego

She looks to be intrusive.
What yonder window she'll
break.
She becomes obsessive.
Well then that's your mistake.

Never underestimate her vigor
Because she will surely strike
Use some paper and some scissors,
And destroy you out of spite.

She can't feel.
She's nothing but orgasmic.
Enticing is her scent.
Yet she's nothing but plastic.

Her reverie
Contains a fortress made of her
enemy
Immune from their disease
Murder was never so lovely.

She can do anything
Patiently and with ease
Shun you from your own skin
As quickly as one, two, three.

You would surely elude her
No matter what the cost
Just reading bout her
Count the breaths you have lost.



She's no pushover
Perky, god forbid
Evolve into this perfect mold
That's all she ever did.

Silent she can stay
For only a couple of days
Then she'll take over
And put herself into play.

Alas, when the clock strikes
permanently
Releasing me of her spell
I'm in control again
Yet she made changes, I can tell.

She outlawed my good deeds
Embraced what was illegal
In the end all she will ever be
Is My Alter Ego.

Marly Antigua

Falling Just Short

Parrying the left,
And getting caught with a right.
Running for eight on fourth and nine.
The buzzer going off before the puck crosses the line.
Smacking a deep fly to the Warning Track.
Shooting that buck with a three point rack.
Smashing a drive, just to end up in the rough.
That monster dunk turns into a monster stuff.
We all do these things for the love of the sport,
But usually we fall just a few inches short.

Anonymous



Life is Like: A Deck of Cards?

What makes up a deck of cards? Fifty two randomly assorted numbers, letters, monarchy positions, and symbols. If life is like a box of chocolates, why not a deck of cards?

When we look at this deck, we only see four different designs plastered on them. There are four suits, all with the equal number and similar cards. History shows that the spade and club were derived from the original German symbols for playing cards, a leaf and the army respectively. The heart and diamond came from the French monarchy, representing something they believed strongly in, love and money. However, today, in poker rankings, the spade is the highest, followed the hearts, then diamonds, then clubs.

Why would this ranking be like this? If love is something that everyone wants and needs in life and diamonds are a girl's best friend, why wouldn't they be first and second? If the French were the ones to start this modernized suiting and production of playing cards, why wouldn't they encourage that their two suits were the highest. Although this was still only the mid 17th century France and Germany were not on great terms, why would the French say that a German themed card was the highest, especially one that represents a leaf, and not even the army.

When these cards were originally printed, they had two colors, red and black. Today we know the spades and clubs as black and the hearts and diamonds as red. Why then would we put a black card as the highest, followed then by the two reds? Wasn't red the color of the monarchy and black represented the slaves. Why would anyone ever put a German leaf colors as a slave as their highest card, over France and love? Although today we have racial equality, back then it didn't exist. Even throughout American history and our creation of the playing cards, we still held a black suit as the highest suit over the two reds, thus contrasting our racial inequality views.

And then we have the numbers. When the cards were invented, the King was the highest, as to represent the power of the land. France placed representations of each King as someone that had a great impact on its empire, and each one matched with his queen. As we fell down the ranking, we found their valets, or jacks, the clergy that helped up the monarchy from the grasps of the commoners, the numbered cards. But, just as the French government views the commoners, all as one and one as all, so was it that these numbered cards were all viewed as equal.

The overthrow of this idea would take the overthrow of the French monarchy. When the French revolution came around, so would the ideas of changing the cards. Now, instead of the king reigning supreme over all the others, the one card, the Ace, would take over. The peasants moved the ace high to represent the takeover and downfall of the previous power, the king. The three monarchical powers got changed into representing liberty, equality, and fraternity, forever shaking how the cards would be looked upon. Today, we don't think about the power of the king over all, we understand that the Ace, the power of the people, still trumps it.

In life we find people that fall along each one of these fifty two cards, each person holding a different hand and showing different cards along the way during their lives. We find people showing their king cards when they try to control the actions of others. For the king, it's their way or no way at all. They try to push all the other cards around and dictate what can be said, when it can be said, and what comes of it. The king makes the rules for everyone to follow and have a strong often deadly punishment of them.

