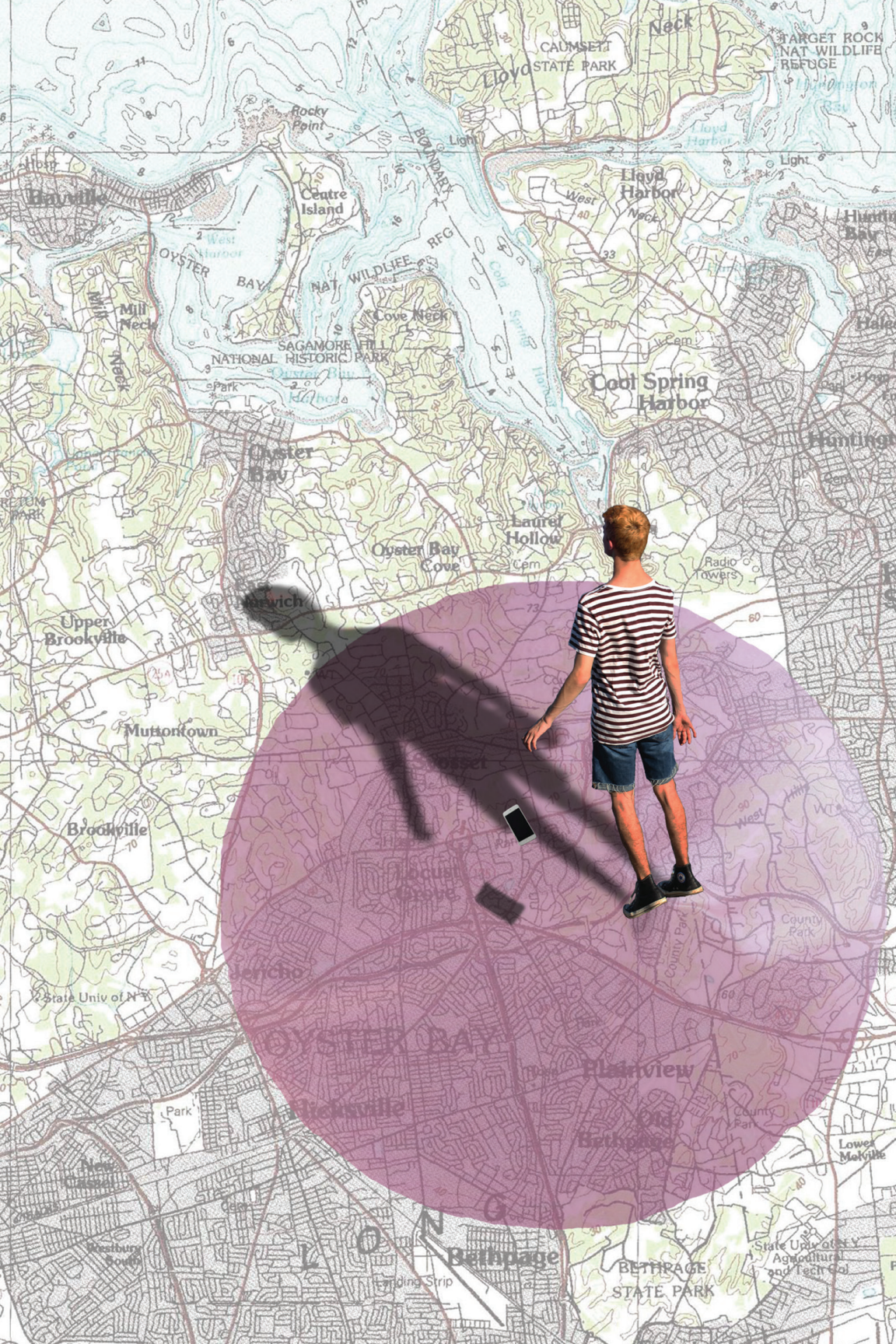




IMAGES

POBJFK HIGH SCHOOL

VOL. 24



LLOYD STATE PARK

TARGET ROCK NAT. WILDLIFE REFUGE

Oyster Bay

Centre Island

Lloyd Harbor

OYSTER BAY

NAT. WILDLIFE REF.

Cool Spring Harbor

Oyster Bay

Laurel Hollow

Upper Brookville

Muttontown

Brookville

Oyster Bay Cove

Brookville

OYSTER BAY

Plainview

Brookville

Plainville

LONG ISLAND

BETHPAGE STATE PARK

State University of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts

IMAGES 2016

Vol. 24

Date Published: May 25, 2016

Vol. 24

pobimages@gmail.com

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Dear Traveller,

Come, rest your weary feet, and continue this journey with your eyes alone. You hold in your hands the map to your next destination; whether that place will be on the earth or amongst the stars is up to your unique interpretation of this guide. Allow our map to take you to soaring heights, discover unfathomable depths, and cross the deepest of seas—all through the guidance of the works of art and literature that you will discover in the following pages.

We invite you to explore what we believe to be the three chapters of life's journey: the Wanderlust, the Crossroads, and the Clarity. This map reveals the various feelings that the chosen works portray, and as you continue to meander, we hope that you will find yourself stricken with the yearning to wander, trapped by the many choices life throws at you, and relieved by the chosen path you see.

Enjoy the journey.

The Editors

PROLOGUE

I.

I emerge, weathered hands tearing through a hazy cloud of inhibition. Boots sink heavily into fragrant mulch, lungs expand with brisk mountain air, and suddenly each breath becomes novel. I am a physical being in an equally tangible world; vibrant heartbeats grip my limbs and I can only think to run, trip, and tumble into the earth before me. The world is only a matter of what I do not conquer.

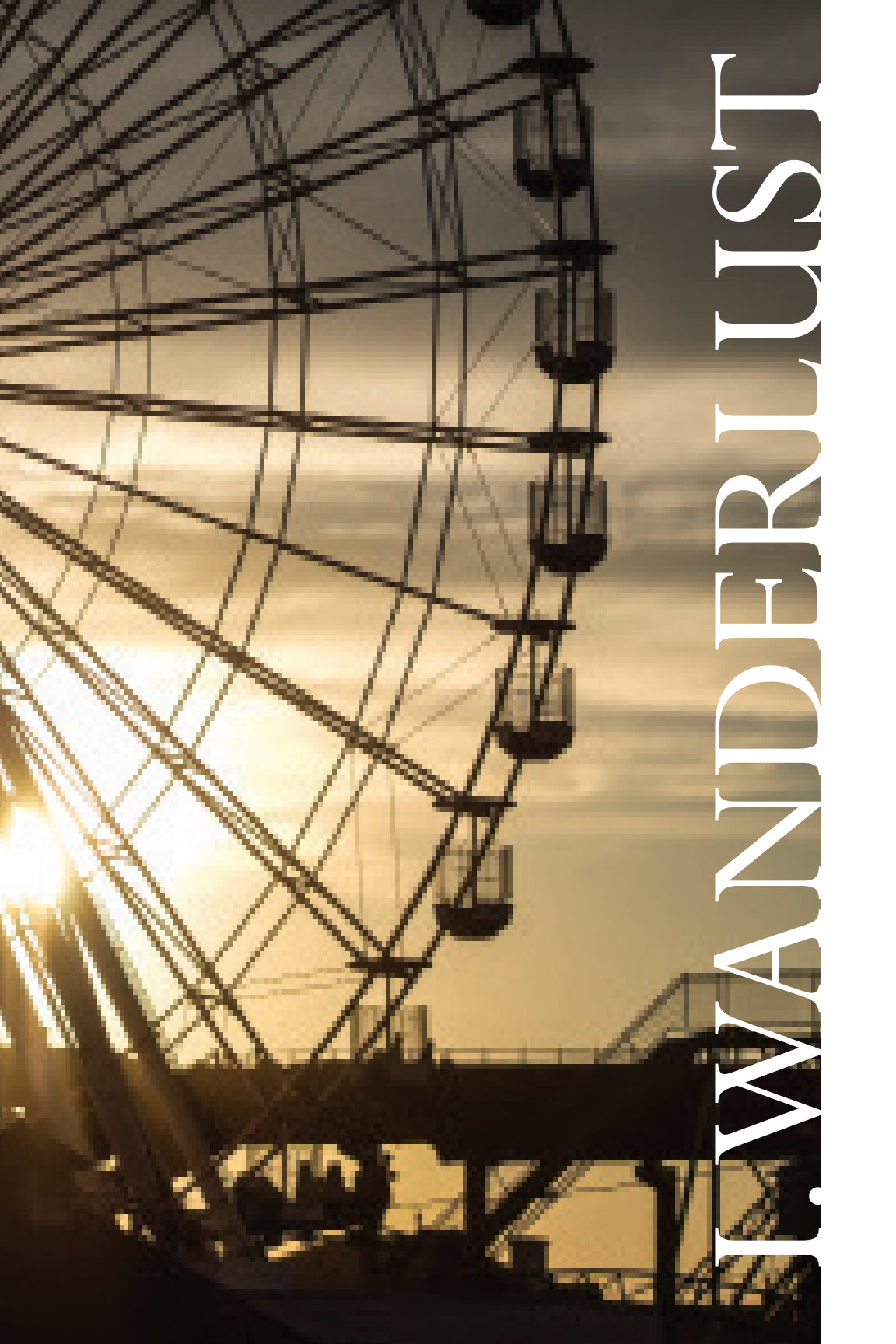
II.

