

# The Scholar

## April 2009—Senior Edition

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Editors:

Paige Mason

Erin Creech

As Dr. Dan likes to say:

Dear Friends,

Paige and I apologize for getting this out so late. There was some confusion earlier in the semester and a ball or two got dropped somewhere along the way, but not to worry, we've found it now and are off running again.

This is the Senior Edition intended for last November. The underclassman edition should be out before the end of finals if all goes well. If not, look for it at the start of the summer. We will be sending out emails next semester to remind everyone of the publication requirements and the conditions for inclusion in *The Scholar*, so be on the lookout for that in September. For now though, let's include a brief list of Scholar news.

Saturday, September 12 — Scholar trip to see *Wicked!* at TPAC. Talk to Dr. Dan to reserve tickets now. Several seating options and price ranges available.

Sophomore reading discussion groups for next semester: "Medical Mysteries" with Dr. Ann Gathers (Tuesdays, 3:00 p.m.) and "Photography Basics" with Mr. Rodney Freed (Thursdays, 4:00 p.m.)

We'd like to include a big shout-out to Katelyn Busmann and Emily Kendall for all their hard work on *The Scholar* in the last four years. You guys have done a fantastic job, and we will strive to fill your shoes. Good luck to both of you with everything you go on to do in life.

Have a great summer everybody! See you in the fall.

Your new editors,

Erin Creech and Paige Mason



## **"Reflections and Goodbyes"**

Rhett Chrysler

My last submission to the scholar... kind of a scary thought isn't it? When I began this grand four-year journey, I was both enthralled and terrified as I had no idea what to expect. Looking at it today the journey was the easy part, it's the end of the road that is truly terrifying. At least when you're walking the path you have something to follow; when the scent runs dry all that remains is infinite possibility.

In the last four years I've been flooded with currents of new ideas, swarms of emotions and multitudes of revelations. Life was simple before college. I spent my childhood in the middle of nowhere, smack dab in the center of a thousand acres of rolling hills covered with forests and fields. Home was a place of stability, peace and warmth. But as I got older, I began to feel like I was missing something.

One day I went to check the mailbox and found what seemed to be like one of Willy Wonka's famed golden tickets. Somehow I was chosen to be a Scholar. I almost turned it down, but Dad talked me out of it, and within a couple months I was off on my latest adventure...

For those of you who haven't been with me since the beginning, I've changed considerably since the first day I stepped onto this campus. I look back and remember how scared and frightened I was of everything and I can't help but laugh. Luckily I fell in with good people. With the help of my newfound comrades, I managed to set up a foundation here, and make some good impressions here and there to help me along the way. I was beginning to feel stable again...

Things can change a lot in four years. Lately I've been on a journey to find myself – sometimes it's easy and often times it's a labyrinth of closed doors. As the end of four years looms closer and closer, I've lost that stability once again. Until recently, I was enjoying it: for those of you who have run into me on my many outings recently, I'm sure you can attest that predictability certainly has not been a defining characteristic of mine. For a while it was new and exciting, but as of late it's beginning to wear me down.

As spring approaches I can't help but feel a multitude of emotions. Many of my closest friends will be graduating and leaving, and I'll be stuck here for yet another year. I've loved Martin and have had a lot of fun here, but it's beginning to get tiresome. Maybe its wanderlust, or maybe it's just that I've gotten so used to change I'm ready for something different. At the same time I'm also terrified to leave. I've built a foundation here. I've established myself and don't have to worry about proving myself over and over.

It seems recently that I almost prefer instability because I'm not quite content with the parts of my life considered stable. When I reflect upon the things I am unhappy with, chaos feels refreshing at times. I think it has to do with searching for opportunities. New adventures seem to present themselves far more to the dynamic and the bold rather than the stable and the consistent. For quite a while now there have been some things that I've been looking for, and I've been determined to find them. I've learned that you don't find opportunity by giving into the everyday routine. Rather, you have to break away from that oppressive force and just live free. Anyone can have stability, but to have stability and be content at the same time is far more difficult to come by. I suppose inevitably that's what I'm looking for, my satisfied stability, but it keeps fleeting away. Despite how much I bask in the chaos of things, once I am content I imagine that I will have no problem settling down, at least until the unavoidable force of change rears its ugly head once again.

