

“But where has the Time Gone?” by Melissa Yusko

“Time is a ribbon, a silent icy river.” Or maybe, time is “like a river, ever changing as it flows, and [a person’s] just a vessel that must follow where it goes.” Because, “time keeps running away, no matter what’s left behind. It keeps moving. Tomorrow is not in today, and all of your yesterdays are only a matter of time.” It’s quite amazing how many song lyrics deal with time. Perhaps it’s because time is something not quite understood—not controllable—we just follow its course and try to keep up. I mean, look at our four years at MC. It seems just like yesterday that we were sitting among our family, friends, and faculty as the President welcomed us at matriculation. Now four short years later, we once again are sitting among our family, friends, and faculty, but this time the President is congratulating us on our graduation. Where has the time gone? Several explanations help fill in the time spent at Marietta: finding ourselves, procrastinating and learning from that procrastination, expanding our opportunities, and learning to overcome obstacles.

Upon coming to college, we found ourselves: “Trying to learn from what’s behind you. Never knowing what’s in store, makes each day a constant battle to stay within the shores.”

First, we learned from our past. “Time grabs you by the wrist, directs you where to go. So make the best of the test and don’t ask why. It’s not a question, but a lesson learned in time.” High school gives us a start of finding ourselves, but it’s not until we get on our own, and gain independence that we really understand what makes us tick. By taking our past struggles and successes, we adapted to new encounters: whether dealing

with roommate conflicts or learning we might actually have to work in some of our classes. The past offers helpful advice.

Second, the future and who we will become is uncertain. “And nobody knows what’s gonna happen tomorrow. We try not to show how frightened we are.” Coming to college, living on our own was scary. How many of us were both excited and scared out of our minds the first day we came? Part of this fear came from not knowing how we would deal with our independence, the lack of family and friends to support us. Yet, we managed to dig deeply within ourselves to gain confidence to make new friends, and new families, while along the way learning that we can handle freedom. The unique community at MC allows faculty and students to interact on more than just an academic level. How many of us have a professor’s cell phone number—and have used it? With a community as deeply interwoven as this, we could really create a new supportive family. Again, we were forming a bit more of whom we are, and our friends and faculty helped play a role in our newfound selves.

Finally, college was a struggle. Finding ourselves was not easy. Breakdowns occurred, friendships lost, but nobody said life was easy. “The journey of a lifetime will begin with one step. When you’re climbing up that mountain it’s so easy to forget, it’s one step at a time.” As with anything, finding ourselves took, well, time. We took small steps, failed perhaps, tried something else and succeeded. For instance, how many of us were undecided or changed our majors, 1...2...3 times while we were here? By finding ourselves, we understood what we enjoyed, and could therefore find a major or career that fits into our lives. But deciding was often troublesome. Yet this struggle gave us character, and each of us can tell a completely different story of whom we have become

since coming to MC. Just look at Marietta. In our four years Dyson Baudo and Rickey were built, McCoy opened; Gilman, athletic fields, and Fayerweather were renovated; and the campus went wireless. By coming to college, we didn't just learn how interact with people and write papers. We learned about change and whom we are, which is more important than any book knowledge we can acquire.

Along with finding ourselves, we learned to procrastinate: "Too many times we stand aside and let the waters slip away. 'Til what we put off to tomorrow, has now become today." Ah, procrastinating. Everyone does it, even when we try not to. "Ticking away the moments that make up a dull day, you fritter and waste the hours in an off-hand way." Ok, so we talked on IM or just checked people's away messages...numerous times just to see if it changed. Or watched a movie, surfed the internet...just about anything except our work. "You are young and life is long and there is time to kill today." The group project is due at the end of the semester; that research paper is due next week. Plenty of time.

