

Open

Your

Mind

THE REVIEW

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THE REVIEW

*the literary & art journal of
John Burroughs School*

VOLUME NINETY-EIGHT

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Reader,

We have never lived through such a time. The spread of COVID-19 has wrought serious uncertainty in all of our lives. As seniors, it stung a bit to clear our calendars of our last hurrah in the blackbox or the pool. There's also that back-burner anxiety of the safety of our grandparents in China and Romania who haven't left their apartments in months....

Well, you know what else is exceptionally unique? The 98th edition of *The Review*. If a smoother segue could be made, we wouldn't want to make it. We set the bar high for submissions this year, and almost in an effort to spite us, the student body produced a greater abundance of high-quality creative work than ever before. So, we apologize if this journal is clunky in the hand, but we truly believe every piece in it should be shared with the greater Burroughs community.

To help guide you through the girthiest journal to date, we've divided *The Review* into five major sections: *Earth*, *Aging*, *Identity*, *Adversity*, and *Here*. We've crafted each section as a progression, with various pieces working together to tell a unique story when read as a whole. The last section, *Here*, aims to capture the beauty of uncertainty, the absurdity of life, and the false dichotomy between existential and daily realities... because we live both, all the time. Now, more than ever.

Best,
Adina Cazacu-De Luca & Ann Zhang
Editors-in-Chief, 2020



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PART I: EARTH

"The best thing about the Earth is if you poke holes in it, oil and gas come out." | STEVE STOCKMAN,
U.S. CONGRESSMAN

TRIDEMOSPONGIAE

Lily Orchard | clay, glaze

CRICKETS

Madeline Buchowski

Like jingling bells they fill warm air with their call,
 And the moon illuminates damp grass in which they hide
 Doomed creatures, their chiming overlapping the faint whoosh
 Of trembling branches and hum of sleepy bees,
 Lured onto flowers blooming violet and sunset orange
 By the spellbinding scent, and the stars arrange
 In their formations. Constellations shine together,
 Decorating the obsidian sky with their faint glow
 Leaves brush past each other with the lingering breeze...
 Alone with the whisper of trees and chorus of crickets
 I could wander forever, eyes glued to the sky.

GREY MORNING

Tamar Kreitman | digital print



INTO THE WILD

Dylan Fox | digital print



TREEHOUSE

Madeline Buchowski

Furry moss camouflages rotting wood amongst towering pines
 Which form a second roof with their olive needles
 Her oasis in a sea of green, whose hinges
 Blew away with winter flurries and spring rain...
 The door rests on the forest floor, a new home for beetles
 And inside, boards weathered gray and splintered
 Tremble with the weight of hopping squirrels and mockingbirds
 Glass lets in streams of sage-tinted sunlight
 Where fingertips smeared away the collected dust
 She climbs the carved rungs up to her dwelling place,
 Whistling with the birds and hum of flowing water
 Knowing no one will hear her call.

Click [here](#) to read Madeline's reflection on this piece.



EVOLUTION

Kathleen Dobbs | plaster, moss



EXPLORERS

Dylan Fox | digital print



OVER THE EDGE

Tamar Kreitman | digital print

FIND SOMETHING TO BITE DOWN ON

Lauren Keeley

The Sun is coming up at dawn
 But now is not the time
 To reconsider running
 Away you've gone too far
 Not to let it burn
 Through the layers of
 Your skin count them
 One
 Two
 Three
 Find something to bite
 Down on and tell me Icarus
 How does it feel to
 Melt to
 Burn to
 Let the flames lick your
 Shoulderblades tell me Icarus
 What did the falling feel like?
 Did the saltwater
 Wash away the sting of smoking
 Flesh or did you
 Shatter like ceramic when you
 Touched the white-hot
 Waves



PREDATOR

Sara Cao | colored pencil



PROMETHEUS

AnnMarie O'Shea | bronze



THE LIFE CYCLE OF OIL

Hallie Williams | digital print from watercolor

THE PLANET RUNS ITS COURSE

Eva Kappas

We came from dust, we came from
The granola crumbling dirt eroding
From hillsides beneath our toes
Leaning into the wind that sways through the tall grasses
With closed eyes and eagerness

Cinnamon sunsets cycled with spices
Toasted and enveloping, with a blanket of humidity.
Rolling over on our side
Into mango daybreaks like citrus
We drank it up like orange juice and said thank you

Where along the way did we bite the forbidden fruit
And as the pomegranate tarts exploded on the tongue,
Feel the pressure welling up beneath a carpet of pine needles
Of a bubbling, roiling spring of oil
And call it potential.

Why did we gaze into the clear watery eyes
Of a crackly honeycomb cavity walled by thin shears of sparkling rock
Geometric hexagons hollowed out by the drip, drip, drip,
And looking at the water cradling our reflection,
See a resource and call it mine

When did we coil our metalloids into power—
Was the snake in the garden of Adam and Eve
A shining, copper cable? Plant the computers above
So the metallic wires hang down like roots
Dripping liquid electricity into mercury pools below.

When did sticky stalks of grass
Start plastering wrappers to our ankles along with mosquitos
Neon popsicles cooling the hope beading on our skin
Into a refrigerated complacency.
Our society strained like broccoli in a colander:
already too far from its roots in the dirt.

*hey, do u think you could stop with all that doom and gloom stuff...
it's kinda annoying*

Sure! Let me spoon-feed it to you slowly.
Slurp it up, oozing over the silver linings
Dark molasses spoonfuls of petroleum
Don't let it drip down your chin
You're doing great, it's fine, just little changes at a time

I'll make you a smoothie of your daily greens
Spinach and lime and greenhouse gases
A healthy dose of methane along with your daily multivitamin
We have time, anyway
Loads and heaps of it, like wheat baskets overflowing

Come find me in the dust someday
We'll all be blowing in the wind
While the waves roll seasick and the mountains choke on the sky
Tupperware containers spin by like tumbleweeds
Because not everything returns to dust.



NATURE VS. NURTURE

Zoë Scully | altered book
and charcoal on cardboard

PESTICIDES (MOO)

Lily Yanagimoto

Moo. When does it get better?

The PDA and the FDA and the plain old DA will send you letters in the mail. Sponsorships. When will it get better? More urgently, now: does it get better? If we can imagine something better, that means we haven't peaked yet. The day we stop imagining better things is the day we will have gotten bloated on them. The day we stop imagining better things is the worst day. The worst day. I guess. Moo.

How many days? —Take out your watch. (If we sue our state, they find a way to charge us.) Grow the grass, chemical green: clip it. Clip it again. Click. Nice. Smell of gasoline. Oil slick on my face and cheeks: I'd like to blame the fossil fuel industry for my bad skin. How many days? —Not family friendly, but in Australia they say the world will be over in 2050. How old will we be? How many days? My skin will not clear up, it's peeling now, and everything is red—

Moo. We're burning out, stress fractures all along the earth's thick skin. Getting thinner now. Like a hairline, like patience, something you mix with paint. We're all stretching ourselves out thin, poisoning ourselves, the earth retching underneath our feet, spitting up carbon dioxide, faces peeling. Beneath your eyes are red, raw strips of sadness: the air is hot, and thick, and heavy, and I can't walk anymore. Birds are dropping from the sky like rain.... Our chemical romance with this planet is turning nasty: side effects, listed in a monotone under the cheery visuals of prescription drug commercials. You've been drinking pesticide, and the space behind my face is throbbing.

Pain medication will help with the headache, but watch as cancers form underneath my tongue two years later. Moo. Right?! Let's just throw ourselves on the grill now—!

Flaming up quickly—it'll all be over just like that—before you know it—much better than burning slow—(can you hear the earth? like that, it's saying something, it's coughing, it's—!)

Skin prickles. Sunscreen. The sun flickers through the clouds of toxic waste. Coughing. Lungs are burning now. Did you hear that? It sounded like a cow—

Everything burns. I will go outside and cut the grass today. I will check the mailbox, and I will burn the letters. Coupon clipping for more plastic that I will throw away. My face hurts like walking on coals that you have to ignore. My face hurts from smiling. Open the mailbox... cut the grass again, again, again, again—....

Maybe—this is just a fever dream. The earth is sick right now; maybe we are just a fever dream, to be killed off by the heat, and our ashes will be blown away for something new and better. The earth tosses and turns—reaches for the metal bowl beside the bed. Getting sick is never pretty—nobody to hold back your hair.

This was supposed to be about something else, but then it was about burning down your house. And then the neighbor's, and then.... We could burn it all, we could burn it. Where there's smoke, there's fire; we've already started it.

Moo.

When does it get better?



COLORFUL COWS

Sara Cao | watercolor

A WASTED WORLD

Ethan Kalishman

[Lights up on the Director of the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], former lobbyist for Waste Management [WM], walking down a smoggy Washington D.C. street. His only company is a green and white paper that catches his eye, lifted by the wind above the littered, concrete sidewalk. The Director gets a hold on the leaflet and sees that it is an executive internal memo from WM. The pages then catch air as if attempting to escape from his clutches, but the Director grabs the papers yet again in one hand. In the other, he grips his eyeglasses, then begins to read the leaked letter that follows.]

Board of Directors and Branch Leaders, Waste Management, Inc.,

Fall, 2019. What a season! In this quarterly update, it is my great pleasure to share the most exciting news in our corporation yet: Waste Management is now the largest pollution solutions provider throughout North America! Finally, we have surpassed our goal of reaching continental reliance among all municipal, commercial, and industrial human wasters. Now, customers are forced to rely on us to take care of all of their daily trash waste, ranging from broken glass and chemical outputs to our newly-included category of feces. And with the world's ever-exponential population growth, we are ensured perpetual success. Congratulations, everyone! It is all thanks to you and your teams' hard work in the field that have brought us to this threshold of achievement.

Along with this incredible new milestone, WM has garnered much acclaim, ranging from Presidential Medals of Valor and Nobel Peace Prizes all the way to waste-friendly legislation in the U.S. Government. However, with the rise of anything good in society also comes the opinionated rhetoric from the worst of critics, and WM is no exception to feeling the brunt of this trend. I hate to admit it, but due to our recent success, the local media networks have come out against the WM family. Some outlets say that we "lack quality customer service" and that it only will "worsen since we now hold a monopoly over trash collection." Other media platforms simply do not agree with our business model. Even the fringe sources go against us, saying that we contribute to climate change because we "promote the reliance on consumption for business, a strategy that increases the use of fossil fuel energy." Regardless of whether or not these media outlets are "correct" in their claims, I can assure you that after speaking with both the Human Resources and Public Relations departments, Waste Management is not vulnerable in any way, shape, or form. After some thinking in my own time, I agree. We truly are the world's best company—a waste-filled family™. Board and Managers, our nation is a bin filled to the brim with trash. Let's not only clear it up, but let's also expand. In doing so, we can contradict the media *and* profit. Let's take on another facet of waste.

Let's start recycling.

I know what it sounds like: "Mr. Starks, haven't we already succeeded?" Board and Managers, I understand these concerns—and yes, we have already achieved unimaginable levels of achievement. But I would never close the door on opportunity. Remember when this same group of people was apprehensive about changing our name from "garbage" to "waste"? I certainly do, and I also remember the night we made the name change official as the best one in my life. You see, while society loves a little bit



SELF PORTRAIT

Hallie Williams | acrylic and
found object on board

of political-correctness, I love money, success, and power. Board and Managers, please trust me one more time.

My late father, Mr. Joe Starks I, suggested in his first address as former Chair of the Board to “tell all the truth but tell it slant.” Having lived by this mantra ever since I heard those words, I have built this company around it. I actually got the idea from our partner, CEO of Zara SA. They call it “greenwashing.” If we can focus our attention on our marketing to raise customer acquisitions, not only can we promise to recycle the greener goods (e.g. glass products, papers, metals, and more) for a premium fee, but also we can collect more waste, thus generating a higher overall profit. Our recycling process will follow suit.

WM will publicly roll-out a new campaign to “go green” to secure customer loyalty and commence the program. The operation is pretty simple, too. We just have to make everything green—and by painting our trucks, bins, and buildings the most beautiful shade of money ever seen before, our dream will come true. Then, we will rebrand with a new slogan and trademark: “Waste Management: Gone green!”™ Now, Green™ will be synonymous with waste. No matter that we won’t *actually* recycle anything—if it’s Green™, it’s good. Board, this is the exact narrative we tell the public when we think of spreading the slanted truth. Our customers love to think that they are doing sustainable things for the earth, and they will pay any price to say that they are. Thus, even if climate change actually is an existential threat, we’ll be the last ones to perish because those suckers undoubtedly will give us all of their business. We can exploit these guys until the end of the planet.

Our game is not just winning over the hearts of everyday Americans; the path to power also is through politics. Fortunately, both liberals and conservatives are easily duped, so we will just use slanted truth with the words “climate change.” When we add that phrase to our mission statement, liberals will throw their support behind us because of their desire to reduce “dirty energy use,” and that is over half of the US House right there. Then, since conservatives back anything that says, “free-market,” WM will then have managed to attract all sides of the political spectrum. Perfect.

With all of this said, there is only one thing left to figure out: your role in this honorable endeavor—and it is quite small. All I ask of you is to ride this wave out with me. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the rewards of your investments. Fellow Board and Managers, I have enjoyed my tenure with this company—this Green™ family. I hope I have done well as your chosen CEO, COO, CFO, and CTO. More importantly, I hope that I have made you proud. Thank you for your unfettered support. As always, let’s get to work.

Joe (Jody) Starks II
CEO, COO, CFO, CTO
Waste Management, Inc.

[The Director finishes reading the letter. He pauses. The last few years have certainly shaped his life ever since WM cut communications with him. The Director sighs with exasperation, pulls out his phone, and dials. The Caller ID reads: “EPA Publicity Dept.” The Director looks back at the paper in his other hand. Lights dim, but not before the Director can crumple up the letter as he continues his walk, back turned to the audience. A hand reaches out to the right, and a green paper plops into a green, WM-labeled recycling bin. End of scene.]

IN THE ABSENCE OF LIFE

Teresa Jiang | colored pencil





PART II: AGING

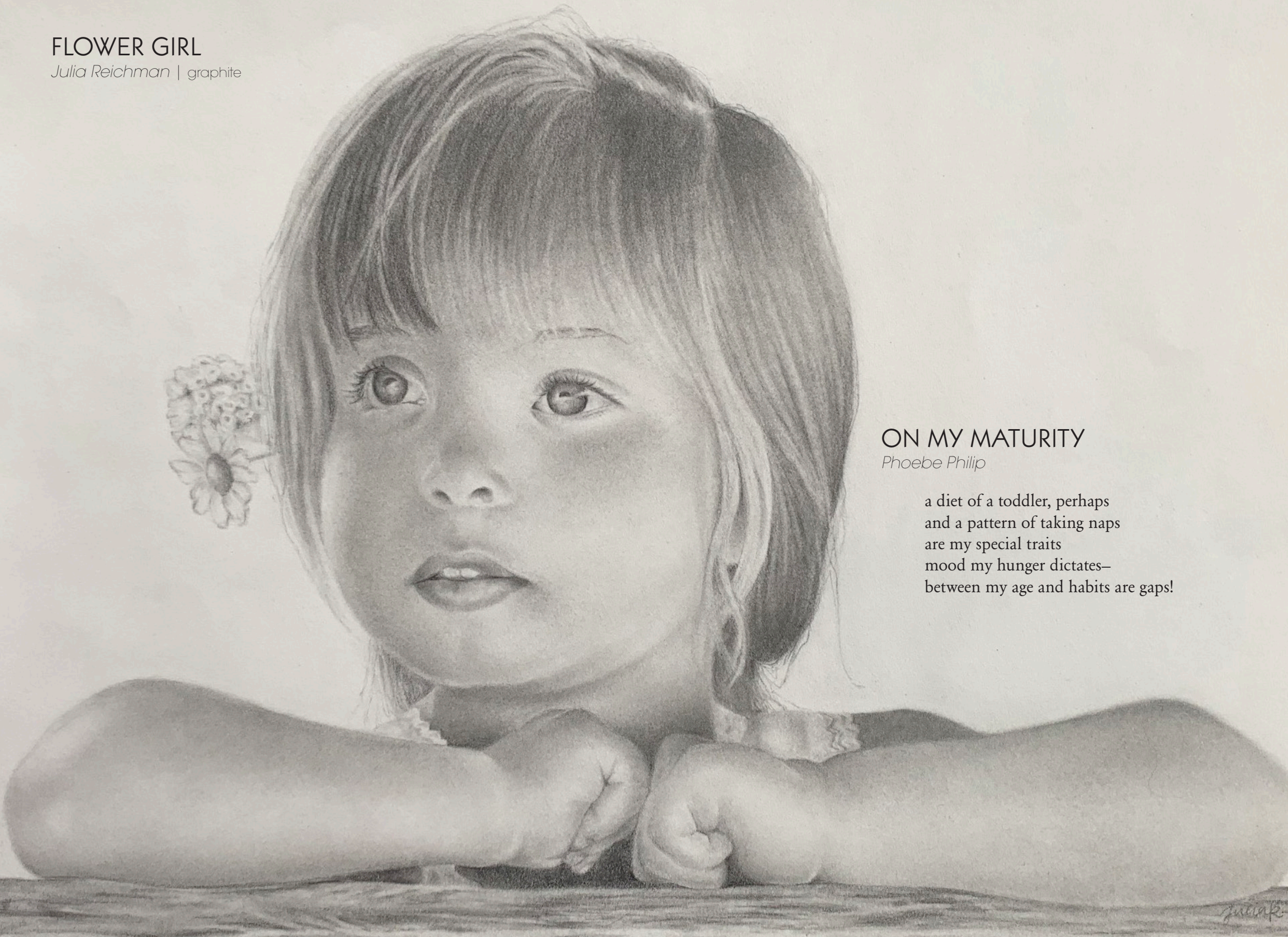
"If you live long enough, you realize you are not the person you were." | KATHLEEN GRABER, POET

ZWEITE GEBURT [SECOND BIRTH]

Moritz Habermann | plaster, acrylic

FLOWER GIRL

Julia Reichman | graphite



ON MY MATURITY

Phoebe Philip

a diet of a toddler, perhaps
and a pattern of taking naps
are my special traits
mood my hunger dictates—
between my age and habits are gaps!

I TRANSCEND TO THE END

Sarah Ding

I bend my legs,
Tighten my grip,
Tap the ball forward,
Step backward,
Step forward,
Swing my stick down and through,
Hit the ball,
Watch it sail,
To the goal.

Goalie stops it,
Forward tips it,

And...

GOOOOAAAALLL!!!!

Field hockey game's tied 1-1,
Other team's being outdone,
Hustle and heart,
Set us apart,
Our team's on fire,
So hot we're not afraid,
To use our striving shot,
A super shot,
A sonic shot,

A downright nasty shot.

I hustle hit,
Never quit,
Pull a fake,
Pass it right,
Lose the ball
Win it back,
Tap it forward,
To the goal,
Take a shot,
Chip it hard,

Ball bounces,
Grazing feet,

Corner! Tweet!

Standing my ground,
At option left,
Ball speeding,
I'm receiving,
Touching outside circle,
Then back in,
Squatting down,
Squeezing stick,

Unleashing deadly hit!

Ball soars,
Towards goal,
Goalie falls,
On ball,
I score,

GOAL!

Four minutes left,
When I play ball,
I leave it all,
I defend,
To the end,
Try my best,
I don't rest,
Jab the ball from their control,
Pull a fake,
And then take,
Another of my dreadful hits!

Feel a shove,
I collapse,
Hear the ref,
Tweet! Stroke!

Minute left,
Pressure's on,
On the line,
Goalie and me,

Cannot hit,
Only push or lift,
Goalie stares,
I respond,
With stinging glares,
Goalie flinches,
I'm alone,
With the ball,

TWEET!

Anger surges I'm going to win,

I've practiced strokes 1,000 times,

I use my strength

I use my power,

I use my one last bit of fire,

I transcend to the end,

And push the ball to the place,

With superb, lighting pace,

The goalie lunges,

The crowd gasps,

I close my eyes,

Cross my fingers,

Hope for the best,

This is the test,

Everyone's silent,

So am I,

I hear a whistle,

Open my eyes,

Everyone cheers,

Sprinting towards me,

I score the stroke,

Goalie's sad,

Her coach complains,

I celebrate,

Walk to the podium,

Hear my name,

Enjoy my moments of little fame,

I transcend to the end!

ROSIE

Abby Greenberg

“Can I sit here?” says a girl to you on the first day of kindergarten. She kicks your foot with her pink-rhinestone shoes, and then sits down without waiting for an answer. You decide not to say anything because your dad told you to make friends and that might be happening right now, but you don’t know. You’ve never made a friend before. Then the girl pulls a lizard out of her pocket and says, “Shhhh! I found this lizard outside, but Mr. Dillard says she’s not allowed inside, but she told me she was cold so I brought her inside. If you tell on me I’ll kick you.” You don’t want to get kicked, so you hold the lizard and the girl tells you its name is Rosie. “That’s my name too,” she says, “and it’s the coolest name ever so our lizard is also named Rosie.” You nod in agreement—that seems like solid logic to you. “This looks like the beginning of a beautiful friendship,” Rosie (the human) says, and you won’t notice until years later that a five-year-old was trying to quote *Casablanca* to you.

You and Rosie set up by the Lincoln Logs and build a house for Rosie the Lizard. “We’ve got a lovely floor plan right here,” says Rosie, placing a couch from the Barbie Dream House next to the lizard. “See, the floors are open and that means the energy can move around. Energy is the most important thing when you’re looking at houses.” You nod sagely along, and place a lamp in the house. Rosie the Lizard twitches her foot and turns away from it. Then she sticks out her tongue, reaches it up, and licks her eyeball. Human Rosie lets out a shriek. “Why did she do that!”

“It’s ‘cause she can’t blink,” you say.

“She can’t blink?”

“Yeah. She doesn’t have any eyelids.”

“Well,” says Rosie with a huff. “I like my eyelids.” Then Mr. Dillard comes over to check on how your playtime is going, and he gets really mad and *confiscates* Rosie the Lizard, which means that he takes her and puts her back outside. He also moves the Barbie Dream House things back into the Barbie Dream House and you think that probably the floor plan has been messed up now.