Ideas turn to hungry hands, each grasping dangerously for a moment of my scarce attention; my name becomes Pandora, and I am forced to watch every word skip and bounce before my tired eyes. A certain manner in which my veins pump and my bones age makes me feel as though the universe has already mapped everyone's existence, that a diagram of our lives lies somewhere among the innumerable stars. But as much as I'd like to believe, my conviction dissolves as I sink into a liquid daze. I gasp and I am submerged. It becomes impossible to believe in anything. How long can we hold our breaths before dying?

III.

She feels, for a moment, a trace of anxiety that quickly disappears into the deepest part of her and ceases to exist. Her closed eyes are in no rush to open, her consciousness in no rush to keep speed. A clamour of numerous voices envelop her, and senses are heightened—fingers tingling with anticipation, yet heart at complete serenity. There are etchings in her skull of relative motion, our gravity, of time, and who she was always meant to be. The world is greater than all, and though greater, never diminishes the meaning of an individual.





J. VANDERLUUST





DIZZY

a frozen horizon,
cartwheels on grass
with our own private sky
and bubblegum laughs.

fingers scraping the clouds,
skin tinged pink thru the light,
i feel fuzzy and full
with my eyes screwed up tight.

i stretch out forever,
sugar melts into ground,
as the air becomes hazy,
my surroundings are drowned.

but nothing is ever
as good as it seems,
so i'll get myself drunk
on sunlight and daydreams.

Ilana Luther

Ryan Kerley



Michelle Shin

Warning: Life ahead, proceed with care.
-The Bump





Kayla Paris



Rachel Kubrick

VIENE, VIENE

Viene, Viene

La pareja de las aves
Separan en el otoño
El ave está volando
Al mejor lugar

Come, Come

The pair of birds
stand in autumn
The bird is flying
To a better place

Viene, viene mi ave

La mañana está aquí
Me despierto temprano
Estoy pensando en ti

Come, come my bird

Morning is here
I wake up early
thinking of you

Viene, viene mi ave

No puedo comunicar contigo
Pero mi corazón está contigo
No puedo esperar
Para nuestra reunión

Come, come my bird

I cannot communicate with you
But my heart is with you
I can not wait
For our reunion

Viene, viene mi ave

La noche está aquí
Yo te extraño mucho
Y no sé que hacer

Come, come my bird

The night is here
I miss you so much
And I do not know what to do

Viene, viene mi ave

Es el mejor momento
Yo puedo verte
Ver tu éxito y felicidad

Come, come my bird

It is the best time
I can see you
See your success and happiness

Tú necesitas salir

El mundo está esperando para ti

You need to leave

The world is waiting for you

Lexi Pinnata

PLEASURES

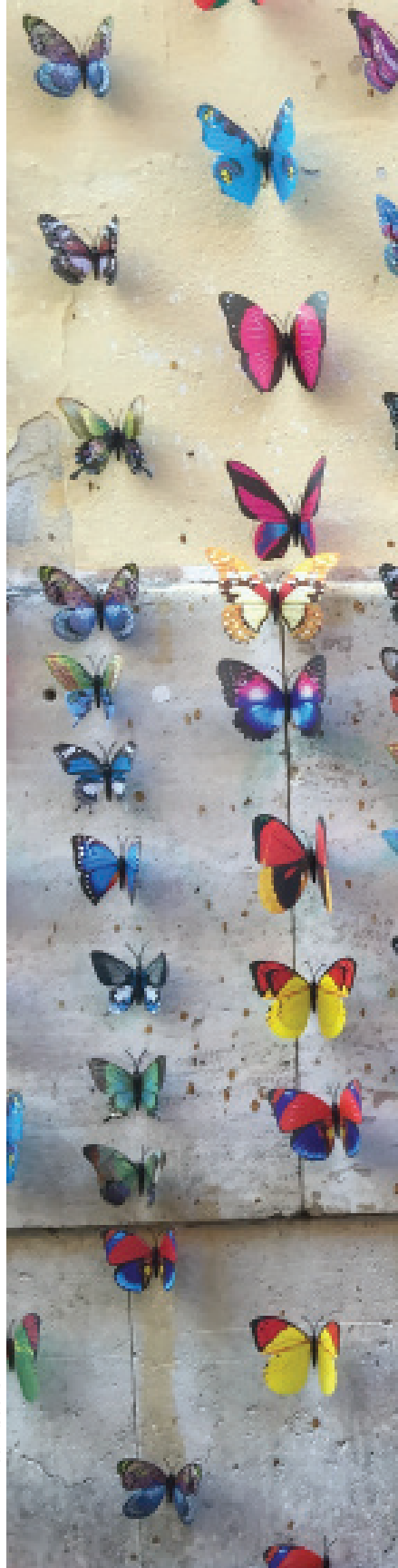
i am a plump fruit
mishandled in my transport
oh, i am swaddled in saran wrap!

my breath fogging on the plastic
and eyelashes clinging together with dew

i am a billowing blanket
wrap me around your body and i will envelop you!
satin and silk grazing your cheek,
i am the familiar scent of childhood

i am the honeysuckle blooming
blooms in early spring
sprigs spring through sidewalk cracks
crack into vines and valleys

Ilana Luther



Noah Sachs





WEDDING

To marry or not to marry, on Facebook that is:
We kiss all day, my teenage dream, but maybe it should
only be between you and me.

I came through your doors, your parents were out,
and so, we made out.
Padded up to your room like bride and groom,
Hands clasped, arms around each other, as tightly as
baby's around mother.

But then, an interruption—the computer.
Login.
Long username. Long password. Long time to load.
And finally, we wedded.
Closer yet further.
The computer was the only guest at our wedding.
And suddenly, the whole world knew.

Anonymous



Ingoo Kang



Ellie Lee

A FIGURATIVE TESTAMENT TO THE STRENGTH OF IDENTITY

your name, to me, was synonymous to inky gold etchings against ivory, tragically forced to forget the murder which birthed such false dignity; was it that gruesome shame which held your shaking hands, coercing you into concealing your history by carving it into this sheepish pretense?

ah! when finished, you must have thought, it's perfect - it looks - oh, it looks as though it had been shaped from divinity, crafted for the eyes of god and god alone! in this way, it all made sense to you; it appeared that the woes of a sculptor were merely the price of the finished piece.

your aching hands grasped it with fever; it seemed as though after you sifted through all the debris, this was the only thing left. a crude tusk of an expired elephant, your sullied name slathered with chipping paint.

is it true that you are the only one, and have always been the only one, who cannot see through it? is it true? have you been told before that you may have scraped away things that were worth keeping?

