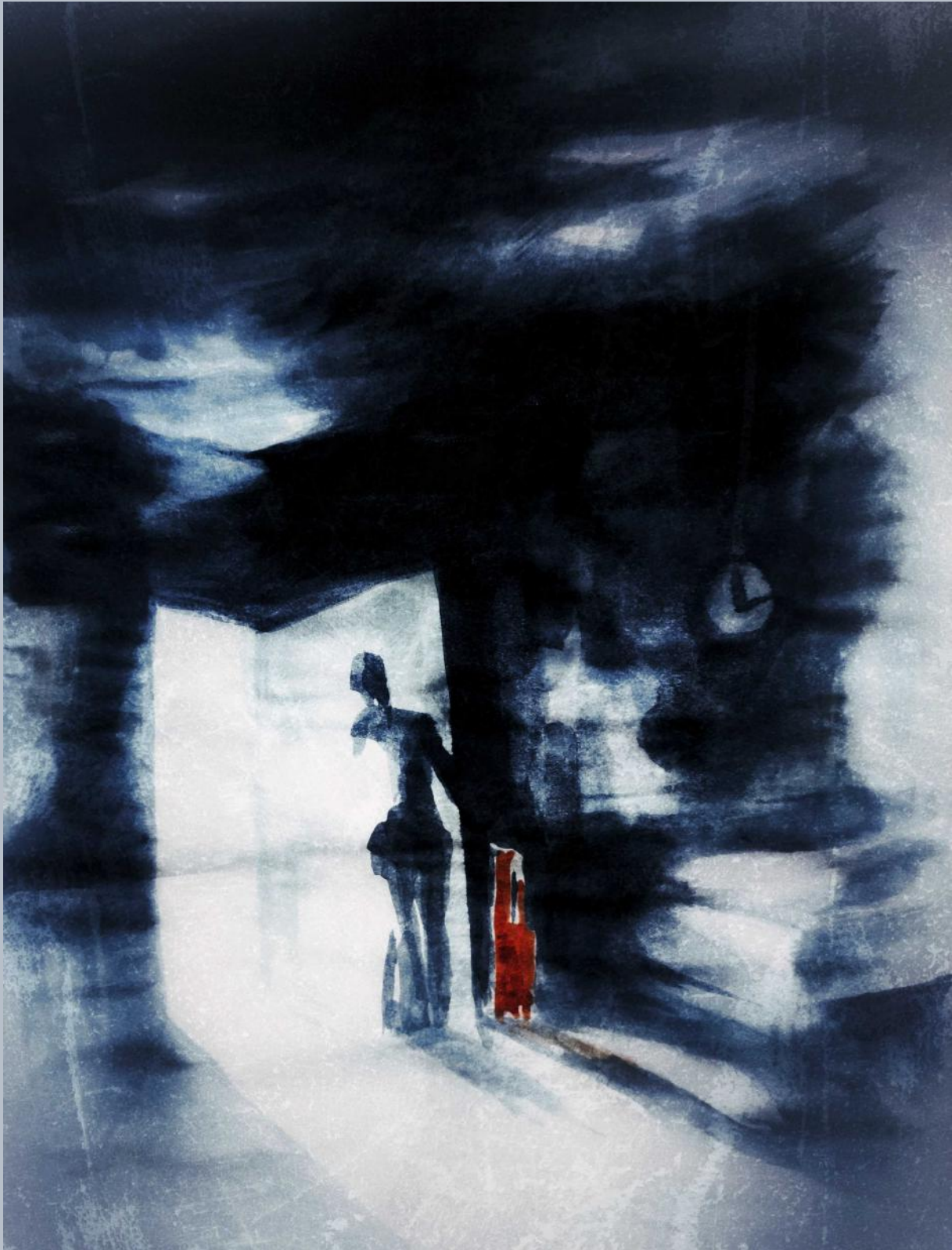


K A L O P S I A

POETRY | PROSE | VISUAL ART



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Masthead

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Table of Contents

Poetry

tongue	1
porcelain crucible/mo(u)rning glow	3
Neverland	6
A Surrender	12
the summer of cherries	14
lullaby with rising dawn	16
four questions for gallileo's father's father	24
Wires	26
Babel	34
if it's the beaches / love letter	36
summer spins on its axis	38
i'm learning that everything is temporary	40

Prose

Blood and Maple	8
In the Birdcage	19
Communities	28

Visual Art

By a Thread	2
Catch and Release	5
Collage no. 44	7
Gas Station	11
Hollywood	13
if my mind was transparent, you'd see how you consume it	14
look beyond my world	17
look within my world	18
river	23
Sea to Sky	25
tangerine dreams	27
The March Toward Extinction	33
Timeless Light	35
folklore	37
Frost in the Wind	39
East	41



tongue

By: Lynn Kong

I'd like to think that there was a trinity of poems
before the throb of the first human tongue,
that the words were thatched in raspberry,
that the rhymes were cleansed with mirth—each tongue famished
for the syntax of divinity.
What ivoried clauses could Eve have uttered
in that Eden of epithets?
If only I had been there when the first sentence braided
lives—utterance as ingress. It all digressed
when the pelican was singed by the glamour of the subjunctive,
when cygnet souls became lexicons,
when the persimmon was first christened. All I know is that the fruit's peel held
pretense—its pith ripening,
bruising, throbbing on the lies of the first human tongue.

About the Author:

Lynn Kong lives in North Carolina. She has been published in *Up North Lit*, *The Society of Classical Poets*, *Parallax Literary Journal*, *Crashtest Magazine*, etc. She serves as an editor for *Polyphony Lit*. When she isn't writing, she can be found soaking up Isaac Babel's wondrous short stories.



By a Thread
Lindsey Smith
Pen and ink on paper
14 x 19.5 in

porcelain crucible/mo(u)rning glow

By: Rachel Xu

*“coroner’s office closed at 8,
you’ll have to wait ‘til morning.”*

the receiver clicks shut, and
an undercurrent of unease laps against
the white-knuckled atmosphere.
in the floor above, grandma’s milky retinas
peer up at the ceiling; her bloated form
ossifying with every elapsed second.

outside,
father fingers her old Brazilian cigarillos
seething with maudlin pride at the acetic tobacco.
as evening totters by, in the drawing room
mother, brother, and I smother our conversation
in stale liquor; our thoughts draw themselves closer
to those last days of watery ambivalence:
of grandmother flitting aimlessly about
a marketplace mudlark, with an eye for chaffer
and a parching affinity for the exotic
once attic salt marinating into sickly mirth,
she wove wooden curses into kitchen countertops
throaty laughter and wrinkled touches
lingering in her wake.

when daybreak arrives,
we turn our heads to the sound of
felt-laced spatterdashes crunching against morning frost
as banyan-wrapped officers circle the matinee.
from a distance, ruddy-faced children perched
upon rotting stumps thread hushed whispers
through the listless town;

my ears, craving solace,
prompt me to follow my brother’s hunched shadow
and we step into the rays of dewy ether
to watch the rosy-fingered sun chase our moon
onto the dauby blue canvas; the sun dog
barks at Baltic dawn, and Ariadne’s thread
winds down like coiling snakeskin around fetid detritus.

together, we lounge in mournful rectitude:
father clutches the ormolu-scrolled urn in deserted rancor
mother’s cries disembody into cyanic commiseration
the children are whimpering now; their eyes
dogging the alabaster shroud as
we watch the bier crawl into the distance, and a
weighted cross bears itself against our throats.

brother hands me our leftover drinks, and
I raise grandmother's chipped porcelain crucible
against my chapped, sunbaked lips, downing
hard spirits under the aureate glow of tomorrow, the
last of some unsung elegy lost forevermore
on the tip of my tongue, muddy presque vu

or otherwise.

About the Author:

Rachel Xu is a high school student who enjoys reading, writing, sketching, and playing badminton in her free time. She has been published in various anthologies such as *Hysteria*, *Live Poets Society of NJ*, *Poetic Power*, etc.



Catch and Release
Nathaniel Voll

Assorted print materials and animal
classification cards on paper
11 x 14 in.

Neverland

By: Lauren Hyunseo Cho

They told us:
bedtime stories
are important
for children to dream
happily.

So, I dreamed:
cold *iron rust* *nausea*
 the swelling current
and I grasped
at chains of ancestry
but they
decayed *perished* *crumbled*
in my crimsoned hands.

My blood was
lighter
than the water
around me—
 my dreams were not.