I don't know what's to come, but I do know what has passed. No matter how confused I am today, I have had some exceptional journeys over the last few years and wouldn't give them up for anything. I've learned so much, experienced so much and I couldn't have done any of it without all of you accompanying me along the way. Whether you're already pursuing your own hopes and dreams, about to embark on them or still preparing for them, you have impacted my life and it will not be forgotten. I know it seems the older I get the busier I become, but I truly hope our paths will cross again. I have watched many faces come and go, some stick around, others disappear completely... and there are always those that manage to pop back up every once in a while when you least expect it. I truly wish I didn't have to fulfill all of these responsibilities and could just sit back and enjoy life with all my friends and loved ones, but that's not what makes life what it is. It's the stress and despair that we have to deal with every single waking day that make those moments when we actually get to enjoy life that much more memorable.

To those that are leaving I salute you. I sincerely hope all of you find what you're looking for and best of luck on your travels to come. Some of you are my best of friends and I will always cherish the memories that we have shared together. I imagine some of our paths will cross again, and perhaps those crossings will yield some more of those memories that we can't help but remember. Whatever the case, I just want you to know that you will be sorely missed.

To those that remain... well... I have a feeling there will be some interesting adventures yet to come...

Rhett

**"The Battle of Meleagris gallopavo"**  
Whitney Cates

Oh, how many were sacrificed  
On that one single day.  
They fought for their lives  
In so many ways.  
They cried with their voices,  
So many took flight,  
But many were taken during the night.  
With all their weapons their enemies came,  
With knives and with axes these victims to slay.  
They fought with their hearts;  
They fought till their demise;  
The enemies took young, old and wise.  
The battle was pauseless, bloody and long,  
Their enemies knew not they were wrong.  
They fought till the end,  
Wavering not,  
And then their fellows heard the final shot.  
In the cavern they were placed,  
In the heat, in the dark,  
To be held there until  
They had the right mark.  
When they came out,  
The only words their enemies could say  
Were "Thank You, Lord, for this turkey,  
On Thanksgiving Day!"

**"Today"**  
Eric Wilson



The alarm clock sounds; today begins,  
Papers are due, tests to be taken,  
Expectations to be met

PEACE, BE STILL...

Today wars continue, terrorists attack,  
Brave soldiers fall,  
Families are taken back with grief

PEACE, BE STILL...

Today jobs are lost, economies crash,  
Debt accrues, banks foreclose,  
Hunger rages, diseases spread, millions die

PEACE, BE STILL...

In a day and time so uncertain,  
We can Trust in the God of Wonders  
And believe He will provide.

PEACE, BE STILL; KNOW THAT I AM GOD

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea..." Psalm 40:1-2

Photo by Erin Creech

## **“Stoleianity: A Preface to a Religion”**

Josh Verdell

Disclaimer: The following is not to be taken seriously; it is entirely a work of fiction. It is a portrayal of a discussion I had with my good friend Jarrod Stoles.

One Sunday afternoon I was hanging out with my good friend Jarrod Stoles when we became involved in an interesting conversation. I believe a little back story on Mr. Stoles is appropriate; he at one point in his life was a sociology major at a fine university but has since been called into a different way of life. While hanging out watching television we came across a televangelist, and this is where the gears started to turn in my good friend's mind. While the televangelist “pleaded” and “threatened” for donation, you could see the opportunist side of Mr. Stoles becoming interested. Jarrod had been wondering to himself, in what kind of profession could he possibly make enough money to warrant the effort? This television program answered his question and has set Jarrod along his current path. No, he has not entered the traditional ministry; no he has not become a missionary. What he is doing is quite innovative despite the fact that it has been done several times in the past. He has set forth to start his own religion.