Emily Shih





TOASTS TO THE EMPTY

He's thinking of her tonight,
thinking of the rail road tracks
scattered all over her body,
they always seem to lead
back to him,
keeps him running,
head full of smoke.

There's another empty bottle,
lights in the kitchen
are flickering,
on-off on-off
reminding of him,
that even in the smallest of
shadows there is still pain.

He's staying at home tonight,
whispers of whiskey
and toasts to the empty
chair in the corner,
drink and drink and drink
until the bottle is empty,
She will never be at the bottom.

Isabel Wallach



Shannon Firooz



Drew Kaplan

A NON-EROTIC PORTRAYAL OF DISMUTUAL AFFECTIONS

He took her in his arms fully, his chest against her breasts, hasty handfuls of hair in his fists. They were a temporary sculpture of adrenaline, painted unskillfully with vivid hues of ecstasy and sorrow; he kissed her over and over with a sort of lethal desperation, as though the mere act of taking breath would put space between them, and the art would cease to exist.

“I love you. I love you. I love you so much,” she murmured into him, rouge lips naughtily sneaking color onto his ear. “Why do you have to go?” The words dribbled out of her like she was spitting honey, thickly sweet and sticky to the touch, too messy.

“Ah—” Lee pulled away from her, releasing her as though she had suddenly become poison. His eyes were half-lidded, bloodshot, unimpressed—presumably from a lack of sleep. He was staring at her, but not very committedly; his vision seemed unfocused and he didn’t bother to correct it. “My bus is coming soon, love. I’m gonna leave and you’re gonna forget about me, okay?”

Deep, black eyes filled to the brim as though someone were pouring liquid into them, and she gripped his jacket, knuckles blanching. Her expression was too fluid, emotions visibly rolling over her, continuously distorting her face in the ripples.

“Why? You could stay. Stay here with me. It can work, Lee... I can make it work.”

He had heard her sing once; it was the only reason he took interest in her in the first place. The sound was so rich, so saturated, it seemed as though the air had been textured by it. If he had inhaled, he was sure he could have tasted her; at the time, he wasn’t sure if he found that effusive quality captivating or annoying.

“You know I can’t do that,” he breathed, sounding just shy of embarrassed. “It’s less... painful for you to just forget I ever existed. I told you before I couldn’t stay. I’m leaving for your good, darling. Don’t you trust me? I don’t want you to suffer.”

All at once, he stepped out of reach, but the distance became so encompassing that they seemed like strangers instead of lovers: she stood before him with her shoulders curled inward and gravity crushing her high heels into the bottoms of her feet; her dress, an expensive thing, hung like it had been tossed onto her body, and despite the objective gaudiness of her features, a bystander might have guessed that she was coming from or going to a funeral. A strand of hair fell into her eyes, but neither she nor Lee made any motion to push it aside.

He turned halfway, sparing her an awkward glance as he took up his backpack and swung it over his shoulder. “Maybe we’ll see each other again someday, kid.”

She nodded.



Justin Koo

Lee hated people who clung to him like that, acting as though they hadn't been a real human being before meeting him. Ridiculous. He narrowed his eyes and scowled, clearing his throat and spitting onto the stairs of the bus terminal.

He wondered if he should feel bad about— about any of it. Maybe once, he would have, but lately it felt like he was too many things to count, and a fool would stand first among those if he tried to deny his titles of both a liar and a whore. Guilt wasn't much to him other than a taste in his mouth he was trying to wash out.

He tripped coming to the bottom of the staircase, lost in thought, and sighed so wearily, it was as though his backpack was filled with Atlas' burden instead of his own: an unwashed change of clothes and a sleeping bag. The thought that he could afford a bus ticket seemed laughable now.

He found his place on the last step and sat down.

Emily Shih





IN CROSSROADS

AN ASCENT TO MISERY

Punctures in his reverie
by rotting teeth strewn into a smile,
framed by bloody, black lips

flowers bloomed from empty sockets
buds screaming a red scent
maggots swarmed;

with a whirl of hunger and the crackle of bodies snapping
soft wooden limbs become violent
the wind making it talk walk feel like a real boy

the days gathered like feathers sprouting from his back,
and he was carried up, up, away
into an enlightened torpor

his eyes settled into dim, dimmer light
yet everything was still profoundly ugly,
he was disgusting—

he looked up
and constellations were all drawn out for him
the fractured sky was blinding, blighting

he reached up
and sliced the longest vein spanning the sky
the taste of rain burned holes through his tongue

still,
the night sky is romantic.

Shannon Firooz



Drew Kaplan

11:28PM - DECEMBER 5th, 2014

darling we were graceful radiant colorful stained glass until an ungentle hand reached out to embrace our beauty but also to test our strength/we broke into thousands of dangerous sharp shreds proving just how fragile we had been/once a work of art to admire now a mess to clean up and throw away/and just like that, all because of our delicacy, every trace of us was gone/we used to make people smile we used to be the talk of the town we used to be what gave our worlds some sense of raw reality; you act you learn you sing you are absolutely confident i write i read i am absolutely shy but when we were together we traded places and for once i wasn't the shy one i said everything i wanted to say i was completely unafraid i wanted to dive right in but you on the other hand kept some thoughts to yourself and felt like you needed to choose your words carefully and you weren't so confident anymore you were shy you were vulnerable you were you/and i know even if that ungentle hand had never laid upon us, we would've ended up falling apart at some point eventually; something so delicate cannot stay intact forever/i just wish we could've worked on becoming stronger.

1:44PM - JANUARY 26th, 2015

whenever i see you it's like our two separate worlds are nearing each other again and i have to warn myself to stay in my own because if we collide again there will just be another mess to clean up.

Danielle Chelosky



Riley Schear

MANIA



heavenly bodies
made of stars and galaxies
don't compare to you

i'm trapped by my name
buried by my holy duty
but i'm free with you

---one

blood is on my hands
dirt under my fingernails
eyes that shift too fast

my remains are lost
secrets to give the future
purge it in the fire

-- two

now sitting here
my heart fast in its cage
leaving me to rot

drain my nervous brain
kill my creativity
just give me music

-- three

Schuyler Young

Colette Lynch

RED THREADED DRESS

Yes, she has her red dress on.
No, she is calm as can be,
got 'erself driven to prom,
was she nervous, no, happy,

Princess of scarlet,
her beauty her right,
her tragic fate set,
as she left that night.

That red threaded dress,
showing curve under breast,
has made her careless,
thinking "daddy doesn't know best"

Dances slow and lovely,
to drinks and memories blurred,
she wasn't herself, see,
tonight an awful lesson's learned.

Home she will return,
that red threaded enchantress,
from a man she no longer knows,
tonight she has felt less-ness.

As her memories would return,
and she would soon know,
how that night had taken a turn,
how he'd hurt her so.

The less-ness she would harbor,
the deepest compress,
as her knight in shining armor,
had asked her to undress.

Kelvin Ortiz



Carly Rosen



Marie Arena

WORDS IN FLAVORED TONGUES

silk-mouthed spider talk,
 spitting sugar-glazed simplicities;
these teeth are tired, decaying,
 tied, each bound in place
with hot strips of cinnamon floss.
 cough, cough, up come cotton balls;
 breath, beckoning;

a brainless bastard
 gifted with the boldness of a bullet,
brandishing a honeycomb hornet's nest
 clipped just below the belt;
there are too many,
too close,
too close,
too--
 too far.

either way, we are all blind.