Mr. Dillard yells at both of you for the lizard debacle, and banishes you to the back of the classroom with Max, who is there because he likes to talk out of turn and eat glue sticks like push-pops. Max smiles at you and you look at the sticky fingerprints he has left on the desk.

“Did you guys really find a lizard?” asks Max.

“Yeah,” answers Rosie. “We did, and she was the coolest.”

“*Awesome*,” breathes Max, and his eyes go wide. “What did it look like?”

“She was brown and her head was spiky and she had a really long tongue,” Rosie says proudly.

“She licked her eyeballs with it,” you add quietly. Max looks right at you, and for a moment you fight the urge to crawl under the desk. It feels like you’ve swallowed your tongue.

“She *licked* her eyeballs?”

“Yeah,” you say.

“*Awesome*.”

After Max has finished asking you and Rosie every lizard-related question he could think of, which was not that many, he pulls a bottle of Elmer’s Glue out of the cabinet behind him and pours a glob of it onto his hand. He starts mashing it around like soap. “When it gets hard you can peel it off and look at your fingerprints,” he explains. “It’s like being a policeman.”

“Or *policewoman*,” says Rosie as she snatches the bottle of glue out of Max’s hand. She pours a dollop onto her palm, and then hands it to you.

The orange label on the bottle is slowly peeling off. A smiling blue cow stares at you from the sticker. You’re not sure why it’s there—you aren’t sure what glue is made of, but you don’t think it comes from cows. The top left corner of the label has folded in, and the sticky side is covered with dust and has turned grey. You smooth it back out, but there isn’t any sticky stuff

on it, so now it just sticks out awkwardly.

Mr. Dillard then sees Max and Rosie with their glue hands, so he comes over and separates the three of you. You end up sitting in the corner by the classroom fish tank, and Rosie pulls faces at you from across the floor. It makes something feel wiggly in your chest. The day is almost over, so you don’t mind watching the fish float around until your dad comes.

When your dad comes in, Mr. Dillard quickly pulls him aside and they whisper together for a little bit, probably about Adult Things. You continue to watch the fish.

“Ready to go, kiddo?” someone asks, and when you look over you realize you didn’t notice your dad coming over. You nod, so he helps you up and walks you off to the cubbies to get your jacket. You look over your shoulder, and see Rosie still in her spot. She makes eye contact, and then smiles so big and so wide you’re surprised it fits on her face. She waves enthusiastically. You give a little wave back, and that wiggly feeling comes back in full force.

In the car on the way home, you fiddle with the seat belt latch in your lap. You see your dad’s eyes looking at you in the rearview mirror.

“How was school?” he asks.

“It was fun.”

“Did you make any new friends?”

You think for a moment. You think about the lizard and the glue and the fish tank. “I think so,” you answer. “Her name is Rosie. I also met a boy named Max.”

Your dad looks back over his shoulder quickly and gives you a tight smile. You expected him to be happy that you made two whole friends, but maybe he wanted you to make more. It’s quiet for a little while, so you look out the window and watch a lady walk her dog. It’s a big dog.

“Mr. Dillard says you had a couple problems today,” says your dad from the front seat.

You look at him. “I did?”

“Well, he said you had to sit for a little while to calm down. Is that right?”

“I guess so.”

“Did Rosie and Max have to sit for a little while too?”

“Yeah. But Max had to sit because he eats glue and Rosie and me had to sit because we made a house for our lizard.”

“You found a lizard?”

“Yeah. Her name was Rosie, too. We saw her lick her eyeball.”

Your dad is quiet for a moment.

“Just be careful, honey,” he says. “I don’t want you to get in trouble anymore. And maybe if Rosie and Max get in trouble a lot, you shouldn’t be friends with them.”

“Why not?”

“Well.” Your dad sighs. “Sometimes there are people who are *bad influences*. That means that we sometimes do bad things and get in trouble when we’re with them. So we shouldn’t be friends with people who make us do bad things.”

“But I liked Rosie,” you say. “And all we did was find a lizard.”

“I know,” says your dad, but you don’t think he really does. “Just think about it.”

You look out the window again, but you’ve already driven past the lady walking her dog. You think about it. Eventually you think that Rosie shouldn’t have gotten in trouble in the first place, because now she’s a *bad influence* and you can’t be friends anymore, and nobody can be friends with her because she got in trouble. That makes you sad, because you had fun today.

Your dad stops at a red light. Through the window, you see a girl following a man who is probably her dad. She stomps her feet, and you see that she is wearing light-up shoes. She laughs and stomps again and again, then she jumps in a muddy puddle and stomps all around. You stare at her shoes, sparkling in the mud. The light turns green, and you turn your face to watch the girl until you can’t see her anymore.

HEART RATES

Carrie Zhang

It always happens when you're around.
The escalation of heart beats,
growing faster and faster,
like children in the winter
sliding down heaping hills of fairy-gifted snow
with their fragmented blue sleds.
Shouldn't heartbeats only beat this fast
when we see death sitting
on the tips of our noses?

It feels like an anvil beating my heart,
forcing it to keep pulsing
or maybe turning
levers and pulleys.
The aortas and the veins
that grapple with your presence
weave and choke in a crumpled pile
of desperation
and maybe hope too.

When your footsteps lose their clarity,
the body parts untangle,
returning to their nests in the trees
only to fall back to the forest floor
once more with your very presence.

It tasted like overripe bananas
that mush in dry mouths
and birds that crash into perfectly
cleaned windows in cities and skies.

Hearing the constant seizing
of my heart, begging to stop,
but still hoping for more.

If heartbeats tasted like colors,
the overbearing buckets of
red and blue would saturate my tongue
until I choked on wordless thoughts.



RHYTHM

Allie Lane | plaster, acrylic



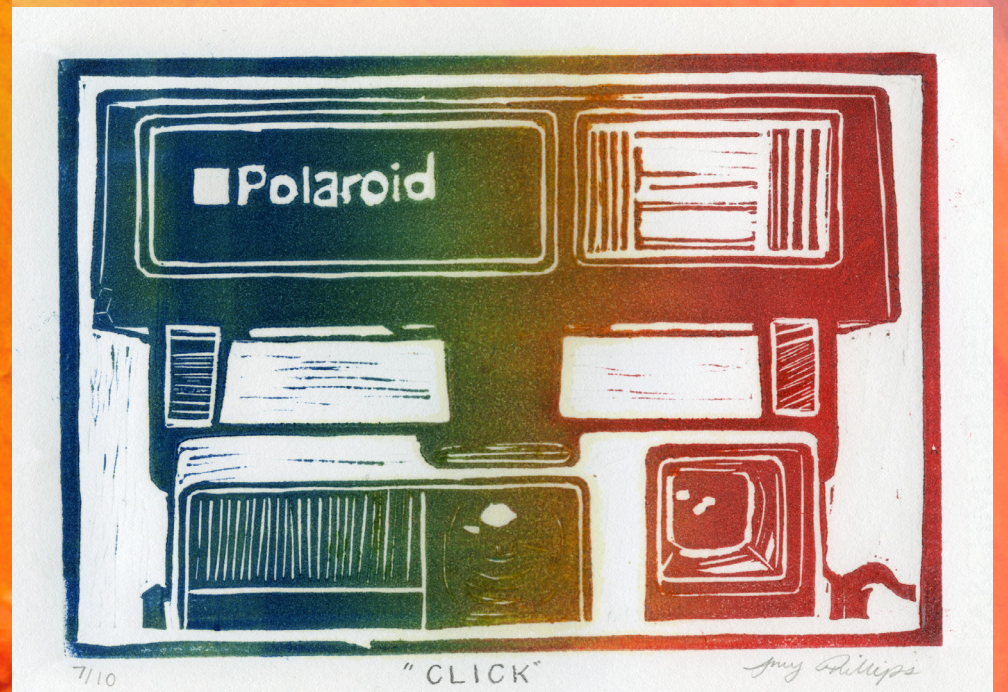
BLUR

Celia Gossow | digital print



CLICK

Amy Phillips | linoleum cut



DIFFERENT BODY PARTS I ASSOCIATE WITH LOVE

Madeline Pass

BRAIN:

Because love is a chemical reaction in the brain, according to the self-declared cynics in English class: Romeo and Juliet didn't love at first sight. I don't know what's so bad about love not being magic.

HEART:

Because *obviously*, hearts are pink shapes on Valentine's Day; Do you love me? Wearing your heart on your sleeve means that you're too sensitive, grow *up*. A heart attack occurs when you are so hungry that a coronary artery becomes blocked and I just think that love is like that sometimes.

LIVER:

Because it's the seat of the soul said the Egyptians, who put livers in a canopic jar for Imsety, a god connected to death caused by emotions in excess.

LUNGS:

Because really, what is more like love than breathing, carrying on? During gas exchange across a respiratory surface, lungs expand like balloons. During meditation I can feel everything moving, alive.

SKIN:

Because it's *everywhere*, like love. My skin feels thin and fragile, but there's evidence of strength in every scar.

Conclusion: Love disperses through the human anatomy, like laughter.



SEND NOODS

Amy Phillips | marker

Click [here](#) to read Amy's reflection on this piece.



UNFINISHED
Katie Xu | digital drawing



VSCO BOI
Katie Xu | digital drawing

CONTRACT

Sylvia Barnes

They said let the friend groups naturally form
 But now they're forming all around me
 I want the status more and more
 And I know they see me frowning
 If you force it, you will lose it
 But yet I feel like I am losing
 All my old friends, they're all thriving
 Over things I'm not invited to
 But I'll try to not get caught up with
 The distance and the instances
 Where I feel like I'm the problem
 And I'm just what the issue is
 But I'm glad that I can recognize
 Who is genuinely nice
 Not just wearing some old mask
 In an act to be disguised
 The true, but overwhelming fact
 Is they're scared that they won't be liked back
 So they organize a group of friends
 Who validate them for pretend
 But really when you make this change
 You lose the real friends in exchange
 For a picture perfect friend illusion
 Which only runs off your exclusion
 When those groups move up the ranks
 Of people they affiliate with
 They're just telling others, no
 No, you've got no place to go
 Even though, they've got a group
 Who lets them in, if they approve
 One wrong step, and that's the cue
 They've got the power to remove

To them, and to you...

Friendship is just a contract
 Of who you can contact
 And who you can't
 You sign it
 And then you're invited
 To all of their plans
 But read the fine print
 There's a condition
 You don't want to miss
 Drop your other friends, they're useless

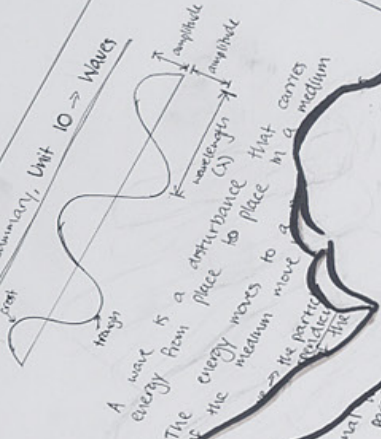
CONAN

Becky Tan | graphite





Model Summary, Unit 10 -> Waves



Longitudinal waves
parallel to the direction of travel

f = frequency

T = period

$$f = \frac{1}{T}$$

Units of frequency = 1 over second = hertz = Hz
 Units of period = seconds
 v = speed of the waves total travel through the medium. This depends on the medium itself. lower is it more of density and low elastic is it (mass)

Transverse waves
perpendicular to the direction of travel
 • wave is perpendicular to the direction of travel
 • wave is perpendicular to the direction of travel
 • wave is perpendicular to the direction of travel

Parent signature
 Student signature
 Date

Handwritten notes on a notebook page, including mathematical calculations and algebraic expressions.

LATE NIGHT
 William Hylan | marker

THE VOICE OF REASON

Adam Zhao

The clock strikes 3 AM. I have just finished my last piece of Calculus homework, and I'm on track to get an hour more sleep than usual. My shoulders have turned into lead weights from pullups and the distance butterfly workout. Tomorrow's schedule is full with six AP classes, Model UN and Science Olympiad meetings, and yet another morning-afternoon paired swimming practice.

Ever since I could understand words, my parents have encouraged me to "do as much as possible, in any way possible." Clearly, it worked for them: my dad is an investment banker at Goldman Sachs and my mom owns a world-renowned purse company. As the oldest child, I hold the greatest responsibility for continuing the family legacy. And I've always been determined to meet and exceed their highest expectations. "If at first you don't succeed, try again. If you don't succeed again, then just break a few more rules."

So here I am: a member of three varsity sports teams, involved in a dozen on-campus clubs, and on track for perfect scores in every one of the seven AP exams I will be taking in a few months. The world demands exceptional people, and I am exceptional at whatever I pursue.

Recently, I was accepted into a prestigious day school. Unfortunately, my home is in New York and the school is in New Hampshire. Of course, my parents were not going to let distance stop my secondary education and purchased a three-story Victorian mansion. The house exudes an air of decay—the faded black paint is peeling off the wooden siding, only a smattering of the original tiles cling to the roof and turrets, and plywood planks conceal the spider web of cracks on half the downstairs windows. Though we moved in several months ago, a thick layer of dust still covers most of the ancient furniture, and cobwebs lurk in the corners. A functioning grandfather clock stands proudly in the foyer. Its ticking sound and ominous hourly strikes are audible throughout the house. As the oldest and therefore bravest sibling, I live in the attic bedroom. There is a bit of a draft from the old window, and the ceiling is dangerously low. But I don't mind. The clock's ticking is barely audible, my siblings rarely bother to scale the rickety, winding staircase to my room, and I can get my work done in peace.

I have been having this faint nagging sense in my head. It's nothing significant, just a passing urge every now and then to cut up my teammate's valuable racing suit, or to rig my competition's bow to fall apart during their violin performance. I try to brush it off as a side effect of my sleep deprivation. But it won't leave me: the sensation infects every part of my life. I'm itching to double cross my selfless co-leaders and seize complete power, sabotage my teammates' precious equipment to get them kicked off the team, and exchange purses from my mom for A's in my classes.

Second semester has started, which means triple the normal workload. I have been working, quite literally, around the clock to keep up. I desperately need more sleep: at night, the ticking of the clock, no longer muted, fills my attic and rattles my brain, and every creak and groan of the house sounds like a whispered threat. Through my window, the trees look like lumbering giants, slowly but surely creeping toward me. During the day, life has become a monotonous to-do list: breakfast, school, clubs, sports, planning, homework, sleep, repeat. And for the life of me I cannot rid myself of this terrible feeling,

which day by day is starting to resemble, I refuse to believe, a raspy voice! At first, it is barely able to garble out the simplest of phrases, but as I ignore it more, it becomes more intelligent.

Sleep evades me; I have been subsisting on coffee and protein bars to stay awake because the voice crunches through my thoughts ceaselessly. I feel like a trapped animal, willing to do anything in order to escape its constant drone. Just once, I give in to an odious command: instead of stringing my friend's lacrosse stick properly, I rig it to fall apart. Sure enough, in the middle of the game, his net breaks, losing us the game, and the coach cuts him from the team. And then, for the first time in an eternity, I am blessed with silence.

Now that I've discovered how to shut the voice up, all I have to do is continue meeting its demands, no matter how outlandish or despicable they are. Interestingly, as I toil to satisfy it, I am extremely pleased to discover that although the voice's demands are horrible, the end result always benefits me, and solely me. Over the course of the semester, I have been reaping the fruits of my labor; I send my classmates a doctored study guide with inaccurate formulas ahead of my AP Chemistry midterm and outperform my rivals; I siphon some gas out of my teammate's tank so that he can't make it to the big meet and take his place as captain; I send my friend's love note to the wrong girl, which wins me the girl we were fighting over. Soon enough, I've cemented my position as my school's most exceptional student, athlete, and leader. Accolades roll into my lap. My father longs to know what I've been doing. I simply smile and say: "I'm just doing as much as possible, in any way possible."

Thus far, the price of my successes appears manageable—I obey these occasional requests, and no long-term harm is done. For once in my life, I have been able to accomplish whatever I wish, simultaneously dispatching my enemies and pleasing my parents. All thanks to the helpful voice in my head.

As I sit in my room, pitch-dark except when illuminated by harsh flashes of lightning, I receive the latest set of orders: kill my parents. My first reaction is incredulity: how could my guide expect me to murder the two people I love and respect most? I ignore the command, but I should have known better. The voice rises in volume: "Think about it! You kill your dad, you inherit all of his money. You kill your mom, you take over her company. This is the only way."

I push away these Satanic thoughts, but over the subsequent days, the voice only intensifies. Finally, I give up, desperately craving a moment of silence.

As I'm walking out of my parents' bedroom, knife in hand, I slip on the blood and tumble down the stairs, landing headfirst. Everything fades to black around me.

The following is a clip from a RACCOON NEWS segment: "Yesterday, respected businessman Alexander Birch Washington and his wife, CEO of world-famous accessories company Purse Co., were murdered in their sleep by their son. Police were called to the gruesome scene by the victims' housekeeper. Despite efforts to resuscitate them, the Washingtons were pronounced dead at the scene. The suspect, a 16-year-old who is known for his excellence as a student, athlete, leader, and community member, did not appear to have a clear motive. Right now, he is in a vegetative state from which doctors say he is unlikely to recover. Back to you, John."

REMEMBER HOW TO SEE THE MAN

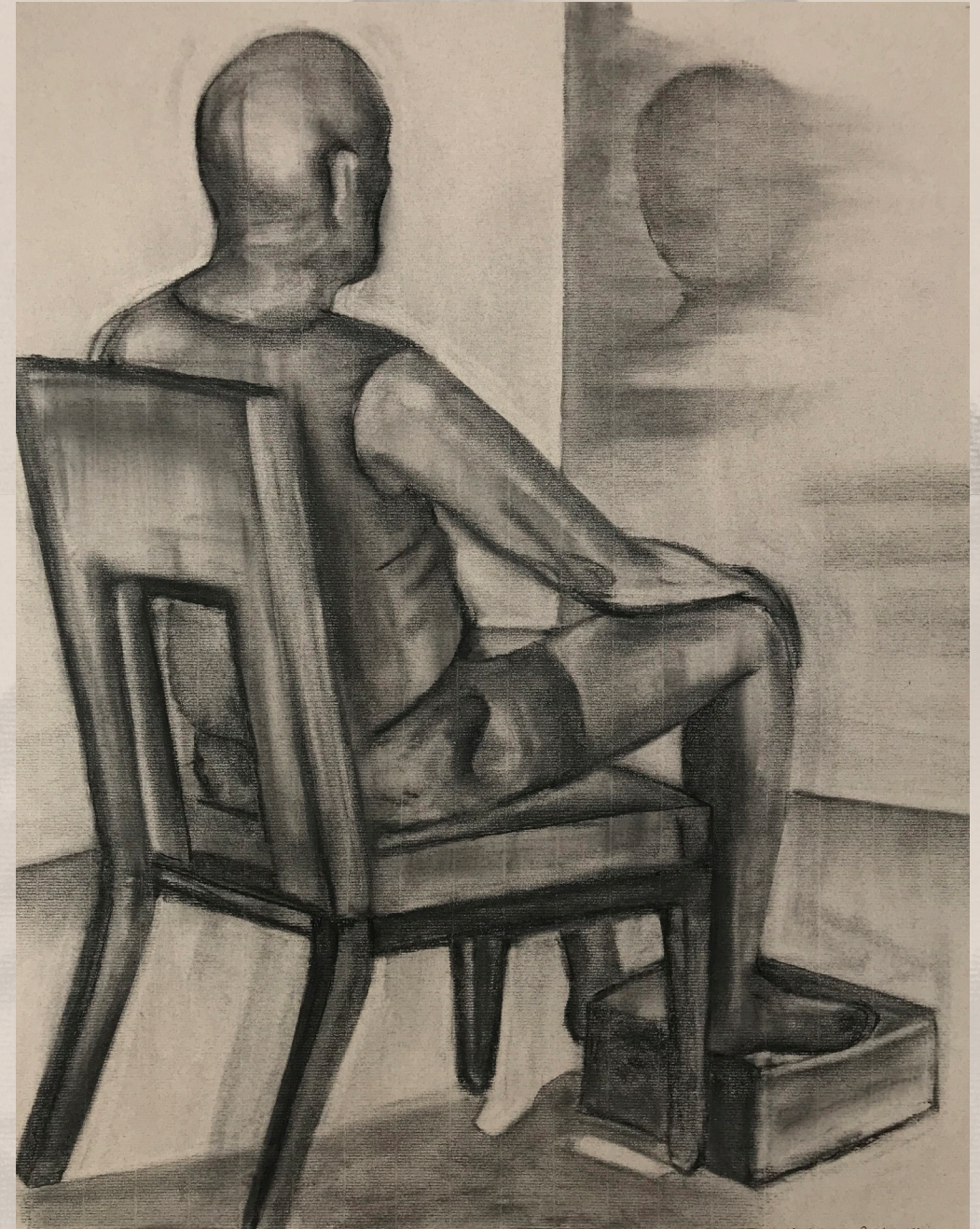
Lauren Keeley

{ Every time you blink your eyes
 Are closed for one two seconds
 And he flashes in inverted color on
 The backs of your eyelids as if
 He is the Sun and the glow around him
 Has caused an imprint but he is
 Not the Sun you do not orbit the man
 Who looks less and less like a man
 Every time you blink }

{ Count one two seconds close your
 Eyes try to remember how to
 Breathe in how to
 See the man and not
 The beast how to stop
 Seeing when you close
 Your eyes how to stop
 Feeling his breath on the back of
 Your neck even when he is standing
 In front of you }

{ Blink harder blink longer
 Try to hold the image in place when
 You open your eyes try to
 Reconcile what you see with what
 You see when you can't }

{ Line up long spindly fingers with the
 Pair of ragged claws you feel scraping
 The tops of your shoulders line up the melancholy
 Ocean of his eyes with
 Fear becoming
 Panic becoming
 Aggression because the monster you keep
 Seeing in the image he stamps
 On the backs of your eyelids is exactly
 What he fears he might become
 If he trusts what he sees on the backs
 Of his own }



REFLECTION

Madeline Buchowski | charcoal

A CUP OF COFFEE

Carrie Zhang

Setting: A small living room cluttered with an unnecessary number of armchairs and pillows. The couch is covered by a mound of recently-used blankets and several harsh creases run through the cushions. Several picture frames decorate the walls, all featuring a bright, smiling couple. The photographs portray the couple through a timeline, from cheering at a high school football game to sitting in front of their new house. A kitchen adjoins the living room and is jumbled with stacks of mail, newspapers, and opened discarded packages.