I know what you must be asking yourself. How could someone think that starting their own religion would be a profitable endeavor? Jarrod explained it to me in this way: the initial investment will be returned proportionally to the number of followers you can sway. His plan was quite complex and in some points seems underhanded even to myself. The new, currently unnamed, belief system will be organized by canons. He described to me how he would shape these canons to undermine currently popular religions. His plan was to require less of his followers than other religions, while providing more local influence to followers that make higher donations of money and time. In Mr. Stoles's opinion, the lesser involvement required would entice many westerners who view current religions as being too much of a burden.

Of course having fewer requirements in and of itself will not make a religion; religion must be based on a belief. However, in reference to the human psyche, the religion need not make sense, as Mr. Stoles quickly pointed out to me the followers of a popular religion in Hollywood. At this point my own views started a shift to coincide with those of Mr. Stoles, yet I could not bring myself to be so callous. He began to build the framework of the religion there in front of me. It is to be a religion that embraces science rather than shuns it, it is to preach acceptance and its followers are encouraged to practice this acceptance. He decided that there is no main deity to worship, yet the followers are allowed to worship a deity if they so choose, as long as their actions fall within the canons.

In an odd turn Mr. Stoles realized a peace and joy religion looks good on paper, but people need something to unify and impassion them for a cause. This cause would, he decided, become the religion's unwavering stance on government-provided welfare. This stance is not to be seen as an attack on the poor, but more of an encouragement for success as a high priority for the followers is the education of the younger generation.

Of course, the religion needs to be noticed, since there is no way to sustain the income required without enough followers. To start off, the religion will try to begin as a political force during a presidential election year. It will find a charismatic, well-spoken individual to run on their ticket as the champion of justice. The plan is not to win the election but to get media attention; from the spotlight, many controversial and polarizing subjects will be addressed, providing a springboard for the movement.

Now, I'm not sure how or when Mr. Stoles plans on accomplishing these tasks, or if he was even serious about them. What I do know is that this conversation left me with more than a few questions. Was this simply the rambling of a stoned college dropout or was it something more? This conversation, along with simply knowing someone as deep as Jarrod Stoles, has caused me to be more critical in my own thinking. Though I maintain my previous beliefs, I do not simply filter everything based on those beliefs. For this insight I have to thank my good friend Jarrod Stoles, wherever he may be.

## “Advice to Scholars”

Rachel McCoy

To all non-Senior Scholars,

My semester has been completely consumed with Senior Project mishaps, and as a result, I've learned some valuable lessons. Instead of giving you advice on what you should do regarding your Senior Project, allow me to present to you a list of things you should **NOT** do regarding your Senior Project that I had to learn the hard way:

Do NOT assume things will go the way you have planned just because you planned them that way. If you're like me, rest assured anything that can go wrong, will go wrong!

Do NOT allow yourself to think that you will *make* time for this project. Instead, *plan* time for it, and *make* time for other things.

Do NOT believe anyone who tells you the IRB process doesn't take FOREVER.



Do NOT expect anyone to take your project as seriously as you do. There is no such thing as a Scholars Senior Project Emergency, such as needing a particular signature or needing to speak with *anyone* in Administration within a reasonable amount of time, *especially* if it's lunch time or Friday.

Do NOT be unorganized. Make copies of EVERYTHING and write EVERYTHING down, preferably in ONE notebook. Seriously.

Do NOT assume that you will be able to get ahold of the people you need to get ahold of when you need to get ahold of them. No one is ever in their office, near their phone, or by their computer. Yes, they got your message, and no, they haven't had time to take a look at the issue. Their secretary will get in touch with you sometime before 2010.

Do NOT be surprised when someone who knows **nothing** about your project tries to tell you how you should do it, how you should change it, what you should call it, who you should vote for, what they want for Christmas, etc.

Do NOT punch that person in the face when you've finally heard enough from them!

Do NOT forget to take little breaks from your project. Everyone loooves their projects, blah, blah, blah. But seriously, you'll get tired of it.

Do NOT make the same mistakes I did! Good luck with all of your future projects!!!