Emily Shih

HORROR STORY

I am reverberating shrieks and withered flesh
And bloodshot eyes at 2 a.m.

I am the arid blossom; the neglected weed.
The pinpricked patch of pine wearing through the fabric of your jeans.

I am the blood drawn out of the teeth marks on your lip,
The angry red nub of nail bitten to the quick.
I am the salty tear streaks across bed sheets.
And lipstick stains on knives.

I am the puckered scar across your stomach
And the purple welts on your thighs;
The snarls fisted around your neck.

I am the sullied hydrangeas
Dripping with muddy river water
And footprints trudging over wet clay.

I am the wild and the meek,
The “should’ve”s and the “once was”s and the “could have been”s.

I am the copper wire binding flesh and blood.

I am
what’s never existed
and
what’s always been.

Ilana Luther







MATERIALISTIC MONISM

a statue born in wax,
but, at first touch, could've been cast in cards
however, the fire hit before the wind
and smooth features slid from their stance

lips fell from each other,
irises flattened into disks,
honey vines sank down the bridge of a flattening nose,
sing'd skin cinched around an ebbing skeleton..

no matter, it found porcelain to adorn interrupted sockets
branches of quartz for bones,
bubbles of ruby as lips,
no need to mimic voice..

—oh, maybe it was made of ice!
or possibly encased in it?
a figurine or a fossil?
either way, it smoldered in the presence of heat

—a warning signal?

Shannon Firooz



Rachel Kubrick



Amanda Newman



CITTÀ DI CENERE (CITY OF ASHES)

Fiery liquid absconded down the streets
Of an ancient village where lovers wept
As their neighbors blazed, speeding their heartbeats.
Lionhearted men died as their souls leapt
Into the ashes that covered their bleats.

The city was lost, a secret well-kept.
As the years went by, the his'try went gray.
The valiant mortals could not find Pompeii.

Amanda Sheps



PURE

Long time ago
Not very far
In a time of innocence and peace
Land was pure
Pure of war
Pure of murder
Pure of all
Peoples, animals, nature
All were free
Just how it should be
Oh how it has changed
Everything has changed





Rachel Kubrick

في قديم الزمان ليس ببعيد عندما كان
الصفاء والاخلاص
الارض كانت خاليه , خاليه من الحرب , خاليه,
من القتل , خاليه من كل شئ سيئ , الناس والحيوانات
والطبيعه كلهم يتمتعون
بالحريه كما يجب ان يكن , كل شئ تغير
كل شئ مختلف ,

Raya Abu-Saab



MY FIRST RECITAL

Cerebral Hypoxia is death by shortage of oxygen to the brain cells. This was how my grandmother died when she was strangled to death in the bathroom of her small dry cleaning business in Windsor Terrace, Brooklyn. The New York Times quoted a witness who had found her lifeless body sprawled in the doorway before the police had discovered that she was murdered in a robbery. My grandmother was an immigrant from South Korea who had taken over her husband's dry cleaners when his alcoholism progressed, impeding his ability to manage the business. Her new responsibility consumed all the free time she had, yet she fervently supported my cello career and pushed me to pursue my musical dreams. Though she made a daily three-hour commute to and from Valley Stream and Brooklyn, my grandmother never missed a single cello lesson of mine until that night.

At eleven years old, I hadn't understood the full details regarding her death. Her absence in my life, however, was palpable. Silence replaced the familiar Bach melodies that she had played in the car, and no longer was she there to encourage me when I faced the hardships and obstacles that accompany a musical career. Every morning before I set out to school, she would admonish in Korean, "What you endure while practicing never compares to the possibilities of what you could one day achieve." Her hopes for my future mirrored my own: I would one day perform in a prestigious recital hall for a grand audience.

As naïve as I was, I dreamt ebulliently of

bright lights, exceptionally poofy dresses, and lavish cello recitals where I would impress my family and friends. My eleven-year-old self was thoroughly deluded with the 'side effects' of musical achievement. Success meant basking in the approbation of loved ones and boasting the significance of such accomplishments. Indeed, recognition is part of a musician's success, but it soon became the driving force for my musical perseverance.

It was not until the funeral directors requested me to play at my grandmother's memorial that I had a revelation brighter than what any spotlight could cast. I eagerly agreed to their proposal, preparing to play by my grandmother's business that was nearly unrecognizable as white flowers, handwritten notes, and flickering candles overwhelmed the doorstep. Taking a seat on the cold metal folding chair, I wedged my endpin into a crack in the sidewalk and began to play Fuare's Elegy – a song for mourning.

In that moment, as the music began to escape me, I had faith that my grandmother was listening. It became clear that what brought me to play the cello wasn't my yearning for a vast audience or an abundance of appreciation. Instead, what compelled me to play music was the buzzing sensation in my fingers, the intrinsic desire, and the utter desperation for the music in my soul to reach the souls of others. The cello became a medium to communicate the grievances of everyone standing at the corner of 10th Avenue and Windsor Place.



Michelle Shin

My first performance was far from what I had imagined. There were no spotlights. There were no flowers thrown at me from the audience. The glamour of my fantasized recital wasn't present in a single atom of the air. As I leaned into the music and closed my watering eyes, I realized that I never really needed any of those things. My love for music alone fills an internal need that no recognition or tangible objects can satisfy. Music is not made for mere admi-

ration, nor is it made to pass the time; it's how we express ourselves, make sense of our lives, and understand with the heart what the mind cannot comprehend. For this last lesson, I thank my grandmother.

Alice Oh
College Essay Contest Winner



A vertical photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky transitions from a bright yellow at the top to a deep orange and then a dark blue at the horizon. The water below is a deep blue with small, white-capped waves. The text 'III. CLARITY' is written in a white, serif font, oriented vertically on the right side of the image.

III. CLARITY



Chiori Negishi

AFTER THE COLD

The warmth of the sun
Blends with the harsh, chilling winds
Spring slowly draws near

Jeffrey Song

LIFE MET WITH DEATH ONE DAY

Life met with Death one day. Death was a figure of white, black mist coming from within. The mist was not evil in nature, it was simply dark. It would fade around the edges like a fire, but let off no heat. It let off no temperature. It simply was. Life was pale blue, white hair that flowed to the ground, leaving a trail of flowers and plants budding in its footsteps. When it met Death's mist, the plants would wither and frown until the green and vibrant colors were muted into darkness.

"Death," Life began in a breathy tone. "What are we to do? The innocence I bring is corrupted in the mind by the time they are too old."

Death made no sound, but observed what Life was observing. Life had gotten into a sitting position, surrounded by flora. Death merely turned its head and looked at its companion. "There is little we can do."

From the warm hands of Life, a bird flew away. Death's long fingers took a rose and it withered. "This rose was in the way," Death said after a pause.

"Excuse me?" Life asked, genuinely puzzled.

"It is the answer to your question as well." Skeletal feet and black mist moved to carry Death towards Life. "You see, you brought a wonderful thing into the world. It did not look in my direction. The rose had filled its role, and its role in the end was to be in my care."

Life shook its head. "Are you saying the living pay you no mind if they are beautiful and have no role to fill?"

"No, only if they are new and do not know their role." Death said back. "Nothing will pay attention to me until I can be seen beside them. A baby's first sight can be me."

"Why are you telling me this?" Life got up. "I do have to make more of those each time you decide to touch one. Not everything can be so simple, Death. Not everything ends with you."

"No, Life."

"Yes." Life said defiantly. "I believe there is a solution."

Death shook its head. "You are beautiful. Not new. No role other than to live."

Life's deep eyes saddened. "And what of you?"

"I am a truth realized too late." Death said, as the bird's first feather fell.