EL. You slept on the couch. Again.

JAY. Yeah. The stupid bed is just killing my back. The couch feels a lot better.

EL. *(In a clipped tone)* Okay.

Jay glances at El but doesn't say anything else. He pours the hot water into his mug. The spoon clinks harshly against the mug every other second. El turns away from the refrigerator and passes him the sugar.

JAY. *(Almost apologetically)* Thanks.

EL. Sure.

Jay continues to stir. El closes the refrigerator and turns to look at him, crossing her arms over her chest.

EL (CONT'D). The bed was cold.

JAY. Sorry. It's just... I told you, I slept on the couch because my back hurts.

EL. *(Quickly, quiet vehemence)* Sure.

JAY. What's that?

EL. Does it hurt?

JAY. A little. *(Beat.)* Maybe I should see a doctor. Have them check it out.

EL. Yeah. Maybe.

El glances at Jay, who scratches at his eyebrow with his right hand.

EL (CONT'D). Did you go to the store? I wrote it on the fridge a few days ago.

We're almost out of coffee.

JAY. No. Sorry.

EL. It's fine.

Jay sips the contents of his mug and avoids looking at El who sighs and starts to unwrap a new package of bread.

EL. Toast?

JAY. No. Thank you, though. I should be headed to work soon. Got lots to do.

EL. I thought that you didn't have to start till eleven today. They give you half of the morning shift off on Tuesdays.

JAY. *(Stutters)* Yes, but, I have a rather large project coming up.

EL. Right.

JAY. It's important.

EL. What's your project?

JAY. Calculations. Numbers. It would bore you.

EL. Is Joan in your group?

JAY. Joan? Which Joan?

EL. Pretty Joan.

JAY. I didn't know there was a pretty Joan. *(Beat.)* I also can't make it for dinner tonight. We're eating at Al's.

EL. You can't eat at home?

JAY. I told you. I have plans.

EL. Okay, but I was going to make your favorite. *(Beat.)* Chicken parmesan.

JAY. Oh.

EL. So?

JAY. It would just be rude of me to cancel on them. Reservations, you know. They can be hard to come by.

EL. Right.

JAY looks at everything but El.

EL (CONT'D). I'll see you when you get home.

JAY. Okay.

He pauses and sets his mug down. Cautious. El starts to butter her toast. He glances back at her.

JAY (CONT'D). Hey, I made—

EL. *(Quietly)* Apple cinnamon tea. I know. I bought a new box of tea bags last week.

El doesn't look up from her toast. Jay nods solemnly.

JAY. Right. Sorry. I forgot to get you your coffee.

El shrugs but says nothing. Jay starts to gather his things, looping his jacket around his arm before reaching for the knob of the front door. El puts down the toast and knife.

Jay stops for a moment, his hand still resting on the door knob. He glances at El once more, who stares knowingly at him, before slipping out the front door and closing it shut behind him.

El moves to sit on the couch where she tugs the blankets across her lap. She pauses for a moment to look at the photos strung on the wall.

EL. Happy anniversary.

She turns and rests her head in her hands.

Lights slowly fade to black on El and the living room.

END OF PLAY



STACKED

*Delaney Frank | plaster,
gold leaf, acrylic*



UNTITLED

William Hylan | marker

THE PROCESS OF COMING BACK HOME

Abby Greenberg

Plastic crinkles as the floor rocks—
He clutches the bag of roses and waits for his stop.

She will be waiting at the door, peeling
An orange, the very last one, so he will have to
Bring back more tomorrow.
She will probably laugh, that he has
Brought her flowers instead of fruit:
“Do you not want us to eat well?”

They used to look at each other and starve—
A hunger like no other, not something gnawing,
Rather a pressure behind the sternum, insistent and
Nearly painful, as if something was growing.
Then, a fullness when she looked at him,
Early in the morning as she pulled the curtains open,
Or when he poured her a mug of coffee without thinking.

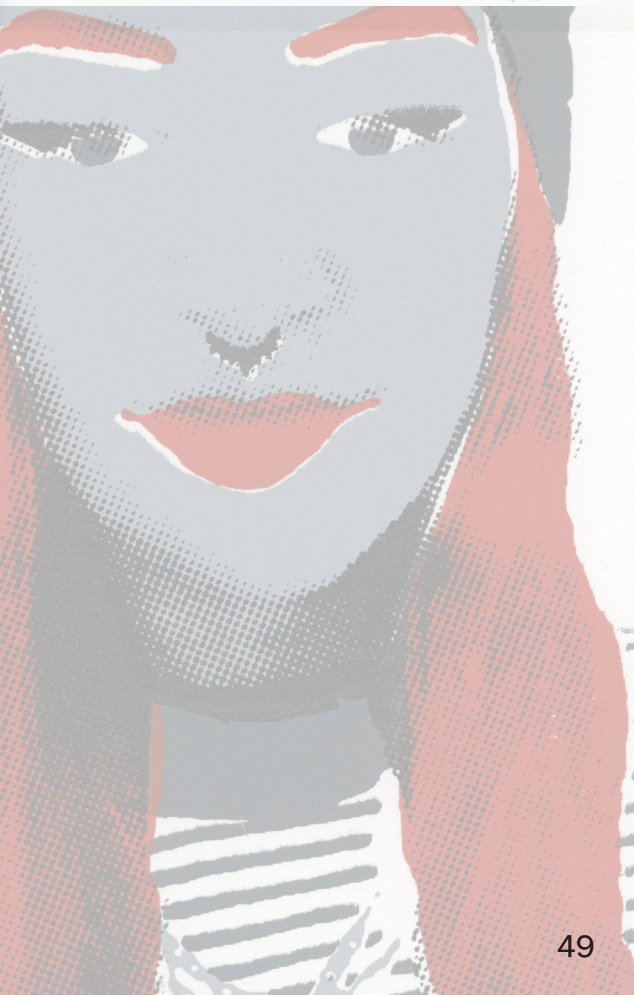
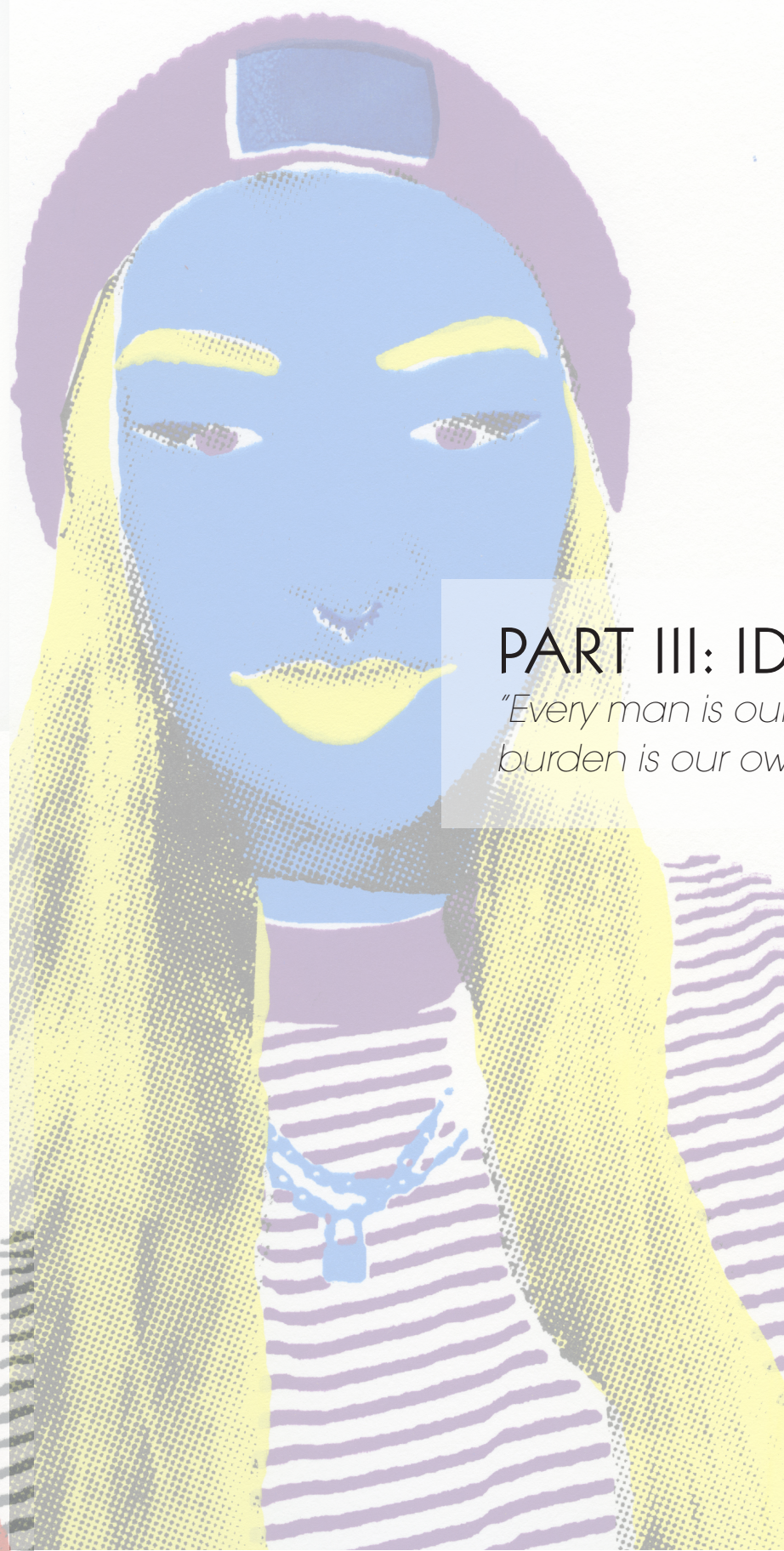
He sways as the train stops and skirts around a man
In a blue windbreaker and the woman he is with,
The bouquet held with two hands.

Perhaps when he comes in the door,
She will see his roses,
And she will pull the peel off the orange in
One long strip,
And the light will hit the fruit in her hands
Just so, and if he looked it would almost seem
As if a sun was anchored between her palms.
And she will look at the flowers he
Brought home on the subway, and
A smile will crack across her face
Like a sudden morning sunbeam:
He would fill the room with roses to see her look like that again.



MAN'S BEST FRIEND

Julia Reichman | graphite



PART III: IDENTITY

"Every man is our brother, and every man's burden is our own." | WHITNEY M. YOUNG, ACTIVIST

POP SELF-PORTRAIT

Amy Phillips | screen print



UNTITLED
Ayah Hamed | digital print

MINT CHIP

Ann Zhang

The first day I ever stayed home sick from school, I stuck the twenty dollars my mom had left me in the front pocket of my Yale hoodie and walked to buy lunch. I had chosen this outfit to prove that I deserved to rub shoulders with the owners of the battalion of Range Rovers in the Straub's parking lot. Perhaps I didn't own a car worth more than my apartment, nor did I understand the advantage of Lululemon's sweat-wicking technology over the leggings my parents got from Costco. However, I was prepared to rack up a small fortune in student debt, and the numerical similarity between this sum and the other customers' monthly salaries made us colleagues in my book.

At Straub's, I purchased a carton of mushroom soup and, on a whim, a pint of Halo Top ice cream called Mint Chip. It bothered me slightly that the Halo Top design team did not write out the flavor's full name, mint chocolate chip. This was likely part of their strategy to remind us that this ice cream was "light" with "64% fewer calories than regular ice cream." I walked home and consumed a pound of food while watching Gwyneth Paltrow cry silently on *The Politician*.

Less than a week later, wearing the same hoodie, I could think of nothing but mint chip. Was this my descent into a life of raw, American indulgence? I remembered reading a BuzzFeed article about some guy who ate nothing but Halo Top ice cream for a month. He was fine. I, too, would be fine.

Stepping outside the apartment, I thought to change into a nicer outfit. My Yale hoodie did not seem to impress my last audience at Straub's. A hoodie, no matter its label, was too loose, their nauseated glances informed me. What was the point of doing bikram three times a week if I couldn't show off my rocking body in a Lululemon Define Jacket Luxtreme? I wrestled with the doorknob of my apartment only to realize that on the way out, I had locked it without grabbing my keys.

My mom would not be home for another hour. On the phone, she told me to wait inside Straub's because the common hallway of our apartment complex had minimal heating, and she didn't want me to fall ill again, like the week before.

This time, I made a beeline for the ice cream aisle and mentally prepared myself to camp out for the next half hour. Fortunately, this aisle was located in its own isolated wing, as I was feeling self-conscious about my wet hair and repulsive hoodie.

It amused me to discover that every character in the store, the wives and husbands and daughters and sons, had acquired the same technique, a dance with which they approached this aisle. Their faces would contort with mock surprise, as if they didn't know exactly where the ice cream resided, having frequented this store after every session of bikram or lacrosse. It was better to think they had just lost track of direction, their feet wandering serendipitously past the fresh fruits, through the liquor aisle, and down the brightly-lit alleyway of dairy products. Usually, these weary travelers lingered for a minute or two before walking away empty-handed.

Only half of the time did they acknowledge the red-eyed chick staring meditatively at the row of Halo Top. Birthday Cake, Cookies & Cream, Lemon Cake, S'mores.... Toward the end of my hour of detention, a gruff Straub's employee was sent to restock the vegetables. He eyed me warily across the aisle, flexing his biceps over the celery. Sensing my exit cue, I grabbed a pint of Mint Chip and hustled to the check-out line. This was the only flavor I was ever really considering, as hard as I tried to convince myself that I was someone who might change my mind, someone with the potential to become someone new. But I was pretending as much as everyone else.

EDEN'S GARDEN

Amy Phillips | mixed media

Click [here](#) to read Amy's reflection on this piece.



EVE'S DEFIANCE

Amy Phillips | mixed media



THE PERFECT EXAMPLE

Carrie Zhang

By noon, Senator Eileen Winters of Massachusetts had finished proposing her newest bill—the Heartbeat Bill—and John Doe, the Senator of Alabama, could barely feel his toes. His shoes pinched at his feet like relentless crab claws and seemed to be shrinking by the second as he squirmed in his seat.

The newest bill was the most radical proposal that John had seen in the fifteen years he had been a representative in the Legislative Branch. The Heartbeat Bill would require all males, at any age, to undergo a vasectomy to prevent any further pregnancies. John understood the problem at hand; the rapidly rising number of babies being born in recent years was unlike anything the world had ever seen. However, he failed to understand how forcing men to change their bodies was up for debate. Why shouldn't the women be more restricted, or at least as equally constricted as men? John shook his head. Neither were plausible options; autonomy was a fundamental human right, and John couldn't fathom why women thought it was acceptable to make life-changing choices for men.

Eileen Winters stood, wearing a look of the utmost royalty; her chin stayed at a perfect 90 degree angle; her clothes were crisp and pressed at all times; and her greying blue eyes bore into John's soul when she looked at him, which was never often. Her hands seized the podium as she looked down and observed the debate on the floor.

Senator Mei Chang from New York rose and declared, "Cases of overflowing baby populations have appeared all over in every single state. I've received word from my sources that babies are now being stored in grocery stores, because there is no more room anywhere else. Another source has declared that they found several babies stored in the book shelves at their local library. Senator Winters is correct. The Heartbeat Bill provides a simple solution to an ever growing issue that we have long battled."

Clapping resonated throughout the entire hall, echoing in John's ears. Senator Adichie of Vermont leaped to her feet and nodded in support. "It's like the Baby Boom Part Two but escalated to the extreme," she declared. John shook his head and rubbed his forehead with his index finger. He knew that he would receive relentless backlash for his disagreement, but his job was to represent the people who voted for him. He had no choice.

He rose to his feet, coughed, and said, "I understand where you are coming from, Senator Eileen, and I applaud you for your impressive efforts. However, a bill such as this cannot be passed. It infringes upon the rights of men and fails to hold women accountable for their sexual activities, too." He sat down solemnly and gripped the edges of his leather seat.

Senator Bill from Missouri stood up warily and nodded at John. "I cannot agree more. The Heartbeat Bill forces men to change their bodies. We're taking away their choice, and isn't America all about free choice?"

"We're saving more lives here. If babies continue to take over the planet, there will be nowhere left for the living to... well, live," Senator Chang scoffed.

Senator Winters smiled at Chang in approval and leaned towards the microphone of the podium. "There is no better solution to the problem. If we don't take action immediately, our impending doom will be irreversible. And to the horrified look on your face, my dear Senator Doe, it is not as if we are a dictatorship. Trujillo, now he was a dictator. He mutilated bodies and left behind a dark society where people were afraid to even speak up. We would never do that. We're simply addressing a major conflict in our world."

John knew that if the bill passed the Senate and the House of Representatives, President Sandra Cho would approve. He rose again, his eyes flitted from the ceiling to the floor to the table in front of him and then to the podium, right below Winter's gaze. He knew he had a job to do, and he could not fail. His own safety and well being depended on it, along with his sons' and brothers'.

"A vasectomy is not one hundred percent guaranteed to work. They don't promise the eradication of the Baby Boom Part Two. Now, if women were forced to get an abortion, that has a much higher chance of eliminating that problem. But, we can't do that. You know why? It's because it is wrong to take away a person's choice. We take away their choice, we take away their dignity, their humanity, and their self-worth. We are not a nation that does that."

Silence hung throughout the room like a tempestuous cloud before Senator Eileen Winters leaned closer to the microphone and snapped back, "Actually, a vasectomy is scientifically proven to be one of the best methods of birth control. The chances of a pregnancy occurring after a vasectomy has been performed are incredibly slim. It's less than 1%."

Senator Chang chimed in, "It's true. For those that are still on the edge, let me tell you this. If Dimmesdale had a vasectomy, the antichrist Pearl would not have been born. The world would not have exploded into a million pieces, and the people would still be alive."

The women in the room erupted in clapping and joyous cries. John looked at Senator Bill who shook his head. Women outnumbered men significantly in the Senate and passing a bill required the majority. They had failed. John hung his head as a tear slipped down his cheek. He could only go home and wait.

"Bill?" John's hand gripped the edge of his living room couch; the other pressed his phone to his ear so tightly, a piece of paper couldn't slip through. "No, no. You're telling me that the House passed Winter's bill? President Cho is to give final approval in a matter of days?" He paused. "Wow. It really happened."

John hung up the phone and collapsed against his couch, folding in like a disposable lawn chair. He rubbed his worn hands against his stubbled face and shook his head.

When John walked into his office the following Monday, the rest of the Senators—the female ones—were cheering, unable to contain their excitement from their success. President Cho had officially signed the Heartbeat Bill, and Eileen Winters had even been recognized by the president as the newest driving force to Making America Great Again.

Before he could even set his briefcase down, his phone blazed in his left pocket. His wife, a surgeon at the Hospital of Mercy, was on the other end.

"John," she stuttered out. "Johnny. They..."

He plopped himself in his chair and scratched his forehead. "Katie, what's wrong?"

"They told me that they want me to perform a vasectomy tomorrow." Katie's voice shook through the phone and quavered.

"Who's they? Who told you this?"

She took a deep breath before saying, "It wasn't the head doctor. It was a message from President Cho. She wants me to perform a... a... vasectomy on a male authority figure to, well as she put it, to show that our country that the Heartbeat Bill will be enforced. The authority figure would be the perfect example."

Katie started to cry. "Johnny, it's you. They want me to perform it on you."

AS BIG AS THE WORLD

Madeline Pass

Beep! Beep! [the TV blares: families should take precautions against a changing climate, officials warn]

I. A New Layer of Patriarchy

21st-century females are as big as the world but are trained to shrink until they only take up 8/10 of the space of a man. A woman can shrink both by restricting the number of calories she gets to eat and the number of words she allows herself to say per day.

Many young women today wear used clothes, give up animal products, and refuse plastic in the name of stopping the climate crisis. While I admire these girls, I can't help but think about how these efforts to limit resource consumption for the benefit of the human race tie directly into patriarchy in an entirely new way. Girls have always been told to be beautiful for the benefit of others. They also have been told for a long time to be hard-working (because perish the thought that a girl's academic success be due to intelligence instead of stubborn determination!). In a way, it adds up that the newer job of remedying the climate crisis (an issue thought of as secondary by politicians) has now fallen to young women (a group also overlooked). This is the third major burden girls now have to bear.

II. Not Good Enough

Here are two insufficient consolations I've overheard white men offering to women recently:

Elizabeth Warren could still be Vice President! Then once everyone sees what a good job she does maybe the US will be ready for a female President.

Even though your boss didn't even consider you for the job (twice), just think about how much everyone at work likes you.

III. Dress

I own this dress. I ordered it online from ASOS a few months ago. Navy blue and pleated, it comes to just above my knees. My favorite part is the absolutely gorgeous red flowers embroidered across the chest. In the days before my package arrived, I thought about the dress every night before I went to bed, how pretty I would look wearing it. Before I ordered the dress, I envisioned myself eventually wearing it to Blue and Gold. After I put it on for the first time, all I could think was that it was too short, the top was too loose, the straps were too thin, and most of all that I had contributed to the fast fashion industry by wastefully ordering something I wasn't even pretty enough to wear.

IV. Not Tired

My mom said today that the older she gets, the more tired she gets of far too much power in the hands of far too many men. But I'm not tired. Among my friends I try to be the optimist, happy, and that's genuinely how I am most of the time. But right now? Right now I'm *so* angry.

Beep! Beep! [the oven chimes: time to finish preparing dinner]



WARNING!

Lily Yanagimoto | digital drawing

AN ODE TO CODE

Vanessa Polk

First period
 English.
 Where skin differs,
 People differ.
 But somehow,
 Language does not.
 What did you say?
 Can you help me?
 I don't understand.

