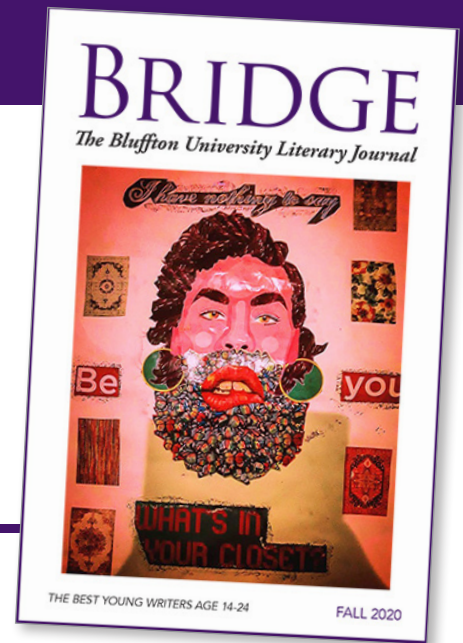


BRIDGE

The Bluffton University Literary Journal



IN MEMOR(Y)AM

Brooke Daly

CHARACTERS

Virginia: late seventies, cares deeply, struggles with impatience

Lewis: early eighties, kind, not always mentally clued in

SETTING

Friday night dinner at Virginia and Lewis' house. Modern day.

BROOKE DALY is an Orlando, FL native studying Creative Writing and German at Emory University (class of 2022). Her love for words traces back from crafting poems in elementary school, to co-writing a one-act play entitled "Out with a Bang" which was performed by Infinity Theater Troupe in 2017. When Brooke isn't with her friends or drinking coffee, she's facetimeing her cats back home.

Continued on page 2

Curtains rise, lights hit the stage. VIRGINIA and LEWIS sit on opposite ends of a long, wooden dining room table positioned downstage left. A meal of ham and green bean casserole is on the table. The only sound is of forks scraping against plates until LEWIS decides to break the silence.

LEWIS:

Dinner tastes great, Virginia.

VIRGINIA:

Thank you, Lew. Didn't take too long to put together.

LEWIS:

You know how ham is one of my favorites.

VIRGINIA:

That's why I made it.

LEWIS:

Well it's excellent. Thank you.

VIRGINIA:

You're welcome, dear.

LEWIS peers at the watch on his left hand, taking notice of the time.

LEWIS:

It's almost 7 o'clock. Shouldn't Georgeanna be here by now?

VIRGINIA:

(Stiffens, her fork stops mid-air)

She's not coming to dinner, Lewis.

LEWIS:

And why not?

VIRGINIA:

Because she's just not.

LEWIS:

Well that's silly. I know there has to be a reason. She's always here.

Continued on page 3

VIRGINIA:

She hasn't come to dinner in ages and she's not going to anytime soon.

VIRGINIA shoves a bite of green bean casserole into her mouth in an attempt to stop the conversation.

LEWIS:

What for?

VIRGINIA rubs the side of her temple and remains silent.

LEWIS:

Virginia?

VIRGINIA:

What?

LEWIS:

You didn't answer my question. Are you alright?

VIRGINIA:

I'm fine, Lewis. It's just been a long day.

LEWIS:

(Short laugh)

We're retired, Ginny. What could possibly tire you out?

VIRGINIA:

Errands, cooking...among other things.

LEWIS:

Well, anyway, dinner's delicious. I do love ham.

VIRGINIA:

I'm aware.

VIRGINIA and LEWIS both take bites of dinner. The air is tense.

LEWIS:

Continued on page 4

So how's Georgie doing? Must have a good reason for missing dinner.

VIRGINIA:

Would you stop with all of the questions, Lewis?

LEWIS:

All the questions? It's the first I've asked the entire day!

VIRGINIA:

No it's not.

LEWIS:

Am I not allowed to ask about how our daughter's doing?

VIRGINIA:

Not anymore.

LEWIS:

Now why would you say that?

VIRGINIA:

Because I don't want to talk about it.

LEWIS:

Ginny, what's come over you? First you're angry at me and then you don't want to talk about Georgie?

