

Volume 10, Number 2

Spring 2021

Interrobang



The Literary Magazine of Kirby School
Santa Cruz, California

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Interrobang publishes excellent poetry, short fiction, creative nonfiction, drama, and comics written by the students of the Kirby School. *Interrobang* appears twice yearly, in winter and spring. Share your original, proofread work with our staff at interrobang@kirby.org anytime between August and May. Contributors need *not* be on staff. We welcome submissions from Kirby middle school and high school students. Submission guidelines available upon request. Email mcaballero-robb@kirby.org with any questions about submitting your work or joining our staff.

The staff of *Interrobang* meets during club time. We always welcome new members with interests in creative writing, art, literature, and ideas.

Interrobang Literary Magazine

Kirby School

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May 2021

Dear Readers,

In our Spring 2021 issue, we are pleased to present poems, stories, and the intriguing opening to what promises to be a longer work of speculative fiction by Ren Takahashi-Kelso. Read it—and you will hope, as we do, that Ren will send along the next chapter of the story as soon as possible. Additionally, some pieces included in this issue were written by students in Ms. Fiegel’s Creative Writing class.

We are grateful for Kirby’s student writers for their interest in creative writing and their love of ideas, both of which are essential to the life of *Interrobang*. We urge all Kirby creative writers, from middle school to high school, to submit poems, personal essays, comics, and short stories to interrobang@kirby.org by email or by sharing a Google doc. Contributors remain anonymous until publication.

This issue marks ten years and twenty issues of Kirby’s student-run literary magazine, *Interrobang*. We continue to be grateful for the ongoing support of the administration and teachers at Kirby School, which has made all of this possible.

Enjoy!

—The Staff of *Interrobang*

Yunqi (Nick) Zhang

How Should the Nightingale Sing?

Over the sunless sea the whirlwinds prevail.
To the invisible shore the lunatics sail
And see their fellows' corpses drowning.
How should the nightingale sing?

On the high cliff this noble creature stands
And is not sure on which branch to land.
Should she cease to sing at the hour of crimes?
Or should she resume the art of her rhymes?

Through the thin air there sounds a melody
In which Sirens sing their constant elegy.
No more waiting! Toward the swirling tides
Where the mirror of the sun shines high!

How should the nightingale sing?
To the darkness does she wing.

Ridiculous

You've passed the fish hundreds of times. Just a wooden decoration hung on the kitchen wall. This time though, you paused to look at it. The shade of blue caught your eye or something. It's pretty, you suppose. Kind of turquoise-y. Or maybe aquamarine. In any case, here you are, in the kitchen, not getting a glass of water as you had planned to, but instead having a staring contest with an inanimate object, as if holding its gaze long enough will reveal to you the meaning of life.

Ridiculous.

To be fair, the fish is just as likely to reveal deep insights about the universe as anything else you interact with daily. The chances aren't very high, but then again, your daily life is rather empty.

Still, ridiculous.

Ridiculous, the fish agrees.

You blink. Turn away. Then turn back. You alternate a few times, switching between clockwise and counterclockwise turns. Ridiculous, the fish says again.

You turn away (without turning back this time) and head towards the back door.

(Fish don't talk. Especially wooden ones. What were you thinking?)

The backyard is brighter than you expected. The turf has heated up under the sun, and you are reminded by the pain in your soles that you have forgotten to put on a pair of shoes. You go back inside.

The kitchen is on the way to the staircase. Ridiculous, the fish calls as you ascend. You count the steps as you walk, tapping your toes twice against the wood before actually stepping down.

At the top of the stairs, you remember that you still want a glass of water—the reason why you were in the kitchen to begin with. You go back downstairs in the same way, but this time you tap your heels instead of your toes.

In the kitchen, you accidentally bump your right hand against the counter. You backtrack, turn around, and bump your left hand against the same spot. You use both

hands to open the cabinet door and to remove a cup from the shelf. Then you close the door, again with both hands, the metal handle cool against your fingertips.

While you fill the cup, you turn your head (counterclockwise) to look at the fish. It is perfectly still and silent.

Of course it is. It's a wooden fish.

Your fingers feel suddenly cold. The cup has overflowed. Glaring at the faucet, you turn off the water and take a few sips so that the cup is no longer filled to the brim. You turn around again, clockwise this time.