## God is in the Details

Katelyn Busmann

Details in a story can add dimension to a story. It no longer becomes a vague story that can be changed from storyteller to storyteller, but a legitimate story that happened in the exact way described. The lack of detail can make a story less believable, but allows imagination to fill in the missing details. In depth detail persuades the mind to believe the story's validity. This validation is apparent in the description of the world flood found in the *Bible*. The story about Noah and the ark has many details that add to the story and a lack of details that creates questions. This aspect creates an *aporia*.

In the *Book of Genesis* when God commands Noah to build an ark, He imparts explicit details of how the ark should be built. He details what wood should be used, the dimensions of the vessel, the number of stories, even where the window and door should be placed:

So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. (Genesis 6:14-16 NIV)

The language of this passage is imperative, which is ironic when one thinks about what the task involves. Not only is the task one that will take lots of time and dedication, but it is also absurd. The way in which it is written, however, makes it sound like any commonplace charge. God is ordering Noah to build an ark in the middle of the desert in the same manner an ordinary person would order a dinner. The command's presentation and the assignment are very intriguing.

In another passage, God told Noah how many animals to gather of each kind and where to store them in the ark. He also told Noah how long it was going to rain and when the rain would begin. He gave in depth tasks for Noah to follow:

You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you (Genesis 6:19 NIV)...Take with you seven of every kind of clean animal, a male and its mate, and two of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, and also seven of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights. (Genesis 7:2-4 NIV)

These details are helpful because otherwise Noah may not have provided adequately for all the animals. He may have made living quarters only for his family, stocked it improperly, or built the rooms improperly sized for the various kinds of animals. This easily could have been a problem especially because Noah did not find the animals; rather, the animals came to Noah where he gathered them into the ark (Genesis 7:9). This is an important distinction because it shows even further the magnitude of these details.

The detailed description allows readers to imagine the journey. It is possible to visualize the size of the ark, the depth of the floodwaters, and the area in which the ark came to rest. One can picture Noah releasing a dove and it flying back with an olive branch in its beak to signal that the waters were receding.

The amount of detail in Noah's directions differs significantly from other parts of the flood story. Details about who Noah was before the flood are not mentioned. It simply states that "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord," but it does not give the details of how Noah gained this favor (Genesis 6:8). It states that Noah "walked with God," which shows that Noah had a relationship with God, but it does not detail any previous events showing Noah's obedience to God's will prior to building the ark. Having a relationship with God and obeying a terrific task are two separate entities. Why was Noah the only person suitable to live and carry on the human race?

The story does not say how the people of the area reacted to Noah building an ark. Was he mocked? How did his family react when he first told them? Did they believe him or wonder if he was "crazy?" Did other people attempt to board the ark as the floodwaters began to rise? Why does the *Bible* state that God shut Noah in the ark (Genesis 7:16)?

Once again, the language in the story is unusual. The passage states matter-of-factly that God liked Noah. The language is important, for even when the story is not embellishing in detail about why Noah is liked, it is still stated in the same fashion as all other detailed aspects of the story. Unlike Moses or Jonah, the *Bible* does not say whether Noah ever questioned God. It does not say anything about Noah's reactions to being commanded to build an ark in the middle of the desert when wood is not a ready commodity, nor the pitch necessary to seal the ark. This is unusual, for almost every character in the Old Testament who God tested at least asked God why he was chosen to carry out the task.

The lack of details is important, for the details and lack of details create an aporetic sense in the story. The lack of details seems to discount the validity of the story. It undermines all the believability the details have instilled in the story. The juxtaposition as to why the story is so detailed about how high the window should be placed or the dimensions of the ark in contrast to no mention of the way society perceived Noah and his family should be noted. Why are the details so important to some parts of the text when the whole story does not contain the same level of detail? In contrast, why are so many details provided, if the story is intended to leave room for much supposition and interpretation?