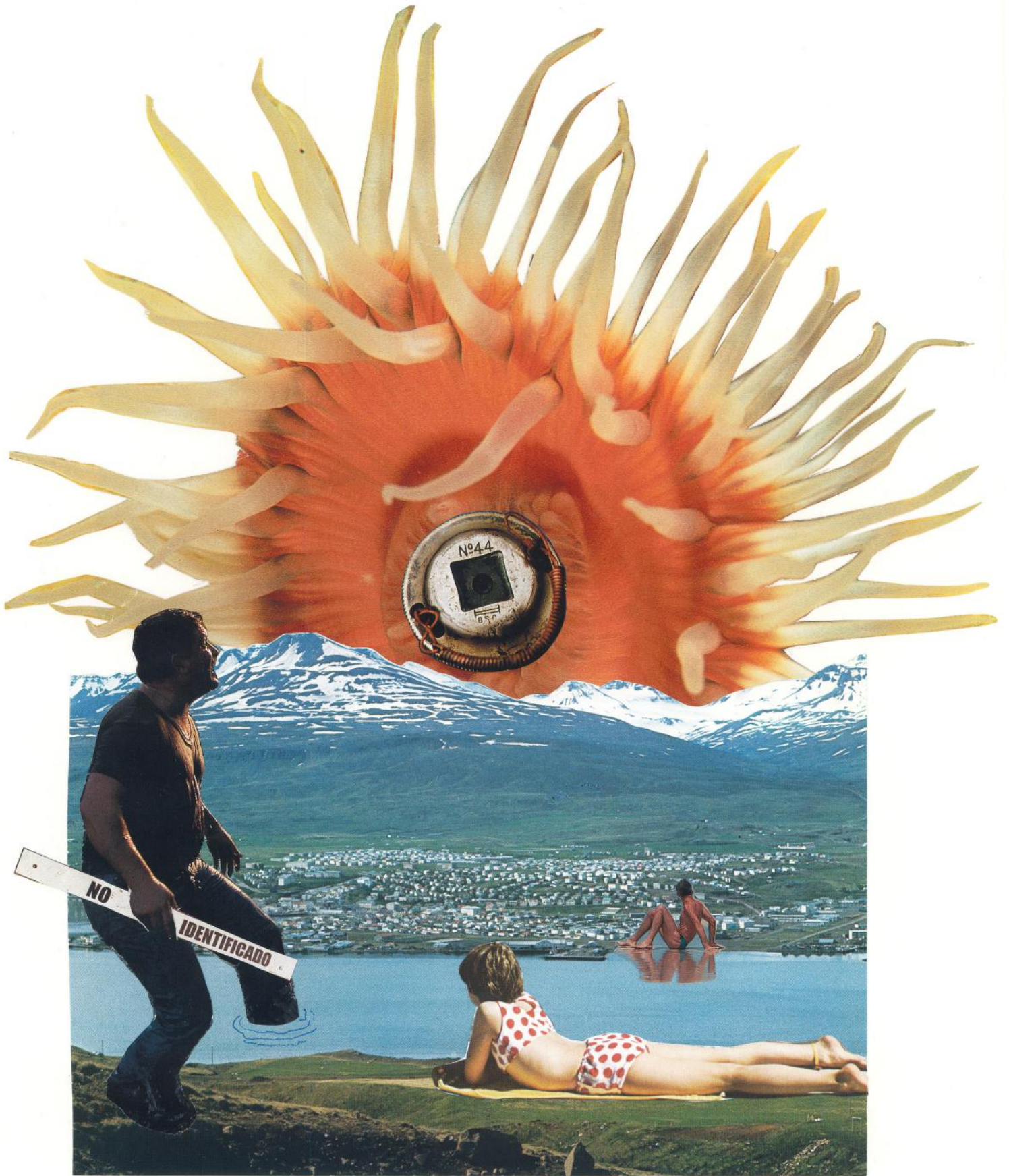
The river
enclosed
my throat,
my windpipe,
 putrescent
birds of paradise
 smothering
me as they watched—
I sank
 beneath the surface,
next to my 215* brothers and sisters.

They watched us rise
to the top in a lotus
painted in feathers
and stripes and stars,
our rebirth,
a putrid celebration.

About the Author:

Lauren Hyunseo Cho is a student living in Seoul, South Korea (pronouns: she/her). She has her poems forthcoming, pending on editorial review, or published in *CrashTest Magazine*, *Teen Ink*, *Ice Lolly Review*, *LiveWire*, *Cathartic Youth Magazine*, and more. She is interested in issues of multicultural advocacy, feminism, and philosophy. Her love for writing serves to produce poems and stories of her take on these ideas.

*The number of indigenous children found buried at an unmarked, mass grave at a former residential school in Canada.



Collage no. 44
Nathaniel Voll
Magazine and ink on paper
11 x 14 in.

Blood and Maple

By: Holly Barratt

It's one of those sticky August days when your blood feels like melted peanut butter and Tia's mom finds no relief, lying on the scorched grass in the shade of the maple tree. The edges of the leaves are turning their first shades of crimson, like the glow of a dying match. Tia's mom is a dying match too, in a cheap dip-dyed dress, with two buttons missing. She's always gone without, more than Tia will ever know.

Tia's mom grew up in hand-me-downs from her own mom. Shirts with reams of extra cloth around the chest, jeans rolled up at the ankles, bruises on her wrists and her face. Back then it seemed like everyone had a go at using Tia's mom as a punching bag. The man Tia should have called Daddy threw Tia's mom down a set of concrete steps and into a motel swimming pool after he found out Tia was on the way. Left them both for dead. Some cleaner fished her out and drove her to the county hospital. After she was patched up, Tia's mom hitchhiked two hundred miles on her own, got a job serving coffee and eggs to truck drivers and runaways, and gave Tia a better life.

When Tia was born the maple tree branches were bare and black against the pale sky, but the hospital sheets were bright red. Tia's mom lifted her head from the pillow as a nurse handed her the tiny, lizard thing with a slick of black hair and turned-up little nose.

"Your little girl," said the nurse, with her eyes on the clock in the corner.

"Mine?"

Tia's mom vowed then to never speak about her history. She wanted to look forward to their family, to their new life together, hand-in-hand, never looking back over their shoulders to the wreck of the past.

The memories Tia and her mom treasure most are from the days when the trees were dark green and plump with water, when there was still a freshness in the air. Tia in her pink dress like a spring blossom, singing along with the radio. Tia slitting the stalks of daisies with a sharp thumbnail, making long chains and looping them over her mom's neck.

"Am I your best friend, Tia?" her mom asked.

"Yes, Mom," said Tia, still looking down at the daisies.

"Give me a kiss, then."

Tia pressed her lips to her mom's turned-up nose, then ran towards the river to chase some bird she'd seen.

"Pelicans, Mom!"

"Away from the river, Tia!" her mom screeched.

A vision rises: concrete steps, cracked bone, and a half-conscious splash into cold water. The river would not—could not—take Tia away. Tia's mom grabbed her a little too tightly, pulled her a little too roughly, and Tia cried out—but the water couldn't take her.

"Never, never go anywhere near the river again."

Tia stared up at her mom. A shadow bloomed across her cheek.

"Am I still your friend, Tia? Mom's sorry."

"Yes, Mom."

There were no tears in Tia's eyes. Even at four years old, Tia recognized the depth of

Mom's love.

Tia and her mom were always friends. Sometimes her mom could talk rough when the whiskey flowed a little long, usually after a bad day when too many customers grabbed her ass, and especially when the boss told her to suck it up, count the tips, and be glad she wasn't working at a strip bar. Her mom watched her say goodbye to her school friends through the window most days, sipping her drink, when Tia came home from school. When Tia came in, Tia's mom would remind her that those friends of hers in their new outfits might be pretty and speak nicely, but they'd never respect Tia. They'd never really understand what it was like to struggle. They'd never know her or care for her like Mom did. And Tia would say "Okay, Mom" and turn the radio on.

"Don't you 'Okay Mom' me. Listen to me. I'm telling you what I know. I'm gonna be there for you till the end, you know that? One day you'll see it too. Shallow. Ungrateful. You'll see what matters one day. You'll see what I've done for you..."

"You're drunk, Mom."

And sometimes the whiskey would swing Tia's mom's arm. And in the morning Tia's mom would apologize for the whiskey and the arm, then lend Tia a little cover-up for the bruise. And Tia would say thank you.

"No more whiskey, Mom."

Tia didn't kiss her mom anymore. And she stopped saying goodbye to school friends right outside the window. Tia's mom had to watch around the corner when she arrived home walking next to some red-haired boy with fierce eyes, sunburned arms, and hard knuckles. As he handed a pile of books to her, Tia leaned in. Tempted by the false promise of a charming smile that would lead her all the way down concrete steps to a dirty swimming pool and a hospital in another county. Tia's mom came out from the corner, clutching a bottle, just to scare the boy away.

"You little whore!"

The red-haired boy never came back, but Tia was a pretty girl, and there were other boys.

Tia's mom had to protect her. Maybe it wasn't sensible. But she couldn't handle the thought of losing her to some rich boy who'd be too embarrassed to invite her to the wedding. Some boy who'd persuade Tia to run away to New York or Boston, some city suburb where Tia would start to dress in tailored suits and forget where she came from. Tia's mom locked Tia in her room. What else was there to do?

"One day you'll understand, Tia."

Tia didn't answer.

Her mom knew she made some mistakes. She always knew there must be a better way of keeping Tia close if only her heart would stop beating too loud for her to think of it.

One day, Tia's mom was half a bottle down when she unlocked the door with thoughts of reconciliation and found Tia gone. Her mom remembers grasping her car keys from the kitchen, cold metal against her hot hand. She remembers crossing the bridge over the falls and not knowing whether the noise pounding in her ears was the crashing river water or the sound of her own blood, thin with heat and alcohol, rushing around her body too fast. The road lined with red-tinged maples rolled out in front of her as the headlights unfolded the future. She remembers a motel. A set of concrete steps. A swimming pool lit with a single lamp, illuminating dirt and drinks cans, floating. She remembers a blank room, some stranger with wide eyes and a rich man's haircut, shouting, his hands held high. She remembers dark hair, a turned-up nose, and a scream.