Gavin Goldsmith



WHAT I KNOW

I know the sound of the ocean reaching the shore.
Sometimes soft and delicate, like the crunch of glass stepped on one too many times.
Other times, like the shattering crash of a boulder falling from atop a mountain.
Heard from miles away.
I can still hear the sound of my father's voice, deep but cautious.
As if he were still here on the beach.
As if the lapping and crashing waves
Still carry his soul.

Jennifer Lancaster

Aidan Spencer



ME

If you'd seen me you'd be amazed. Although I have a physical form, the form I have emotionally is more amazing. I am a solace, a refuge. Yet, my body is hard and shallow.

Normally, people only see me as what I am, an object with natural beauty. I have a natural curvature that makes any woman jealous. Well, I'm flattering myself, but it's true. My voice sings, my dress fluttering to the flurry of fingers, vibrating into the most beautiful dance. But, what I provide to my owner is more important...

He walks in with a heart playing a melody of silent rage, brooding in his own anger. It plays like nails dragged across a chalkboard, shrieking heavily. His eyes cold and piercing, like the edge of a sharp knife, fist balled up next to his sides. Yet, as he walks in, he sees me. His eyes start to dimly light up like a faraway flame in a deep cave. His loneliness becomes eased, and the tune of his heart lightens. Mellowly, he picks me up and sits me on his lap, as if telling me a story by a fireplace. He starts to pick slowly.

Softly, he gently pats my braided hair, nudging me to utter words of peace. But my raucous voice soon becomes a flurry of harmonics, a symphony of sound played in the most beautiful pianissimo. It calms his heart. It calms his soul. His mind becomes blank, as a breeze of music fills the room.

"Louder," he thinks to himself, not knowing that I was able to hear. He encourages me, coaxing to sing louder. Suddenly, a full ensemble of instruments materializes out of thin air playing a firm and secure forte. My sound barrages him with a soothing balm effect.

Yet, within this small frame, within this small body, I embody my owner. He trusts me with his emotions. He trusts me with his stories. He trusts me with his whimsicalities. I am the epitome of mediators. I take emotions and translate them into expressions. I turn sorrow into joy. I am the translator of the unconscious to the conscious. When he cannot express his own thoughts, I organize them and play along with them. I add to him, but I envelop him as well.

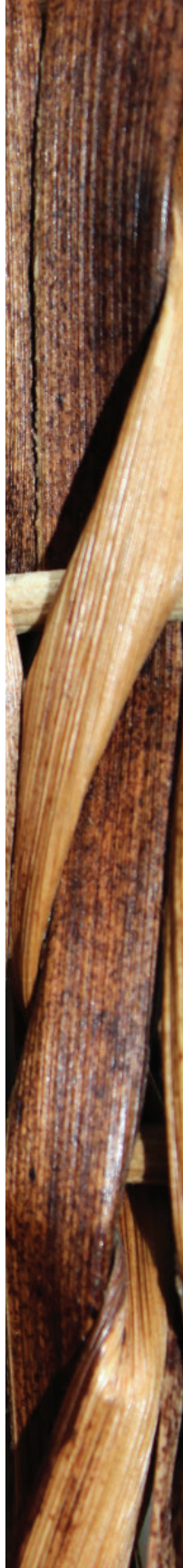
His jumbled mind becomes placid as each note sung turns his mind like a rubix cube. Through me, he becomes complete -- or so he says. Through me his emotions become visible. His love, his joviality, his merriment, his laughter, and his unforgettable youth awakens powerfully. As he plays with me, he lightens up. As he plays with me, his past seems to dissipate as if it were shooting the breeze.

From within my belly echoes out the sense of laughter. My daily dialogues dings with descriptions of dry humor. Yet, my chorus croons and chants curds of creativity. Peace of mind. Peace of soul.

But my body vigorously quakes with the sound of my voice, as my silvery-bronze hair glistens. The hollow of my frame provides the depth of my voice. My bracing becomes my skeleton. My neck extends, and ends with a square head. Pointed plastics strum my vocal chords.

For you see, I am only a simple guitar, but to my owner, I am much more.

Paul Lee



HOME

Dearest to me,
Make your home in me, my love,
safe is this heart of mine,
though now void, empty, abandoned,
it yearns for your presence.

It yearns for your warmth,
it begs your attention,
it pumps the blood within my veins,
only so that my hands may seek your touch.

Does your heart feel as mine,
does it yearn as mine does?
is it bound by reckless abandon?
or has it found an owner?

Is it a summer beach house,
warm, softly lit, basking in the sun's beauty?
or a winter log chamber,
cold, hard, and unseen?

Will that is the definite truth,
I've not known your walls,
nor felt your tapestries,
your home had never been mine.

-I can only hope,
hope to be your home.

Kelvin Ortiz





Sabrina Song

EFFERVESCENCE

As the bubbles rise up to the surface, a quiet *pop* resounds. My vision is diminishing, as murk covers the glass surface. I cannot see anything beyond a few inches. It has been at least 16 days since I have last eaten—well, besides my own excretions.

Endlessly, I wander around in circles, nowhere to go besides the small area I am confined in. My comrades have all died of starvation, and rest right atop the water, all with their bellies facing upwards. I know not what to do with them, as my abilities are limited.

I miss the family that always fed me so well. I know not what has happened to them, it's been 16 days since our last meeting.

But ever since 16 days ago, a strange metallic-smell continuously wafts towards my position. It is the first time I am detecting such a smell.

Again, I begin to wander. Endlessly. I wonder when I can stop.

"It is the Police!" I hear. The first voice I have heard in awhile.

Loud noises reverberate.

"What is this?" A large man asks, piercing eyes gazing down at me. "One is still alive."

Just moments later, my friends were sealed into small black bags, while I was set into a clear bag, and then into a vehicle with other men. Along the way, I saw the family that used to care for me, also being sealed up, but in larger black bags.

Soon after, I realized I was being taken to a hospital, a special hospital for my kind. I learned that I was quite close to death, actually only hours away. But I was saved.

