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Editorial

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For a moment he faced the crowd and then hit Hothfer over the head with his helmet. Hothfer lost his balance and fell to the ground. The crowd laughed in a short conceit.

Hothfer rubbed his head while Gawain walked of the field hoping this would suffice.

Gawain walked past Kyra into the crowd. There was a satisfied smile on her face when

he nodded. He hoped that this would be the last of it. Love. Diplomacy. Things really seemed to have changed in this Modern Age. He would not share this joke with everyone.

Editorial: This Issue

In this issue, we welcome some new writers with a variety of tastes and techniques. Publishing with us for the first time, Charlie Starr contributes a short story which features the passion of spelunking, with background of Kentucky folklore and other mythologies. Mary Ann Georgia Banks Marin explores a timeless old Chinese tale. Myles Buchanan brings us “Brackenstead,” an excerpt from his developing story of a fantastic world in conflict, where a pragmatic authoritarian government faces down rebels who dream of freedom. Gania Barlow offers two sensitive poems inspired by the classics, while Marly Youmans presents prophetic poetry partly in the style of Yoruban praise poems.

We also welcome back some previous authors. In fiction, William Wandless, who published “The Third Mercy” in *MC31* (2009), and “Ornery Corn” in *MC 37* (2015), now brings us “The Finest Jest,” exploring the conflict between faith and the drive for conquest in a remote ancient Eastern setting, with a style reminiscent of Poe and Lovecraft. Ryder Miller, in “The

Undiplomatic Girl,” shows the impact of social change on King Arthur’s court. Lee Clark Zumpe examines the merits of diplomacy in extraterrestrial conflict. Chelsi Robichaud presents three short poems based on themes from the *Odyssey*.

Once more, L. C. Atencio provides a cover illustration, while Emily Metcalf produces two wonderful illustrations for “The Finest Jest.”

Special thanks to Bethany Abrahamson for her help with editing and layout.