ROME-- I sing of arms and of a man… Well, not quite, but I would like to share a story of my stay in Italy through eyes that have been, for better or for worse, permanently altered by the honors curriculum. It is my first night in Rome and everyone here at the John Felice Rome Center is excited. We have made it to Italy and we are beginning what we all hope will be a great semester abroad. With this mindset, we head out to see the sights Rome has to offer. After stopping for some late night gelato, I walk into St. Peter’s Square. I stand there, blown away by the sheer immensity of this piazza, but then I hear a voice in my head say, “See how the colonnades of Saint Peter’s form an embrace, welcoming people into the piazza, unlike the entrance at the Palace of Versailles, which is more like a funnel symbolizing the concentration of Louis XIV’s power.” What?! Where did that come from? With a groan, I remember my freshman year, sitting in Galvin Auditorium for Honors 102, listening to lectures on Versailles. It all comes flooding back to me, here in the city founded by the line of Aeneas. I get flashbacks of sleepless nights spent writing essays and recollections of hand cramps after writing like a madman during exams. Then I take a breath and remember all that is behind me. I am in a world beyond Honors 101 papers and finals. After this realization, I finish my gelato and just enjoy that I finally get to look at all these things first hand.
It is a power you are afraid of
like when you stare at a plane you could make it blow up
so you look away in case it does
look away to evade the blame
but it is inside of you and you know it
and the man on the TV said we are also on the way coming
and you want to believe it, you do
but there is a sandbag dam built up around the soul of every living thing
it is the risk of existence
to be afraid
when all you need to do is drive all of everything into one place
and stop looking away when it catches fire

Risk of Existence

Poems of Hannah Ramlo

Shades of orange and crown molding
Teaching me the benefits of staring at a ceiling for at least an hour,
Whipgrass images playing through my mind like
An experimental film crackles black and white and sepia.
Everyone knows that a different lens makes a thing more beautiful or damned
A perpetual haze, nothing is real like
You are real and yet I'll force myself away,
Home is a place you make up in your mind
And I'll be there soon.
Blast From the Past: Dr. Jonathan Mannering

By: Michael Conway and Jessica Jones

We all have our own heroes in our youth and even in our undergraduate years, heroes that inspire us in a variety of ways. Before the world was exposed to the abject horror of Jar Jar Binks, college fans of Star Wars were brimming with anticipation and optimism about the release of additional films to the canon. One of these enthusiasts fawns over the saga and allowing us to explore the heroes of a young classics scholar. “What counts is the story.”

“...Jonathan Mannering, a 19-year-old University of Chicago freshman from Park Ridge, also collects ‘Star Wars’ toys, but said, ‘If I lost the whole collection in a fire, what would still remain are the movies. What counts is the story. ‘George Lucas is the Homer of movies,’ he added. ‘His imagination is boundless. He has created another world, just as Homer did (in The Iliad and The Odyssey) and it’s something we can go to discover more about ourselves.’

He added that ‘Star Wars’ has ‘pointed me to clear thinking and to not following the easy way out of things, which is the Dark Side. It has influenced me in choosing what will fulfill me as a person, and in the same way Luke goes on the path to become a Jedi, I’ll go on the path (to study) the classics.”

From a young, doe-eyed college student, to a respected Honors professor, Professor Jonathan Mannering is well on his way to becoming a Jedi [aka, tenured]. Help me Dr. Mannering, you’re my only hope to understand...

THE CLASSICS

[Link to the full 1999 Chicago Tribune article:
http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1999-03-12/features/9903120439_1_star-wars-phantom-menace-darth-vader]
RIDDLE ME THIS RAMBLERS

BEGINNER RIDDLES:

1: WHAT MONTH DO SOLDIERS HATE?

2: WHAT HAS NOTHING BUT A HEAD AND A TAIL?

3: WHAT TWO WORDS CONTAIN THOUSANDS OF LETTERS?

BONUS RIDDLE:
WHAT OCCURS ONCE IN EVERY MINUTE TWICE IN EVERY MOMENT YET NEVER IN A THOUSAND YEARS?