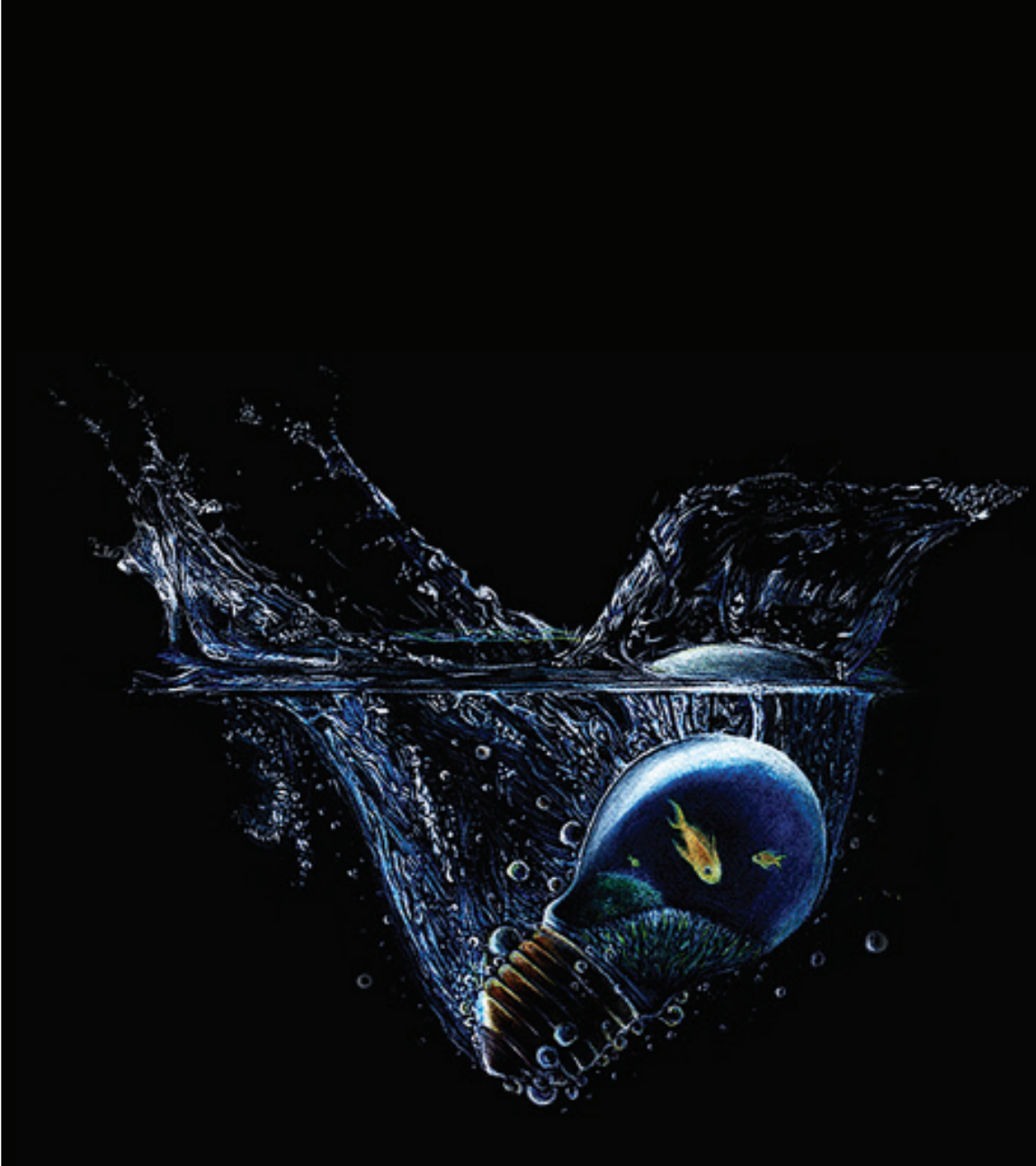
Eventually, after my release, I spent the rest of my days at the police station. I was fed regularly, and my vision was now clear. Although I was still wandering around in a small area that was just a tad bigger than the area I was allotted before, but it was okay. I was happy now.

Oh yes, the reason for me being at the police station you ask? It is because the officer that had found me took quite a liking to me. He regularly cleaned my tank, fed me, and gave me a new name.

Goldie.

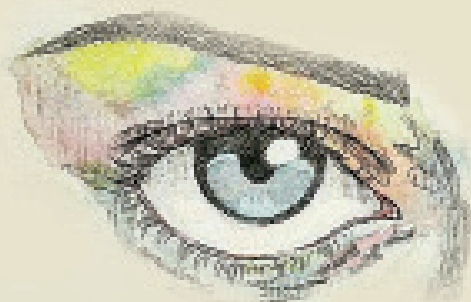
I was now known as Goldie, the goldfish.

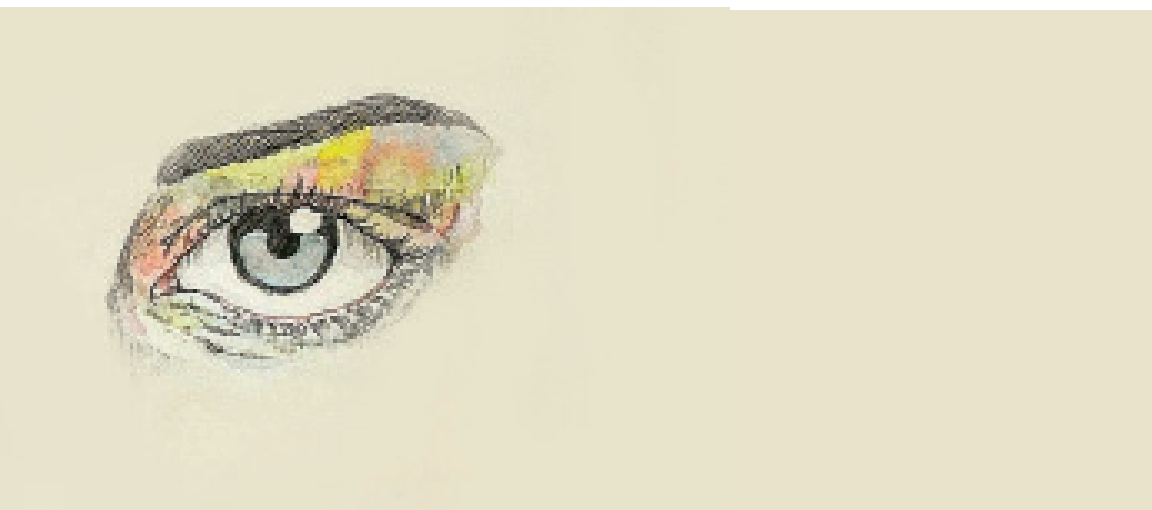
Hareem Syed



Justin Koo

Lost glasses; what did I write?
-The Squinter





Can't sleep. Today's a new day.
-The Optimistic Insomniac

Ellie Lee



ARSENIC

The arsenic dosage injected into my heart ventricles,
I call it heartache, pain unimaginable,
because in my clearest, brightest memories of it all,
I feel darkness ever growing with each mental trial,

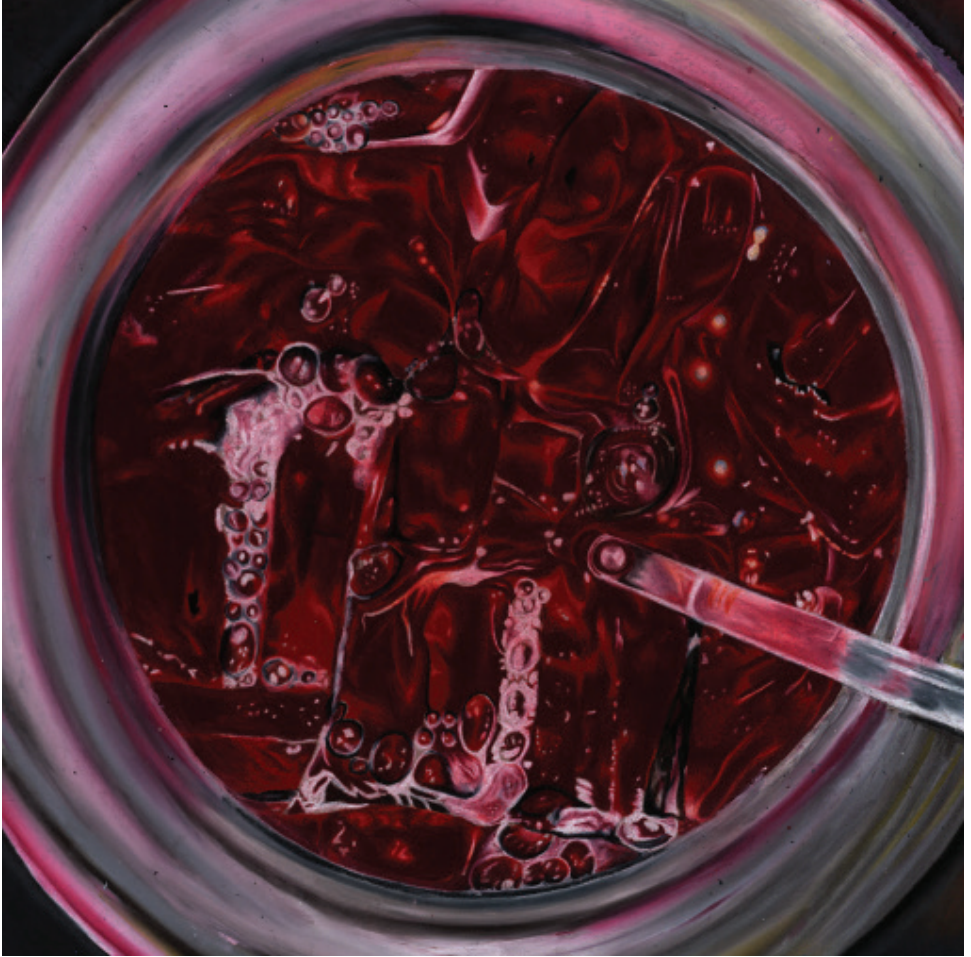
my heart feels battered by burning stones.