"Preposterous," you say, and then when the fish doesn't respond (which of course it doesn't) you head back upstairs.

(Ridiculous, you hear.)

A Familiar Sound

You're such a familiar sound
and I could recognize your voice anywhere,
I miss you when you're gone.

Tone - Cadence - It's always the same,
Buzz
A certain buzzing or ringing sound, I know your name,
I know where to expect your voice,
Sometimes I am forced to listen to you
without a choice.

On the difficult days I crave your sound
even though some despise it,
If I could, I'd bottle you and put you on replay

When I have no one with me,
Your sound really hits me,
I miss your voice,
I miss you telling me the secrets that you
wouldn't tell anyone else but me.

I need you to sing to me when I fall asleep,
Deafening, I don't have to do much to hear you,
Sometimes you're embarrassingly loud but your sound isn't cheap,
It's hard to find
Like a penny on the ground instead of a dime.

Your sound reminds me of a box

Whose walls are made of titanium that has been shut off to everyone,
Everything and every place,
Like a feather floating through outer space.

Silence is such a familiar sound.

Advice for When You've Committed a Crime

When the doorbell rings at three in the morning, it's never good news. Stay in your bed for a few moments and savor the warmth of the blanket. If you are reading this, I will assume that you know this will be the last time you ever lie in your bed, and thus need not to spell this out for you. Don't spend too much time screeching at your dog when they alert you to the police's presence. You will probably never see them again and clearly you wouldn't want their last memory of you to be of you shouting.

When the doorbell rings at three in the morning, there are many things you absolutely must have already done. Buy many types of tea before you commit your crime. Anticipate that the police will be picky. If your locks are not long, I suggest you make them so. Hair extensions are a good way to go. Make sure to get them redone every couple of months and use a hair dryer to fluff them up a little bit. If your locks are not luscious, I suggest you scurry on down to the corner shop and buy yourself some nice shampoo and a comb. I absolutely do not condone cutting your hair. When you go to prison, they'll do that for you. Don't sit and think about what will happen when they take a razor to your head. If your locks are neither long nor luscious, I'm afraid there's very little hope. You can try to do one or the other but it is unlikely to work. I will repeat myself in a different manner: if your locks are neither long nor luscious, pick one and probably fail at it.

When the doorbell rings at three in the morning, don't be surprised. You know what you've done. *I didn't think they'd find me this quickly*, you think. It is, however, highly possible that they knew where you were all along. Expect as much. The police force is riddled with clever people, people whose sole purpose in life is to locate you...creepy!

When you get out of bed at three in the morning, take your time. Once you have spent your five minutes in bed, get up slowly and get dressed. I encourage you to put on your second-nicest outfit rather than your nicest once--that way, you will be taken to prison in style, and when they come to collect your belongings, they will see your nicest outfit and realize how fashionable you are. If you would like to waste two minutes of your last moments of freedom on brushing your teeth, feel free to do so.

Just remember that these are your final moments of freedom. Savor this step--I do not frequently allow readers to choose what they do. After you have done so, slowly fill up your kettle and turn it on. When it has boiled, settle yourself down on the couch. Remember that this will be the last comfortable thing you will ever sit on. Listen to the music of the police shouting at you outside, but do not accept their offers to come peacefully. These offers are quite frequently not followed through with, and are, quite frankly, a waste of time.

When the police storm your house at three in the morning, casually say *Hi!* to them. I can guarantee that this will shock them. When you offer them a cup of tea, they will also be surprised. Try to win them over by showing off your beautiful hair. Parade around the room to show them the second-nicest outfit that you own. You must display extreme confidence to the police officers who have come to take you into custody.

When you get arrested at three in the morning I expect you to follow all of these instructions. You may be telling yourself that my advice doesn't apply to you because you're a man, or because you hate tea, or you're bald, or whatever reason really. If you don't follow my advice, though, you may not spend enough time savoring the good things in life. You may also experience several embarrassing realities, including, but not limited to: not being dressed when the police arrive; making tea for police that they don't like; having your dog interrupt you while you show off your outfit; not smiling in your mugshot; having a hair out of place in your mugshot; having bags under your eyes in your mugshot; and, the worst embarrassment of them all: looking completely ugly in your mugshot. It's your choice whether or not you would like this to happen. Understand that not a single one of these actions will keep you from being arrested.