Details in the story give readers a sense of security in the story's validity. A story that is vague in details allows the readers to perceive a story how they want, meaning the story can be changed each time someone tells it, for the details are not written in stone. The details in the biblical flood story are important because the details are there to help readers believe and understand the story. The lack of details is also needed though, because it symbolizes that God allows his people to choose what they believe. He set out detailed instructions for Noah regarding certain things, but did not detail every aspect, only providing guidance so to show that Noah had a choice. The language helps convey the importance of the details by not being too overwhelming or complex, but still showing the authority of God's words.



Photo by Erin Creech

**“Vertical Words”**

Christopher Cates

We must follow our destinies and  
have the patience to sometimes be willing to say  
you just can't win.

Don't go against the grain,  
or you'll damage the finish of your life.

When I was your age I was the  
envy of the town.

Look at my life,  
each step you  
take only leads to the same end.

Take my advice:  
help yourself first and let  
everyone else  
strive to  
endure their own struggle.

See how  
they don't look like us,  
act like us,  
think like us;  
each one wants to kill us,  
murderers hiding behind  
every face;  
never  
trust  
someone who looks like that.

In all situations it is  
necessary to  
first consider a series of rules:  
listen to your instincts,

use those around you to your own ends,  
endure the false morals of others, and  
no one has anyone else's interests in mind;  
control of said situations  
eventually leads to total inner peace.  
Ultimately, none of this matters  
since it's my senior year and none of this affects my post-graduate life.

**“A Reply to Bob Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde*”**

Casey Ridener

As my car cuts through the black of night,  
You call for me.  
You beg me to come home,  
And you ask me  
About my leopard-skin  
Pillbox hat.  
You want me so bad.  
You tell me that "Every-body must get stoned"  
And I see you in a juke joint,  
Forty-five years ago.  
Smoky, dim, you're onstage  
A one-man band; guitar, harmonica, tambourine.  
I'd love to be in that audience  
Wearing a knee-length dress with a square-cut neckline  
Bouffant hair  
I'd sway my hips and snap my fingers  
With a man wearing a skinny necktie.  
  
As my car cuts through the black of night,  
You call for me.

## Prologue from *Jubilee*

Zach McCain

Scouting Mission: 116 Alpha

Standard Date: 163 a.c. Jubilee Date: 346 a.c.

The ruby scar on his forehead itched. It always did when he was nervous. He keyed in the entry code to his locker, the locker he alone had access to. He was the only one within billions of kilometers of his position, out here in the outer reaches of the solar system. It was a lone mission, yet this was only one of many strong security measures on the ship. The only explanation lay in human paranoia, he thought. Stupid humans, afraid of themselves, even when there was no one around to cause problems.

A hissing noise emitted from the locker as the pressure locks let go of their captive door. The door slid open and he reached deep inside for his containment suit. They had given this to him as a safety precaution in case of emergency. Of course, the only emergency he could imagine needing it for would be loss of cabin pressure, and then he could think of nothing this suit could do but sustain his miserable existence a day or two in case someone invented a more technologically advanced fusion drive, mounted it onto a modified hull, and launched for his position within a two-hour time span to rescue him. The method of unlocking it was a perpetually disturbing reminder of this when he decided he needed something out of his locker. He was used to a voice-print identification lock, and so the idea of needing a physical code in the case of loss of cabin pressure was unnerving. He didn't like the idea of a sudden inability to produce sound out here in space. The locker key made this far too prevalent in his thoughts. Pointless, he thought. Of course, he hadn't thought of this.

But then again, who would have?

His brow was itching still, building into a fire. It was obvious to him that he wouldn't be able to keep himself composed in this situation. He knew his face would be contorted and his brow would be sweating, no matter how cold it was out there. He only had one comfort in all of this....

There was no conceivable way an alien species would be able to read human expression.

Aliens...extra-terrestrials...Martians...there were a million names for them. No one had truly thought they existed. At least, not many would admit to themselves that they did, and those that would were skeptical deep down inside. They couldn't possibly let humans be less than anything else. It was a matter of pride. He didn't care about pride, would love to stifle it with the existence of something greater. Now he would be able to give them a name.