However, "then one day you find [four] years have got behind you, and no one told you when to run, you missed the starting gun, and you run...to catch up." Yeah, that paper is now due tomorrow and you pull an all nighter to finish it. And that group presentation is now due in two days, and getting everyone together to practice is nearly impossible. All of the time you thought you had somehow disappeared. Sometimes, ok probably most of the time, our procrastination came back to hurt us—even if it was just lost sleep. And how many of us felt overwhelmed our senior year, trying to fit in the last few classes needed to graduate or figuring out what to do next? We put off thinking about that last science credit (we can take it later), or what next after MC, like thinking about a

job or graduate school (we have time). Surprise. Senior year was here before we knew it and we had to deal with everything we pushed off. As a result, we learned to deal with decisions and work under pressure. There will always be deadlines in the future that creep up and surprise us that we will have to deal with. Maybe our procrastination was only preparing us for future time crunches...yeah that's our logic.

While we procrastinated, we still expanded our opportunities: "So don't you sit upon that shoreline, and say you're satisfied. Choose to chance the rapids; dare to dance the tide." "Time waits for no one, don't let it pass us by." When we weren't procrastinating, we stepped up to the plate. After all, we had mountains of homework and presentations to keep us busy. The main reason for coming to college is to gain knowledge and experience to further our career opportunities. We took classes, had internships, and went to seminars and the Career Center to get help in making us more polished individuals to present to the working world...or grad school for those of us prolonging reality. And the faculty were there for us each step of the way: of course assigning a ton of homework and forcing us to do team projects, but also to offer advice on what opportunities lay before us.

And if classes didn't keep us busy enough, some of us decided to get involved. For some of us, we probably should be shot for all we were involved in, but in the end it was worth it. "I see the way you hurry, and time runs your life again." The only way we could juggle our academics, social lives, and sports/leadership roles on campus was through time management skills. Here is a skill that will come in handy in the future when our employer tells us a huge list of tasks to complete. Plus, we expanded our interests by getting involved in different activities like the presidential election last fall or

just going downtown to practice our singing abilities on a Thursday night. Either way, by getting involved we opened doors to new experiences and possibilities: traveling to conferences to present papers, taking our athleticism to the next level, or just having fun in any of the other 40 different organizations on campus. All of which let us make friends, and provide stress relief—goodness knows we needed it.

Yet even with expanding our opportunities, we learned to overcome obstacles: “There’s bound to be rough waters, and I know I’ll take some falls. But with the good Lord as my captain, I can make it through them all.” Thank goodness for our close-knit, supportive community this year. If there was ever a rough year, this one was it (though 9/11 our freshman year comes close). The list of tragic events this year is quite extensive: 2 floods and 2 deaths of prominent figures on campus: Mike Conte and Coach Schaly. It seems that our community kept getting rocked, one event after another. But “you’ve got to believe it’ll be alright in the end. You’ve got to believe, it’ll be alright again.” No one ever likes to deal with the tough times, but without them, we could never enjoy the good. Remember, we need to take the good with the bad. For instance, the floods let us kayak down Front Street and get cool Survivor t-shirts. How many other colleges give that opportunity to its students? “Days go by and nothing stays the same....tonight is tomorrow’s memory.” We picked ourselves up from each event and fought or swam on. Life will always be difficult, but we learned we can survive.

“The random aspects of our lives come together once in awhile....you know there’s no avoiding the lesson to be learned.” Because “I’ll never reach my destination if I never try.” Throughout college we have learned more than just book smarts, we have found ourselves, procrastinated and learned from that procrastination, expanded our

opportunities, and learned to overcome obstacles. MC has given us a wide variety of experiences with which to draw from in the future, whatever our endeavors might be. And while our time here has ended, the next block of time is starting. And while this next quotation is from a movie, not a song, I still find it to be meaningful: "Someone once told me time was a predator that stalked us all our lives. I rather believe that time is a companion who goes with us on the journey and reminds us to cherish every moment, because it will never come again. What we leave behind is not as important as how we've lived." So as we leave MC, we'll cherish our memories and experiences as we continue on our journey. "I hope you had the time of your life." Now let's go out and make this our "finest hour." Congratulations class 2005.