"Mom, no, please, let's talk. Please. Mom, I love you but you need to stop. Mom, we'll get you a coffee and talk it through."

A glass smashing on the hard floor as the telephone wire yanked out of the socket. Two loud bangs. A dog barking somewhere, followed by distant shouting, and then sirens.

She runs, ducks into her car, blood still rushing through her ears like a fast-filling tank all the way down the highway. Then the memory hits, a sea of crimson even redder than maple leaves in October.

Tia's mom turns the wheel of her car, sharp and sudden. The driver's side slams straight into the trunk of the biggest maple on the roadside, throwing her clear. Crumpled metal, crumpled bones, and a cool breeze as her vision blurs and anger fades. Her heartbeat slows. The hot blood leaves her body. Tia's Mom will stand and be judged before whoever does the judging, split her ribs and open up her heart wide as needed to prove there's nothing else in there but love.

And then she'll walk over to Tia and take her hand and they'll walk under the maples together.



About the Author:

Holly Barratt lives in Wales, UK. She writes short stories in many genres and is currently editing her first novel. She is inspired by history, folklore, nature, memories and dreams. Writing fights for space in her life alongside a full-time job, cat parenting, and a serious martial arts and yoga habit.



Gas Station
Jaeyeon Kim
Gouache with colored pencil on paper
81.5 x 31.5 in.

Artist Statement:

When going on a long car journey, a stop at the gas station is inevitable. Although everyone is passing by with the common intent to fill up, each customer has their own story to tell. Some people are kicking off a new journey and for others, everything is coming to a close. For me, such a gas station is a vibrant hotbed of emotions and a fascinating place to observe. From the excited youngsters setting out on a road trip to the lonely businessman craving his bed, their thoughts and feelings circulate and fill the void. By drawing the objects of gas stations as if they were liquid, I wanted to show the way in which all of these different perceptions of time and space come together as one and fill the space with invisible energy.

A Surrender

By: Ansharah Shakil

this summer I am missing before it is even over / stinging sword in my chest / june's bright promise dwindled into the loneliness of what is left / what is not enough for me / I want everything I won't have / I want / a sunlit dream of / running down / gathering up a lover's spun-silk hair in my hands like anemone / windflowers / I could be good to a lover / I could be good to you / if you were good to me / will you be good to me? / I'd push off the ground in a wild burst of laughter / like I'm flying / flowering / wind carrying my feet into the air / as if I have a chance / as if I'm not trapped / as if I'm talking to you / and not to myself frantically / because / in truth this has been ripped out of me / breath caught in my throat / till everything was all coming out before I could put a halt to any of this / like sand falling through my fingers / in a shower of self / in this merciful desire / in this rueful desperation / saying / begging / to not be alone / I never did learn how to swim. / and that drowning girl in the mirror / full of reassurances that / there's a fall waiting / an easy turn of the season / twirling from the summer's stifling heat / brimming with possibility / to / a bright autumn, with red-gold leaves that crunch under my feet / where the trees shed their skin and so do I / a world in which / maybe I'll finally be like them / or maybe I'll finally be myself / trial and error / trial and error / again and again / again and again / waiting for someday, one day / and if that day never arrives / and if it seems like it's every year that I tell myself / next year / then I suppose there's nothing to do but keep going / there's always another summer / and another fall, after. / besides / it's started to rain / a soothing patter against the window frame / and the world is being washed anew.

About the Author:

Ansharah Shakil is a Pakistani Canadian student in her final year of high school. Some of her favorite things include: poetry, ice cream, pink blossoms, and Howl's Moving Castle. When she's not writing, or reading, or daydreaming about either, you can find her on Instagram @ansharahshakil_.



Hollywood
Lindsey Smith
Pen and ink on paper
14 x 19.5 in

the summer of cherries

By: Katie B. Tian

i. dawn

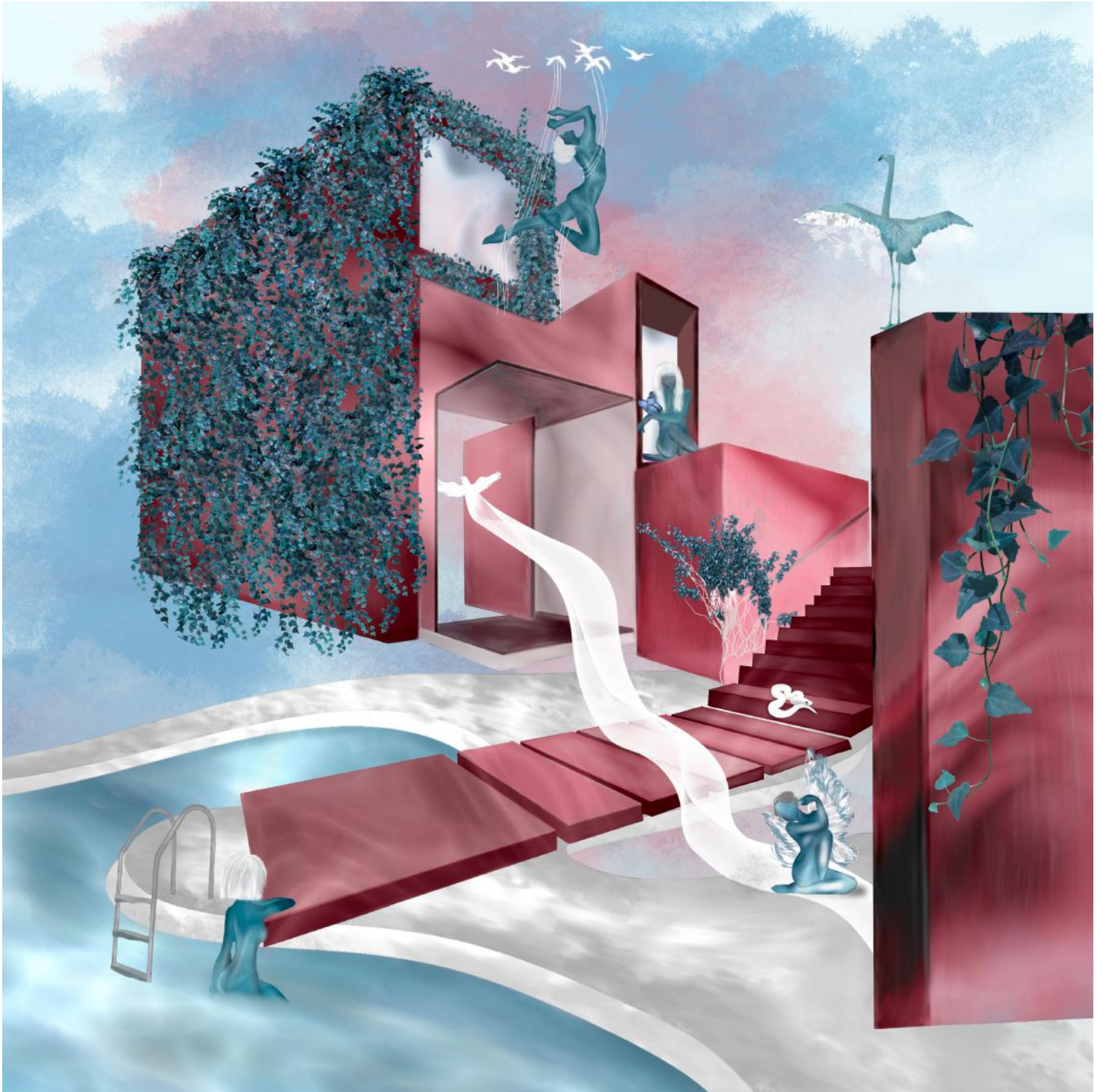
remember the first summer
 when we called ourselves sisters:
how we ran cherry pits off our tongues and
buried them beneath the conifers' gilded stems.
 how we were untouchable—
girls in shiny taffeta all puzzle pieced together
weaving firefly strands in naked palms.
cloying droplets stained our plumages crimson
 & fed the pavement in soft torrents.
— "you know cherry pits are toxic?" yes
 and I threw my head back laughing.

ii. charade

remember the second summer
 when we tried to eclipse our youth:
our prepubescent bodies camouflaged in bikinis,
parched lips puckered toward a near-tangible sky.
our cherry plants too spurned to grow tall,
we could only swallow dirt-caked confections
 & spit sticky convoluted metaphors:
"red is not death," you said, "but love."
"do you even know what love is," i asked—
 back and forth, us as pseudointellectuals.

iii. verdict

remember the final summer:
 when our honeyed tongues thawed
into metallic streaks & soiled ashtrays.
 —tell me, did you meet a boy,
 do you know love now?
i may still saver these bougs for kindling,
splayed like gossamer limbs on asphalt.
outside, you: a centerpiece, satin curls
slick against the carcass of a dead doe,
cherry-clotted fingerprints as damning as anything.
 haven't i made a mess of us now?



if my mind was transparent, you'd see how you consume it
Mahima Chaudhury
Digital
4000 x 4000 px

lullaby with rising dawn

By: Katie B. Tian

slowly, i am forgetting the face
of my shadow, the names of my ancestors

and the shape of my body carved alabaster.
my mother is in the kitchen forgetting

my name so i have to scoop out my bloodred
heart and stamp it on the tarmac pavement.

my father is praying to false gods
so i have to flee and flee into a field

of dead crabgrass and hyacinths until
i choke. i am pieces and pieces

of a whole, the ones before, hurtling
toward the same dead end. i cast a fish net

for memories, collect them like last night's
dinner, all silt and sand through my

fingertips: two empty chairs at the dinner
table. one pair of shoes too small

by the coat hanger, one leaving in the earliest
morning. one child who does not know

the words to a lullaby. i've learned to remake
myself a ghost, to fold myself into the wings

of a paper crane. so i have to hold
resentment against the innocent.

so i drown in '90s hit songs and radio
static to remember my parents. so i chart my

fragments into blood-metallic dawns before
they wash away in the tsunami. i remember:

it is only when the sun spills its yolk
that my shadow begins to mock me.