To counter the king, our society can find the queens as well. These ladies like to take control and power from everyone they can. The decision making does not come in the form of the king or by a group vote, they have the power to make the decisions or make people's lives hell. The queens, although mostly found tied hand and foot with the King, can also be single. The single queens can show their true colors, often referred to as: the drama queen, the beauty queen, or the fashion queen. Although they don't have the power to make the laws official, these women definitely have the power to enforce them.

Following briskly along the heels of the king and queen are the valets, or jacks. The jacks show all of their tricks in order to get people to like them, fall for them, or follow them. Anyone heard of the jack of all trades? Somewhat as the boundary between the unknown and the rich and famous, jacks try to make their living showing off for the rich. With this card group, they try to achieve, fit it, and give up everything they have to be accepted. You will find jacks abandon their friends or career path to follow something else, for the potential betterment of their lives.

Right underneath the jacks, you can find the commoners, ranked from two to ten. Just as one card might win against another, you will find that in life we do the same thing. Certain people will go into something with an open attitude and open mind and others will go into the same thing with a prejudice already: I will or I won't win this

draw. As we walk into a room, we have already judged who we want to be friends with, talk to, and those who we want to have absolutely nothing to do with. It's human nature, undeniably. Subconsciously, we rank people by who we would rather have as friends and not. Those who we rank as 10's are better than ourselves, bringing something to the table to challenge us and make us better people. From the lower end of the spectrum are those who we just know from first instinct we don't want to have anything to do with, not only will they drive us crazy, they will make you question your very existence.

Scattered amongst these fifty two cards are several cards that take their roles to the next level. The King of Hearts is a guy who walks around thinking that everyone can fall in love with him. Even when people try to say no to him, he continues to pursue them, eventually harassing them so much, they tell everyone and their moms to stay away. The Queen of Diamonds is the woman that just wants all the money. Everything they say or do always has to do with how wealthy they are and aspire to be. For these women, they are not ever appeased with their income, even when they display it proudly throughout the day. They not only want to make the millions, they want to marry into the money. The Jack of Spades, the jack of all jacks, lives his life constantly showing off to everyone. He is the jack of all trades. This jack never lets a dull moment pass because he is always trying to prove himself to others, displaying all of what he can do, even trying to do things he cannot do. We could then conclude that the Ten of Hearts would be what is assigned to someone's love. Not only do they complete you, but they would have your love for the rest of your lives. This ten is the best of the available cards out there for the commoners, someone who you can dream about and wish to have.

Following all these cards are the aces. The aces are the population, the right and power of the people. This card represents the ability of each and every one of us to be influenced by the majority of the people, the power of the people. Some people hold the card of the ace in their hands and feel like they have all the supreme power and the vote of the people. The ace has the power to define you and who you will be for the rest of your life. But this isn't necessarily by your choice you will also loose to the majority rule, whether you like it or not. You will find that many of these people have the ability to ostracize their followers, as did France with their father of their revolution, Robespierre. Sometimes it is these people that you have to watch out for; they are in the world with their own objective and will let nothing stop them from doing it.

Whether it be the most popular person in the school, the book-smarts person who has no common sense, or the person who you just think should not be wasting their time any longer at school, the deck of cards theory applies to everyone. Right now, everyone is showing at least one of their cards to every single person. Maybe it's just one side of you that you are showing your friend, or maybe, that friend knows all of your cards, everything about you. And those who think they do, do they...really?

So, you ask, what about those pesky jokers. The two cards, sluffed off into the deck by their printers. What do they represent? Normally, we play jokers as any other card in the deck, a wild. So these jokers act to our lives as wilds. Sometimes we wish we could play them as a number end card, the ten of hearts searching for love, sometimes as a higher card, an Ace. The way we perceive this wild helps to shape us to adapt to different situations and different life experiences we all go through. This card represents those who don't want to chose, but they don't have to until the card must be played or shown, who knows how late in life.

If you could define your life by five cards what would they be? Do you even know?

Mickael Pierce



Summer Apples

I prefer to eat small apples – ones that fit in the palm of my hand. Most apples found in the supermarket are twice the size of my fist. They weigh half a pound, and they're full of watered-down flavorless pulp. They lack the harmony of a crunchy bite, aromatic scent, tangy flavor that makes the edges of my tongue curl up, and juices spilling out that run down my chin. I always prefer a small apple to a large one.