One can follow each of these steps and still get sentenced to life in prison, however, one will be sentenced to life in prison in *style*, and with *grace*. If you don't know what I'm talking about, I suggest you re-read this story. If you are a stupid person and you still don't know what to do, let me politely propose that you read, *Advice for When You've Committed a Crime, For Dummies*. This reading will provide a solid introduction to how to respond to your doorbell being rung at three in the morning, but for those who need a tad bit more help in life. But for now, ta-ta!

Apricot Tree

I was standing there
Below the apricot tree.

I was short,
Wearing my pink shoes,
Dirty because it had rained and there was mud.

I was standing there
Beneath the fascinating green tree
Its leaves wet and bright.

There weren't many apricots
A few, rare and special,
Orange like the sun setting behind the orchard.

I was standing there
You picked one from the tree,
smiled and washed it for me
in the fountain, fresh cold water splashed all over.
You handed it to me, told me to taste it.

I stood there.
Didn't know how to tell you I didn't like it
Too soft, too grainy
You were proud of it, but I was a picky child
so I kept it in my mouth and smiled.

I am standing here
Taller now, stronger and older
But I can't find the tree
My taste has changed

I would love an apricot from the apricot tree

I am standing here
I look around
Nothing is green anymore,
There's no sunset
no fountain, no trees

I am standing here
Without you.
I wish
we could talk below
the apricot tree
once more.

After Words

They would hear her. She was much too loud. Wedged behind the crumbling garden wall, she saw no other option. The satchel clicked as she opened it, and a slight clinking sound was heard as nimble fingers withdrew two vials. The first, shaped like a panther, was labeled *STEALTH* in a spindly script. The second simply read *CAMO*, the rest of the label faded from wear. It was in the shape of a moth. The corks of the vials gave way with a slight pop as the figure tipped her head back and drank from both simultaneously, being sure to leave some of the contents inside. Opening the satchel once more, the figure pulled out a comb, dark as the night and dappled with stars. The comb hissed as it slipped through her curls, stealing all color from the locks. She pushed her hood back, her hair now a perfect hollow black, and ran, silent as a cat's paws.

* * *

Chapter One

The thump of a newspaper jolted Camille from her thoughts. She went to the door automatically, bringing it inside. It seemed strange that something so normal would happen in the midst of all the chaos in the world, but she guessed people were trying to hold things together as best they could. Tossing the newspaper on the kitchen table, Camille glanced at the first page. The headlines, of course, were bright and bold, splashed with information about the world's latest predicament. "MORE WORDS GO MISSING—MEMORIES FADE WITH THEM" the front page read. Camille sighed, shoving the paper away. Her gaze shifted towards the ancient alabaster clock that hung on her wall, reminding her that she needed to leave. The sun had just begun to set and she knew she couldn't be late. Setting off, she grabbed her satchel and tucked in a black cloak, dark as a spill of ink. The winding streets, usually bustling with activity, were dead silent. Everyone was hidden in their homes in a desperate attempt to protect themselves. Night fell and a sharp gust of wind tore at her honey blond curls as Camille followed the empty streets to an old unremarkable alleyway, coming to a stop at a rickety door. A slim cord,

almost invisible to the naked eye, spooled out from a crack in the doorframe. It unfurled, tracing the shape of her face gently.

“Identification?” a silvery voice asked.

“Camille. Deliverer #33.” The cord withdrew, and the door creaked open. Camille slipped inside, shutting the door firmly behind her. In front of her, a wide variety of gleaming staircases twisted and turned, defying gravity. She started up the third staircase, made of a rose colored glass that glowed softly as she climbed. Branching off near the top, a narrow hallway led to a sapphire door labelled “Creatium.” Camille paused, peering through the small pane of glass set in the door. Inside, the factory’s Formulysts, all wearing blue coveralls, scurried around, holding great whisks and funnels. They were the ones responsible for counteracting the current crisis. When words--and the memories within them--first began to be stolen, a complex recipe was formulated, distilling the essence of knowledge and memory and turning them into physical solutions. Large quantities were created every day, each with a different purpose. Still looking through the window, Camille spotted a vial shaped like a woman, cradling a child in her arms. Looping script on the label read *LOVE*. The sludge inside was pinkish gold, and glimmered like starlight. She saw vials in the shape of dogs, ravens, trees, books, and many more, each with a different label. *JOY, WIT, STRENGTH, FAMILY HISTORY...* The great door opened suddenly, startling Camille. She turned away from the lab and continued up the stairs. At the top of the staircase, she saw a young man clad in blue coveralls. One of the Formulysts, she thought, and waved to him until he stopped.