About the Author:

Katie B. Tian is a sixteen-year-old Chinese-American writer and journalist from New York. A Scholastic Art & Writing National Medalist and two-time Adelphi Quill Awards First Place winner, her work is published or forthcoming in *Frontier Poetry*, *Rising Phoenix Review*, *Kissing Dynamite*, and *Blue Marble Review*, among others. She currently serves as the Creative Writing Director of online literary magazine *The Incandescent Review*. Apart from writing, she has various talents, such as singing in the shower and eating her weight in brown sugar boba bars.



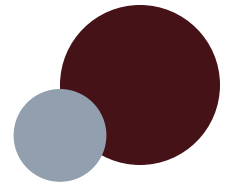
look beyond my world
Mahima Chaudhury
Digital
4000 x 4000 px



look within my world
Mahima Chaudhury
Digital
4000 x 4000 px

In the Birdcage

By: Isabella Fonseca



Let's make one thing clear: Flora Perry did not eat the crow. She swallowed it. Its inky feathers slipped down her throat, leaving a bitter taste on her tongue. What else was she to do? She was seven years old and hunched by the side of a gravel road, clay staining her dress red and sea salt tears streaking her cheeks. That's when she saw it in the yellowing grass: a crow with its talons sunk deep into the innards of a dead squirrel.

Flora shot straight up, her eyes narrowing, her face turning crimson. She marched over to the crow and did what seemed logical only to a girl of seven—she stuffed the thing in her mouth before it could eat the squirrel. Immediately (and expectedly), she regretted the choice. The fluttering in her stomach. The bird's heartbeat in line with her own. Still, he'd deserved it. She wiped her tears with the backs of her grimy hands. *No point in killing a dead thing again, you stupid crow.*

Ten years later, that stupid crow remained alive inside Flora, his wings occasionally getting caught beneath her ribs. Even now, while she weaved her way through a hedge maze of beige and blue buildings, he refused to leave her alone. It began with a tickle in her chest and scratch at her throat, followed by a storm of feathers and talons, violent and afraid.

Something is wrong, Elvis, the crow, told her in his strange way.

Flora gulped down the feeling and kept moving forward. That's how she found the forest-green house owned by the Fosters, tall and folding to the harsh winds. Through the stained glass, she spotted the silhouette of a woman with a young child and in the upstairs window, a boy no younger than her seventeen years.

A laugh escaped Flora, dumbfounded by what she was about to do. The Fosters were the reason she had come here. She had traveled all this way to meet a family of TV psychics, rumored con artists with no psychic abilities whatsoever. The type of people who pretended to be something they were not, but maybe that's what made them like any other family.

Regardless, she swallowed the lump in her throat as she climbed the steps and knocked on the door three times. The face of a middle-aged woman met her, round and pale like the moon.

Flora was seven. She stood in the middle of her aunt's bedroom, the one with the peeling floral wallpaper, and flipped through a book about birds. Her Aunt Calista's face, boney and slender, peered down at her.

"Flora," Aunt Calista said in her syrupy voice. "Please set aside the book and put on the dress. I know this is rough, but you have to try at least, alright? *She would've loved this dress.*"

Flora sighed and dropped the hardback book on the bed. Her mom would not have loved the white dress. But her mom wasn't here, so why did it matter? She slipped her small arms through the sleeves. Tears welled in her eyes.

Flora's aunt grabbed her hand. "Come on now, or else we'll be late."

Flora peeked out the window. In the yard, she could see her family members arriving,

and out farther, a group of crows swarmed near a tree. Flora squinted through her blurry tear-filled vision, hoping to get a closer look at the birds. She gave a slight smile. "Aunt Calista, did you know my book says a group of crows is called a murder?"

Her aunt looked at her and then forced a laugh. "Well, isn't that silly?"

The woman, Mrs. Foster, peeked her round face through the crack of the door. "What can I help you with?"

Before Flora could respond, she began to cough violently. Elvis rattled inside her, talons scratching to escape. The sudden movement startled the woman, who jumped back. Unable to control Elvis, Flora leaned over the railing of the stairs and retched, vomiting black feathers. Dark and slick. At that moment, everything looked as if it was made of paint, and if Flora moved, the world would smudge.

Mrs. Foster's eyes widened, "Did you—did you eat a bird?"

Flora drew herself up, pulling a feather off her tongue, "I swallowed a crow. I didn't eat it."

"I see." Mrs. Foster did not actually seem to see.

"It's why I'm here," Flora explained. "I'm a huge fan of your show, and I came to ask for your help."

The woman fidgeted with the lacy collar of her shirt. "Oh, honey, I don't know. Maybe you should see a real doctor for that."

"No, you don't understand. I'm desperate. He's um, alive. Like the crow is alive inside me and since—"

Mrs. Foster tensed and slammed the door.

Flora flinched. She took a breath to still herself and then stumbled down the green steps, defeated. She had gone to everyone she could think of to get rid of the bird. Doctors, mediums, and even now a con artist—no one could take Elvis out of Flora. Most people didn't even try. Maybe Elvis would reside inside her forever, trapped in the haunted house of her ribcage.

Exhausted, Flora collapsed on the sidewalk in front of the psychics' house. Here she was, once again, a scared little girl, hunched over in the road with nowhere to go. *Maybe I'll swallow a vulture this time*, she thought and laughed to herself. Flora dropped her head in her palms, stringing her fingers through waves of brown hair. The same color as her mother's.

Elvis grew frantic.

"What's wrong with you today?" Flora yelled at the crow, her voice echoing from the deep hollows of her chest. "Why won't you leave me alone?" Tears burned in her eyes.

"Please, Elvis, I'm just so tired."

But Elvis had no sympathy for Flora. He cawed and pecked and screeched and flailed until Flora had no choice but to listen.

It was after the dinner party.

The first one Flora had attended at Aunt Calista's house without her parents. She had attempted to talk to the other kids, telling them facts about animals, and ancient Greece, and even stars, but all they'd done in return was stare. They, apparently, were not interested in the death of Betelgeuse.

Later, Flora had snuck out to Aunt Calista's backyard with the tall grass and rolling hills. She had kicked off her shoes to feel the earth beneath her feet and tiptoed over to

the garden to pluck wildflowers. As soon as she had found her mom's favorite, a violet, she heard Aunt Calista's bittersweet voice. She and Uncle James were taking their cigarette break, trailing smoke and hushed voices behind the old shed.

"I worry about that girl. She's gotten so weird."

"Well, she is our sister's girl. She's always been weird." That was Uncle James.

Aunt Calista chuckled. "I don't know what to do with her. She rarely talks to me, and when she does, it's always about something odd."

"I don't know, Listy. You're the one who signed up to take her. This has to be a hard time for the girl."

"Could you hear her trying to talk to your kids earlier?" Aunt Calista spat. I just—I just think she could use a little help, you know? I mean, she's constantly crying about something. Even small things."

Flora recoiled at the words. Distraught, she scurried away from the shed, stumbling and holding back her tears. She ran down the hill past her aunt's house, but her feet tangled in the grass. Her knees buckled, and she tumbled down the hill until she found herself at the gravel road, breathless. The rocks pricked beneath her bare feet.

There was no one. Not her parents and not even her aunt and uncle. Flora Perry was all alone. Hunched on the side of the gravel road, her white dress stained in red clay. Although she already felt dead, the world seemed to keep pecking her. That's when she saw it behind the grass. She swallowed her pain and rose to her feet.

And then, she swallowed the crow.

Flora stayed beside the road till the sky painted dark. No one even noticed she was gone. No stars were out that night, just a satellite. So, she wished on that instead.

I wish I could be normal. I wish I could let it go.

Flora didn't want to remember the pain of that seven-year-old girl, so she perched on the sidewalk with her eyes sewn shut. Her vision was black, with no stars in sight. And then, she began to sob. Loud, scratchy, violent sobs. The guttural wails grew more piercing when something tugged inside her, talons clawing at the soft skin in her throat. *It was so long ago*, she thought. *Why are you like this, Flora? Can't you just let it go? Other people have it so much worse.* Flora coughed. She raged. She cursed the unfairness of her parents' deaths until the tugging stopped.

Flora opened her eyes. She couldn't feel Elvis anymore, but she didn't need to wonder why. In front of her was a crow. He gazed up at her, eyes dark like pools of ink, spilling into his feathery black coat.

"Elvis?"

Steps shuffled behind her. The bird startled and flew off into the sky, leaving behind a single feather and the now, the abandoned house of Flora Perry.

