

Title of Magazine: From the Depths Issue: Fall 2012, *A Story Will Rise*

Mikaela Jorgensen

Editor: Susan Warren Utley and Savannah Renee Warren

October 2012

Web Address: www.hauntedwaterspress.com/From_the_Depths/From_the_Depths.html

What they publish: Fiction, flash fiction, penny fiction creative nonfiction, poetry, interviews with their contributors

Submission Guidelines: Each issue has a theme. Fiction should be under 3500 words, flash fiction of any length, creative nonfiction should be no more than 1500 words. The editors look for elegantly written work with an emotional connection to the reader. "Think love and loss, triumph over adversity, defining moments in an otherwise mundane life, desperate measures in desperate times, ordinary people and extraordinary circumstances, the ends justify the means." Characters should be complex, interesting, and well developed. If your story has a fairy tale ending, it must be believable.

Description of Publication: *From the Depths* releases four issues per year: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall. The experience of the contributors is vast. From undergraduates and people submitting their work for the first time, to people with MFA degrees and debut novels forthcoming. The design of this magazine is impeccable. Each piece has illustrations to accompany it and each page has some form of art or graphics. Each issue is on the website in a flipbook format, which makes it very easy to read.

Prose Per Issue/Amount of Published Annually: The magazine is now accepting submissions for its fifth issue. It's first issue (Winter 2011) featured three stories, but each issue contains more and more pieces. The Fall 2012 issue contained 13 stories. If it continues publishing 13 stories per issue, 52 stories will be published per year.

Prose Reviews: A first person, plainspoken and exotic story, *The Broad Cloak of Night* by Chad W. Lutz, is set in the main character's backyard as he watches his wife wash dishes in front of the kitchen window. The story begins with the man drinking beer in his backyard. His wife goes into the house and waves from the kitchen window and the narrator says, "She was beautiful, and we were in love and nothing could spoil our perfect night." Except then the narrator sees a blade poke through his wife's neck and saw it clean off as the rest of her body drops to the floor. A smile remains on her face and the narrator, who is confused by a cocktail of pills, doesn't know if it's real or not. This isn't clear to the reader either, which leaves them wondering.

This unreliable narrator keeps the reader guessing, unsure of what is real and what he is imagining. "Over and over the knife touched flesh, each time adding to the pool of blood collecting on the counter and my own fears as to whether or not any of this was real, or the side effect to some wicked prescription cocktail." The suspense and fear of watching the narrator's wife being decapitated while he is drugged and unable to act or stay conscious is executed effectively.

The Edge of Reasons by Michael Ducak is a first person, plainspoken story in a domestic setting. The narrator begins the piece by saying he lost his best friend, Erik, at the age of sixteen. His mom is worried about him, "But she doesn't know, none of them know, what I've been carrying around all this time." The narrator goes on to describe the evolution of their friendship, how a nobody like him and a popular rich kid like Erik became friends. Their favorite hangout is on this beautifully described cliff, where they often smoke and drink. The narrator asks Erik if he's scared that he might just throw himself off. "Stoned, I couldn't find the words to describe that irrational feeling, that freedom of will, the subliminal knowledge that there is nothing stopping you, nothing holding you back

but your own reasoning.” This same irrational feeling comes to the narrator when Erik is standing on the edge of the cliff, urinating. He doesn’t know why, but he pushes, and Erik falls to his death.

The structure of the story makes the story itself very suspenseful. The narrator foreshadows his guilt in the opening paragraph, goes on to describe the birth and unlikeliness of their friendship, and finally gets to the “I remember our conversation on that last day partly because of how well it illustrated some of the fundamental differences between us.” The conversation between the two, the first dialogue we see, really does help the reader tell them apart. Maybe the disagreements between them and Erik’s taunting plays a role in his decision to push and ultimately, murder him.

Rating: 9. Although this journal seems to focus on horror and dark fiction, this online journal is a great place for emerging writers to start publishing. The range of experience in the writers *From the Depths* has published is vast. The journal is very professional in communication, appearance, and content.