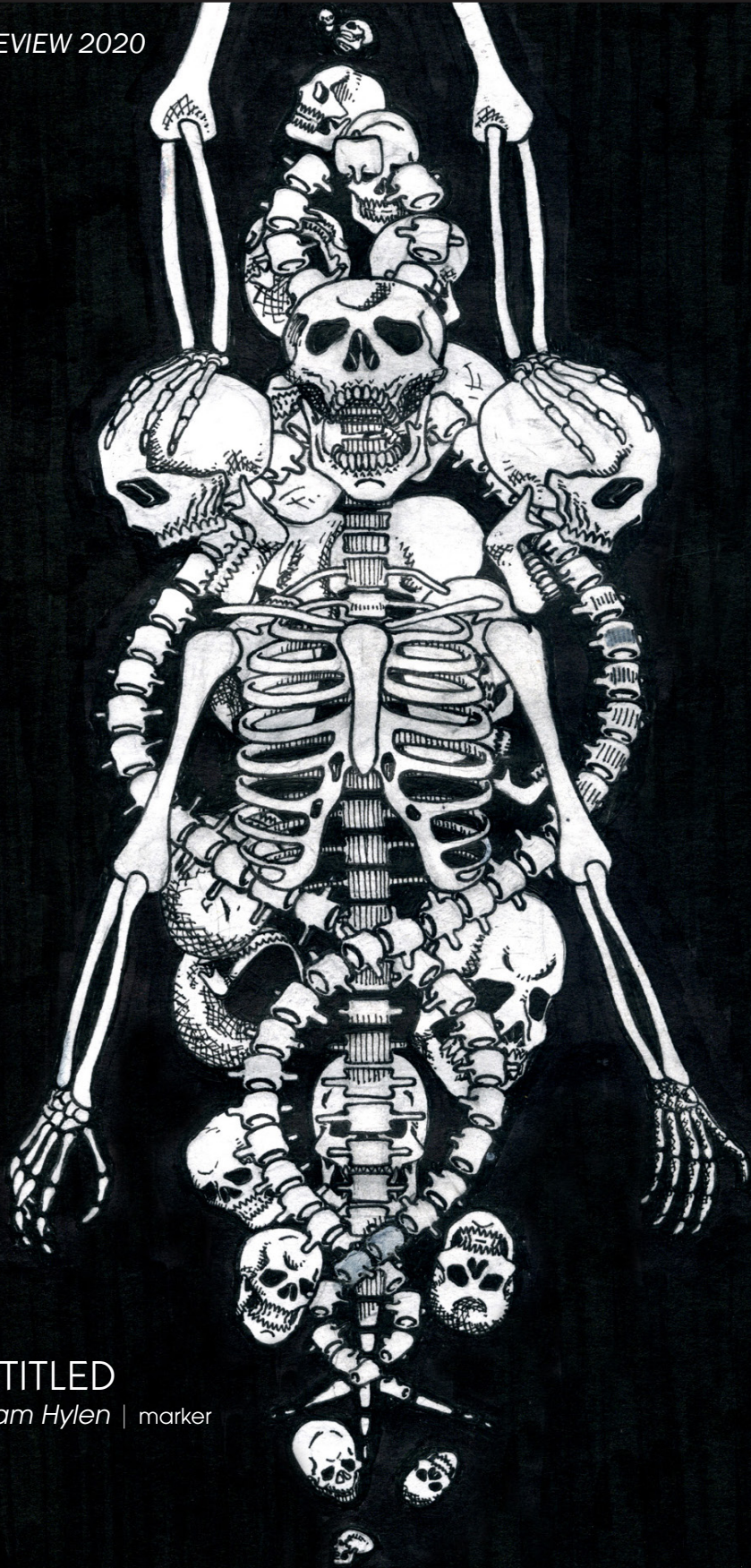
Second period.
 African studies.
 Where skin is like mine.
 Brown, and
 oppressed. They
 seem to be synonymous.
 In these studies,
 and in my life.
Whatchu say?
Nah, hollup go back.
Brub. Ion get it
 Bell rings.
 Do' creaks
 behind me.
 Back to real lif—
 I'm doing great, Mrs. Roberts.
 How are you?

Third period.
 Painting.
When words don' matter.
 Brushstroke doesn't make a difference
wen you got effort
 And talent.
You just yo name,
 and your work
 I love it
 I can be anyone
I wanna be



LUPITA NYONG'O (AFTER KEHINDE WILEY)

Emma Sock | acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED

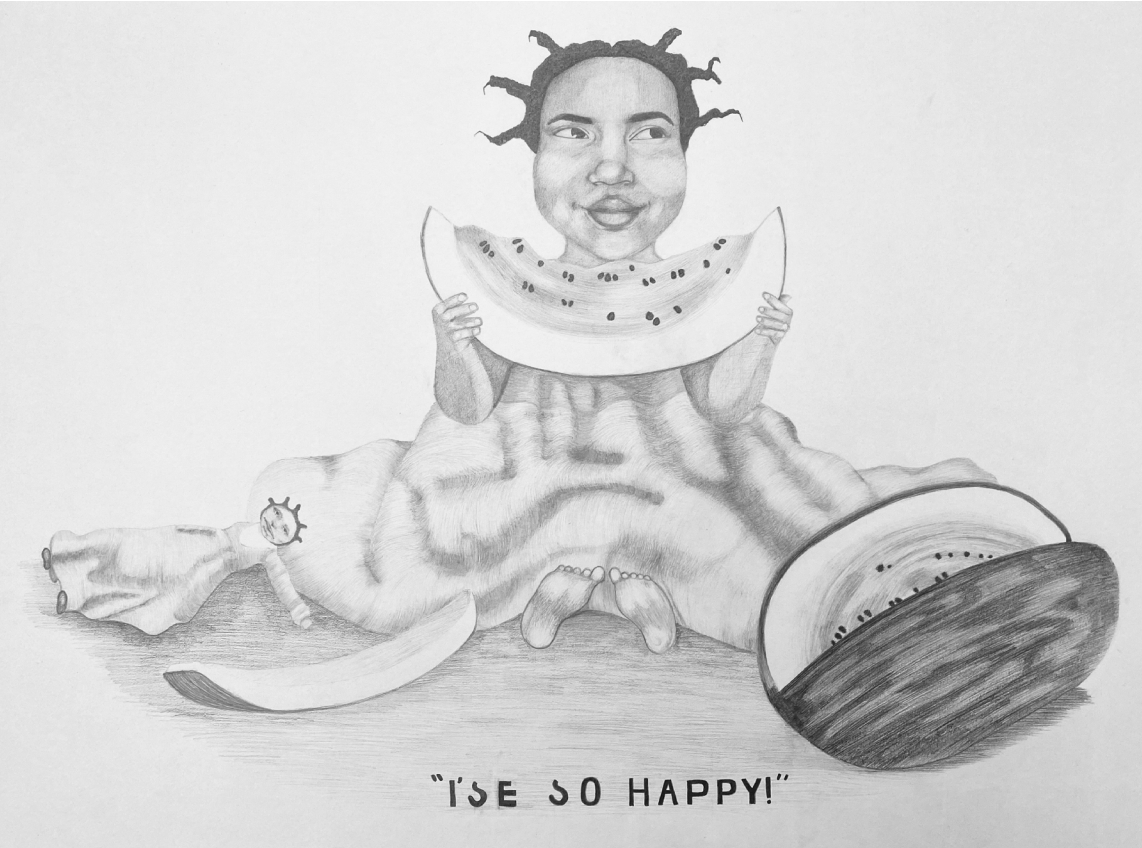
William Hylan | marker



PURE

Leyla Fern King

white walls remind you of childhood and laughter:
 walls moving inwards towards crystalline structures,
 the thin bone of your finger, and the stretching skin
 that you mold around it. i watch you pluck your eyebrows
 and hear the weary in your voice as you choke on inadequacy
 reminds me of the moment before you soaked yourself in bleach
 told me happiness doesn't cut corners and closed the door.



I'VE SO HAPPY!
(SELF PORTRAIT BASED ON RACIST EPHEMERA)

Gabby Randall | graphite

TELL US HOW WE SHOULD FEEL

Kami Lou Harris

1. Even though we are in the same grade and it was I who scheduled the meeting, the head of the department only addresses my classmate. They are both white.

We are unheard

There is a reason that Conrad uses “Africa as setting and backdrop...” (Achebe). It is for a comparison, a tool to show us the humanity amongst so much savagery. He includes many black characters; one might even say that they comprise most of the people the reader encounters throughout the book. Their description is almost the only thing written, because not one African has more than three spoken lines. Conrad paints a detailed picture of inhumanity and dehumanization and the natives are not given the words to combat this hateful depiction. They are either silent or they “grunt” along (Conrad). How could the English not appear so civil in the face of a man who is not given a full line of speech? The natives are voiceless. They are merely images drawn onto the canvas that hangs above the stage. The actors: the white men. This is the only context in which *Heart of Darkness* “can be called a great work of art” (Achebe). Conrad has reduced “Africa to the role of [a] prop” (Achebe).

2. “I would never date a dark skin girl.” Other boys hear him. They say nothing. Their silence confirms their agreement.

We are unwanted

“Africa,” like black people, “is something to be avoided” (Achebe).

3. My partner and I both disagreed with the girl sitting across the room’s comment. While my partner expresses her reasoning, I sit quietly and nod along. When she has concluded her statement, I say, “I agree.” After class I overhear the girl across the room whisper, “_____ was so aggressive today.”

We are uncivil

To complete the story of *Heart of Darkness*, one must complete “a story in which the very humanity of black people is called in question” (Achebe). One in which we are no longer referred to as only humans, but as “ants,” “creatures,” and “savages” (Conrad). Questioning the humanity of someone is an easy thing to do when they are no longer looked upon as a human. Was that not one of the main justifications for slavery? That we are no longer human? That we are animals? No different from the horses that they rode or the cows that they milked. Or the donkeys that die in the novel. Fish, never an animal that has been compared to us (because haven’t you heard? Blacks can’t swim), but still an animal nonetheless. Did you know that if fish are given food, they will never stop eating? They will burst. Just like “a hyena prowling amongst the corpses of a battlefield,” fish lack “restraint” (Conrad). We were not gifted with self-control. We are “wild, and violent” (Conrad). We are incapable of civility.

4. After my friend and I finished our conversation with the wrinkly old lady, she looks only at me and voices, “You speak so well.” Guess my friend’s race... and the lady’s too.

We are uneducated

Learning a language with the proper textbooks, a teacher, and regular quizzes and tests is an amazing feat. Many people who have learned a second language hold awards and certificates for doing so. Therefore, learning one without any of these necessary resources, but with only occasional contact with someone who speaks it must mean that you are... a “fool” (Conrad). The logic seems sound, but let’s dive a little deeper. The natives are often described as “insolent,” “uncouth,” and “incomprehensible” (Achebe). And from the way that they are “grunting” and “howl[ing]” it would not be wrong to assume that you have just entered a daycare (Conrad). But they occasionally converse in English. While one might see their broken English as “some of [Conrad’s] best assaults,” or the complete opposite as “acts of generosity,” it can actually be argued that it is neither (Achebe). When the natives converse in English they are expressing their innate ability to learn. The Englishmen have encountered far more natives than the natives have Englishmen, and yet they have still learned nothing about their language. They cannot distinguish a single word. Conrad has inadvertently uncovered their weakness: the Englishmen cannot even attempt to grasp the natives’ tongue. But few people will read the garbled english as such. They will read it as the black people’s inability to develop intellectually. Like the white men in the book, they will read it as the “frenz[ied]” ramblings of a “simple people” (Conrad).

5. Write a response to Chinua Achebe’s essay “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.”

Keep in mind your response should deal with not only Achebe’s essay, but also the primary source, Conrad’s original text. For example, if you choose to agree with Achebe, your essay must expand some portion of his arguments, and for this you will need the support of your own primary source material. If you choose to disagree, you must likewise build your rebuttal of his specific points through your own textual analysis of the novel.

We are nothing

“The question is whether a novel which celebrates this dehumanization, which depersonalizes a portion of the human race, can be called a great work of art. My answer is: No, it cannot” (Achebe). When a predominantly white class that contains only four black kids is asked to respond to an article that condemns a text that has completely and fully negated not only their intelligence, but also their experiences, and their status as human beings... they largely do nothing. Because that is their life. They are accustomed to their oppressors arguing what they should or should not feel. Should it not be up to the marginalized to decide whether or not they feel as if something has offended them? How can someone who has not been affected by something claim that others have not been either? The book is simply a written version of everything they have heard almost everyday, only phrased a little differently:

1. *We are unheard*
2. *We are unwanted*
3. *We are uncivil*
4. *We are uneducated*
5. *We are nothing*



OKONKWO
Katie Xu | digital drawing



KARUNA

Celia Gossow | silver gelatin print

MONO NO AWARE [A SENSITIVITY TO EPHEMERA]

Claire Pan | metal, textile





GREEN

Gabby Randall |
digital drawing

BLACK GIRL

Evan Harris

My mama told me that
I am beautiful
Not despite my skin
But because of it

*Then why they
Laugh at me
In the hallways*

My mama told me that
I am strong
Not despite my past
But because of it

*Then why I feel
So weak
Right now*

My mama told me that
I am smart
Not despite the way I talk
But because of it

*Then why they ain't
Understandin'
What I sayin'*

My mama told me that
I am capable
Not despite my race
But because of it

*Then why they
Look down
On me so much*

My mama told me that
I am wanted
Not because of anyone
But because I am me

*Then why
Am I
alone*

BORIKÉN [PUERTO RICO]

Isa Rosario-Blake

Clipped grass under sooty clouds
puddles so inky and reflective
a Stygian self gazes back

—so disparate from the muddy
lands they knew—

Hills of argyll and hibiscus
sinuous cliffs shaped by
years of inundations
Cascades of water dwindling to
tributaries and clay

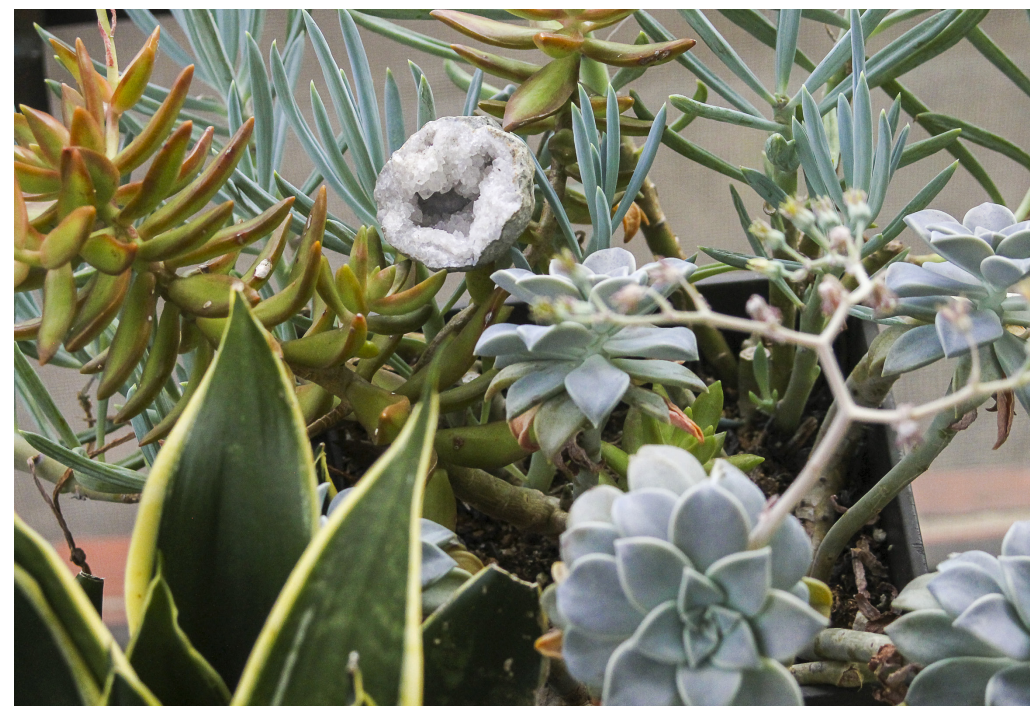
blushing roses
Imperial ipomoeas

overshadowed by flamboyance
and Saccharum

Indigenous coral
brushing chromatic aurelia

pure and cerulean
waters glide over
the bow

And taste of sweeter
simpler times



UNTITLED

Emma Danis | digital print

VORÁGINE

Adina Cazacu-De Luca

Preface: The following is an account of the construction of the Panama Canal and Railroad, as given by an American textbook intended for middle school education as well as excerpts from primary documents.¹

The textbook begins its narrative of the Panama Canal's construction by saying, "How many times have you taken a shortcut through a neighbor's backyard? The U.S. created a 51-mile shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through a distant neighbor's 'backyard' and called it the Panama Canal. Of course, the U.S. got permission² from Panama first, back in 1904."

In his speech to Congress in 1906, President Roosevelt defended American construction³ of the Panama Canal. "From time to time various publications have been made, and from time to time in the future various similar publications doubtless will be made, purporting to give an account of jobbery, or immorality, or inefficiency, or misery, as obtaining on the isthmus. I have carefully examined into each of these accusations which seemed worthy of attention. In every instance the accusations have proved to be without foundation in any shape or form."

"I repeat that the work on the isthmus has been done and is being done admirably," Roosevelt proclaimed. "The mistakes⁴ are extraordinarily few, and these few have been of practically no consequence."

1. When driving through a neighborhood with interlocking trees arched over a road far from the canal zone, a mother recalls the word vorágine. "It's like a jungle that consumes you. The opposite of deforestation. Powerful. Moving. Voracious. Maybe you would translate it as voracious." Vorágine: noun. According to WordReference, "vortex."

2. Permission: *noun*. To provoke a rebellion and coerce a newly developed nation without negotiating power or representation into an agreement. An agreement that lasts "for perpetuity."

3. "American construction": *misunderstanding*. Of the 50,000 laborers, about 6,000 were white Americans working as administrators and engineers. They lived in communities with free housing and material comforts. The others were black laborers from Barbados. They lived in segregated barracks. Barracks; see *slum with 70 sardines per 15-ounce can*.

4. Mistake: *understatement*. The Americans weren't the first to try and build a canal in the motherland (see *female anthropomorphizing of male conquests*). The French came, died, and left. Vini, morivi, vici, as they say. Death; see *malaria*, of which 20,000 died before the French withdrew. They didn't have a place for the flesh (see *earth*) they stole from her, so the rainy season filled in their attempts at breaking her skin with landslides and floods.

Before the Canal came the railroad. Colonel Totten, project leader of building the Panama Railroad, described the hospitals⁵ in the area as "some ugly white washed buildings" with "the pale-faced sailor and the melancholy convalescent negro, sitting smoking their pipes on the steps" near "some outlying huts with half-naked negresses and pot-bellied children sunning themselves in front, rupt with decaying matter and black rotten roots of trees."

To address the health risk of malaria, the Head of the Army Corps of Engineers proposed malaria solutions such as removing uncovered containers of water, screening houses, and building new hospitals.⁶

Before the railroad, there was a Lewis and Clark equivalent expedition to Panama in the 1850s. The Lewis equivalent noted that "no human being⁷ could realistically perform strenuous work in severe jungle conditions."

Following the expedition, an article from *Harper's Magazine* in 1855 explained the demographics of the region. Out of three million inhabitants, those of "pure European descent" did not exceed one hundred thousand.⁸

Roosevelt addressed canal workers in a 1906 visit, "You here who are doing your work well in bringing to completion this great enterprise are standing exactly as a soldier of the few great wars of the world's history."⁹

In a report filed to Congress on the building of the railroad, Colonel Totten wrote that he "shared the dangers and the sufferings of the builders."¹⁰

5. Hospital: *overstatement*. Yet, 5,000 of the \$0.10/hour laborers died in the vortex created by their American good neighbor. In 1906, 80% of the workforce was hospitalized with malaria.

6. "Unfortunately, few in Washington wanted to spend money on such things," the textbook touts.

7. Human being; ignore *native population*.

8. The rest were "poor and ignorant aboriginals and mixed races, in a state of scarcely semi-civilization." Semi-civilized; *adjective*. Potential worker. See *available, exploitable, other*.

9. According to the textbook, not all workers were doing their work well. "Local laborers suspicious of Americans' power-grabbing ambitions did not prove to be the most enthusiastic, earning them a reputation as lazy [Lazy; see *antonyms: hardworking, earnest, American*]. U.S. citizens were used sparingly in Panama because they were both disease-prone and demanded higher wages."

10. Perhaps Totten too had felt his hands blister over. Not from scalding metal in the tropics, but rather from a land scorched with a voracious rage. Perhaps the American official overseeing his canal workers (see *neo-plantation*) felt the earth tremble and heard voices shriek. Not from dynamite accidents, but rather the unfathomable future. Future; *idea*: see *reclamation, improbable, vorágine*.

THE HURT THAT COMES AFTER

Leyla Fern King

in this one i wake up to you gone
i count the creases in the sheets
and roll over, sink myself into
the dip your body left

in another i wake up screaming
you sing me sweet *ninne nanne*
until i finally fall back asleep

in each i find the melancholy
of remembering the details
of a story you keep reminding
yourself to forget—knowing that
between the subtle nuances in the
differences between leaving
and forgetting to stay, there will always
be the one where i wake up and can't remember
which syllable it is you stress in my name
or how to roll my *Rs* like you taught me to
the one where i wake up to pull the
sheets back over my head, close my eyes
and try to forget.

LAYERS OF WATERFALL

Tamar Kreiman | digital print

SINOLOGY

Michael Tu

Sinology: the study of Chinese language, history, culture, and politics. And people.

If it had been up to me, I wouldn't have gone to Peking Palace for my six-month anniversary date. The food is good and all, but do you really want to be sitting six inches from a group of Chinese moms discussing which fancy investment firm their sons are going to work at after they graduate from college? When I thought about it, it was probably because Catherine wanted to practice her Chinese on the waitstaff, which would be a lose-lose for everyone except for her. On the bright side, I managed to get a window seat.

As the only blonde in a sea of black hair, Catherine was impossible to miss. I watched as she dusted the snow off her coat and leaned into the cash register. You could see the moment the cashier realized Catherine was speaking in Chinese. His eyes widened to the size of tennis balls and he stood up as if someone had poured ice water down his back. Smiling, he led Catherine over to my table.

"Nice scarf. The turquoise goes really well with your hair."

"*Xie xie.*"

A waiter came by with two glasses of water. "Here are some menus," she said, eyeing Catherine. "Please, take some time to order."

After the waiter left, Catherine turned towards me. "*Ni hui shuo zhong wen,*" she said.