He had launched from space-dock about a month ago. They had recently re-engineered one of Earth's old propulsion techniques. This recently acquired fusion drive was the fastest thing any of the colonists had ever encountered. The ability to travel at such speeds had become a forgotten dream, limited only to those who remembered the great journey. Many thought that they would never be able to recapture the science behind the old ship drives, but then again, there were those that never thought it would be possible to successfully settle Jubilee, never thought they could force the gene structure of essential plant life to adhere to the rigors of a new world, or develop an implant to adapt the atmospheric pressures to suit the needs of the human lung. All of them had been proven wrong. Society never understood the possibility of the impossible until it smacked them in the face. Once again, man was too prideful in his knowledge to consider there were some things he didn't understand. That was up to the dreamers, and society never liked dreamers.

Of course, it wasn't exactly like the drives of the past, but the components were too difficult to manufacture here. After a few tests, all successful (at least as far as they would tell the public), they had decided to send out a mission. Leave it to the overeager human race to strap a small metallic hull to a massive highly volatile explosive, send it vaulting into the air after minimal test runs with an unexceptional 32-year-old male occupant, and decide that there was a need for a security locker to hold his nominal possessions.

He wasn't exactly the most social of humans, lost in a complex web of mixed insecurity and bad experience with his race. But they had needed a man that could stand being alone for an indefinite period of time, with little room for what the psychologists called "separation anxiety." So they had chosen him, a recluse, someone who found himself in no want of human society. Had they known what he would encounter out here in this emptiness they might have sent a slightly better representation of humanity. At the very least, they might have trained him in some diplomatic ideology.

He had caught himself thinking of home out here in the black. He may have had reclusive tendencies, but he still missed Jubilee. Life was there, not just cold machinery. It wasn't human life he longed for, but rather the more

pure forms of it. Humans disgusted him. There were some he could tolerate, the ones that immersed themselves in the work of furthering existence, instead of stifling it, but he saw faults in all of them. He wasn't conceited, though, he knew he was almost as bad as they were, but he couldn't escape from himself, unfortunately, and he had no desire to leave the life of reason and contemplation he had found solace in. These were the only things that excited him; discovery, science, knowledge, and nature grasped at his heart because of its purity and elegance. He knew that there must have been something much greater than man out there somewhere, and up to this point he had looked at the natural world order and perfection of the cycle of the universe as proof. He had thought more than most that others might be among the stars, but never had the reality of the idea truly struck him. He was struggling to believe it even now that it was upon him.

It was this natural world that he hoped to represent to these beings he was about to encounter. He cared nothing about sharing mankind with them, but instead wanted them to see more of the perfect universe he knew to still be pure. He simply hated that a human had to show this to them. He knew his representation could not be accurate.

"Scout, what's our status?"

"We are currently 4,362 km outboard of the asteroid, approaching at a speed of 2,852 km per hour. We have approximately 1.53 hours until intercept." The melodic female voice informed him. She had been his only companion for this journey, and he was not displeased by it. She was logical, ordered, and unobtrusive. That's how he liked anyone, but he seldom encountered a sentient capable of such constraint. Thus the Scout IV was his ideal companion. His interface with the ship had been minimal, but he talked much more to her than any human he had been around, unless forced to within the constraints of his work. He couldn't help but be fascinated by the technology man had developed, in spite of his dislike for humankind.

He wondered what this new species he was about to encounter was like. He didn't think much about their physical appearance. There was no way of knowing the answer to that question, and there had been plenty of representations of what they could look like in the millions of fiction works involving them. Humans had spent enough time trying to guess at the alien appearance for all the possible species combined. No, he wondered what kind of character they had, what they valued, and what they despised. He knew one thing...if they had advanced this far they couldn't be of the same destructive nature as humans. He wasn't worried for himself. He would more willingly place himself in the hands of an advanced alien civilization than in the hands of any human. His only worry was their inability to understand each other. He disagreed with the famous 19th century writer of Earth. It wasn't "To be great is to be misunderstood." No, he knew that to be great was to be able to make yourself understood. He just hoped that he was great.