“Hi,” she said, smiling at him. “Any progress being made?” The Formulyst wrung his hands, looking away. Camille leaned against the railing, her ice blue eyes trained on him until he shook his head.

“Well that depends... we’re learning more every day, which is important.” He paused, lowering his voice. “The problem is only getting worse. Knowledge is still being taken from books, old articles, you name it. We thought we’d have some information about who the culprits are by now, but they’ve managed to stay hidden.” Camille’s heart sank. She had been hoping that things would have at least gotten a little better.

“Thanks,” she murmured.

“No problem,” he replied. She started to turn, but he held out a hand to stop her. “Be careful out there. You’re a Deliverer, right? Have you heard about the latest attack?” Chills danced across Camille’s body, and a cold spike of fear stabbed through her. She knew her job was a dangerous one, but she considered it worth the risk. Still, it was hard

to ignore the fact that she was in great danger, especially with news of attacks spreading further each day.

“I haven’t. An abduction? Did they succeed?”

“Deliverer #21 was jumped last night. He made the mistake of taking the same route twice. A simple error, but a catastrophic one.”

“Maybe he forgot the way. The knowledge of what to do in that situation could have been stolen from him; any simple memory could be breached nowadays.” The Formulyst nodded grimly.

“Perhaps. He managed to destroy the contents of his satchel before the attackers could get their hands on them, but it was a close call.” Camille shivered as he continued. “You guys are the most wanted at the moment. The memory vials are far more concentrated than the knowledge found in any book or article. They are much more in demand, and if the thieves get their hands on them, the results could be disastrous.”

As they stood in silence, a melancholy chiming filled the air, accompanied with a soft emerald light, and Camille turned to go.

“Thanks for the info. I have to report to my station, but I’ll be careful.” She rushed down the hall, coming to a stop at a silver door. The room it led to wasn’t small, but it was by far the smallest room in the factory. Milky jewels in the shape of constellations glittered on the low ceiling and dark walls. Camille pushed open the door and was greeted by Aaron, the Delivery Master. He was distributing the vials to the various Deliverers from behind his gleaming amber desk, informing them of their duties as they passed by.

“Ah, Camille,” he said with a smile. “Here is tonight’s assignment. You have seven different deliveries tonight, all fairly large.” Camille shifted the vials into her satchel, making sure to close the fastening tightly. She slipped into her cloak, pulling the hood over her head to conceal her curls. Aaron made his way to the front of the small room, facing the prepared Deliverers. “Be careful, everyone. There have been more and more reports of attacks. Remember to move swiftly, be aware of your surroundings, and never take the same route twice.” With that, he dismissed them all.

Camille exited the building, bursting out into the cool night. As she walked, she wondered who she would deliver to that night. Over the past few weeks, Camille had grown to recognize the dynamics of the people she delivered to. Most people were generous with the memories and shared with family and friends, trying to get a bit for everyone. Some people were stingy. They slammed their doors immediately after snatching their vials, not wanting anyone else to get a single glimpse. She shook her head

at the thought of people like these. What good is a memory if it can't be shared? Sometimes, people peered through cracked doors with fear in their eyes, regarding the slender girl and her bulging satchel with suspicion. She couldn't blame them. The world was already a scary place, and now you didn't know who you could trust.

Camille wound her way through the streets, glancing every so often at the first address displayed on her assignment scroll. Halfway there, she felt a slight sense of unease, but brushed it off as just being paranoid. As she walked, familiar buildings rose up on either side of her. Camille froze. *Familiar*. With a chill, the Formulysts' words came rushing back to her. "*He made the mistake of taking the same route twice. A simple error, but a catastrophic one.*" Camille's heart slammed against her ribs. She tried to pay attention. She needed to figure out the best way to get to her destination, but she could only focus on the muffled thumping sounds that got nearer by the second.

Too late, she realized what they were. Footsteps.

To be continued

Yunqi (Nick) Zhang

Ode to this Capitalist World

We all live in a pigpen.
We rush and scramble to leave,
racing over each other
for a final slaughter.
“We couldn’t write poems,” I say.
For there’s no metaphor,
except the language itself.