"Yeah, no. I'm taking Chinese classes. That's not really the same thing as being able to speak Chinese. You have the highest grade in the class anyways. It's not like you need more practice."

"*Shuo zhong wen.*"

"Why would I want to speak Chinese?" I flipped over the laminated menu page. "All the food has English translations anyways." One of Catherine's eyebrows spasmed, and she opened her mouth again before closing it and glaring.

"*Shuo zhong wen!*"

"Fine, fine, I'll speak Chinese." I paused, letting my tongue twist itself into the unfamiliar syllables. "Happy now?" I asked in Mandarin.

"*Hen hao.*"

"Alright, what do you want?" I pushed the menu towards her. In response, Catherine pulled her phone out of her purse and pointed it at the menu. "What are you doing?" I asked. She just tilted the screen at me. On it were lines of pinyin and English. "*Jin sha nan gua xia,*" I switched back to English. "Gold-sand pumpkin shrimp? You really want this?"

Catherine jabbed a finger at the translation on the menu. Shrimp stir-fry with egg yolk. "I still don't think it sounds that good, you know," I said.

"*Ni yao shen me?*"

"My mom used to always get the fish when we came here on her birthday. She said it was the best thing on the menu."

"*Shuo zhong wen!*"

"Cat, my mom doesn't make me speak Mandarin," I responded. She just glared.

"Fine. *Wo yao zhe ge.*" I pointed at the fish just as the waiter returned.

"Are you ready to order?"

"Yes, we're ready to order. We'd like a—" Catherine pinched me under the table before cutting me off.

"*Wo yao yi ge shui zhen yu,*" she said, almost tripping over the last three words.

"Any side dish?"

"*Suan rong buo qing chao shu cai.*"

"So you want garlic or no garlic?" The waiter had started twirling her pencil while Catherine looked for translations on her phone.

It was time to take some action, I decided. "Yes garlic," I said in my best Mandarin. "And could we get one red braised pork?"

"Any more?" The waiter determinedly ignored Catherine's cough.

"No, thank you."

"Food will be with you soon." The waiter jotted down a note and hurried over to another table. I looked at Catherine. She looked back. The two of us stared at each other until I started laughing.

"You do realize neither of us knows enough Chinese to hold a conversation until the food arrives, right?"

She rolled her eyes. "Fine, you win. I just wanted some practice. It's not like we ever do any talking in class. How am I going to learn any Chinese if I don't speak it with anybody? It's not going to be like that when I go to China."

"That waiter was definitely judging you, though. Think about it. What would you think if a random, tall, white girl started spitting Mandarin at you? It's borderline cultural appropriation."

Catherine yawned. "Okay, Mr. Monolid." She'd come up with that nickname a month or two after we started dating, at which point we'd already been in the same Chinese classes for three years. If you think taking a language in college sucks, imagine also being the one person everybody expects to *already* know the language. That first day of class, the professor, a balding ex-ypat, had asked me, in Mandarin, whether I already spoke Chinese. What kind of student would go to language class if they already knew the language? Of course, he didn't believe me when I told him I could understand what he was saying but couldn't speak a word of Mandarin. It took an entire semester of failed oral exams and at least three calls with my mother to convince him otherwise, and I think he still suspects that I'm faking it.

I met Catherine about a week into the class. The two of us sat in the back row and were probably the only two people in the class who cared, or at least, Catherine had enough caring in her for the two of us. I mean, how many people will record themselves saying the same syllable over and over and over again *and then send it to someone else to see if they're saying it right?* I must have gotten at least a hundred recordings of her trying to pronounce the word for horse (*ma*, in case you're wondering) in the week before our first midterm. After we started dating, I asked her why she had sent all those recordings to me, and she told me that at first, she wanted to get our professor to listen to them, but when he refused, she thought that the next best thing would be a native speaker, which, in her mind, meant me.

The food arrived fifteen minutes later. I breathed in the comforting smells of warm rice, steamed fish topped with green onions, and the distinctive, salty tang of soy sauce. We even got a complimentary cup of tomato and egg soup. "I call the pork," said Cath-

erine. “You can have the fish.”

I stared at her. “What do you mean, ‘I call the the pork?’”

“Weren’t you the one that wanted the fish?”

“That’s not how this is supposed to work.” I waved a hand over the table, just missing the clay pot, which Catherine had begun pulling towards herself. “We’re supposed to *share* the food.”

“I was going to give you some if you asked.”

“No, I mean,” I knew this was going to sound pretentious and she’d call me out for it. “Chinese people eat family style. Don’t you see the bowls?” I pointed to two bowls, neatly stacked on top of the rice bucket. “Why do you think they have lazy Susans here?”

“Hey, don’t lecture me about Chinese culture.” She made finger quotes for Chinese culture. “Your parents don’t even speak Chinese to you.”

My mother didn’t share Catherine’s enthusiasm for learning new languages. When she found out that I had dropped physics for Chinese, I thought that she would reach through the phone and strangle me. “We did not come here for you to learn Chinese,” she’d hissed. “If your father and I had wanted that, we would not have come to America. China would have been good enough.”

“But did you really come all this way so I could be the fortieth electrical engineer in the class of 2019?” I’d responded. My mother didn’t cook for me for a week after that comment.

I looked back down at my food. “That’s low.”

“I’m sorry.”

“No, it’s okay.” I fumbled with my chopsticks.

“Kevin, I’m sorry.” She laid her hand on top of mine. It was warm and dry, except for the cold band of her ring.

“Apology accepted. Here, don’t let the food get cold.”

“So why’d your parents move in the first place?” She asked a few minutes later.

“I don’t know. They never wanted to talk about it, and I’ve never asked.”

“Weren’t you born there?”

“Yeah, but we’ve never been back.”

“You’ve never seen your grandparents or anything?”

“They came over a couple of times when I was really little, but I don’t really remember them that well.” I sipped at the soup and let its eggy warmth tickle my throat.

“That sucks.”

“Well, I don’t really know what I’m missing.”

“We used to visit my grandparents all the time. They lived in this little house by the beach, and we’d stay over the Fourth of July and stuff. I’ll invite you the next time we go over. It’ll be fun.”

“Thanks.”

The waiter reappeared with the check and a few fortune cookies. Catherine giggled as I grabbed one and started fumbling with the packaging.

“What are you laughing at?”

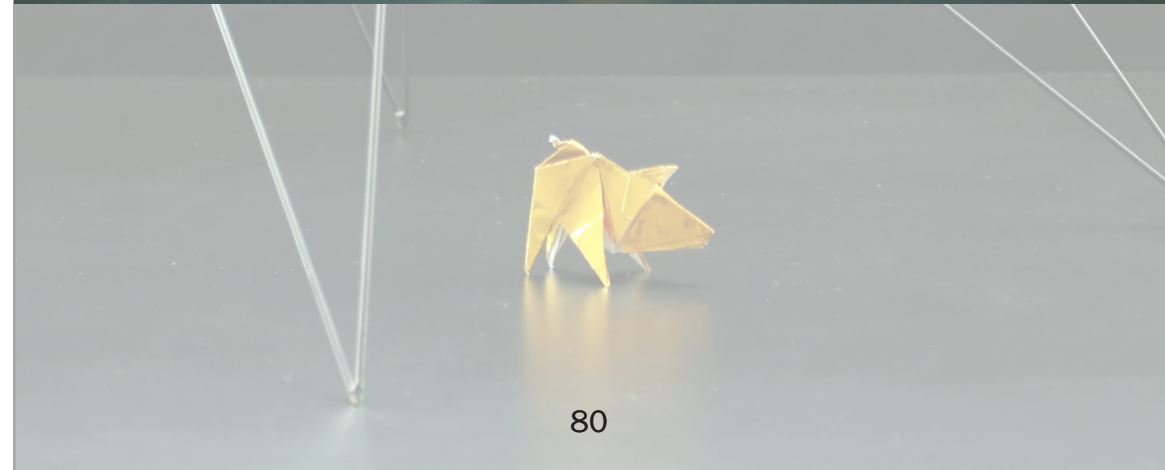
“After all that talk about Chinese heritage... you know fortune cookies are Japanese right?”

I bit down on the cookie. “Who cares? It wouldn’t be Chinese without them.”



THE SPACE YOU FAIL TO FILL

Claire Pan | wire, paper



BAO

Sara Cao

Your hands, callused with the lines you crossed,
 knead the dough with the conflicted push you saved,
 but decide not to use on me. Though sometimes,
 you remember the dirigible and you navigate out loud—
 words like “engineer” “doctor” “lawyer” make
 your anger boil alongside the water on the stove.
 You’re reaching 100 degrees before it does, bubbling,
 brimming with pride, but mostly potency. Provocation
 plumps your lips as you’re filling the dumplings
 and I’m cushioning the criticism with cuts. Moving on,
 you fold, fold me under the pushing heaps of tiger skin,
 fold me under the thin wraps of stigmatization.
 But this time, stuffed with impatience, your poisoned product
 bursts open, and you *bao* me back into this yellow skin.
 You call me your baby, your *baobei*.

YELLOW IS THE COLOR OF MY SKIN

Claire Pan | pastel

BLURBS IN THE STYLE OF PHOEBE ROBINSON

Tina Chen

Disclaimer: I am a huge hypocrite.¹ There. Now, people who are on their phones during dinner, lunch, breakfast, snack, supper, or tea time need to take a chill pill ASAP. Like when Taylor wrote full albums to get back at Kanye and Kim, texting on your phone while sitting across the table from someone else is a FU in big neon lights. If you want to talk to Billy Bobby Jones so badly, why the H-E-double-hockey-sticks are you here and not there?!? Scrolling through your Insta feed, TikTok,² or Snap is disrespectful to everyone else at the table, so please leave and take care of your business³ or STAHP. But what do I, an out-of-touch Gen Z-er and a hypocrite, know? Do whatever you want, Karen. We're all going down anyway #Terminator #TheMatrix #SadKeanu #CheerUpKeanu.

As a Taiwanese-American, I can testify that Americans really don't know what to do with anyone who isn't a) Chinese, b) Indian, or c) Mexican—not that I blame them. Though some of us⁴ may not see color, the reality is that most of us⁵ identify people the same way we identify lipstick shades. In other words, “Dragon Mami” or “Croatian” don't mean anything to us unless we can figure out what skin, eye, or hair color that means. Anyway, given that there are less than 100,000 Taiwanese-Americans in existence according to Wikipedia and half of them live in California, the likelihood of anyone correcting the following facts is low, so here we go:

- 1) Taiwan ≠ Thailand. I wish Taiwan had elephants though. Wouldn't that be sick?
- 2) Kumon? Kumon. When I was in elementary school, my Sundays started with cramming in a week's worth of Chinese homework, Chinese school (but the Taiwanese version), and then doing a week's worth of Kumon algebra. Also, one of my earliest memories of my grandparents is my grandma making multiplication tables for me to fill out over and over again while we waited in the Kumon lobby for my brother to finish his visit. #mathgrind
- 3) WTF is Taiwan, anyway? Taiwan is a fun-sized island that's been passed around countries like a hot potato sack. Perpetually caught in political shitstorms, the people cope by playing pick-up basketball, forwarding pseudo-scientific diets to everyone and their mom, and consuming copious amounts of fried chicken, fried cruller, and even fried milk. Even though the United Nations is supposed to be inclusive and welcoming, they said “psych, you thought!” and peaced out on Taiwan.⁶ #Capitalism #Yay
- 4) Bubble tea comes from Taiwan. It's taken over the coastal areas by storm, and for some unknown reason, millennials seem to love boba's chewy texture. Pro tip: don't get it at malls (because it separates into straight-up corn syrup and frozen fruit). Gua bao, Jay Chou, Din Tai Fung, and braised beef noodle soup also all originated from Taiwan, but everything is always attributed to Korea.⁷ #rip
- 5) Fighting for the check is an essential Taiwanese skill. When we go out to eat with family friends or relatives, getting the check is a whole-family operation. There's usually some wrestling, running, and pleading, and of course, secret deals with the waiter and “bathroom breaks.” Once, while we were in Taipei, I shouted for my mom when I saw my grandfather trying to sneak off to pay the bill and then bodily held him back while my mom ran off to pay. Honestly, it was this act more than anything else that made my relatives go, “Ah, she is true Asian.” #Asian4Lyfe

1. And also this essay is trash. But it's okay, because everything's trash.
2. TikTok, A.K.A. the app that has made prepubescent teens scream “OMG, it's that TikTok song!” at least once every half hour. FYI, no, Britney has been famous since forever #Criminal.
3. And take those pesky new pescetarians with you. IDK why, but they've been popping up everywhere. First off, there should be a three month waiting period before you can officially call yourself a pescetarian. Secondly, I see you becoming pescetarian the day it's meatloaf for lunch and they made zucchini patties for the veggie eaters.
4. Tomi Lahren, I'm looking at you and your Daily Show interview.
5. Excluding Forsyth kids who all have the map of the world tattooed on their eyeballs.
6. Okay, to be fair, Taiwan yeeted itself out of there first because its then-dictator was salty about losing all of China to Mao. But what's a democracy gotta do to get a seat at the table?
7. Except the Koreans can take the credit for mukbangs, AKA when you watch and listen to someone else eat a five-course meal, including ramen #slurp #ASMR.

LILY, COLORIZED

Becky Tan | graphite and colored pencil





PART IV: ADVERSITY

"Sweet are the uses of adversity which, like the toad, ugly and venemous, wears yet a preious jewel in his head." | WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, PLAYWRIGHT

MODERN STREET IN BLACK AND WHITE

Mia Wood | digital print

GRAY AND GREEN

Rahul Jasti

Walking back from Yogyakarta, I witnessed, firsthand, the effect of the eruption of Mount Merapi. I brushed the ash off a leaf on a corn stalk. The leaf, when I let go of it, drooped down, the tip almost scraping the gray dirt. I squished some of the warm ash between two toes as I stood up and gazed at the horrible painting that surrounded me. Thousands of wilting plants, all bore the weight of the same hot, gray ash. As I walked past rows and rows of corn, I saw it out of the corner of my eye: it was glowing a brilliant, vibrant green. Before this one, not a single plant had survived the effect of the eruption. A sign that not everything was lost, everything I worked for, my father had worked for and his father and my family and the families of the rest of the village and of the rest of Indonesia, I headed towards it.

I heard two voices carrying across the field. I turned and saw a boy and a girl playing in the rows of crops, laughing as they threw piles of ash and watched it fall back down.

How could they be laughing? Did they not realize that their life has been affected in the worst way possible. They are farmers, we are farmers. Have they ever heard of farmers without crops? Farmers without crops are not farmers, they are unemployed, they don't have a life anymore, do they want to be unemployed? They are just children, they don't understand anything.

I turned back to the green plant I had found. *Where was it?* I checked all of the plants around me, but could not see anything but gray. Gray dirt, gray leaves, gray flowers, gray clothes, gray house, gray clouds, gray sky. *Where was it?* I stormed through patches of dense leaves and stems, knocking over everything in my way to find the one plant that had survived, that had not abandoned me, that gave me life and a job and a purpose... but it was not there. I screamed at the trees as if it were their fault. I kicked the dead plants, and the ash from my hair and clothes blew through the air and settled down on new objects. I marched back to the dirt path again and fell to my knees, my face in my rough coarse hands, my elbows tingling in warm dirt. After a few minutes, I started to hear the voices of the boy and girl again. I lifted my head up and my hands felt slightly damp.

They were the ones; they made me lose the plant by talking so loudly, they made me lose everything I had.

I jumped up and trampled my way towards them, not noticing the sharp stings of small pebbles and hot ash. As I approached them, they turned around, saw me and immediately stopped laughing.

"What are you doing?" I demanded. Both the boy and girl were now looking down at their soiled feet.

"We were playing," answered the boy in a weak tone.

"Playing! How can you be playing when there is so much work to be done! Why did you disturb me?"

"How could we have disturbed you, father? We were over here the whole time while you were in the field."

"Yes, but you made me lose something."

"What is it, father? Can we help you find it?" This time it was the girl who perked up, her hair spotted with gray flecks.

"N... no," I sighed, finally realizing something.

"Why not? Let me help. I can find it!" the girl pleaded.

"I said no! No one can find it."

"I can find it. I found lots of things."

"You can't. No one can," I reaffirmed.

"Why not?"

"This thing is lost forever. It is impossible to find."

"But nothing can be lost forever. Someone has to find it." I finally gave in.

"Maybe, but first both of you go help your mother make dinner."

So both children walked off toward the small, gray house. Part of the roof was missing and there was dirt everywhere. I looked back to acres of dead corn plants and thought maybe my daughter had been right.

"Nothing can ever be lost forever."

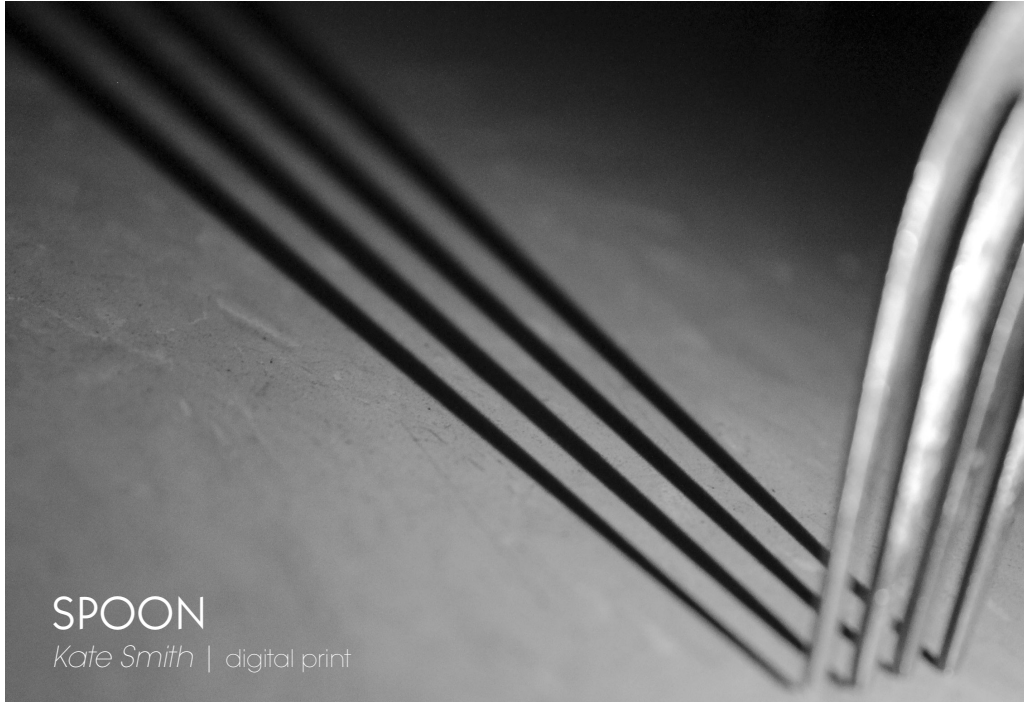
Did that mean I would find the plant one day? Maybe. Maybe I won't... but someone else might.

As I turned back, I saw, out of the corner of my eye, a shimmer of bright green. My mouth slightly grinning, I started back towards the house, a mouth-watering aroma wafting through the air.



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Nina Zhu | silver gelatin print



SPOON

Kate Smith | digital print

LEAKY FAUCET

Lily Yanagimoto

Water taps into the white hollow
 belly of the tub, and I wish I had my own cold
 white-porcelain glaze, to keep the sound from seeping
 in—to make it roll off the sides of me
 and dry harmless. No such luck. My skin is thin and sick
 instead, and the water will not stop falling, heavy
 and insistent. Every time another gray
 mercurial drop flicks the bottom of the tub,
 the sound pokes the base of my skull: somebody
 prodding with the cold round end of a kitchen utensil. Those
 high plinks of tap water against the basin are
 like little metal spheres worrying at the spine-bones in my neck—
 quick round plopping jabs of silver, all
 against the temples of my aching head,
 flat disks of flat sound and flat worry, a flat tinny metal bell,
 a tiny glass gong, crashed at by a flat little devil—a little
 spoon, carving out painful tear-drop spaces in my ears,
 I can't take it anymore. The tap is broken, all it does is leak! and
 the flat rapping and dripping and flicking and prodding
 makes my head throb
 like nothing else. It pokes at me, the pinging, and now comes
 this high-pitched ring in my ears, this keen buzz, this sound—...

AWAY FROM THE GUN

Kiran Khan

I don't want to hide in mind-numbing darkness. I don't want to hold my breath and press a hand against my mouth, to silence uncontrollable fear. I don't want to pretend that the awaiting evil outside can be blocked by a wooden door. Not when I can hear the stranger's footsteps in the hallway. My parents don't deserve a goodbye filled with typos, unsent text messages composed of half-finished sentences.

I imagine; what would happen if we fled? Through the backdoor and down the staircase, across a concrete courtyard littered with abandoned backpacks. We'd run together, side by side, our breaths and heads pulsing to an unrecognizable, erratic beat. And, if I did run, I want to run with everything: hardships I've endured and doors I've opened, regardless of what lay inside. With fears I've had and forgot to overcome, with dreams tucked away in the depths of my subconscious. With everyone I've held close to my heart and have been offered, in return, a part of their being.

But the masked villain doesn't know who I am. He doesn't care. He can't read the narrative in my stride, though I wear it proudly. To him, I am simply a girl. Fifteen or sixteen, brown skin and thick eyebrows; Indian maybe, Pakistani possibly. Last words slip unwillingly from my lips: a prayer to a God I never really believed in.

He can't see past the terror in my eyes. They are no different, perhaps, than the fear of all my friends, my people, my loved ones. We are reduced to sheep. Less than humans, deprived of our essence, running with fear and no meaning, up hills and through empty courtyards, away from the slaughter, away from the gun.



UNTITLED

Kiran Khan | digital print

Click [here](#) to read Kiran's reflection on this piece.

FROM THE FOG

Tamar Kreitman | digital print

COUNTDOWN

Molly Magarian

I ran. I felt my heart beating in my chest, falling into step with the thuds of my footsteps against the cold concrete. Tears burned in my eyes, my whole mind crumbling as I ran down the dark alley. Come on. *Come on.* I gritted my teeth, knowing I was almost there. But the cold winds held me back, pushing against my body and fighting me in a battle I knew I couldn't win. I screamed, but the wind stole my voice and carried it away. The snow blinded me, even as I could see the gold lights of my neighborhood off in the distance.

