

Just Write

Gloucester County Library System

Logan Township Branch

Writers' Group Selections

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Freeholder Director, Robert M. Damminger

Freeholder Library Liaison, Lyman Barnes



Robert M. Damminger, Freeholder Director
Lyman Barnes, Freeholder Liaison

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Silence and Screams

by Shelby Carlton

I dreamed a dream of you,
Last night like I always do -
But this time you paid me no mind
And spoke not a word that was kind.
You looked right through me as though I wasn't there -
Your silence was almost more than I could bare.
The emptiness in your eyes
Is where the hidden truth lies -
I just want you to look at me the way you used to and say my name,
But it seems that somehow I'm still part of your wicked game.
You turn away from me as you talk to another girl -
Beneath my feet I can feel the room start to whirl.
Your indifference pierces my soul like a spear,
Trapped in this world with everything to fear.
I blink as the colors begin fading to gray,
But there are still some things I want to say -
There is something that I need you to know,
But the walls are crumbling and I know I have to go.
As this fake reality shatters I hear myself scream,
Finally waking up from that terrible dream.
Now here I am in the real world without you,
In a place where I know what's true -
But the truth is sometimes I'd rather be dreaming,
Even though your name is what I wake up screaming.

Sleep

by Joshua Carter

I wake up naked in a room with my hands cuffed to the ceiling and my feet tied to the ground. A man walks in with a belt and lashes my body. My screams fill the room as tears begin to flow and blood slowly seeps from my skin.

Day 1 – Trap

I remember everything from the 2 am wake-up call I received from my Boy. He gave me the address of a discreet location for an awesome party. I remember driving for hours just to find the place. When I finally found it, I called him to ask where the entrance was. His voicemail said to go in through the tarps and, “I’ll meet you.” I walked in, and hearing footsteps from behind, turned to meet with an iron pole to the head. I heard a deep voice ask, “Are you hungry?” I said yes and he gave me a human arm, which looked so familiar, but I’m clueless as to the reason why.

Day 2 – Setup

I heard the sounds of the night-roaming creatures. But the room was so clouded with darkness, not even the thinnest strip of moonlight could pierce through. I remember the night he tied me up. After giving me the arm, he stood over me as I ate. Then we fought and tussled for a while before he whipped out the iron pipe and knocked me to the ground with another blow to the head. He stripped the shield from my body then restrained my limbs. My body was like a statue: stiff, but barely breathing. He gave me a leg this time.

Day 3 – Torture

Amused, he laughs at the sight of my body jolting from the cold steel as he scrapes my spine. He stabs me, just enough to make the blood pour. He tasers me just to see my reactions. He has beaten me with human arms and legs. He would throw body shots to numb my body as if I were a human punching bag. He slices my back with a katana sword and releases

me from the shackles just so I can last a little longer. As I lay on my back, the last thing he said before he left was, "If you survive this, then your freedom is gained." He drops a grenade and walks out. As my wounds compel my brain to sleep, I lay there knowing I would die in this personal hell.

Day 4 – Freedom

As I opened my eyes, barely alive, part of my body was in scorching pain; the other part still shaking from the aftermath of the blast. I planted my hands on the ground in order to stand. I felt my hands immersed in a puddle of blood. I stumbled to my feet and fell at least twice before I could walk straight. As I walked towards the door I noticed some light. I opened the door to see sunlight fall on my blood-stained hands and my cut up, tortured body. As I walked farther away from the building, my conscious told me to go back. I go back just to sit in the puddle of blood. I realized that this was the only path to freedom. And I love it.

Finding the Grave of Elias P. Seeley, Civil War Veteran

By Henry J. Winser (aka Ben Carlton), Special Correspondent

On a recent blustery, cold day, two veteran sailors of the ironclad ship, USS *Lehigh*, along with a photographer and one shivering newspaper correspondent set out on a trek to find the grave of Elias P. Seeley, a direct ancestor of William Myers, one of the aforementioned tars. The salty four met in Swedesboro, and, traveling south over winter's hard-rutted roads, finally arrived at a windswept cemetery on top of a frozen hill in Bridgeton, New Jersey. Upon looking about, we discovered almost immediately the object of our search among the silent tombstones of the dear departed: the final resting place of the much-lamented Seeley, distinguished veteran of our late Civil War.

Mr. Seeley amassed an admirable record of distinguished service during the War of the Rebellion. He first enlisted as a private soldier in Company F of the 5th New Jersey Volunteer infantry, 2nd Division, Third Corps, Army of the Potomac. Seeley's unit was decimated in the swirling vortex of battle that came to be known as the Wheat Field, fought on the second day of July 1863 at the decisive Battle of Gettysburg. Prior to that momentous contest in Pennsylvania, Private Seeley was present for duty for every march, skirmish and major engagement, including General McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, Second Bull Run, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. Following Gettysburg, Seeley transferred to a regular army battery: Battery H, 4th United States Artillery, on 8 July 1863. Rendering distinguished service during General Grant's Overland Campaign, Seeley was seriously injured as a result of an explosion of a caisson that occurred near Totopotomy Creek, Virginia, on 30 May 1864. After recovering from his wounds, Seeley was discharged from McDougal Hospital, Fort Schuyler, New York, on 15 September 1864. Returning to civilian life, Seeley became a prominent citizen of the historic town of Bridgeton.