"Were you talking to that raven?" A voice asked her.

She looked up and saw it was the boy from the window, one of the Fosters. "It's a crow," she said, her voice hoarse. A tear ran down her cheek.

He gave her a crooked smile and glanced back up to the sky. "I don't know my bird species, but he was pretty cool."

She couldn't quite tell if he was genuine, but there was something warm about his expression. She swallowed. "Did you know a group of crows is called a murder?"

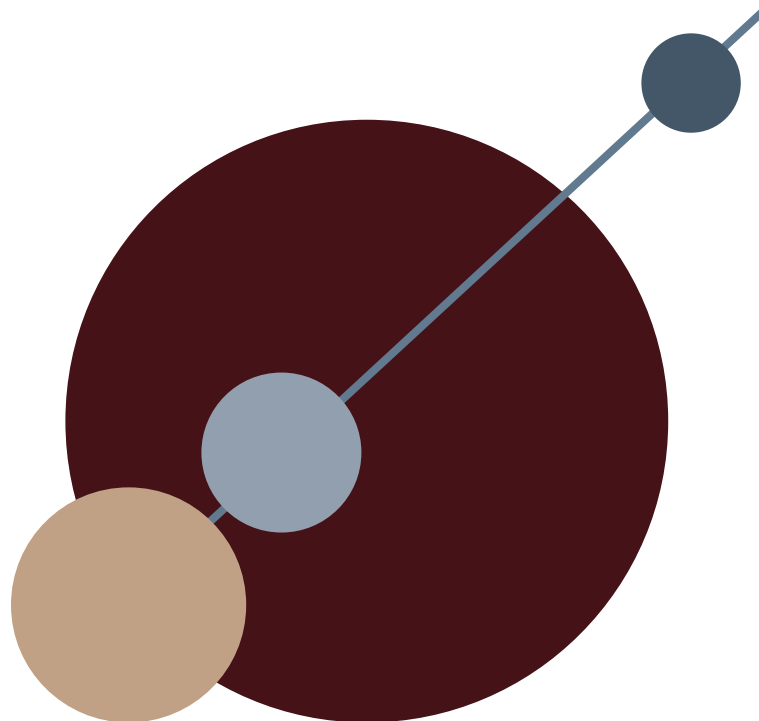
He laughed playfully. "Yeah? Really?"

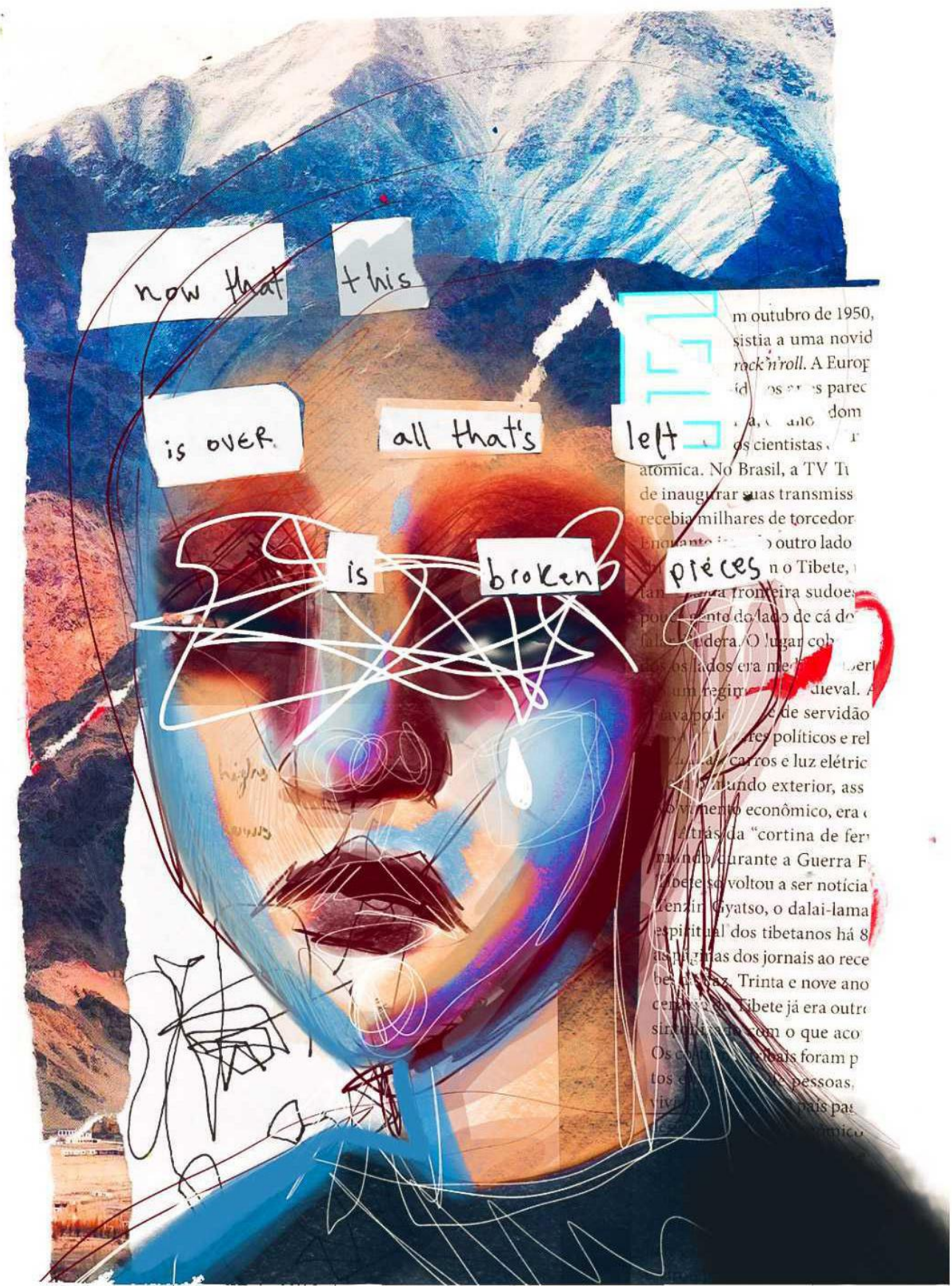
Flora followed the boy's gaze, hoping to see Elvis one last time, but the bird was gone. Her chest still ached from where he'd perched, and the sour taste still lingered in her mouth. Grief was not a feeling she could shake off like a feather.

Despite it all, Flora looked back at the boy and smiled.

About the Author:

Isabella Fonseca is a high school student from Georgia. Although she can usually be found with pointe shoes on her feet or a violin in her hand, her one true dream is to become a clever YA character. And if that doesn't happen, she'll settle for writing one.





river
Luana Góes
Mixed media
14 x 19.5 in

four questions for galileo's father's father

By: Uriah Howard Allis

did you distrust
your grandson,
his ideas?

when asked of your relation
to the astronomer,
did you refute this accusation?

could you behold the urgent wonder
of your own fatherhood
like galileo spotting the milky way?

did you weigh your readiness for that day
when you became a father?
(i doubt any man can

contemplate this crushing concept—
which is easier to dismiss
like phrases about the phases of venus.)

even now, i cannot compose questions more profound
than those roused by galileo, age four, wrapped in these words:
*padre*¹, *babbo*², *nonno*³.

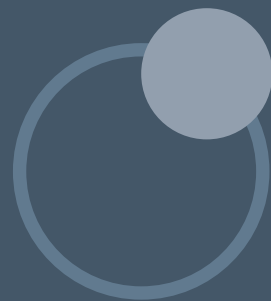
i ask in pursuit of understanding fathers. for, as with constellations,
childhood only twinkles
in the night of youth

before fleeting
like orion's zenith,
where your grandson first saw jupiter.

¹ Italian for "father"

² Italian for "daddy"

³ Italian for "grandpa"



About the Author:

Uriah Howard Allis, twenty-one, is a queer poet and nursing student from rural Western New York. His poetry is featured in *Active Muse*, *Ice Lolly Review*, *Eclipse Magazine*, *Moss Puppy Magazine*, *Intangible Magazine*, *YAWP Journal*, *Impostor Lit*, and *Human Narrative Journal*. You can follow him on Instagram @uriahallis or uriahallis.wixsite.com/my-site



Sea to Sky
Nathaniel Voll
Magazine and assorted print materials on paper
11 x 14 in.

Wires

By: Jordan James

Our cats are a tangle
of wires atop their tower.
Could you spot the knots,
where one begins—one ends?
These are the shapes I want
to become with you. Will you
take my hand and follow
my lead into our room?
I could rough you up,
see how tough you are, K.
Study as I tie you in a braid
it'll take you years to wrestle
yourself from, split you
in half like a paperback,
rest my head amongst
your wires warm and wet.

About the Author:

Jordan James has been published in *Cagibi*, *Throats to the Sky*, *Product*, and *The Robert Frost Review*, with works forthcoming in *The Westchester Review*. He is currently a graduate instructor at USM working on his PhD in Creative Writing.



tangerine dreams
Mahima Chaudhury
Digital
4000 x 4000 px

Communities

By: Rylan Shafer

Heat is a ghost that haunts the American South, and if a person isn't careful, it'll possess them. Lotte knew this. She hid from it in the shadow of a large billboard with the others. A young woman stood beneath it along the highway, a cardboard sign in hand. No one knew if it was the exhaust fumes from passing traffic that gave them their cough or something more that made its way through their community. They hoped not.