I finally managed to get out an audible scream. "COME ON!" I screamed into the night. "RUN FASTER, BRI. RUN FASTER."

I finally reached the end of our street. Exactly twenty-three houses before we would reach mine.

Twenty-two. Twenty-one. I heard a faint blaring in the distance, and just hoped it wasn't what I thought it was.

Twenty. Nineteen. Eighteen. Seventeen.

Mom had told me. She had told me not to leave my sister alone. *Too soon out of rehab*, she'd said. *She's never to leave your sight, Brienna.* But I ignored her like an idiot, sneaking out to go to that party.

Sixteen. Fifteen. Fourteen. Thirteen.

I tripped over a loose piece of pavement and fell, my knees slamming into the ground. I felt my skin slice, and cursed, but I struggled to my feet and kept running, ignoring the bitter pain. I had to get there in time. I had to.

Twelve. Eleven. Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven.

The sirens were getting louder, and I screamed into the wind again, knowing what was coming for me. For all I could care, the wind could swallow me—it was better than what I knew I would find at home.

Six. Five. Four.

The police lights were visible now. I could hear my mother's screams.

Three.

I saw my mother. I heard her sobs. I locked eyes with her, and saw so many emotions run across her face. Her eyes were sad, her skin as pale as a ghost. Her whole face seemed glazed over, like she wasn't really here with me.

Two.

I came to a screeching halt. Because I finally saw it.

The black body bag.

Still unzipped.

One.

AN HONORABLE AND UNFORTUNATE MISUNDERSTANDING

Grant Dahl

Christopher – Behind Enemy Lines

Every morning I wake up. Afraid. They will find me soon. I know they will. Each day the hungry ground pulls my shack deeper into its mouth. I cannot take refuge here much longer, but I have nowhere to go. I look around at the cages strewn across the sinking ground, at the baskets that no longer hold eggs, only the skulls of my fallen brothers. The faded yellow walls are splotted with blood. From Omaha Beach, I hear distant machine gun fire, the sound of our armies being torn apart. Someday, I will join them and die among the rest of my comrades. Someday. For now, I am just a coward. I was never cut out for the army. I gathered up all my courage to jump out of that plane and look where it's gotten me: blown off course right behind the German camp.

From a peephole in the shed, I see German officers having a peaceful breakfast, bathing in the satisfaction of battles soon to be won. I cannot stand their arrogant laughs. Although I am weak and scared, I will do anything to punish those bastards. I am willing to die for my country. *What must I do? What must I do?* I push my cowardliness aside and ponder many options, all that end in my death. Without a valid plan, I climb out of the shed and begin to walk closer to the camp before I can talk myself out of it.

Otto – Trapped

I want out. I want out of everything to do with Nazis, and British and Americans too. I want out of guns, ammunition, and artillery. I want out of this entire war. But I cannot leave the army; the dishonor would be too great to bear. A German does not abandon his post. And even if I could, there is nowhere to go. War consumes everything. There is no way out.

Or... is there?

Christopher – The Death of the German Boy

I sneak behind the camp as quietly as I can, keeping low in the darkness. Both sides will soon dig in for the night. I'm not sure what I will do, but I want to wreak some sort of havoc in their camp. I want to go down swinging. I am so deep in contemplation that I don't hear the German soldier until he is only a few feet behind me, pistol in hand. Held at gunpoint, I raise my hands in surrender, for I am unarmed. The soldier looks young and afraid, even though he holds the weapon.

Then, he gives me a weak, strained smile, says "Good luck," and puts a bullet through his brain.

Jason – Thinking of Father at School

Slap. Slap. Slap. I feel only a dull sting as Mr. Brown gives me the last three strokes. I receive at least eight per day for not paying attention in class, but I hardly feel the pain. I cannot think about anything except my father and the war. A year ago, he enlisted in the army. "To defend our beloved homeland," they said. "Be a man and serve your country! Help destroy the enemy!" My father was not courageous at all, but his love for his country compelled him to serve. He left to fulfill his duty with a promise that he would return home soon. He said he just knew in his heart that he would make it back; he knew he would see us again. Father repeated this in every letter he sent, ending each one: "See you soon! Love, Dad."

It has been four months since we have received a letter.

Christopher – Becoming (and Dying) a German

I pray that they didn't hear the shot over the current gunfire of the battle. I lie low in the grass until I am sure no one is coming to investigate. A radical idea comes to mind. As I wait for the shooting to die down for the night, I carefully undress the dead German boy and put on his uniform, covering him up with mine in order to respect the body as well as I can.

Judging by the uniform, I'm pretty sure that the young German was an officer. I walk past some soldiers on watch who cannot see my face very well but don't say anything. I find an empty tent and pick up as many important-looking documents as I can fit inside my jacket. I am not stopped on my way out of the camp, as my face is well hidden. I walk briskly until I am out of the eyesight of any German soldiers. Then, I start running.

I run until I can run no longer, and I walk to catch my breath. When I finally see the British camp, I start sprinting again, eager to arrive back at camp with my fellow soldiers and share my stolen information. However, when I yell out to the watchmen, they all point their guns at me. I keep running towards them, smiling. It is too late when I realize that I am still wearing a swastika my left arm.

Jason – Father is Punished Alongside Me

"Mister Evans!" I am jolted back into the reality of math class by Mr. Brown's firm voice. "Come up to the front of the room, NOW!" *Slap. Slap. Slap.* Although I can feel the pain more clearly now, my mind is still on my father. He is fighting the Germans bravely. He takes three bullets but proudly walks forward, not a stutter in his step. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* He takes three more bullets and flinches a little. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* My father is staggering now. He struggles to take another step, sweat pouring down his face onto his blood-soaked uniform. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* He is on his knees now, putting every ounce of life he has left in his destroyed body towards moving forward one last inch. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* My father collapses onto his side. I stare in silence until I taste my own tears. I wait for them to stop shooting. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* I wait for them to realize that he is long gone. But the volleys keep coming. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* I can do nothing but stand and watch while he is filled with bullets until there is nothing left of him but lead. *Slap. Slap. Slap.* Mr. Brown finally sends me back to my desk with some angry words that I cannot hear. The deafening rhythm of gunfire will forever be in my ears.

Jason – The Letter

For what seemed like an eternity, I told myself it could not be true, that I had let my imagination run wild in Mr. Brown's class, and such events could never occur in the real world. I told myself that he would return home soon and surprise everyone. I told myself that my father was not dead.

But deep in my heart, I knew far before the letter came. I had known ever since that day I received over thirty strokes, the ones I imagined my father receiving as well. Somehow I knew that my father would never get to fulfill his promise.

I read the letter anyway. He died a month ago. However, he did not die how I imagined. They said he was shot down in the night by his old watch team. My father was killed by his own friends. But you couldn't really blame them. He was wearing a German uniform, they said. At first, they presumed he was a traitor and had switched to the enemy side. However, his comrades found the papers he was carrying which were clearly stolen, top-secret information. They called my father a hero. They said he was brave, courageous, and had defended his country in the most honorable way possible. Yes, my father was honorable. But now my father is dead.

My oldest brother is turning 18 in five days. He wants to join the war and avenge Father's death by killing as many Germans as he can. I shall not live to see him die as well. No. Instead, I shall see my father once again.

PETITE BOUTEILLE FANTAISIE

Lucas Willey | clay, glaze



OUT OF THE WILD

Kami Lou Harris

“I wanted movement and not a calm course of existence. I wanted excitement and danger and the chance to sacrifice myself for my love. I felt in myself a superabundance of energy which found no outlet in our quiet life.”

— Leo Tolstoy, *Family Happiness*

We climbed three flights using the fire escapes. We stood on the roof. My dad was beside me and my sisters were a couple feet back. It was flat. No angles, shingles, or rails. He made me stand so that my toes hung off the edge. What age do you learn to be afraid?

My dad looked for little ways to live on the edge. He woke up at 3:00 a.m. every morning, stopped eating, left for days on end. My dad and I got along well. I always knew I was his favorite. Both my other two sisters knew what it was like to be afraid. I did not. I know that is why we understood each other and why my mom was so eager to keep us apart. He was happy, and with him, I was too. My mom, on the other hand, was not. My dad quit his job and gave all of our money to three men with a tomato plant. I fell asleep to my parents fighting most nights. I liked it. I knew it meant that they were still there — one of them was, at least — and that pretty soon my mom would climb into the bed next to me. I saw my dad as fun; the doctors saw him as a man with bipolar disorder.

Great-Grandmother’s lake is what we call it. Every summer when we visited my dad we went fishing there. At least fifteen fish we caught and cooked on a grill we found in the woods. Orange juice from his van to marinate them in. I swear I can still feel the scars from the bones in my mouth. It has been at least seven years.

When we visited my grandmother in the summer, we visited nature too. My father lived with her, so he would always take us out with him. We slept outside, ate what the ground provided us and forgot what it was like not to be covered in scratches from thorns and red splotches from poison ivy. We got lost in the woods because we no longer needed to trace our steps. My cousin would always come with us. We left him in the wild right where we left my father. Neither one of them could distinguish between what was woods and what was not. When my sisters and I would reach my grandmother’s house, we put band aids on our scars. They did not.

He smells like outside and looks like a skeleton. His beard has swallowed his face, and he has swallowed nothing.

I only see Charles regularly at funerals now. First was my cousin after he killed himself, and then my grandad when he dropped dead. I dread seeing him almost as much as I do seeing the bloated, grey body of a relative. Their bodies, organless and cold, weigh more than the corpse that Charles is now. When he walks up to speak at a funeral, everyone but my sisters and I hold their breath. We disguise our laughs as coughs. We lived with his crazy; they just get brief glimpses of it. He called me from my dead grandad’s phone once. It was a sick prank, but he did not see it that way. He just wanted to talk to me. He thought it was amusing that I answered with a hesitant “Grandaddy.” I wonder how amusing he thought it was that I had to block the calls of my deceased grandad. I wished that Charles had died in his place. Sometimes I still do.

Every white van. A Mississippi license plate. Tanned men with beards. Pop Tarts. Loose fitting jeans. Scuffed converse. Peanut butter. Deer. Paper towels. He is everywhere, but I cannot remember his face.

Every couple of weeks, I get trace of Charles. I will see something or someone that is so clearly him. Sometimes I think he is watching me. He has found us before. And if he were to watch one of us, I know it would be me. The pictures on his camera are proof enough. I don’t know what he looks like, I guess that is why I look for him in so many other peoples faces. My mom tells me my feet are shaped like his. He apparently could jump so high that he could hit his head on ceilings. I hold records for the high jump and the long jump. I saw him in the back at my sister’s graduation. She asked him not to come. I felt him there. Without explanation, I turned my head to exactly where he was sitting. No one else saw him. No one else knows. The next time I turned my head towards him, he was gone. It was fitting for it to be me. I know they would all agree.

UPDATED GREEK MYTHS

Adina Cazacu-De Luca

I. Prelude

The countryside of Greece is the type of green that comes from the bottom of your ribcage to force air into your lungs only to steal it back again. The countryside of Greece must be the playground of their spitefully reckless gods and glorified heroes. Then again, the Greek heroes were questionable men, let alone husbands and fathers.

II. Perseus

Received accolades for killing a rape victim. I learned the following tale of Medusa when I was seven years old: Medusa was a beautiful young woman who didn't reciprocate Poseidon's feelings for her, so Poseidon turned her into a monster whom Perseus later slays.

Ten years later in a Greek class, the "real story" is explained: Poseidon raped Medusa in the temple of Athena. Athena, enraged at Poseidon, turned Medusa into a woman capable of defending herself—by turning men to stone.

Slaying Medusa was only one of Perseus' quests. The abridged story kills Medusa twice by footnoting her into oblivion. Medusa was a monster and Perseus slayed her. The hero manages to steal the show.

Sunlight poured in through the walk-out door in a basement that had only the smell of raw cardboard. In one corner, the kingpin spider of the room kept all of his tokens, different insect carcasses hung like deer heads. Boxes stacked taller than my mother were assembled in a solid fortress, with no way of telling the contents of the innermost ones. We shared and serially misplaced a single boxcutter, a paring knife drafted into service.

We found a Pottery Barn autumnal garland crushed in a box under cleaning buckets filled with my dad's hoarded stacks of old *Foreign Affairs* magazines. The packers threw everything from the old storage room into boxes sharpied "miscellaneous." I saw: garland, magazines, baby toys, first communion dress, ponytail I have yet to donate to Locks-of-Love, cleaning bucket. My mother saw: garland, family photos, MLA conference tote bags, handmade christmas ornaments, teaching materials, cleaning bucket.

I can count on one hand the times I've seen my mother cry. Once, she left the house for the night, and I could see her tears when she pushed passed me. The phenomenon occurred again when I asked for the first time why she was still married. She didn't answer my question. She didn't cry in the basement that day, but she was about to. If her emotional scale was our road-trip from St. Louis to Baltimore she was right around Wheeling. As she pulled out the contents of the "miscellaneous" box, she held the crushed garland like a mirror.

"I got this house for a great price... really negotiated them down," I heard my father say on the phone that day. Probably to his mother. "Our beautiful Maryland home!" he later posted in a Facebook status update.

III. Theseus

After escaping the labyrinth with a ball of golden thread given to him by his soon-to-be-bride, Ariadne, Theseus set sail for home. Dionysus, the fun-loving god

of wine, forced Theseus to abandon Ariadne on an island so Dionysus could wed her instead. Dionysus threatened Theseus that should he not comply, no one on his ship would arrive home alive. So, even though Theseus allegedly loved Ariadne, and even though *she* was crucial to his survival in the labyrinth, he caved. Ariadne awoke one day in the middle of nowhere, left alone by a man she had trusted. In his place was a stranger who she eventually marries. Later, she hangs herself.

My mother was promised our move to St. Louis would be our family's last. Ten years later, the promise was terminated like my father's employment. A consequence of his actions. No divine intervention necessary. In six months (practically overnight) my mother and I found ourselves stranded. He moved across the country for a new job and waited for us to follow him. Single-handedly, she spent months clearing out rooms and scrubbing floors to sell her "forever home."

While packing, I found a box of photos from my childhood. In one, my father teaches me to play chess at age four, the picture capturing his furrowed brow and restraint. I must have confused the pawn and king again. They both are so frail. In another, I (age two) sit in his lap, and we're both smiling. I resisted the urge to tear the picture to shreds the size of his shame. The photograph exists as an anomaly; I have no memories of allowing him to hold me.

I wasn't old enough to mark the beginning of my father's emotional abandonment when it happened. I've been told he stayed sitting in the delivery room, indifferent, while I was rushed to the NICU and onto an operating table.

After I went through all the photo boxes (and my mother packed the house), she traveled to a new house to reverse the whole process. She knows better than to call this one a "forever home." When she asks him to unpack a box, he finds another non-urgent errand to run, Facebook post to write a thorough rebuttal of, etc.

IV. Odysseus

Was the quintessential Greek hero. Polyphemus the giant was a sheep farmer with one eye. He loved his sheep like children. Odysseus and his men invaded the giant's home, forced him into a drunken stupor, and stole his sight with a blindingly hot stake. When he asked the identity of his attacker, Odysseus smiled and replied, "Nobody."

While unpacking the new house, I would try to write from my bed. I always deleted whatever I started. Whenever I attempted to cope with the displacement—the robbing of *home* and creation of *house*—anvils would float above my chest. Getting out of bed was no longer a thoughtless task. Across the house, the thin walls told me that my parents were attempting to unpack boxes in the same room. They are popcorn and microwave. I received a text from my father: "Your lack of initiative is mean and heartless."

V. Notebook Fragments

Maybe my youthful fascination with the mythological extended beyond the Greeks. Example: A girl's dad is her hero.

In the past year, I have played *The Gambler* by Kenny Rogers 531 times (which equates to 1.3 days if played continuously). My mother and I have decided it is "our song." The joke is a bit cruel, since we, in fact, did not know when to hold 'em, fold 'em, walk away, or run.

The invocation of the word "father" is the type of summoning that comes from the bottom of your ribcage to force air into your lungs only to steal it back again. It leaves you empty, or perhaps full of rage. By now, the two states feel the same.

Maybe the Greeks spent so much time practicing the oral tradition of storytelling so they couldn't cry when they bore witness.



CRACKLE RAKU VASE

Harrison Pruett | clay, glaze

I WORRY

Jordan Joe

I worry
I worry I'm incapable
of excelling
with all the talents I've been
told I was given, because
I can no longer see those
things in myself

I worry that I'm beginning
to become the cynic
whom nobody likes, spewing
what I believe to be the
truth, yet not listening
to what's really human

I worry that I'm losing
the will to love, yet
at the same time I
find myself needing it
the most, because I'm
in my darkest hour and
my brightest transition

SLIPPING THROUGH MY FINGERS

Claire Pan

It's not really procrastination if I'm still getting work done. That is, art is still a class even though my mom denies it and watching YouTube videos on how to use this new jelly gouache set I bought from Amazon after I watched one review will help me with my giant self-portrait that's due in three days. A few bullet-journaling and calligraphy videos wouldn't hurt either since I'm planning on starting a bullet journal this year even though it's already been two weeks and my calligraphy isn't the best. But I have two sets of brush pens if you don't count the set of fifty I bought last year that weren't the best quality, and I've been practicing really hard in my sketchbook. My upstrokes are nice and thin and my downstrokes are thick and inky and when I finish a word I always make the tail of the letter circle around the rest of the word with a nice flourish even if it looks funny. I think it makes it seem fancier.

Tonight my mom is singing in the basement again and I think it's the reason she hasn't been picking fights lately. She's been singing that Mamma Mia song by ABBA and I think it's called Slipping Through My Fingers since she keeps repeating that phrase and this has been going on for at least one hour. I practice my calligraphy upstairs at the dining room table in the yellow light of the LED bulbs and wait for my dad to be done showering so we can eat the cake that she made for us today. It's covered in whipped cream and berries and anger and anxiety and all the love she has for us.

At school I practice my calligraphy in every class. Up and down the tip of the brush pen goes, tilting sideways on the downstrokes to thicken the line. My friends in math class try out my pens as well since we don't really do anything in math class other than be confused and play board games. Their strokes are shaky and uneven, trying too hard to be perfect when the beauty of calligraphy is that it never is perfect.

Mom and Dad are arguing over how it's his fault that I wasted my summer playing golf to be recruited by college coaches instead of participating in the STARS Program for research that she made me apply to even though I didn't want to participate in the program in the first place. She also mentions that they cancelled my Spanish class's trip to Spain just so I could do the research but I didn't want to go anyway since there would be an awkward dynamic between me and my ex-best friend who still refuses to look me in the eye. I was fine with playing golf and I say so from my homework spot in the dining room. Mom blows up and yells at us yet again that dad and I are teaming up against her to win the argument. I'm confused because I don't really know what the "winner" of this argument is going to gain so I just go back to the comforting consistency of calligraphy.

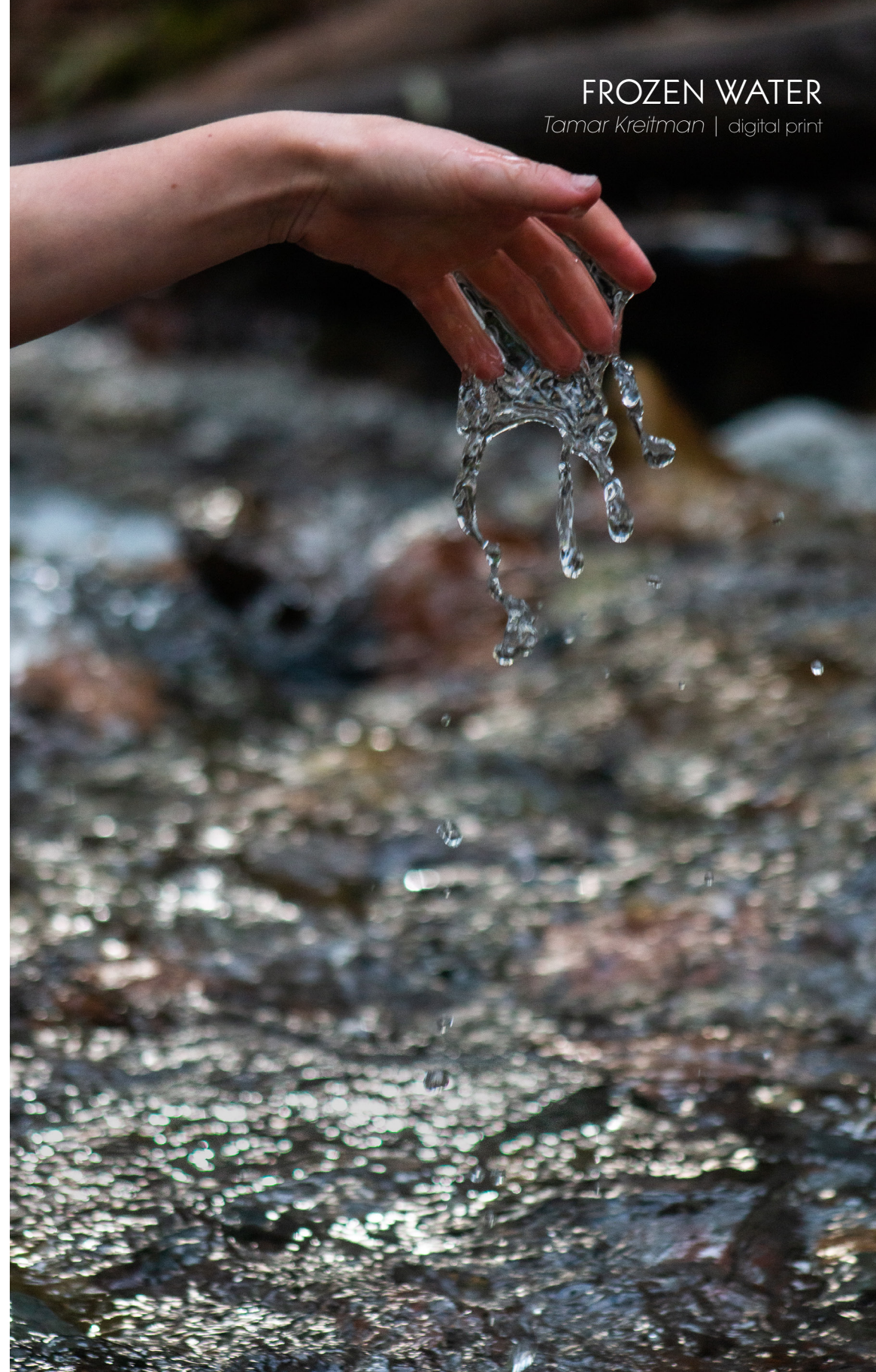
In Spanish class, the girl across from me asks to use my blue brush pen and I watch as she presses so hard on the downstroke that pools of ink bleed through the thin wide-ruled sheet of paper while she slowly writes my name in the most edited calligraphy that I have ever seen. After she's done, I make note that I shouldn't use my blue brush pen as much as my other pens since she used at least half of the ink in one go.