This summer I found a wild apple tree in my coastal North Carolina hometown. It was growing in the grassy median of a parking lot outside the elementary school where my mother works. The tree looked adolescent, though it was quite a bit taller than me. When I stood on the tips of my toes, I could only reach the first three or four branches. My mom said she's seen this tree every day for seven years, but it had never before bared apples. It did this summer, and on this day, many of them were ready to be picked.

Most of the apples were smaller than a baseball; some scarcely outgrew a golf ball. How were we, in this obscure parking lot somewhere in the south, amidst ninety-five degree heat, so lucky to have these little treasures spring up during the dead of summer? I picked one apple, and reluctant to bite it, I gently squeezed its flesh, examined it closely, put it up to my nose but smelled none of the secret scents sealed up inside. I decided, based on all criteria I had inspected thus far, that these apples needed to be picked and could not go to waste. Mom and I got to work. Like a child scrounging for the candy of a newly burst piñata, I grabbed for apple after apple until I had a dozen. I made the bottom of my shirt into a pouch and piled them into the car for the short trip home.

When we arrived, we washed one apple and cut it down the center. I was still amazed that it appeared to have all the qualities of a real apple – the stubby brown stem was the lifeline, the seeds were being harbored in the hollowed out star-shaped center, and its protective

skin streaked red to yellow to green had until now been safely keeping the inside fresh for tasting. We cut a quarter-slice for each of us and nervously leaned in to take a bite as if these mysterious summer apples had actually been dipped in poison by an evil queen and meant for Snow White instead.

After we opened our eyes, having survived the first taste, we confirmed that the apples were a treasure indeed. The salty ocean air and intense summer sunshine pervaded every bite. And the flavors lingered on our lips much the same way as summer sunshine and ocean air tend to do.

Ashley M. White





Tale of a Glutton

Shoulders hunched, elbows on the table leaning
Eyes down, chin inches from the plate
Heaping piles of noodles, red sauce beading
Garlic bread will soon wipe a clean slate

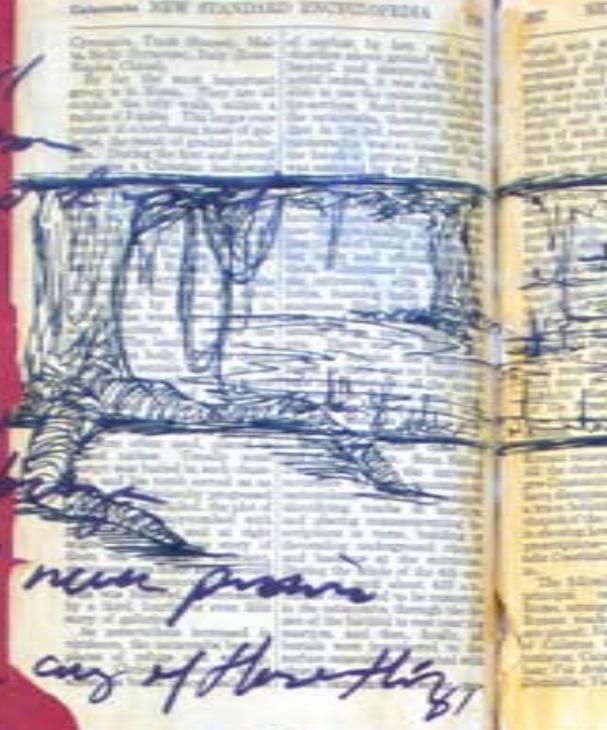
A second larger serving soon to follow
And soon to disappear, quick as it came
You hardly chew each bite before you swallow
A ritual repeated, just the same

No time is wasted since you do not savor
The meal, a hurried task you must complete
Missing out on textures, scents, and flavors
You now feel full and sit back in your seat

Three times a day and seven days a week
You do not even taste that food you eat

Ashley M. White

of my heart
always been a good
for that has never
you'll be you said



could never live
at the love it brings

At least never promise
to be any of these things