Looking for an indecent spree of adolescence,
ready for anything but real commitment,
she has left me on the fringes,
with her arsenic, a tourniquet, and plenty of syringes
but lies to self come with a price and penance.

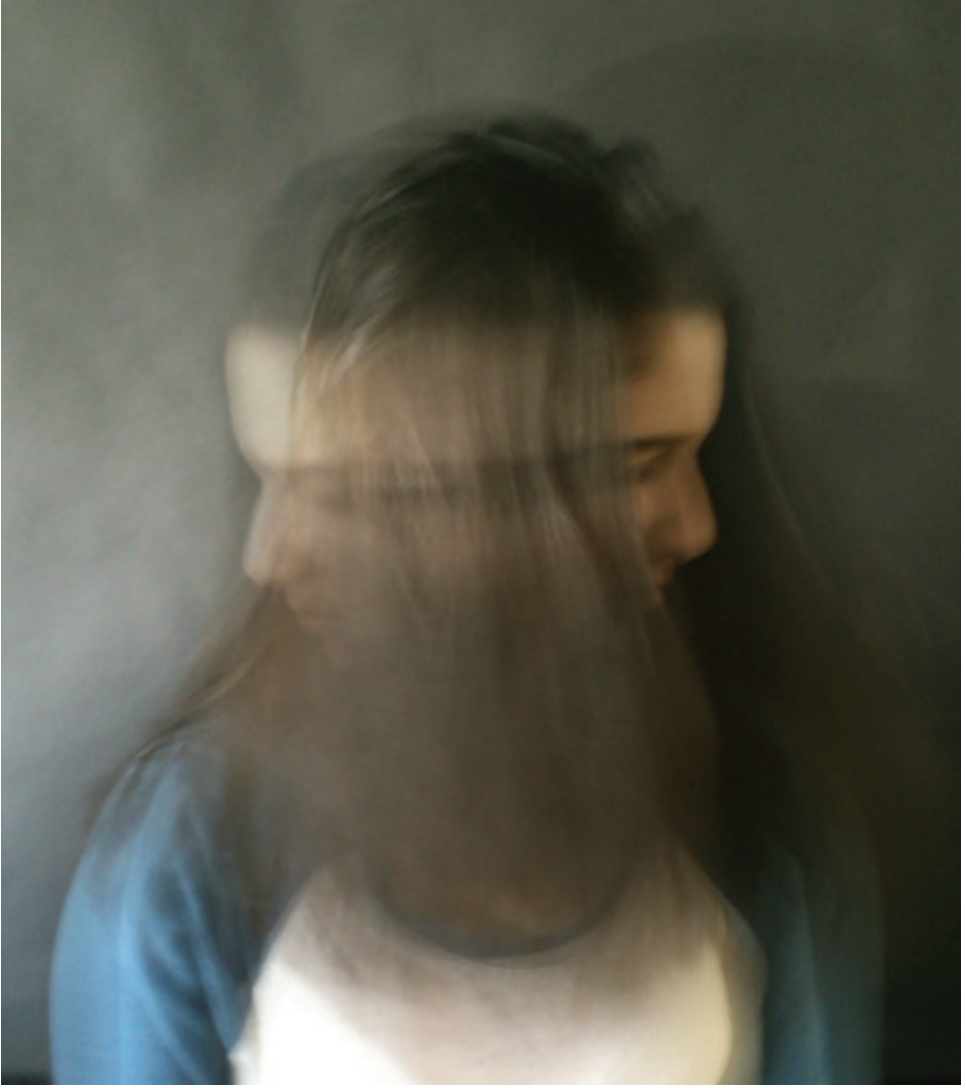
Arsenic flowing through my bloodstream,
boiling my veins, as I sit in burning rain,
It hits me in the weakest of spots,
these are the symptoms of my hourly shots,
unrelenting pain, my heart is to sustain,
this will never end it seems.

This tourniquet tied so tight, and tighter still,
I wait to escape this emotional cage,
this pen be my bloodwell, I will bleed this poison on my page,
I must overcome this with....

Kelvin Ortiz



Molly Davis



Mor Bendror

BUTTERFLIES ON OTHER CONTINENTS

They say that if a butterfly flaps its wings in Brazil it could cause a tornado in Nebraska. Maybe the wind from the wing flap caused an acorn to drop somewhere. A tree grows in its spot. This tree blocks two people from meeting, who, if they had met, would have had a kid that would forecast tornadoes. Something like that, right? Crazy things you

wouldn't think of happening.

I like to think of life like that. Every time you move, every time you breathe or fart or run or jump or cry or breathe or breathe or breathe you're making everything around you move in random beauty. All the little air particles bump into each other in a way

that would have never been possible except for your existence. Maybe those air particles cause a hurricane halfway across the world. Or maybe they cause a hurricane in someone's heart. Maybe your actions have more power than you think anything can have power.

We are brilliant time bombs that will make everything around us beautiful when we explode. When our conscious chapter ends, everyone left will come together to honor us and they'll cry and be together and be happy knowing that they have each other and they'll realize how precious life is. And once everyone's done mourning and someone utters your name for the last time, you're still not over. Your greatest prestidigitiation, your most magnificent magic trick has yet to be performed for a crowd that has yet to come to fruition. But that crowd will be there.

Your sleight-of-hand genius will come well after your brain stops thinking insane beautiful terrible thoughts, well after your heart forgets how to squirt blood to your liver, well after everyone you know forgets how your body did all of this while running on Gatorade and cheeseburgers. Your final masterpiece will be a silent explosion of energy so massive that it must go unnoticed. It will be when the last remnants of your body have left their human form and transmogrified into something a million times more beautiful. This magic may bring your brilliance into the skin of a work or the bark of a tree. Wherever your brilliance ends up, it will not remain anywhere for too long.