I want to procrastinate on my schoolwork but it's not procrastinating if I'm doing something that will benefit me in the future so I decide to practice my calligraphy again but I don't have anything to write anymore. I quickly scrawl out the alphabet and I'm back to memorizing but not learning my Spanish presentation.

During critiques, I stand in front of my life-size portrait and await judgement. I didn't become a gouache expert in the span of three days, and it's not how I wanted it to turn out. The concepts are good, it looks like you, it needs work around the nose. Each comment makes me a little more irritated, a little more frustrated with myself because I couldn't follow through with my goals. As I sit and the other students present their work, my pen spells out in smooth strokes sorry sorry sorry sorry sorry.

It's Saturday afternoon and I'm getting ready to go teach my badminton classes at the club when my mom pulls me to the basement to sing Slipping Through My Fingers. I know the tune by now but not the words, and as she pulls up the karaoke app on her Kindle Fire where we used to watch Downton Abbey everyday together, I'm grateful and nostalgic and realizing that all this time she was singing this song for me, wishing that I could have seen how she longed to spend some more time with me. We stumble over the words together and huddle over the microphone hoping that we'll still get full points on the app. The last chords sound and a replay of our off-key but passionate voices begins. We don't receive full marks, but I leave for class with a full heart.

FROZEN WATER
Tamar Kreitman | digital print



PRESENCE

Lylah Ali

A letter... to someone gone too soon. For my grandmother.

Dear AmiJaan,

13 years. 13 short, beautiful, wonderful, graced, and blessed years. I knew you for 13 years. And while that may seem like a lot, in reality, it's short. Brutally short. And at the end of it, you realize good things come fast and leave faster. And when they're there, you don't realize how insanely grateful you should be for their presence.

So 13 years. I miss everything about you. I miss the late night talks when everyone else was sleeping, I miss the Scrabble games, the trips to our favorite ice cream place, you braiding my hair. I miss the massages, our "breakfast picnics," our card games. I miss the shopping, the phone calls discussing poetry and literature and grammar and history. I miss your cooking, your stories, your fingers pressing into my back, asking me to guess what letter it was you were writing. I miss the traveling, the jokes, the songs, I miss all of it.

But as much as I miss all of those things, what I miss most is you. Not the things, not the memories, but you. Your voice, your face, your hands, your hugs, your presence. Your presence.

I miss your presence. According to Oxford Dictionary, presence is "the state or fact of existing, occurring, or being present in a place or thing." But presence is more than that. Presence is not simply existing, it is living. Presence is knowing, being reassured that there is someone who you know is as loving as it gets.

Because you loved me more than anyone I knew, and I loved you more than anyone else on this earth. You were the sincerest, most loving, genuinely loving person I had. And while I knew that back then, ironically, I know it better now. I had the faith, the comfort, that my grandmother, my wonderful, lovely grandmother, loved me and missed me, and above all, she was there. That was it. You were there.

So the truth is, time is a healer. The truth is, you can't wallow in grief forever. And the other truth is life will never be the same without you. I will never again be able to see your face, or hear your voice, or hold your hand, or sit with you on your rocking chair, or be enveloped in your hug. Those things are gone, I had them once... now they are gone.

The truth is, truth hurts. But at the same time, it teaches. And it has taught me to be grateful, to be aware, to value what I have now because everything is temporary.

And it has taught me this. These past 13 years are never coming back again. Years will come and go, life will go on, but what's happened has happened, what's gone is gone. But these 13 years were the most incredibly blessed I will ever have, because you were there. You were present. I had you, you had me, and we were together. You were the kindest, most genuine, sincere, honest, loving, learned, well-read, pious, faithful, inspiring person I will ever meet. I will treasure all that I learned from you, and all the memories, forever.

I miss you. I miss you so very very much. I miss you like crazy. You were a blessing, you graced my life, my siblings' life, my mom's life, and your whole family's life. And you are in a better place now.

So even though you are not here anymore, I know that some things will always be there, will always be present. I will always be your Lulu, you will always be my AmiJaan, and our love will always, always, stay true... till the leaves turn blue on the evergreen tree.

With all the love in the world,
Lylah



PEACHY REFLECTION

Eleanor Hohenberg | digital print



TUSCAN BALLOON

Leila Fischer | digital print



PART V: HERE

"kowabunga dudettes. i'm so pumped to be on this surfing kick. gnarly day in the h2o. ridin waves!" | KIM KARDASHIAN WEST, CELEBRITY

IF I DIE, I DIE. (AFTER DAVID SEDARIS)

Adina Cazacu-De Luca

In some 60 years from now, my grandchildren will be sitting in front of my rocking chair—or more likely, listening indifferently through the phone—and I’ll get to tell them about how *in my day*, we canceled our senior spring break trips out of fear of a rapidly spreading global pandemic.

Not that this was the type of trip where a large group of friends goes to the Caribbean for the tanning opportunity and low drinking age. The reasons for my solo trip to visit family in Panama were *far* more valid. After a decade of re-learning my first language, I finally overcame a major language barrier and felt comfortable enough to interact with my family. It doesn’t hurt that boys from the *campo* would have been readily available to fool around with, or that my complexion changes directly as a function of time spent with my mom’s side of the family—sun exposure is irrelevant. Therefore, 10 days in Panama equates to at least two months of Missouri summer sun. The tan is key... it makes prom pictures look better. While the discotheques in my abuelito’s barrio are also generous with alcohol, the most important benefit to my journey would have been the 3,000 miles between me and either of my parents.

My father’s response to the coronavirus outbreak in my abuelito’s barrio was, of course, was to bash the governmental response. “How dare a country of four million people with a GDP a sorry fraction of the United States’ only have 1,000 test kits?” He said, “You *know* how dirty public transit is in Panama City... they pack like sardines in the painted-over school buses so that the fleas can jump from one of the infected to another.” For once in his life, he sounded like the uncle I was supposed to visit during my trip. The 9/11-was-an-inside-job-also-the-moon-landing-is-fake-and-this-virus-was-designed-as-Chinese-biological-warfare uncle. “The Ministry of Health has known of cases for months, *mijita*. They’ve just kept it from us, but did we fall for it? Of course not! Now, just because one high-brow politician has finally died, *now* they just happen to mention 20 more confirmed cases. Right.”

My mom, on the other hand, was far more rational in her domestic response to the growing crisis. In her preparation for potential quarantine, she’s beginning to include visits to Costco in her daily commute, surprised each day by the continual shortage of bulk toilet paper. Outraged that she is unable to stock our two bedroom apartment with ample toilet paper for the next three years (although our lease expires this May), she speaks with the stock boy to determine when the next shipment will come in. Following his instructions one day, she found abundant Charmin on the pallets. “Can you believe their audacity?” She called me while I was mid-audition. “I asked when the *Kirkland Signature* was coming. Do they think I’m desperate enough to pay \$23.49 for toilet paper? Unbelievable!”

Yes, the Panamanian Ministry of Health may have canceled all classes, sporting events, and other large public gatherings, but I still gave my mother hell for canceling the trip. My youth made me, for all intents and purposes, invincible, so I was certain that I could safely travel, enjoy my trip, and return without spreading disease. If I were quarantined on the way back, I wouldn’t miss much. The state science and national Shakespeare competitions were canceled, and school would be online anyways. NBC News quoted one particularly smug millennial buying a cheap flight amidst the pandemic: “If I die, I die.” That’s how I’ll end the story for my grandkids, smiling and showing bravado for my willingness to take a trip I never did.



MORITZ

Jasmine Brown | digital print

FREEDOM

Dylan Fox | digital print



BALANCE

Tamar Kreitman | digital print

EIGHT MINUTES UNDER

Lily Yanagimoto

It's been raining 4 hours and 16 minutes.

Still 16. Still 16. Still 16. Still 16. Still 16. Now 17. 4 hours, 17 minutes. If the sun was shining, I'd feel disgusting, but now that it's raining, the indoors feels like a sanctuary and not a trap. If it stops raining on an odd-numbered minute, that would make me upset. Something like rain for 4 hours and 40 minutes, something like that. I would wait out an extra 20 minutes, to get it up to a clean-cut 5 hours. But 5 is not as nice as 4, and I really hate the rain sometimes.

Remember in the Indiana Jones movie, where the blonde actress has to stick her hand into the hole in the wall, and it's crawling with insects, huge shiny ones with plates on their back and tendrils and pale whitish legs and pinchers and eyes? And it's horrible, and the floor swarms with cockroaches, and god, I hate bugs. But Indiana's about to be crushed by the boulder, and the boulder has *spikes*, and he hasn't even *discovered* the secret cult in the caves underneath the palace. So the actress sticks her delicate manicured lady's hand into the hole. (Close-up of her face as she writhes in disgust.) Something crawls across her hand—she whips her hand out of the hole. Indiana, I don't think I can do this.

The spikes are coming for Indy's head. You're going to have to, damn it! She sticks her hand in again. Insects. *Legs*. The leg-to-possible-insect ratio is not promising, everything has too many legs—

A purplish centipede the size of a child's forearm makes its way up her arm. She *screams*. The spikes are bearing down on Indiana's head. This might be the end of the road for him—the actress is shaking the centipede off—

She presses the button, impossibly, in the nick of time. The boulder has stopped right above Indiana's head.

He pulls his hat out of the spikes. Cut to the human skull on the floor.

That was a close one.

But the actress watches in horror as a fat, slimy cockroach scuttles towards her fingers... She shrieks. Pulls her hand *off* the button—

And the boulder starts falling down *again*.

Of course Indiana gets *out*, or there wouldn't be a franchise. Ghost Indiana Jones doesn't have the same ring to it. Also, the whole point is that Indy almost dies and then doesn't. It's for the adrenaline, I guess.

What am I saying here?

What's my point?

Well, what I'm saying is that life is the spiky boulder, and I am Indiana under it, and my dumb brain is the blonde actress, who can't for God's sake push a button and keep her hand there. There are so many things the bugs could be; I guess it's just ambiguous. (Is that what makes a metaphor good? I forget.)

I guess what I'm saying is, I wrote this yesterday while it was raining, and I was stuck writing this and not doing the work that had to be done. I guess you could say that I let my hand come off the button, just for a little, so I could avoid the bugs to risk the boulder.

The rain stopped at 4 hours and 32 minutes, eight minutes under 40 minutes, my ideal time. But 4 times 8 is 32, right?

I guess what I'm saying is, there are bugs and boulders and stuff, and things don't go how you want, but then they work out.

I guess that's what I'm saying.

BUNIA

Madeline Buchowski

She says the clouds look like watercolor if you squint.

She longs to paint her photographs of the sky,

to replicate the world with delicate pastels—

I taught her a different medium, to zoom

in on the ripples of the lake and the

warped reflections of the trees,

capturing black squiggles against water,

salmon with the reflection of the sunset.

I lay out her canvases and brushes,

Urge her to start, even I start, I really try

To get her to try, but she is too scared

of doing the sky injustice.

Click [HERE](#) to read Madeline's reflection on this piece.

SOLITUDE

Tamar Kreitman | digital print



HAWAIIAN BLUES

Ann Zhang

From an airplane, you mark the first blues: cerulean garden of clouds, his wide-mouthed descendant surging beneath. You photograph the line where they meet. Listen for echoes,

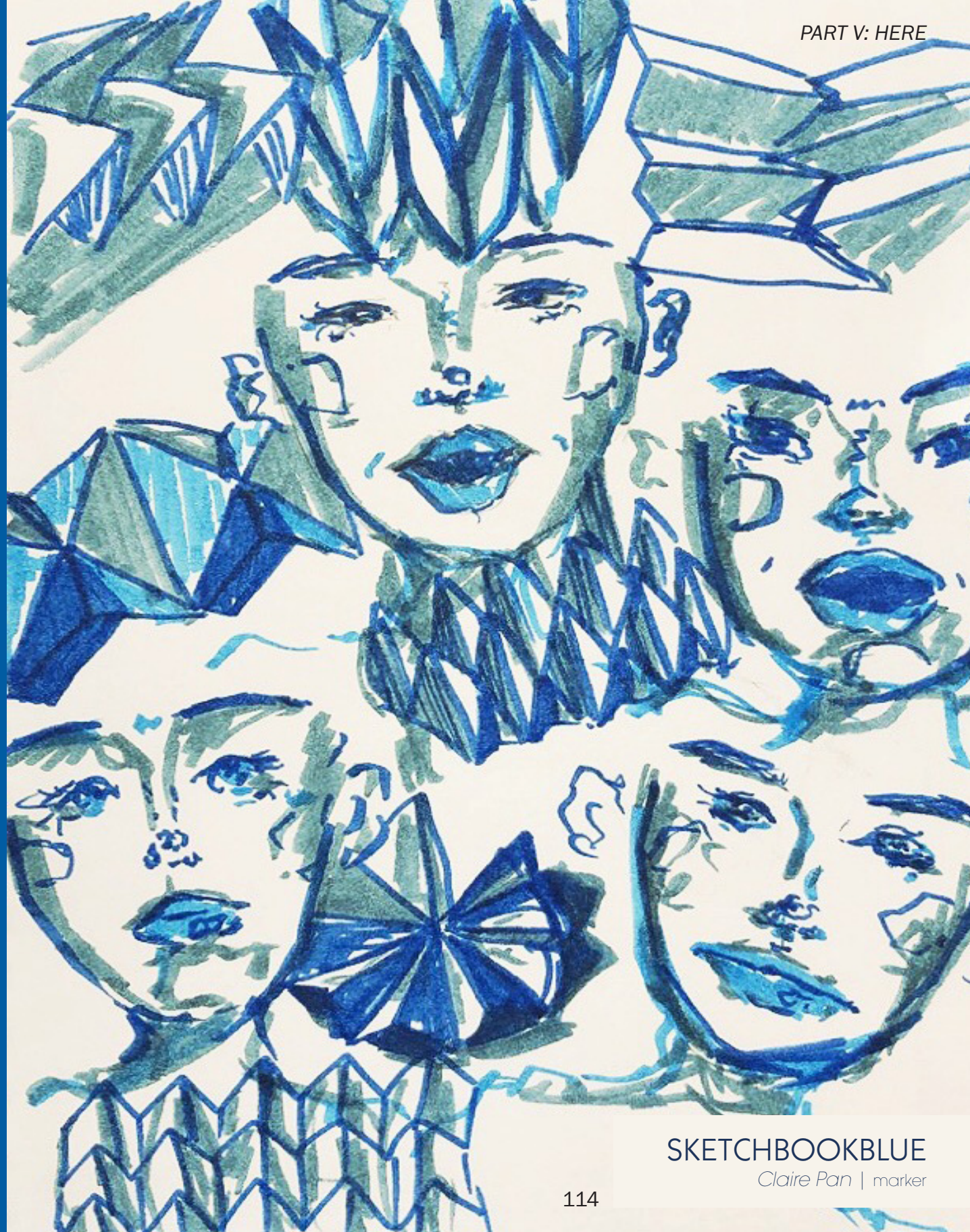
evolutionary refractions: light-blue feathers on necks of native pigeons & your ocean-themed disposable camera & the fleeting figures of kaleidoscopic fish. You indulge

whitecaps & bright-bellied sharks, sparklers that illuminate your dreams on the third night in a foreign bed, the crumpled sheets stained a royal blue. You will not scumble the irises

of the mothers who cleansed you. Conjure another aperture, someplace between azure & indigo, retracing the edges until your veins swell to craters, the tired palms of your feet

cornering a deeper shade of blue. You cannot forget these six days & seven nights in heaven.

For weeks after, you will press your thumb against sapphire bruises, the other hand pulling white sands from your scalp.



THE MORALITY OF MANTIS SHRIMP

Adina Cazacu-De Luca

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Narrator: à-la-nature-documentary.

Tim: middle-aged mantis shrimp tired of his 9-5.

Abel: has chipped dactyl clubs (the shrimp's raptorial appendages), gray-tipped whiskers, and beady eyes that give off a hardened stare.

Bartender: a gentle-looking pufferfish.

The local coral reef drinking establishment, which despite its best attempts at happy hour promotions, is almost empty. TIM enters and sits at the bar while the BARTENDER fixes him up a Shirley Temple. ABEL, seated on the opposite end of the bar, appears downtrodden and surrounded by gray light.

NARRATOR. (*Deeply*) When you imagine a deep-sea killer, what creature comes to mind? Perhaps the orca or giant squid? One often overlooked predator is the mantis shrimp, or stomatopod. Their raptorial appendages can accelerate with the same velocity as a gunshot from a twenty-two caliber rifle. They strike prey often with 15,000 Newtons of force. Even more striking (*beat*) is the mantis shrimp's vision. They can perceive both polarized light and multispectral images and have the most complex eyes in the animal kingdom. While human eyes have three types of color receptors—red, green, and blue—the mantis shrimp has receptors for sixteen, enabling them to see a spectrum far beyond the capacity of the human brain. Here we see two stomatopods in their natural habitat.

TIM. (*Looking over at Abel*) What's got you down?

ABEL. (*Gesturing to his dactyl clubs*) When I was your age, I never used these. At least not like I do now. I didn't need to tear flesh apart. If I was hungry, I could just move 'em quickly enough, the water around me would boil, and the crabs would stop moving.

NARRATOR. Of course, Abel is explaining the phenomenon of supercavitation, where the consequent collapse of hot water bubbles creates an undersea shockwave—as well as bursts of light—that stuns prey.

ABEL. One day, I couldn't handle our vision anymore. The colors are fine, though. (*Pausing to chuckle*) When I was younger I talked to a seahorse. I told him how I loved the way the tips of one reef shined a brighter fuschia than the rest of it. He said the reef was tan.

TIM. (*Setting down his drink*) Don't tell me.

ABEL. I'm telling you...we went on, naming the colors of things. I felt bad for him. Imagine not being able to see the different shimmers of the morning light in our water. The teal of every sunrise. Blue. Just seeing blue. You can't give our vision to anyone. It's alienating.

TIM. Sure, but we make fine poets. We can describe what we see in such precise detail that even (*spitting the word out*) seahorses can imagine our vision.

ABEL. Maybe, kid. It was more about the realization that perception, no, *existence* varies. When you were in the crib, I'm sure you thought all mothers sang *your* lullaby. It's a harrowing thing, the realization that you're not as connected to others as you thought.

NARRATOR. While Abel made seahorse friends in the wild, the same would not have occurred in captivity, where the stomatopod is known to dismember any creatures they share a tank with. Then again, stomatopods are rarely held in aquariums, as they are capable of shattering exhibition glass.

TIM. You know, you said you didn't mind the colors.

ABEL. I don't. I despise how every creature has an aura. That seahorse radiated darkness, like the center of a small oil spill. My mother wouldn't let me spend time with him because of it.

TIM. Why are they so dark, anyways?

ABEL. When seahorses feed, their food doesn't die; it suffers while slowly digesting in the stomach. But... who decided which feeding habits were immoral? (*Beat*) Have you ever seen the aura of a queen conch?

TIM. (*Curling his whiskers into a grin*) I dated one a while back. Pure white.

ABEL. That's such bull! How does the queen conch serve this reef? She eats algae and lives an insular life, and that makes her God's gift to urchins? How is she the image of moral purity? Our vision is broken, and we need to fix it. (*Slamming down his scotch glass*) Instead of having a white aura at birth and blackening over time, we should start with no aura: neutral. Then, let each action lighten or darken your glow. Calculate the true utility of each act, like Jeremy Bentham or John Stuart Mill would've wanted. Imagine, brilliant auras would actually have value. Or, maybe we shouldn't have auras at all!

TIM. What does it matter? It's just how we see the world.

ABEL. (*Incredulous and raising his voice*) That's exactly the problem! (*With his trinocular vision, Abel moves one eye directly toward Tim and the other toward the Bartender. The Bartender, who knows the following soliloquy by heart, deflates in a slow sigh.*)

Every stomatopod is complicit in this false superiority. We categorize every other fish in the reef by their species' average aura.... That's a caste system, yet we consider ourselves superior to fish with school hierarchies. It's hypocritical. So I snapped, kid. I mean, I literally started snapping my prey apart. And as soon as I started, others followed. We became a needlessly violent creature, and it's kept me from sleeping ever since. Have you ever thought about why you use your clubs?

TIM. Not previously, no.

ABEL. Put 'em to rest, kid.

TIM. Even if I do, how can I *unsee* auras?