The hard plastic of the upturned paint bucket Lotte sat on made the lower half of her body ache. She wanted to get up, stretch her legs, her back, let the blood flow freely down to her toes. But Morgan was counting her change and Lotte'd known her long enough by then that she'd lose count if distracted. That's why they always let Morgan go first. Instead, Lotte looked at the others. Andre sat on a camping chair that he bought when he arrived at Tent City. Charlotte and Jonas sat on the ground. The three of them stared at Morgan.

"\$52.48," said Morgan, sighing with relief as she leaned back in her beat-up plastic chair. "It would have been more, but it got too hot out. I couldn't stand in the sun anymore."

"You're damn right it's hot out," said Charlotte. "I didn't even go to Northern Green today."

"Northern Green is a gold mine," said Andre. "There's so much traffic."

"I know," said Charlotte. "But it's too hot to walk there." Andre shrugged his shoulders.

Jonas lifted a large Circle K fountain cup from between his legs and shook it. Poverty has a look. It has a sun wrecked face, knots in its hair. When it walks, it has a limp, or it sways, or it doesn't walk at all but sits cross-legged in a median at a red light, head down, staring at dilapidated sneakers and mumbles "thank you" when someone feels guilty and hands over loose change from a cup holder. Jonas didn't look that way yet.

"What about that woman?" asked Jonas. "The one with the organization?"

"Amy?" said Charlotte. "She won't be here until... what's today?"

"Tuesday," said Andre. "The 13th. So she won't be here this weekend either. She only comes once a month and it's always the last weekend."

"Why only once a month?" asked Jonas again.

"Fundraising," Lotte said. "She needs to find businesses to help support the organization so they can help us."

Someone honked their horn at the woman by the highway and shouted for her to get a job. The woman winced. In the corner of her eye, Lotte saw Andre twiddle his thumbs. Morgan flipped the driver off.

Lotte poured water from her bottle into the cup and mixed it with baking soda, stirring it until it became a thick paste. Using a toothbrush given to her by Amy's organization, she scooped it up and brushed her teeth. This was one of the first things Andre taught her, and one of the first things she taught Jonas.

"Baking soda and water are what you want. Don't get Arm and Hammer though. You're paying extra for a name," said Andre, patting the powder onto his armpits outside his tent. "A thirty-two ounce of Great Value brand will run you a dollar and you can get that

much picking up change in a parking lot.”

The bitter taste clung to her teeth like salt on a coastal home. She poured more water into the bowl, diluting it. Andre’s advice lingered in the back of her head as she brought the bowl to her lips and swished the mixture around in her mouth. She spat into the sink.

“My mom used to mix it with water a couple of times a year to whiten our teeth. So do that. You can use it to clean your clothes, to wash your hair, treat sunburn, anything. Hell, it’ll keep your tent from smelling like sweat too. Just open a box and —”

A woman stepped out of the locker room, startling Lotte. They locked eyes in the mirror. The woman nodded at her. Plastic rattled as the woman pulled the shower curtain closed behind her. Water hissed out of a showerhead. Steam rose over the purple curtain. Lotte stood there, watching it rise until it hit the ceiling and crawled outward. *People are better when they don’t pity you.* She grabbed the box of baking soda, plastic bottle, and her towel before leaving the locker room.

Andre was by the weight benches filling an empty gallon at the water fountain. He was wearing his blue and yellow work vest, smelling of baking soda.

“We should all do this,” he said, gesturing his head toward the gallon. “Basically free water.”

“It’s a good idea,” said Lotte. “I’ll let the others know when I get back.”

The gym was Morgan’s idea, something she read online at the library. Since Andre was the only one with a job, he would get the gold membership for twenty-five dollars a month but the five of them would split the cost equally at five dollars a month. There, they showered, got out of the heat, and worked out. Next to Andre’s free water, it was the best idea any of them had.

Andre backed from the fountain. Lotte replaced him, feeling the empty bottle in her hand. Stepping outside was jarring. The building’s tinted windows had let Lotte forget the brightness of the sun, its unforgiving temperament. The air was thin with electricity and the earthy smell of oncoming rain. Andre looked at the Casio on his wrist.

“You coming to the library?” asked Lotte.

“I have to work and won’t be off on time. If I give you my password and stuff, could you check my email?”

“Sure thing,” said Lotte.

He repeated it three or four times before going inside and borrowing a pen and slip of receipt paper to write it down on. Lotte swung her foot, scraping her heel on the cement as she waited. He came out and handed the folded paper to her. She slipped it into her wallet. After saying their goodbyes, Andre headed east toward Yew Avenue, parallel to the incoming weather. Lotte cut north-west through the parking lot to Lower Way.

Along Lower Way, she stopped at businesses with NOW HIRING signs plastered to their windows. On 34, she ran across one side of the highway during a lull in traffic, stopping at the median to wait for her next opportunity to run. Lotte always knew what the managers would tell her: “The application is on the website.” But it was her way to get the managers to see her face, slip her name into their minds the same way someone slips a bookmark between pages. After the managers returned to the back, she asked for a cup of water.

The recycled air carried hints of noise — a whisper of paper sliding against paper as a page is turned; the rapid *taptaptap* of fingers working away on a keyboard or a mouse clicking; the hum of a printer as a student waited beside it; a hushed conversation. Morgan and Charlotte sat at two computers next to each other. They waved Lotte over to them.

“Jonas got an interview,” said Morgan, smiling. “Some carpenter job. He went back to camp so he can get some money and get to Goodwill.”

“He was real excited,” said Charlotte. “You should have seen him.”

“I bet,” said Lotte. She spotted an empty chair at a nearby table and dragged it over,

dropping her possessions at her feet.

“How about you two?” asked Lotte.

“I’ve applied for a few fast food jobs. I can’t be too picky right now,” said Charlotte. “I don’t know,” said Morgan. “I think I’d rather stay in my tent than work fast food again.” Lotte snickered to herself.

“I’m almost finished,” said Charlotte. “Done with applications but I have like ten more minutes left in my time slot, so I am just gonna read what has been happening. Then you can hop on.”

Charlotte was already gone by the time the heavy summer rain came. Thunder mumbled. Morgan left with her. Thick raindrops thumped against the windows, becoming white noise in the background. Still, the library’s power held fast. The storm kept the usual Saturday crowd from coming. Most days, the library gave out one-hour time slots to use the computer. But when it was empty like this, the librarian didn’t really care. For that, Lotte was grateful.

She checked Andre’s email and, seeing no news, checked her own. Automated, impersonal rejections thanked her for her time, appreciated that someone with her qualifications was interested in the company. There were notifications of her debts and repayment plans. Organizations muddled her inbox with newsletters of topics to be discussed at city meetings, of ways they can help, programs she can try to take advantage of. She sifted through the job openings in the area from Indeed and Zip Recruiter and Monster and the state employment office, opening the links in separate tabs.

Using a resume she emailed to herself, she applied to the customer service representative, to the bartender opening, to the team member position. She visited the websites of the businesses she dropped by and applied there, uploading her information then typing everything back out in the required forms. She once read somewhere to remove “P.O. Box” from her address so that it looked like an apartment address and so she did. Without her noticing, the bad weather passed like a traveling salesman. People began to fill the library again. A notification popped up in the bottom right of the screen alerting her that the session was timing out.

Lotte unfolded the map she printed as she made her way down 34 back toward the gym. Above her, the sun slipped into its late afternoon decline. Humidity latched to her breath like a vengeful spirit. Sweat rolled from her hairline into her eyes. She wiped her face with her towel, then pulled it over her head to shade her. As she walked, the towel bore the brunt of summer and heated it. About a half-mile into her walk, she stopped at a gas station nestled on the corner of a busy intersection. In the bathroom, she cupped her hands beneath the running water and splashed it onto her face. Then, she stuck the towel under the faucet. It grew heavy as it absorbed the cold water. She wrapped it around her face before topping off her water bottle again.

Another two miles passed between the gas station and the turn onto Weddington Road toward the address on the map. Lotte’s towel was dry, her bottle empty, the bottom of her feet beginning to ache and swell. On Weddington, the hustle and bustle of highway traffic winds down. Businesses give way to apartment complexes, then homes. A few residents mowed their lawns. With the towel draped over her head like a flag over a casket,

they chose to ignore her. Hiding near the end of Weddington, a plain, low building was nestled in the middle of several acres of manicured property. Cars were parked in the grass. A line of people trailed from behind the building and wrapped around the front. At the entrance of the driveway, the Islamic Community Center's marquee board read 07/19 FOOD DRIVE.

Lotte cut through the grass and parked cars, getting herself a spot at the end of the line. Hunger pained her stomach. The scent of spices was heavy in the air; garlic and ginger, the distinguishable smell of simmering rice. Under it all, she could make out the fragrance of different meats like lamb and chicken and beef. Lotte's teeth drowned in saliva.