He placed the rigid helmet of his containment suit over his head and allowed it to seal in conjunction with the neck joint before he spoke. "Scout, release the boarding ramp."

"Warning, unregistered boarding zone. Release of pressure locks could result in cabin depressurization. State security clearance."

His brow was still blazing with the itch, but he couldn't reach through his helmet to provide himself with any sort of relief. Blasted security, what was the boarding ramp clearance code? He hadn't expected to need this one.

"Boarding ramp security override class one alpha."

That was simple enough. Class one alpha simply referred to an unexpected circumstantial override. The cabin was filled with a loud hissing sound as the boarding ramp locks began to release. The sound was a good thing. It meant that these creatures didn't live in the vacuum of space. Or, at least, that they recognized he didn't and accommodated him for it. Of course, his instruments aboard the Scout IV had shown him this as he entered the alien docking facility, but he never trusted his instruments.

As the ramp began to fall open a blinding light penetrated the dimness of the pressurization room. He had to squeeze his eyes tight to keep from losing sight altogether because of its unnatural intensity. Of course, unnatural assumes that there is a natural that crosses the gap between human and alien experience. Funny, he thought, I had never considered the possibility of an alien species being more accustomed to a much brighter environment before. Of course, given the lack of consideration man had given what an actual extra-terrestrial race might be like, this was no surprise. Humans had just taken the characteristics of themselves and morphed them a little. Aliens must be something like them after all, right? He had never been more disgusted with human pride.

One thing was certain, if this amount of light was standard in their environment, he would be blinded throughout this encounter. Of course, as much as his senses were being overloaded, he had a feeling one less might cut down on his chances of being completely overwhelmed by what he was about to experience. And then he remembered his suit's visual dampener. Unlike his locker, the suit did respond to verbal commands.

"Activate visual dampener."

Through his closed eyelids, he noticed that the light was dimming, and when it seemed to be dark enough, he began to open his eyes once more.

The only sound he made was the whisper of his breath escaping rapidly through his tense lips. He was rigid, unable to move because of the incredible sight before him. He had never seen anything so alien before. He tried to

think of different words to describe it, but the only thing that would come close to sufficing was alien, so very alien.

Fear.

Pain.

He was doubled over, his vision coming and going, his strength leaving him. In the next instant, he was gone.

## A Few Final Thoughts

Another year has snuck up on frantic Scholars preparing for finals and finishing projects galore. Despite what Chad Holmes may assert, procrastination is not a friend to most. With the school year coming to a close, it is always beneficial to look back on what has been and look forward to what is yet to come.

Rhett Chrysler's duties as Scholar President are over as Rachel Stevens and other new Council members step up to the plate. They all have some big shoes to fill, but I'm sure they are up to the task.

Trying to turn back time, holding onto the hour hand that moves so fast, some Seniors will remain for another year or two but most will move on to the world beyond UT Martin. They are going on to better things and bigger places - not a difficult accomplishment considering the size of Martin. However, they have been a blessing and source of entertainment, and they will be missed. Though the Seniors will soon be considered Alumni, all other classes have a year or more to go.

Current Juniors, look forward to the future and keep working hard. If you can, avoid the dreaded Senioritis contaminant so your Senior Projects do not become potential causation for being placed on a suicide watch list.

Current Sophomores, you are half-way through your college education. Get a good start on your Scholar's Project and enjoy the remaining time you have at UT Martin.

Current Freshman have a while to go, but you should not look at the time ahead as years to overcome but as a time to grow. Try and finish up the list of Honors classes by the end of this next school year while enjoying the two reading-discussion groups, Medical Mysteries and Photography.



As the upcoming freshman enter the Honors building for their first University Scholars class, all upper-classman Scholars should take some time to advise and comfort them. They will be nervous and overwhelmed, as all of us were, and will need some positive words and smiles. Sophomores who will serve as Big Sibs next year should do their best to make the new Scholars feel right at home.

Thank you all for a fantastic year! We at *The Scholar* are looking forward to all the wonderful experiences that will surely happen in the years to come. Good luck on all of your finals, and enjoy your summer vacation!

-Paige