The Lonely Chimney

Blinding flashes
pierced my dreams
like Fourth of July fireworks,
burst after burst after burst.
No rumbling thunder,
no pattering raindrops,
nothing but silent slashes
of brilliant white light.

Three days later,
I woke to an apocalypse.
The skies painted ocher,
glowering with anger.
Snow floated down,
not fluffy white flakes,
but grey ash and charred leaves
scattered through the grass.

Three miles away,
a cabin in the forest, nestled
among towering redwoods.
A peaceful retreat
filled with memories.
Warm, crackling logs,
hot chocolate, gingerbread
and joy once filled the cabin.

From cozy refuge
to raging inferno.

Smooth pine floorboards,
worn leather armchairs,
fading photographs,
and precious memories:
a mournful pyre
engulfed in flames.

And all that remains:
a barren landscape, scorched dirt.
And among charred redwoods
stands the lonely chimney.



Photo Credit: Sugano, Dai and Bay Area News Group. Jessica York, "63,000 Acres Burn in Santa Cruz Mountains," *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 22 Aug 2020, <https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2020/08/21/small-gains-made-in-santa-cruz-county-firefight/>.

A Fraction of Infinity, Unwanted

When considering the history of punishment and torture for any ancient civilization, too much context is included to get a meaningful understanding of personal impacts. So let's start with that, shall we? Let's start with you.

You can't die.

Oh, you've tried, but this curse (No, it's not a blessing) won't let you. The people who forced this on you have tried as well, gleefully hacking into you, breaking your skin, and crushing your bones until you don't have any blood to bleed and your wounds stop healing on their own. Each slash and blow deliver their pain and their hurt, but none kill you. And they know this. And they keep going specifically *because* they can't kill you, for you see, this is punishment. *Your* punishment. You are an example.

You never expected to be on the receiving end of this, your curse of living death, but you had to commit your crime because you were being true to yourself. And you were caught. And they reported. And it's not fair because you were trying to live as yourself, but they don't care, because you're not allowed to be you. No one is.

In you, they see an example, so the next thing you know you're trapped on a stage laid bare for everyone. A sea of masses, people, *everyone*, summoned by them to see you and be warned.

Now you're on your knees, watching horrified as one of them brings a bowl of liquid, shiny and silver, clear as crystal, slowly closer. Your eyes widen and you fight, you struggle, keep your mouth closed, and *don't let that go down* because you've heard the stories. Hushed and whispered, spread by them, about previous examples, you know what that liquid means. It means your death, but worse. It means your life, but hell. It means suffering for eternity. Forever.

It goes down.

The crowd roars and cheers, (or at least most do) all they see is another wrongdoer, another criminal whose story can be used to keep their children on the right path. But truthfully? That's not you. That's not anyone who finds their way onto

this stage. But that doesn't matter because you're here and now it's over. You can't fight it, you can't win. It's inside you and you don't feel different but you know *everything's* different. You truly feel lost.

Hush and silence now, they test it to make sure. A blade is brought, a blade is sharpened, and a blade is put against your neck. A blade is swung, down down down. And it's agony, pure burning agony. Your head should have rolled, your life should have ended but it doesn't and instead, you feel a pain that no human should ever feel because it's usually blocked by death. They're satisfied, you can tell.

Then you're stabbed and left, chained on the stage, sword through your back. Left there day after day, not only for the people to see but for you to drain. You're not fed and you don't drink so eventually you run out of resources. No more blood, no more urine, no more sweat, and nothing left to heal your wounds. It takes days, weeks, of lying there. Unable to sleep, the pain is too bad and it won't dull due to the Curse. It grinds on your sanity, but this is only just the beginning.

When they're done with you, when you don't need to be there for people to warn their kids "don't do that, don't become *that*" they take you. They wash away the caked blood (months old at this point) and drag you somewhere else. You try to resist, but you're hollow, empty, weak. Your limbs are on the permanent edge of pins and needles so you don't pose much of a setback.

They take you far away, to a prison specifically built for people like you, filled with other "examples." Open the door, down the steps, and you're thrown in the cell face down. There's movement. Not all of the cells are filled. Like the one in front of you, it's empty. There are other people locked away, all suffering in varying degrees of wariness. You can tell some have been down here for centuries, and now that's your fate too. Abandoned. Alone. To suffer. Forever. And it gets worse. The guards there, just because they can, leave you with metal spikes, almost spears driven into your back, your chest, your arms, and your legs.