The line moved at a steady pace. Within minutes, Lotte was around the corner. The smell of the food was so thick in the air now that she could taste it. Plastic folding tables were placed in parking spaces. People sat in plastic folding chairs. They talked and talked, their conversations and mannerisms lost amongst each other. Someone came down the line, handing everyone who waited a paper plate. At the front of the line, four tables were lined up together. Food was laid out across three while the fourth had three five-gallon Igloo jugs. Patrons went from left to right, pointing at the dishes. Behind the tables, organizers portioned the foods onto their plates. At the end, a man with a dense, black beard spoke to everyone who came. He gave them advice and handshakes before pointing at a maroon canopy in the corner of the parking lot where another line was forming.

As they loaded her plate, the people behind the meals introduced themselves. Afifa made the lamb stew; Rosaline, the beef kofta with tzatziki; Fahran, the chicken curry. Moe was a vegetarian and made the roasted eggplant with rice as well as the feta and tomato braised chickpeas. Each of them were kind, gentle in their own way.

"Unfortunately, we only have water," said the man at the final table. He extended a hand. "I'm Sana. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"Lotte," she replied, looking for a place to set her plate.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, though I am sure it could be under better circumstances."

"You're right. It could be better. But I'm a little lucky too."

"Of course you are," he asked, handing the drink to her. "Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear."

Lotte grinded the ball of her foot into the concrete beneath her. "Thank you," said Lotte, swiveling her head, motioning toward everything around them. "For this."

"It's no problem." Lotte turned to sit when she felt his hand on her shoulder. "And don't forget," he said, pointing toward the canopy. "When you're finished eating, we're giving out bags to help people. If you think you may need some, take it. Please."

In the night, the silhouettes of tents reminded Lotte of blood blisters, dark and bulbous. The glow of streetlights strained to reach them. Plastic rustled as their inhabitants tossed and turned in them. A lantern cast the outline of a family against the polyester wall of their makeshift home like a shadow lamp. Somewhere in the blackness, a group gathered and laughed. Lotte watched her steps as she walked, careful not to trip on any tent pegs or knock anyone's things down. Jonas sat on Andre's lawn chair in front of his tent. He waved at her. "Hey there neighbor," he said. "Where have you been?"

Lotte put her bag down and shook her hand, forcing circulation back into her fingers. "Went to a food drive off Weddington." She unzipped her tent and pulled her bucket out. She flipped it over and sat down.

Jonas whistled then said: "I bet that was a fun walk."

"We all have to make sacrifices." She slipped her shoes off then stretched her feet

out in front of her, fanning out her toes in her socks, curling them. The stench of sweat was subtle. But if she could smell it, so could Jonas.

“What’s in there?”

“I didn’t look too hard but the mosque gave it to me. I wanted to get home before it got too late.”

“Mosque?”

“Is there something wrong with that?”

She started massaging herself, digging both her thumbs into her heel then pushing them up the arc toward the ball of her foot. As she did, Jonas pulled the supplies out of the Food Lion bag, laying them on his lap. A green toothbrush with a travel-sized tube of toothpaste. Coconut scented Zest, a bar of Dial soap, deodorant, a pair of socks, a plastic poncho, snacks, and a calendar with the month’s food drives circled.

“This is amazing,” said Jonas. “Can I have this?” He held up a granola bar. “Sure. Consider it as my congratulations gift.”

“Thanks.”

The city’s dense skyglow gave the night a sepia tone, filtering the stars out like gold from a sieve. Lotte could feel the ache in her feet melting beneath her fingers. Jonas squirmed in his seat, then put the unopened granola bar back into the bag.

“Another tent moved in,” he said.

Lotte stopped. “Who is he?”

“Who is *they*?” She watched as the outline of his head leaned back. “The Woodwards. A husband and wife with their kid.”

Lotte said nothing. Instead, she grabbed the bag off Jonas’s lap as he talked.

“The wife was in the Marines.” He handed over the contents one piece at a time, never looking at her. “When I introduced myself, I saw a patch. Thought it was his. Michael. That’s his name. Thought it was Michael’s, but he said it was Abby’s.”

“What’s the kid’s name?”

“Logan.”

“Like Wolverine?” Lotte tied the handles of the bag in a knot.

“Another veteran. I can’t believe it,” said Jonas to no one.

“If you’ve got extra baking soda, put it under my bucket in the morning,” Lotte said, standing up. Feeling a phantom grip on her wrist, she continued. “We’ll tell them where to avoid and where to go tomorrow. But for now, I’m going to sleep.”

Jonas was silent. She crawled into her tent, placing the makeshift care package next to an unopened box of baking soda. It was too hot for the sleeping bag, so she stretched on top of it. A pair of headlights passed over her like a sense of *deja vu*. Lotte lay there, listening to the city shift in its sleep, wondering if she could learn to forgive it.

About the Author:

Rylan lives and writes out of the Charlotte, NC area. His work can be found in *Literally Stories*, *Saw Palm*, and *Stanchion Zine*. You can follow him on Twitter @rylannolastname.

The March Toward Extinction



The March Toward Extinction
Nathaniel Voll
Magazine and assorted print materials on paper
11 x 14 in.

Babel

By: Helen Jenks

I have spoken to you in a thousand tongues—
stranger, friend, lover, partner, each one as
foreign and unfamiliar as the next. My mother
said it is hard to learn a language,

that the sounds come strange and awkward on
the tongue, clumsy in the roof of one's mouth.
But with time there are syllables and words,
rocky vowels and crumbling consonants,

a new vocabulary prattling sweetly in the draining
estuary of the day. We learned to speak! And with
it came tender blather of newness, babel, babel,
babbling like the brook

that sweeps across the forest floor.
Sometimes we are silent now, but the
words still come, gentle and unassuming,
as if we have not grown older and
quieter

in the days that have passed. But we've
learned, even still—oh darling,
let me speak this tongue for the rest
of our days.

About the Author:

Helen is a history student and poet based in Dublin with a nervous disposition and a fondness for jumpers and other knitted things. She enjoys writing about the sublime, romantic, and nostalgic—poetry from life, in all its many forms. When not writing, you can find her swearing at Dublin's rude and rather irreverent seagulls, or hosting tea parties with her stuffed animals, who are all very polite and supportive of her work. She has recently started her own poetry magazine, *The Madrigal*, and hopes for its success! Her work is forthcoming in *The Martello* and *Eucalyptus & Rose*, and recently published in *Poetically Magazine*, *Spellbinder*, and *Seedling Poets*. She can be found on Twitter at @rosemaryandwool and @themadrigalpress!



Timeless Light
Lindsey Smith
Acrylic paint on paperboard
12 x 19 in.

if it's the beaches / love letter

By: Riya Jayanthi

when the story unfolds it's in the pages of a rustic novella.
boy and girl with a chance slight of the fingers, a graze,
and there begins the world's oldest story.
the tale of the truest, purest thing (*in theory*)

here, we imagine the silk sway of a slip dress on the sand
and the tip of a hat—an exchange of 3 letters
painted with ink on wet canvas paper. this is the love of age,
one that never wears, immortalized in brushstrokes.

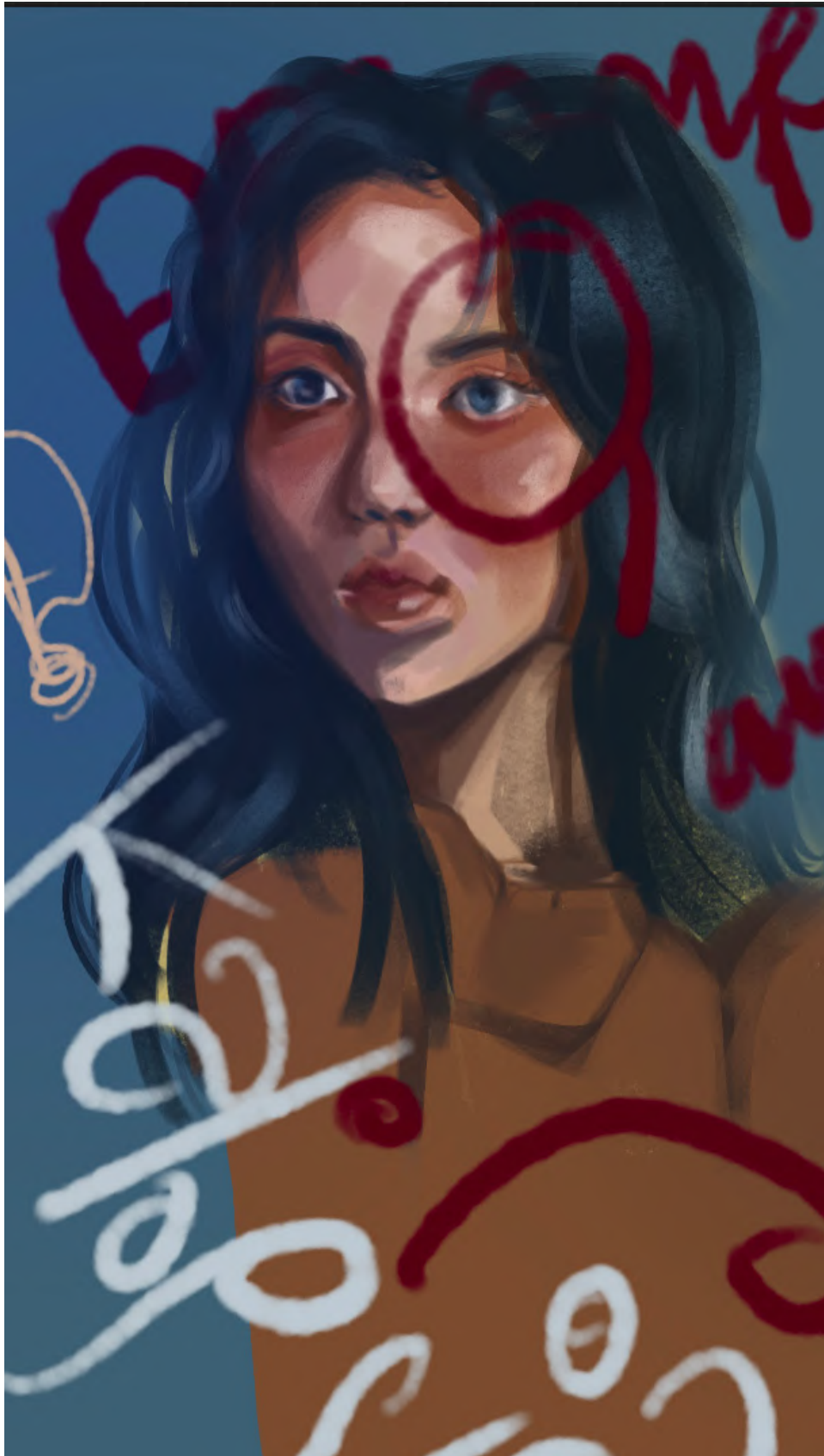
but like sand swells to the rhythm of the sea,
as does the soul: we believe that momentarily, love is infinite,
but it never quite is—instead we bear the tale
of the dryness of the drought. where the endless ocean recedes.