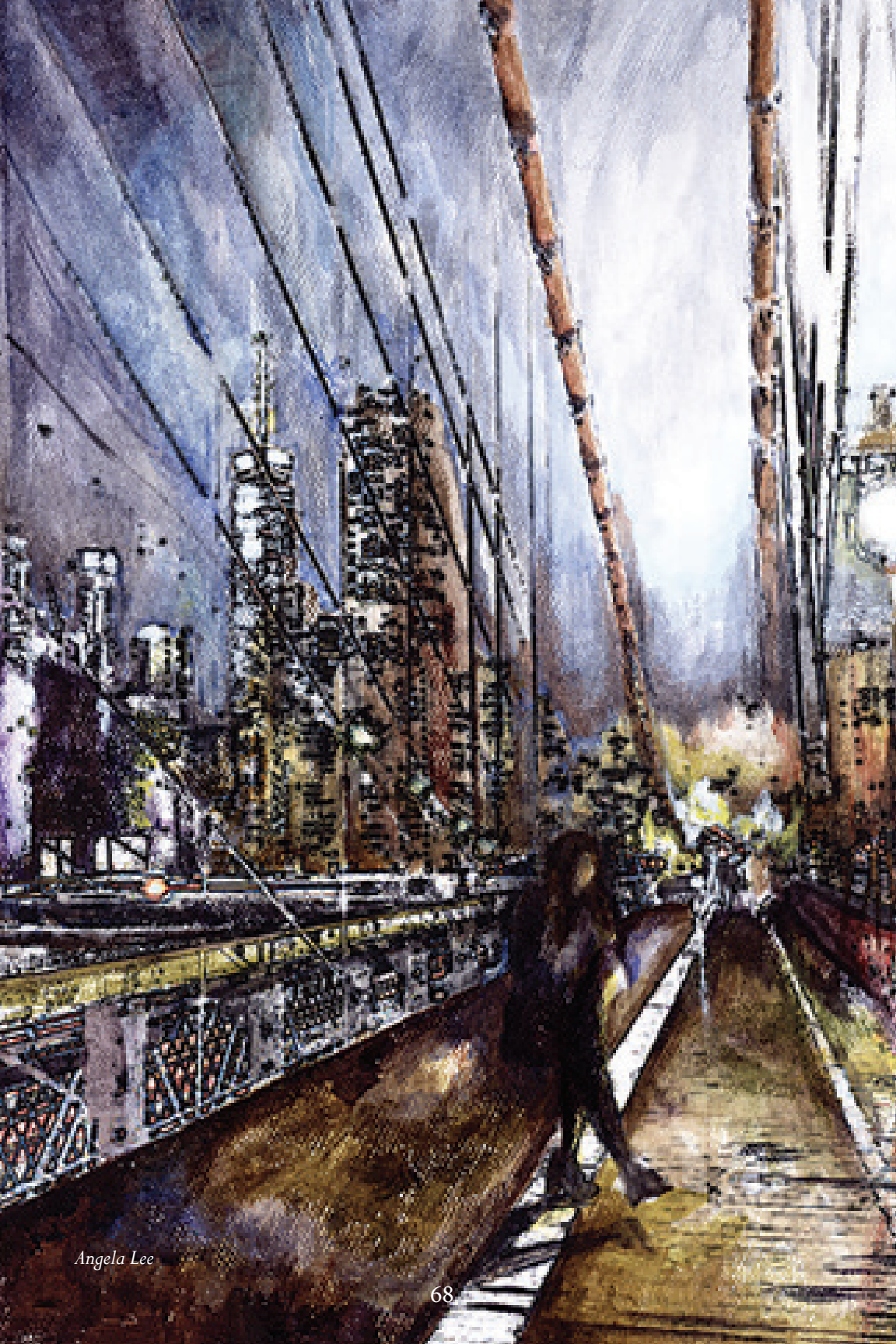
Trees will fall and silly children will eat worms on playground dares and your brilliance will be somewhere else. This

somewhere else will be equally as beautiful. Your brilliance has been in the blood of Shakespeare and the sweat of Gandhi and the skin of Martin Luther and the marrow of Malcolm and the bile of Tupac and under the fingernails of Christ and in the heart of Socrates and it will be in every child that will ever be born and it will be in stardust and in the fabric of the universe and in hospital beds and the insulation of abandoned houses and in animals that will evolve long after the sound of your name has been breathed into the wind for the final time.

Your brilliance will be everywhere. Do not be afraid of the time when your brilliance will leave you, when your brilliance ends up somewhere far from any place that can be located on a map. You will be everywhere. You will be the universe. You will be its particles and all the laws governing its function. Do not be afraid of that kind of power.

You are the butterfly in Brazil. You are capable of so much, even after your name has died with you. Even if your tombstone gathers ivy or if the Sun engulfs the Earth, you are still flapping your wings. You are making cosmic wind. The breeze feels good.

Maxwell Schulman



F44.9

on foggy days
when skies are grey
and clouds are hanging low
on dreamy days
when skies are grey
and time is moving slow
like mopping through a monday
like stopping on a sunday
like listening to the fall of rain (that isnt there)
like feeling the drag of feet through molasses (that isnt there)
a definition of this can be described as;
“the separation of normally related mental processes,
resulting in one group functioning independently from the rest.”
translating roughly to;
“the separation of me from you from them,
resulting in grey skies and the fall of rain (that isnt there).”

(dedicated to emory walsch)

Schuyler Young

I used to live in prison, doing time for crimes of moral perversion. When I became old enough to think for myself, I realized I had undergone a wrongful trial. I was not solely to blame for my offenses. Millions of people hold her in high regard and refuse to acknowledge the transgressions she has instilled in others. However, for these same people, Tradition is the killer of morality, controlling people with ancient handcuffs that cannot be broken. She was dictating my mind and my actions before I was born.

Tradition demanded I believe that the inveterate Indian culture and customs spawning from one of the world's oldest civilizations were the right principles to uphold. Being a moral person meant being an exemplary Indian girl, whether or not those principles were truly virtuous. I grew up observing that women were to be considered inferior to men and held to different standards, that interracial marriages were "illegal," and that same-sex marriage was sinful. When I began realizing that these observations were not moral by standards of heart, and only by tradition, the handcuffs were tightened. Tradition has an insatiable thirst for control - leading to the evening I was slut-shamed by my grandmother.

Wearing perfectly modest knee-length pink shorts, I was sitting cross-legged on the floor when my grandmother dropped a scarf to enshroud the remainder of my apparently indecent bare legs. This feeling of humiliation was not unfamiliar. I felt the same mortification when my parents read my second-grade diary about a crush I had on a Jewish-American boy. That trivial paragraph about my childish sentiments towards an even more childish boy, not of the same race or religion, sent my parents into a frenzy. After both incidents, Tradition

degraded me for not conforming. Exposing skin and having crushes are phenomena that "do not exist" in India, therefore they "do not exist" in my life in America. This recurring shame I felt was like a cracking whip - a method of control over girls like myself who must be assumed recalcitrant beyond reason. These two events, although trifling, had the greatest consequences. I went through life not living for myself, but keeping Tradition's heart beating and mind thinking.

I am a paradox - someone whose physical attributes and demeanor are the epitome of a traditional Indian female, but whose strength is driven from embracing modernity. There is a difference between tradition and traditionalism. The latter indicates the resistance to change in order to uphold orthodox teachings, engendering individuals who believe that tradition consecrates immorality - a mentality that must change for a better future through education and communication.

Education is the blueprint for creating an emerging group of young people who can think for themselves. In May 2014, I began working with fellow classmates to implement a chapter of Girls Learn International. This foundation pairs each chapter with a partner school in underdeveloped countries, and it became our mission to help the Clark Hamagami School in Cambodia in the movement for universal girls' education. Through our fundraising efforts and spread of awareness, there is no doubt that those girls are one broken chain loop closer to breaking their handcuffs.

As a child of immigrant parents, it is understandable why minorities in America struggle to maintain their culture; tradition isn't just an accessory for first-generation

Americans, but a birthmark that should be displayed proudly. Nevertheless, when archaic values begin to contradict morality, that birthmark becomes a tawdry tattoo. Moral, worthy tradition is vibrating with energy supplied by communication. As a writer for *Brown Girl Magazine*, the nation's premier magazine for South Asian women, my goal is to ensure that hyphenated Americans know that although their problems may not be accepted by traditionalism, they are molding a generation of living tradition by acknowledging that these problems DO exist. I am at the forefront of this movement, with tradition and modernization united as one.

Elizabeth Varghese



Tiffany Lee

“

Traveling through the world produces a marvelous clarity in the judgment of men. We are all of us confined and enclosed within ourselves, and see no farther than the end of our nose.

This great world is a mirror where we must see ourselves in order to know ourselves. There are so many different tempers, so many different points of view, judgments, opinions, laws and customs to teach us to judge wisely on our own, and to teach our judgment to recognize its imperfection and natural weakness.

”

—*Michel de Montaigne*

Cover Art // Aidan Spencer

Cover Design // Ellie Lee

Chapter Cover Art // Melanie Soesman, Angela Lee, Noah Sachs

Chapter Cover Design // Nawon Choi

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