It hurts.

Now we could go through all the time you spend down there, the sanity-grating barely-conscious comatose state you find yourself in. The hopeless fear you have whenever lucidity comes rushing back, fear that this is how it will be, fear of suffering through this with no end, no rest, no break from the pain or of just existing, never never never, and always you wish for death because it means something *else*,

something different, an end. But let's move past all this because something important happens.

The doors open once again, and another figure is dragged in. This is around the time you decide it's not worth it to breathe anymore (the pain of empty lungs is worth less than the effort of sucking air in), mind you, but other than that you don't know how long it's been. There's a clatter, a clang, and you realize that whoever it is has been deposited in the cell in front of you. And (this is important) their hand flops through the bars. And something inside of you twinges. A longing, a loneliness. Something that takes your barely lucid mind time to consider as the sound of pouring rocks and gravel is heard in that cell. (Later you realize this is their punishment, pinned and crushed underneath earth and rocks.)

Finally, they're gone, and you make a decision. You gather your strength. You fight against gravity, you fight against stone which has practically bonded with your belly, and the spears driven through you into the earth. You scootch ever so slightly forward, just so you can reach, just so you can have an anchor to remind you that you're not alone. The spears tear through you, sending waves of pain stronger than you've felt in a while, but you *need this*. It's indescribable how much this chance of companionship, this chance of something other than stone grinding insanity means to you, but it does.

Using everything you have, you inch that much closer until you can place your hand on top of theirs. There's a moment where nothing happens. Panic spikes in you. Rejection? You prepare for the worst when a slow, gentle squeeze comes through the rough, calloused hand. You squeeze back. Everything seems slightly better now.

And that's how it stays. For years. One new prisoner turns to two turns to five. And then they stop. Time keeps passing but the doors remain closed, the dust settles, and eventually the metal in the spikes that keep you down rust away.

You don't care though, it's a change you barely notice. The stillness, the quiet and the long pensive years still erode away your sanity like water (when was the last time you saw that?) against the shore. But now when it gets too much, too unbearable or you need something to keep you grounded you squeeze the hand. You always get a response, and even if it takes effort, when they need it, when they squeeze your hand, you respond back. You have an anchor, something to exist for (not live, you can't call this living), someone to think about. It would be easier for you both to lay there,

placid, but you don't. You keep each other grounded and remind each other of your humanity.

Time passes, you keep this routine. Reaching out when it gets too unbearable, and responding when reached out too. One day everything changes though. There's a rumble. You almost missed it, but you were particularly lucid this day. Another one shakes the walls and disturbs the dust. Then the doors blast open, and harsh white light fills the room. Artificial, demanding, and *bright*. It's not the sun, not a fire or a torch, but something else. Something that fills you with hope. Because the light means one thing. It means that a theory that's been forming in the back of your mind, one you've been too afraid to entertain, might be right.

You've been left down here for thousands and thousands of years, but unlike you, the world isn't static. It changes, it grows. It *lives*. The society that trapped you is gone and dusted, that much you can be sure, but that just means there's room. Room for what? Room for hope, room for a future.

And room for you to be found.

In the Garden

Gray rain fills the warm spring day,
fills the garden, so the tree boughs wave sheepishly.
Their golden blossoms blister with lost hopes of fruition.
Two jars of thick honey rest in the shade;
damp, rotting, sweetly smelling,
they came from the throng of bees that fleets by
as we sit still on the swing. We sit, though we could swing.
Our shoulders carry the heavy sky,
and a little weaker grows our dream.

calla lilies

i keep seeing calla lilies everywhere i go—
they're a beautiful flower, aren't they?
a silky white, all encompassing
being.

they seem to grow where they don't belong:
stems peeking out of rivers, sewers,
i don't believe they were
intentionally planted, intentionally watered, intentionally cared for.
and yet they grow.

you know, they have a right to be ugly.
they starve, fend for themselves,
the yearning for growth wired into their DNA.
somehow, they survive without external care,
and yet

they care for everyone else.
their beauty provides calm and peace,
rejuvenation for anyone who sets their gaze
upon them.
they're not perfect, but they try.
doesn't that make them more lovely?

so thank you, calla lilies —
the flower of rebirth — for being everywhere i go.

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