but if it's the beaches—the seagull's chant, the easy breeze,
if it's the ebb and flow of the tide that dictates one's love;
the world feigns mindless piety in trade for easy narrative
but i know the truth the stories sow.

sing to the rhythm of the waves now, love.
if it's the beaches that give you the nerve to bury me
i'll ride into the waves, arms outstretched—
summer love is the beauty of recollection encapsulated
in the palms of two fools & the fading horizon.

About the Author:

Riya Jayanthi is a current college freshman studying Health Policy with an anticipated minor in advertising/public relations who has a passion for literature and poetry. Riya has published two collections and is currently working on her third poetry book. When she's not writing, Riya enjoys traveling, listening to music, reading, and shopping way too much.



folklore
Felicity Liu
Digital
8.7 x 15.5 in

summer spins on its axis

By: Eden Copeland

i dream of south carolina in august:
foaming at the mouth with red-brick heat and steaming needles
of grass pricking our bare feet, yards of browning green all
sizzling under the burnt orange sun.

the sky won't interest you.
breathe this clear air under the spruce trees
and willows, dip your dirty hands into that blue, glassy water
gushing over rocks, making them wet and purified.

chain-link fences whisper in the evening
when the earth stretches out to cool—sipping sweet tea and
standing flip-flopped in line at the checkout counter. the
security camera shows us our fortunes for three ninety-nine.

you might fall harder if the ground weren't softened with pine needles.
everything is lovely when your eyes are this bright
and cobblestone glistens under your feet,
cradling you steady everywhere you think to go.

you'll stay here, a homage to dead american poets,
looking out over the water,
trying to pin down the horizon.

About the Author:

Eden lives in New Jersey and is currently a junior in high school. She spends most of her time reading, writing poetry, listening to Simon & Garfunkel, and trying (unsuccessfully) to keep her plants alive.



Frost in the Wind
Kinnereth Din
Digital
1620 x 2160 px

i'm learning that everything is temporary

By: Natasha Lim

so indulge me in this final act of violence at the end of the world.
tell me about the lick of the ocean, how it feels to be wrapped

in pale blue ribbons bursting with so much light. the sounds of salvation
that called you home, the hushed whispers baked into your brittle bones.

ask me then, how sick i am of sinking my teeth into this sieged city
of vagabonds with too much heat and too much heart and too much

hope. how the hurt has stayed unbroken, bitter on my tongue.
forgive me; i know you've heard it all before, but it's been a while.

these past five years have made hurried ants of us, burrowing deeper
and deeper into the wet sand for any semblance of shelter, finding

refuge from the ripples of sun and salt visible from this vacancy.
do you remember what you left behind? maybe not.

a father is a father until he is set free. a daughter who stays
becomes a vessel for all the courage he could never have.

i'm standing at the mouth of the ocean and contemplating grief,
wondering if mourning what could've been is the same

as mourning a person. on good days, i sustain myself
with the good years. on better days, i am better off.

now we face each other as opposites, barely recognizable
even in the face of the imminent apocalypse.

what i want more than anything is to know if you found
everything you were looking for—if reunion is now just another word

for the deflation of a dream, unleashing rogue waves
and cities crumbling down on my decaying bravado.

the uproar is enough to refract the last light of the sun into
my hollowed-out chest, daring me to transform into something

that withstands the test of time.

About the Author:

Natasha Lim is a psychology student from Singapore. In her spare time, she enjoys drinking copious amounts of coffee and reading books that make her cry.



East
Elwing Gao
Watercolor
7 x 10 in.

About the Artists:

Mahima Chaudhury: Mahima Chaudhury's artworks are a glimmer into her life experiences and the deep emotions she's associated with those moments. Toeing the line between illustrative realism and abstract surrealism makes Mahima's art truly special—you get to view both sides of the coin, artworks that you can relate to literally and metaphorically. Their art embodies euphoric surrealism through the use of perspective—she forms a relationship between her environments and dream-like concepts. Mahima's inspirations derive from her perception of people, objects and the emotions she's experienced in her current lifetime; she takes from these moments and reinvents them into a prettier version of their realities. Her fantasies of a utopian world drives her artistic concepts. As a result of sticky feet, the artist is constantly branching out and exploring different genres of art styles in order to prevent falling into a state of self restriction, their art is boundless. Through the use of evocative ideas and emotional attachments, Mahima creates as a release from the norms of day to day life; and shares her art with the world in order to evoke a personal connection/reaction with her viewers.

Pieces: look beyond my world (17); look within my world (18); tangerine dreams (27); if my mind was transparent you'd see how you consume it (15);

Lindsey Smith: Lindsey Smith is a junior at Myers Park High School in Charlotte, NC. She explores societal issues and self-expression in her art pieces.

Pieces: By a Thread (2); Hollywood (13); Timeless Light (35)

Jaeyeon Kim: Jaeyeon Kim is a fine artist who works to claim spaces for the public to engage with art without difficulty. Her work often revolves around detailed paintings, installation art, and sculptures, which become a place for social engagement and visual communication.

Piece: Gas Station (11)

Nathaniel Voll: Nathaniel Voll is a collage artist, poet and playwright settled in Kitchener, Ontario, which is the traditional land of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral peoples. His work has appeared in *Kalopisa Literary Journal*, *the Midtown Radio Project* and is forthcoming elsewhere. Nathaniel's art challenges the choices we make as humans and celebrates the times when we get it right. For more of his work and to inquire about prints, visit nathanielvoll.weebly.com, or [@diamondinadiaper](https://www.instagram.com/diamondinadiaper) on Instagram.

Pieces: Catch and Release (5); Collage no. 44 (7); Sea to Sky (25); The March Toward Extinction (33)

Staff Artists:
Kinnereth Din:

Kinnereth S. Din is a seventeen-year-old artist and illustrator from North Texas, who loves thunderstorms, fuzzy socks, and lazy mornings. She has received a handful of local art awards and been featured in the Dallas Museum of Art's 2021 Teen Renaissance Exhibition. Her art was also selected for inclusion in Celebrating Art's National Summer Anthology 2020. While she hasn't settled on a favorite medium yet, most of her pieces seek to explore the poignant and beautiful. When she isn't scribbling in her sketchbook, you can usually find her daydreaming with a cup of tea in hand. Find more of her work, and follow her creative endeavors @artofkinn on Instagram.

Elwing Gao:

Elwing is an 18-year-old artist from the Bay Area, currently studying in New York. She works mostly in watercolor and 2D mixed media, and likes exploring mental health and human experiences in her pieces. In her free time, she can be found going on walks and playing guitar. You can find more of her work, and follow her current art studies @waves.and.washes on Instagram.

Luana Góes:

Luana Góes is a 19-year-old artist from Amapá, Brazil. Her artworks are inspired by various mediums and both traditional and digital art, creating mixed media pieces about her culture, mental health, nature and life in general. Góes also likes to edit videos and music, a topic that can be found in her pieces. You can follow her at @luana.g.m on Instagram.

Felicity Liu:

Felicity Liu is a high school junior from the Bay Area with a passion for creating. Her work appears in *TeenInk*, *Inscape Magazine*, and *Crystal Visions*, and has been recognized by the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and the Celebrating Art Competition.

Art Director:
Peter Donley:

Peter Donley is a high school senior from suburban Seattle. He first joined Kalopsia as an executive editor in June of 2020, and has been working as the layout designer ever since. In his limited free time, Peter is a competitive pianist and aspires to pursue mechanical engineering in college. You can find him on Instagram @p_eterd.

**Layout and Design by
Peter Donley**

**Cover Art:
"Return"
Elwing Gao
9 x 12 in.**

**Watercolor on newsprint,
Adobe Photoshop**