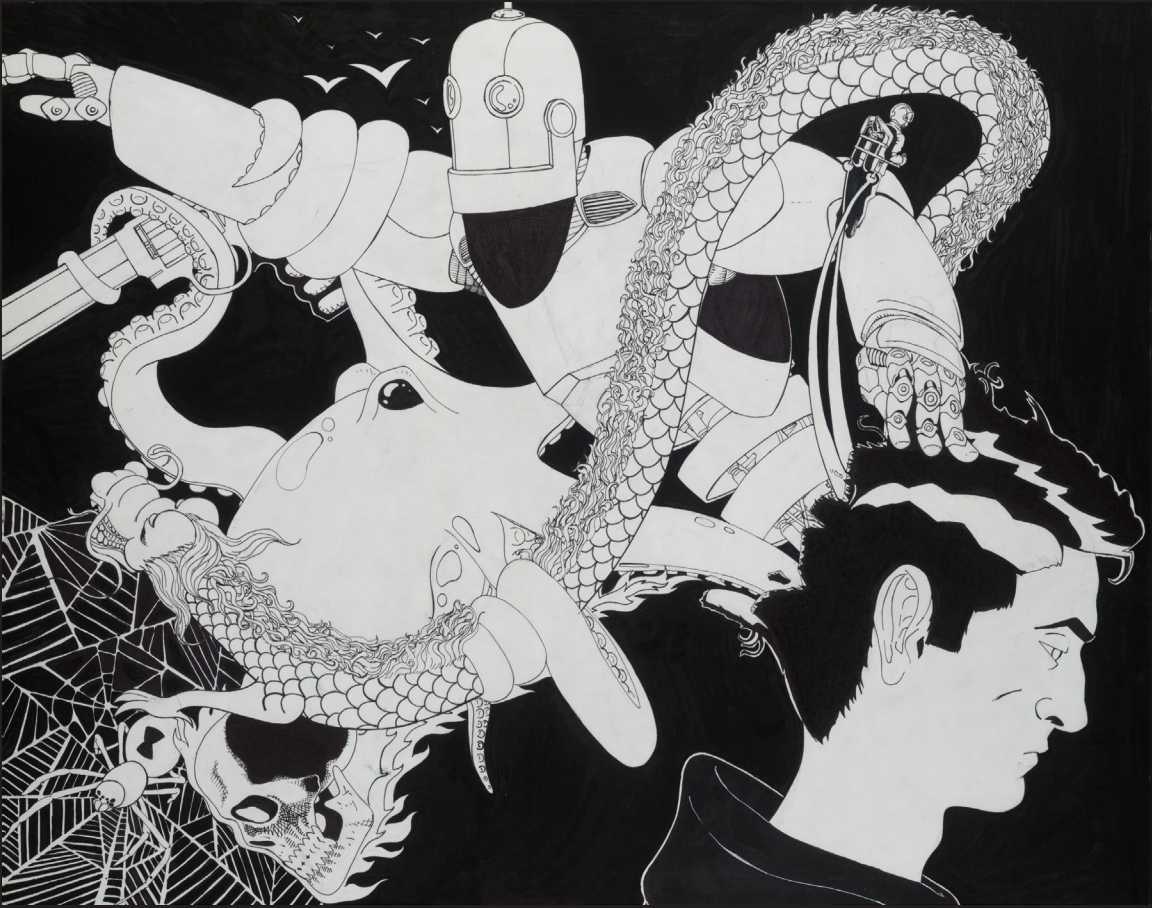
ABEL. You can't, but you can work to see 'em for what they are and teach others their true meaning.

Abel stands up, gives the pufferfish a hefty tip, and leaves the bar.

FIN.

SELF PORTRAIT

William Hylen | marker on Yupo and paper



Click [here](#) to read William's reflection on this piece.

COSMIC DRIFT

Abby Greenberg

EXT. DEEP SPACE - INDETERMINATE TIME

Open on a black screen. Though, as we wait, we realize that it is in fact, not a black screen, but instead a wide expanse of empty space.

An astronaut floats into frame. A tether is attached to the back of his suit, but the other end is fixed to nothing. He drifts. This is BILLY, and he speaks to an A.I. that's installed in his spacesuit.

BILLY. So. This is a bit of a sticky situation, is it not?

A.I. It is not ideal, Billy.

BILLY. Got any ideas?

A.I. I have calculated your chances of survival, and found them at 0.000658%.

BILLY. (*Doing Jim Carrey*) So you're saying there's a chance! Out of curiosity, what exactly are the parameters for that calculation?

A.I. You have never been interested in my parameters before.

BILLY. Well. There's a first time for everything.

A.I. Very well. I take into consideration precedent set by others in similar situations and your previous experiences in peril, and then calculate the probability of various outcomes. In this instance, there are increasingly few situations with favorable results.

BILLY. Sweet. So we thinking I'm just gonna float and chill here until someone comes along?

A.I. Space is unfathomably large, Billy.

BILLY. What's that supposed to mean?

A.I. Likely, you will starve to death before you encounter any other lifeforms, intelligent or otherwise.

BILLY. Oh.

A.I. It takes the average human 50 days to starve. Due to your environment and your average caloric intake, I estimate you have 43 days.

BILLY. 43 days. Let's go wild.

Beat. BILLY continues to float. Then, a BEEPING:

A.I. Warning: my power levels are below 50 percent.

BILLY. Wait, what?

A.I. I am currently running at 47 percent power.

BILLY. Well, can you charge up? Like with solar panels, or something?

A.I. No. You do not have any batteries with you.

BILLY. You run on batteries?

A.I. Yes.

BILLY. OK. Would've thought society moved past that by now, but. If it works, I guess. How long until you're at zero?

A.I. If we continue conversing at the rate we are at, my reserves will run out in 23.5 hours.

BILLY. Less than one day?

A.I. You can conserve my battery life by speaking to me at separate intervals.

BILLY. So I'm just supposed to sit here for 43 days?

A.I. I recommend speaking to me at semi-regular intervals as an insanity avoidance measure.

BILLY. I—Is there any way to send out a distress signal?

A.I. My networks are down. I'm sorry, Billy.

BILLY. Okay. I—I guess I'll shut up now.

A.I. I will speak to you later, Billy. Stay safe.

BILLY. See you later.

BILLY continues to float, slowly, until he's out of frame.

END.



BLÜHENDER KRISTALL [BLOOMING CRYSTAL]

Moritz Habermann | plaster, acrylic, flocking



CREATION

Anne Grace Hooper | plaster, acrylic

ZOOOP

Ann Zhang

(Dimly lit stage. A man emerges from one end.)

Once upon a time, it took twenty minutes to travel a mile. Walk for an entire hour? Move three miles. Now, that was Man. Alone. How much of the world would Man see in his entire life? A few square miles—the same fields, the same lake, the same boring men. And Man’s two feet. Stepping. Trekking in circles.

Then Man met Horse. Man said, “Horse, you shall carry me,” and Horse replied, “Resolve my hunger and we have ourselves a deal.” So Man stuck an apple in Horse’s mouth, and voilà—Man domesticated Horse. In one hour, on Horse’s back, Man could travel five leisurely miles. Forty miles at a gallop.

Next, Man made boat. Man made train. Man made car. Man made plane. In eight hours, man could travel 3,549 miles from New York to London. He no longer paid in apples, but in dollars.

Still, this speed was not enough. Nothing was enough. Until Man made zoop.

Fuckin’ Man.

Allow me to tell you a story. Not about a man, but about a woman. The Woman. She’s got this soft brown hair. Green eyes that shine like a whole new planet. And hell, she’s just....

(Beat.)

Hm. Where was I? Yes. The Woman loved to zoop. Every weekend. Zoop, France. Zoop, Venice. Zoop, her boyfriend’s house. In Bangladesh.

Funny enough, I was the one who first convinced her to try it. This was back when I was her boyfriend, her number one man. She was so scared at first. She said, “Can’t we just take a plane? They’re fast enough.”

I told her that’s probably what Man had said to himself the first time he met Horse. What if he had decided, “Walking around this old field with my new moccasins is plenty quick, maybe I’ll just stick this apple in my own damn mouth!”

What if! But no, Man took a leap onto Horse’s back. Without that sort of progress, I suppose, Man would have never had the chance, eventually, to fly on an airplane. Never had the chance to zoop.

Anyway, I told the Woman this horse story. I also sent her this article from *The Wall Street Journal*; I think it was called “The Zooping Revolution,” something like that. She wasn’t a huge fan of *The Wall Street Journal*. She was always reading *The New York Times*, dabbling her eyes at pictures of children in the underdeveloped countries where a fresh steak is worth more than a college education.

I couldn’t send her any articles from *The Times*, though, because those guys were only reporting the bad stuff. Calling zooping a government conspiracy and all that. Telling sad stories, like this one about a nice old guy from Oregon, zooped and lost forever. Apparently he was a star tennis player back in the day, qualified for the US Open in high school, then he tore something, opened up a quaint little restaurant and started a family instead. He was pushing eighty-two, sick of sautéing mushrooms, when he decided it was time to live his life. Pulled out a zooper—destination, Cancún.

One percent is a pretty small number, if you think about it. How many people die in car accidents? A lot. Count with me. One... two... three. There. Some poor fucker just crashed his car.

You zoop one hundred times, statistically, and one time—just one time!—you might—just might!—get sent into the abyss. I mean, how is that worse than dying? It isn’t. Probably not as painful, I would imagine. Think about drowning. Or bleeding to death. Or drowning while bleeding to death. I’d take the abyss any day. Wouldn’t you?

It is horribly hypocritical when those old-timey snobs condemn zooping. Why don’t they con-

demn cars while they're at it? And don't forget planes! They all evoke the same breed of fear. Even if the worst rumors are true, and the White House does happen to be culling the population, surely that won't affect the intellectuals at The Times. Probably not even the semi-decent guys like you and me.

But the Wall Street Journal article, you see, that one was more up my alley. It was talking about all the reasons that zooping is too genius to pass up. To go anywhere in the world, instantaneously, via the seventh dimension! Who would've known that Man would domesticate speed? And for the trivial price of fifty dollars per zoop! Hell, even those poor desert kids could zoop themselves to McDonald's or something.

Luckily those Wall Street guys are pretty good writers. Because after I showed that article to the Woman, I said to her, "Come on, let's do it together. Take my hand." And she took my hand. It was a little clammy. But it was us.

We only zooped three hundred miles, St. Louis to Chicago. We'd missed the train earlier that morning, probably because we were tired or overworked or drunk, and then we'd learned that the stupid conference was starting in two hours, not twenty-two hours like we'd thought. But then—zoop, Chicago. It was seven in the morning, two hours to spare, and the sunlight was glowing deep inside her green, green eyes. She was looking at me like this was my miracle. Like I was her zooper.

I didn't care that she was zooping somewhere across the world for every weekend after that. Every time she came back, she would wrap me in this big, warm hug, and I would hold her against me, and she would tell me that she loved me. Something cheesy like that. Then one time she came back, and she hugged me, but suddenly it wasn't so warm anymore.

She told me what had happened. How she'd been tanning on her stomach along the Seine, blending in with a group of Parisian teenagers, when this Indian guy sat down next to her. He must have gone to some fancy international school because he told her, in English, "You know what those French kids are saying about you? They are calling you beautiful."

Zoop. Back into my arms. Crying again. She told me, "I love you. But I don't belong to you. I can't belong to anyone."

So last week, when the Woman hit the anti-jackpot and zooped her beautiful self straight into the abyss, I thought to myself, serves her right. I'd stopped talking to her five months earlier. I knew she was spending every other week in Bangladesh with him because I searched her name on the internet sometimes, just when I was eating dinner or brushing my teeth or trying to fall asleep or something. She'd been exploring the world by his side. Captioning every picture in a different language.

(Beat.)

One percent.

(The man reaches in his pocket. Lights out, briefly. When the spotlight returns, the man is standing on the other side of the room, his hand still in his pocket. He has zooped.)

She knew the numbers. Yet she took the risk. Again.

(Zoop. The other side of the room.)

And again.

(Zoop.)

And again. But I mean, maybe that's something I admire about her.

(Zoop.)

There are billions of people on this planet. And Man can go anywhere on this planet now. I could have anything, anyone. But... I think I love her. Only her.

(Zoop.)

And if she could be mine again, if I could be her zooper again, I'm willing to take the risk. I'm willing to plunge into the darkness.

(Zoop.)

Because maybe—just maybe—I can find her.

(Zoop. This time, the spotlight does not return. Darkness settles.)



RORSCHACH

William Hylan | altered book on mat board

Click [here](#) to read William's reflection on this piece.



PART VI: FURTHERMORE

scan the QR codes for additional creative content



CHERRY BLOSSOMS

Owen Front | Sumi ink

Click [here](#) to read Owen's reflection on this piece.

THE TRUTH ABOUT NEURONS

Sara Cao | spoken word

"I've wanted to write about the nature of human thoughts and how it relates to me as a Chinese and deaf woman for a long time. My inspiration was a combination of two other poems—"OCD" by Neil Hilborn and "Someday I'll Love Ocean Vuong" by Ocean Vuong."



WIRE DRAWING COMPILATION

Andrew Wang, Annie Gill, Anyi Sun, David Bernal, Diya Krishnan, Emily Kantrovitz, Isa Rosario-Blake, Katie Xu, Meghna Kommu, Sophia King, Teresa Jiang | white and black charcoal on gray paper

Students in Painting and Drawing 1 filmed their artistic process in an emulation of William Kentridge. According to Art teacher Ms. Ashley Edgerton, in his work, "a single drawing is retouched again and again to create the film stills, with each new image a palimpsest bearing signs of the previous drawing's erasure."

IF I'M HONEST

Emma Braswell | songwriting

"I wrote this song about a year ago or so in my songwriting class at school. I recorded it with [vocal teachers] Mr. Estes and Mrs. Peitz who were nice enough to add harmonies and other instrumentals... I can get in a mood where I will write a song in two hours and be able to write more right after, but then I'll get caught in phases where I can't write anything."



PEACE AND QUIET

Yara Levin | dramatic script

"I wrote my one-act-play for English class around the same time I was diagnosed with a sensory processing disorder. Some people in my life found it really hard to understand, so I wrote the play as a way to share what I was going through every day at school and at home. Everything in that piece is based on real life in some way."

MISSION

Established in 1924, *The Review* is the annual literary-art journal of John Burroughs School. The publication aims to showcase the creativity of the student body in its infinite manifestations and inspire students to reach toward new creative frontiers.

OUR PROCESS

The Review accepts student submissions to thereview@jburroughs.org year-round. The deadline for the ninety-ninth volume (to be published in May of 2021) is March 11, 2021. To submit writing, share a Google Doc of your titled piece. Since *The Review* judges submissions anonymously, please make sure your name is not in the submitted document. To submit artwork, send us an email with your titled submission(s) attached as a file.

Both writing and art submissions are reviewed based on originality, mastery of craft, and impact. In *The Review's* monthly meetings, staff members and editors read and discuss the merits of recently received submissions. Then, all meeting attendees vote to accept, accept with revisions (in which the author receives a list of constructive critiques and is recommended to revise and resubmit), or decline the submission. Any John Burroughs School student is welcome to contribute to discussion in *Review* meetings, and staff membership is determined only by meeting attendance.

After the March submission deadline, the editors decide the journal order based on general flow and create groupings of pieces that center on similar themes or are written in similar styles. *The Review* does not solicit themed submissions in order to prevent creators from putting bounds on their creativity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

MADELINE BUCHOWSKI (2023) ON HER POETRY

“[Treehouse](#),” “[Crickets](#),” and “[Bunia](#)” are all from my poetry book which I wrote this year in English class. The first two poems were for a specific imagery assignment, but I decided to write “Bunia” on a whim. It is about my grandma who loves to photograph the sky, so much that she has thousands of photos of clouds alone. I think that this poem is my favorite because it is completely true, unlike the others which are partially fictional.

KATHLEEN DOBBS (2021) ON “[EVOLUTION](#)”

I enjoyed making my sculpture, “Evolution,” because I was able to find an intersection between art, science, and nature... to express my love of nature and my interest in evolutionary biology in an art form.

OWEN FRONT (2022) ON “[CHERRY BLOSSOMS](#)”

I got the Sumi Inks as a gift from a former teacher, and I was eager to try them out. This was one of my first pieces after experimenting with them. Cherry blossom trees are one of my favorite trees, so I wanted to include them in the painting. I was also inspired by Japanese architecture because Sumi Ink is made in Japan (as well as China).

ABBY GREENBERG (2020) ON “[COSMIC DRIFT](#)”

I wrote “Cosmic Drift” after watching *Interstellar*. It was stupidly depressing, so I thought, “What if it was funny?” Then, I noticed that the idea fit one of my portfolio requirements for film school applications, so I ended up finishing it (which is not something I do with most of my writing). College writing was definitely good for getting me to finish projects, but also annoyingly constraining. This was one of the few instances when what I wanted to write lined up with what I had to write, which is why I think I ended up liking it.

WILLIAM HYLEN (2020) ON INTENSIVE ART CLASS

Many of the pieces that I have made in Intensive Art have focused on my relationship with anxiety. My [self-portrait](#) in black and white, for instance, was meant to show how overthinking things, especially art, can be self-destructive. “[Rorschach](#)” deals through the character of Rorschach in the book *Watchmen*, who is incredibly anxious and paranoid. With this year’s pieces, I have tried to show more personal growth within my work. This is why in my second self-portrait, I used symbols of growth (flowers, buildings, etc.).

ETHAN KALISHMAN (2020) ON “[A WASTED WORLD](#)”

I wrote my satire from the lens of a big corporation to demonstrate how rhetoric in messages can influence large groups of people as I parody the ways in which Waste Management focuses on duping the American public to consume. With climate change in mind and knowing that lavish lifestyles are perpetuated with naiveté, I’ve tried to illustrate the dangers of consumption in both the public and consumer realms.

KIRAN KHAN (2022) ON “[UNTITLED](#)”

One class, I was alone in the art studio. I made a paper airplane and thought to myself, “Let me just put this on the floor.” I started thinking of elementary school and childhood vibes. Then, I played with angles, because one freshman who wasn’t even in our photography class kept telling me I was a terrible photographer. I figured if what I was doing wasn’t working, I should try something new.

AMY PHILLIPS (2020) ON HER EVOLUTION AS AN ARTIST

Burroughs art classes have allowed me to discover a more personal side of my art. Before, I always drew from other people’s photographs, which helped me hone my skills but I’ve been encouraged to look beyond others’ work and find my own message. My work from this year is definitely a reflection of myself—an unapologetic, sometimes (if not often) [brash feminist](#) that still has a [soft boi side](#). By exploring new mediums, I’ve found a new vein in my recent works that I want to keep tapping.

LILY YANAGIMOTO (2023) ON “[EIGHT MINUTES UNDER](#)”

I wrote this piece while it was raining, and I was feeling listless and weirdly unsettled. It’s about those slow, uncomfortable moments where there’s something else you have to do, where you’re waiting for something to line up but it doesn’t. As a piece of writing, I actually don’t know if I like it, but I think it’s interesting. In terms of my creative process... mostly I sit down and write a lot at one time, and it ends up being a lot of brain-slush. For me, it’s just a matter of slushing enough out that something good comes out with it, I guess. Or sometimes, if I have a line or image in my head that I want to capture, then I can start with more directed slushing. If that makes sense.

CARRIE ZHANG (2020) ON “[THE PERFECT EXAMPLE](#)”

I feel like I’ve grown as a writer by paying more attention to my surroundings, which gives me more to write about. Writing “The Perfect Example” was definitely an outlet for me. I can rant about reproductive rights to my friends, but no one wants to talk about it all day. By writing, I’m at least getting my thoughts out there.

MEET OUR STAFF

LEYLA FERN KING (2021)

Review meetings are lively and creative, and it's one of the only reasons that I'd voluntarily wake up early for on a late day.

TERESA JIANG (2022)

I've never been a part of a school publication before, and attending meetings has really shown me the effort and care put into them. It's largely student-driven. Getting to see the critiques and praises shared during meetings allows me to bring new perspectives to my own art: what clichés I should avoid falling into, and different techniques I can use to enhance my work. My favorite memory from *The Review* is definitely the promposal during the marathon meeting. That was really cute.

SAMMIE LEE (2022)

This was my first year attending the marathon meeting. I had so much fun I couldn't bear to leave even when the meeting continued on until nearly midnight. Rather than a meeting, it felt like I was with some friends reading some writing pieces and analyzing art pieces for fun! While I did like *The Review* meetings before, the marathon meeting made me fall in love with the club. I'm already waiting to attend the meetings next year after such a memorable experience this year.

BRICE SHEARBURN (2023)

I started attending *Review* meetings due to my enjoyment of writing, but I really ended up loving the atmosphere and exposure to so many peers' creative ideas that I couldn't otherwise access. Every meeting offers the opportunity for anyone to put themselves out there and reach out of their comfort zone through sharing something that matters to them: art.

ADAM ZHAO (2021)

My favorite part about *The Review* is definitely the bagels at the morning meetings. It's a nutritious way to start my day, and the best part is I don't have to pay.

BIOGRAPHIES

ADINA CAZACU-DE LUCA (*EDITOR-IN-CHIEF*) is an avid opera lover (who cannot sing) seldom seen without her overalls, sticker-covered Nalgene, and book in hand. She is known for making daily assembly announcements and wants to pursue public health.

TINA CHEN (*MANAGING EDITOR*) joined *The Review* during her sophomore year despite having limited artistic and literary ability. She likes *The Review* because of the diversity and incredible quality of work from the school community. She enjoys long walks with her dog and sleeping in.

UDONNE EKE-OKORO (*JUNIOR EDITOR*) first attended *The Review* her freshman year and has enjoyed every minute of her *Review* experience. If she is not crafting up conversations with herself in front of a mirror, she is either enjoying pescetarian meals or sharing the talent that she calls "speaking in cursive."

LAUREN KEELEY (*LAYOUT EDITOR*), harbinger of unsolicited Shakespeare and grand master of grammatically correct run-on sentences, can often be found lurking in the hallways or panicking in the booth during assembly. She enjoys disturbing literary content and should probably consider a haircut.

ANNMARIE O'SHEA (*JUNIOR EDITOR*) is an unapologetic dog-lover. When she is not catching up on Netflix shows or reading five books at the same time, she conspires to take over the world. Her plans include world peace and extermination of the devils known as cats. At the moment, she just hopes to get through high school in one piece.

CLAIRE PAN (*LAYOUT EDITOR*) attended her first *Review* meeting in seventh grade and has stuck with the publication ever since. She enjoys K-Pop and Minecraft and is often seen in the balcony during morning assembly with bakery treats.

MICHAEL TU (*ART EDITOR*) can probably be found somewhere in a state of panic after procrastinating on... something or other. When not faced with a global pandemic, he enjoys practicing piano and playing League of Legends. He has faith that someday he'll climb out of Bronze IV.

ANN ZHANG (*EDITOR-IN-CHIEF*) spends much of her time writing scripts, listening to French music, and learning how to code. She spends, admittedly, a lot more of her time watching Netflix, reading suburban malaise, and eating watermelon.

Cover and End-Sheets Art: Open Your Mind (*silkscreen triptych*)
by George Dietrich, design by Adina Cazacu-De Luca

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brain

Open

Your

Mind