VIRGINIA:

Stop calling her that.

LEWIS:

What? Georgie?

VIRGINIA:

Stop.

LEWIS:

Why?

VIRGINIA:

Continued on page 5

(Matter of fact, quietly)

Because she's dead, Lewis.

LEWIS:

What?

VIRGINIA eats another bite of ham as her eyes begin to water.

VIRGINIA:

She's dead, Lewis. Has been for five months.

LEWIS:

No. You're lying.

LEWIS' eyes begin to water, a few tears slide down his cheeks. He's still unsure how to handle this information.

LEWIS:

Why didn't you tell me?

VIRGINIA:

I have.

LEWIS:

No, you haven't. I would remember something like this. How can you be so cold?

VIRGINIA:

Because we have had this exact conversation every Friday at 7 since she died.

LEWIS:

No.

VIRGINIA:

Yes.

LEWIS:

No, no, no.

LEWIS gets up from the table abruptly and begins to pace center stage.

Continued on page 6

VIRGINIA:
(Standing)

Yes, Lewis. She's been dead for five months and your damn dementia is so bad you ask me every Friday night why she's late for her usual dinner.

LEWIS:

Well it's not my fault I have this God forsaken memory loss. Don't blame me for this.

VIRGINIA:
(Silent sobs)

I don't. I don't. But every week, it's like I have to relive her death all over again. It's not any easier for me than it is for you.

LEWIS:

I'm sorry, Gin.

VIRGINIA:

Don't apologize, Lew.

LEWIS and VIRGINIA stand opposite each other, still center stage. A brief period of silence.

LEWIS:

How did she die?

VIRGINIA:

Car crash.

LEWIS:

And what about the kids?

VIRGINIA:

They were with their father, thank God.

LEWIS sucks in a breath of air and visibly exhales.

LEWIS:

I need to sit down.

LEWIS takes a seat on their living room couch, center left.

Continued on page 7

LEWIS:

I can't believe it.

VIRGINIA laughs a short, non-humorous laugh. Takes a seat next to LEWIS.

VIRGINIA:

You say that every time.

LEWIS looks at her briefly, out of the corner of his eye.

LEWIS:

(Shaking his head in disbelief)

So Georgie's really not here, is she?

A few tears slide down VIRGINIA's cheeks as she shakes her head no.

LEWIS:

If my memory's this bad, why don't you put me in a home?

VIRGINIA:

You're my husband.

LEWIS:

And?

VIRGINIA:

I love you too much to take away the only bits of freedom you have left.

LEWIS:

(Takes Virginia's hands in his)

I don't want you to have to deal with this, Ginny.

VIRGINIA:

(Rubs Lewis' hands assuredly)

It's my job to worry about you, dear. I won't ever put you in a home. I can handle it.

LEWIS:

I don't doubt you can. It's a matter of whether you should.

VIRGINIA:

Continued on page 8

This is just how it is. I don't mind doing it for you. What kind of wife would I be if I abandoned you, too?

A few beats pass.

LEWIS:

I love you Ginny.

VIRGINIA:

(Squeezes Lewis' hand one last time)

I know.

LEWIS:

Dinner sure did make me tired. I think I'll go to sleep. Do you need help cleaning up?

VIRGINIA:

No, Lew; I'm just fine. You head on up to bed...

LEWIS:

(Stands up from couch)

I certainly am lucky to have you.

VIRGINIA smiles sadly, gets up from the couch, and starts to clear the dishes. LEWIS walks upstage, pausing briefly, to look back at VIRGINIA.

LEWIS:

Goodnight, Gin. I'll see you in the morning.

VIRGINIA:

Goodnight, Lew.

Just as LEWIS walks offstage left, VIRGINIA drops into the kitchen chair. She picks up her fork, eats a bite of green bean casserole straight from the dish, and wipes tears off of her cheeks. She finishes chewing and sits in silence for a few seconds. VIRGINIA struggles to desire to get out of the chair. She looks at the table full of dishes and then walks away. Black out.