The *Bridgeton Evening News* reported that Mr. Seeley had been installed as Chaplain of the Bridgeton Chapter, Encampment Number 113, of the Union Veteran League. This veterans' organization was made up of soldiers, sailors and marines who had volunteered to serve three during the war, had served not less than two years consecutively, and were honorably discharged.

According to the inscription on his headstone, Elias P. Seeley departed this life on November 12, 1922. His many descendants, including Mr. Myers, former steam engineer aboard the *Lehigh*, have much to be proud of in their fond recollections of their brave ancestor.

June

by Joshua Carter

The night I saw him was like watching hell rise up to make a deal with heaven. It was the summer of '16. I remember my mother telling me the story of two brothers. And it went something like this...

It was late August and my brother and I were walking home from the theatre at two in the morning. I didn't want to leave the house that night but my brother had such a confident, easy-going personality, I just had to go with him and see the movie.

Three years ago, just before our Dad died, he told us to join the family business. I left the room but my brother stayed for his passing. I told my brother as we were walking, "I just couldn't watch Dad die." We walked on in silence. Without my brother saying a word, I could feel his heartbreaking question: "Why?"

I knew what he meant by "Why?", but I just couldn't tell him. After we had walked another five blocks, he stopped and said with rising anger, "Listen, Scott, I get that you have feelings and emotions for him, but Father didn't die so that you can laugh at his legacy."

"He wasn't my father, James – just yours!" Ignoring the sorrow in my voice, James lifted me up and slammed me against the building and yelled, "You don't talk about him like that!" We walked the rest of the way home in silence. Both of us had regrets for the truth we were both hiding from each other.

We were only a block from home when we saw the dented black car speeding towards us. "Get down or run," my brother shouted. "I wanna fight!" I must've blacked out at that point. But as I regained consciousness, I remember seeing a man in a suit carrying my brother into the black car. "No!" I yelled, struggling to my feet, only to be knocked out again by the man's partner.

The next day I woke up handcuffed to a pipe. "HEEEEEELP!" I yelled at the top of my lungs. A Voice from a dark corner of the room spoke: "There's no one here. Just us...and Death."

"What's your name," I asked. The Voice said, "You first."

"Scott," I told him.

"Steven," he replied.

"So how long have you been here?"

"I don't know."

"Well, tell me how you got here, Steven."

"I started coming here with my father at the age of seven. He was a scientist, so I would help him with lab results and cleaning, mostly. Then school started back up, which

meant that I couldn't assist with any of my father's projects. So my sister had to take over. One night I had a dream that my father did something horrible; in fact, it was so horrific it couldn't be spoken about. I remember my sister saying with a soft, quivering voice, "Wake up, Steve." I opened my eyes. My sister said, "What I saw in the lab was an image so unforgettable, so inhuman, that it will ride your thoughts as dolphins ride the ocean waves." Through blurry vision I saw her pull out a knife, step towards me and say, "You can never see it." I begged her to stop as she continued to approach. She stopped suddenly and slit her throat, meeting death at her own hand. As I sat there stunned, I heard a voice whisper behind me, "Go back to sleep." I turned around to see a little boy without eyes. I awoke from my troubled sleep still in the room, still waiting death.

The Voice from the corner (Steven's voice) said, "He's coming." Steven stepped into the light and announced, "It's been three years since they took me from my family, and tonight I'm coming home." He grabbed a sharp-edged rock and told me, "See you on the other side, brother." At that moment the door swung open and a man with devilish eyes, scales on his skin, and only half a face stepped into the room. He pointed a gun at me and I closed my eyes.

"Mother, that was one of the most bizarre stories you ever told," I said. "Thanks," she said. She then proceeded to pull out a shotgun from behind her chair and killed herself, leaving me to hunt for a monstrous human with half a face.

Five years have passed and no one even spoke of this lab or the terrible things performed there. I decided to burn my father's laboratory. As the flames rose I heard a dying voice say, "You're next."

"Then come and get me!"

Changes Happen

By Marian M. Fay

Changes happen in the yearly seasons

Summer, Fall, Winter, and the ever hopeful Spring

Changes happen in our bodies as we mature

Infant, toddler, young child, tween, teen, adult

Changes happen when our interests are sparked

Business, finance, teaching, art, music, drama, sports

Changes happen in our bodies as we become chronologically gifted

Age spots, arthritis, osteoporosis, vision and hearing deficits

Changes happen in our lifestyles and priorities

Me centered, you centered, us centered, God centered

Changes happen continually to the cells in our bodies

Every seven to ten years we are regenerated into a whole new us

Changes happen constantly with our emotions

Happiness, sadness, anger, fear, relief, contentedness, love

Changes happen constantly in God's creation

Everything is made up of cells that live, die, and are replaced to live and die again

Changes happen with our beliefs

In hard times, where is God? In good times, oh thank God!

Changes happen, with two exceptions

God exists and God loves us, those are life's only constants

Now you can agree or disagree with me because

Changes happen.

Just Write

Meetings held one Saturday a month

10:00 am at the

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