

2022

REFLECTIONS

RED BANK CATHOLIC
LITERARY & PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINE





The Blossom and the Fall From Grace

corrupted conspicuous characters
abandoning her stolen laughter. Why?
we can't help but watch as she flourishes
he touches her, she shrivels and falls away

he's cancerous, she's corrupted and cold
breathing venom through the once flawless soul
a betrayer by any other name
is only a ghost of former, past days

new laughter is snide; a shadow there falls
No, no disguising the gilded smile
treacherous deception behind the mask
I am afraid of what will happen next

a time-old caesarian sentiment
a serpent bite or a crafted curved blade
slicing and dicing along arteries
raincoat cannot deflect the inner storm

if you give a grey wolf an alibi
the wolf becomes a fox: dangerous sly
and along the dark twisted woodland road
lies a blossom fallen from former grace

Aly Sweeney

Glancing at the Clock

Think of all that we could accomplish if
we eliminated the need to wait.
What could be done with the time squandered while
the stop light's red, or the line won't progress?

Seconds consumed while stopped at a crosswalk
or awaiting a restaurant's best meal
could be devoted to perfecting skills,
invention, or our chosen profession.

We cannot truly hate the need to wait,
for the time seen as wasted is vital.
It is like a meditation with which
we can wander within our ignored thoughts.

Think of all that we could accomplish if
we appreciated the need to wait.
What could be noticed with the precious time
given to us on a line or at a stop light?

Alexis Pavlinec





I'll Be Ok

My standards are on the floor while I pick out
the next victim that my heart will intertwine with
while it continues to heal from the last.

Anyone that will distract my youthful mind
from the heartache caused by an invidious person
who got the title of "love of my life".

For every guy that entered my world
retreated with a small part of my soul as souvenir.
It regrew into a deformed piece of me.

So sick of hearing, you will find your person.
You forget there was no indifferent boy that fed you your happiness at
one point.
You were once whole, before he claimed half of you,
Breaking off another part of your person with every tear that falls
from your face.

So tainted by each one of their loves that being solus felt impossible.
Every day is a repetitive cycle of wondering when you will ever love
yourself again.
I woke up this morning and spent the day alone
and it finally felt as if every piece taken belongs to me again.

Ali Campillay

Static Change

The colors of the earth change without fault;
The green fades from brown to white and so on,
Footsteps crackle leaves and then tread fine sand.
It is almost like clockwork I suppose,
Certainly humanity could relate-
To remain so varied yet unchanging
For invention cannot prevent mistakes
And humans like to make the same mistakes.
And for those who do not learn from the past,
They will ever be doomed to repeat it.

Alexis Pavlinec

Rubies

i once read real rubies sink
i think
not that I have any to test
none of my rubies are second best
but in the case of finding such
I won't be eager to try as much
who wants to know they were frauded
all of my rubies, thus exhausted

Aly Sweeney



Dreams

I dream of a world filled with peace
A home that is caring and kind

I dream of a world that is clean
A world with clear oceans and animals living in peace and harmony
Animals should not fear for their lives because humans are negligent

I dream of a world that is free from harsh words
A world in which kindness roams free

I dream of a world that is equal
A world that is even and fair

I dream of a world that is close
A world that is tightly knit and full of community
A world that is tightly knit between you and me.

Grace Anderson

Soulmates

I love you
Three words, eight letters
And yet they have never been more true
If only you were here to hear me say it

I wonder what I would have said if I had known before
That you will always be my one and only
For this longing is foreign no more
Our hearts were never meant to be this lonely

In truth, you can never truly love something til you've lost it
But for you, I promise I won't quit
Though I wish I could turn back time
To see you smile as you once did
I promise I will find you again, my soulmate

Isabelle Akunwafor





I Can't Keep Up

savor the seconds
long for its end
new moment beckons
grief or godsend

outside of the action
amalgam of thoughts
I watch my life happen
but can't make it stop

press pause or slow down!
still yet to mature
each instant will pass
patience's demure

tears while it's raining
breeze in a tornado
don't bother complaining
sit under a willow

the price is potent
pain won't last for long
but one precious moment
will too soon be gone

Madeleine Carpenter



Shark Attack

The shark is a dangerous and evil creature
Swimming through the sea, waiting to attack
Innocent people lounging in the water
All of a sudden they see perfidious black

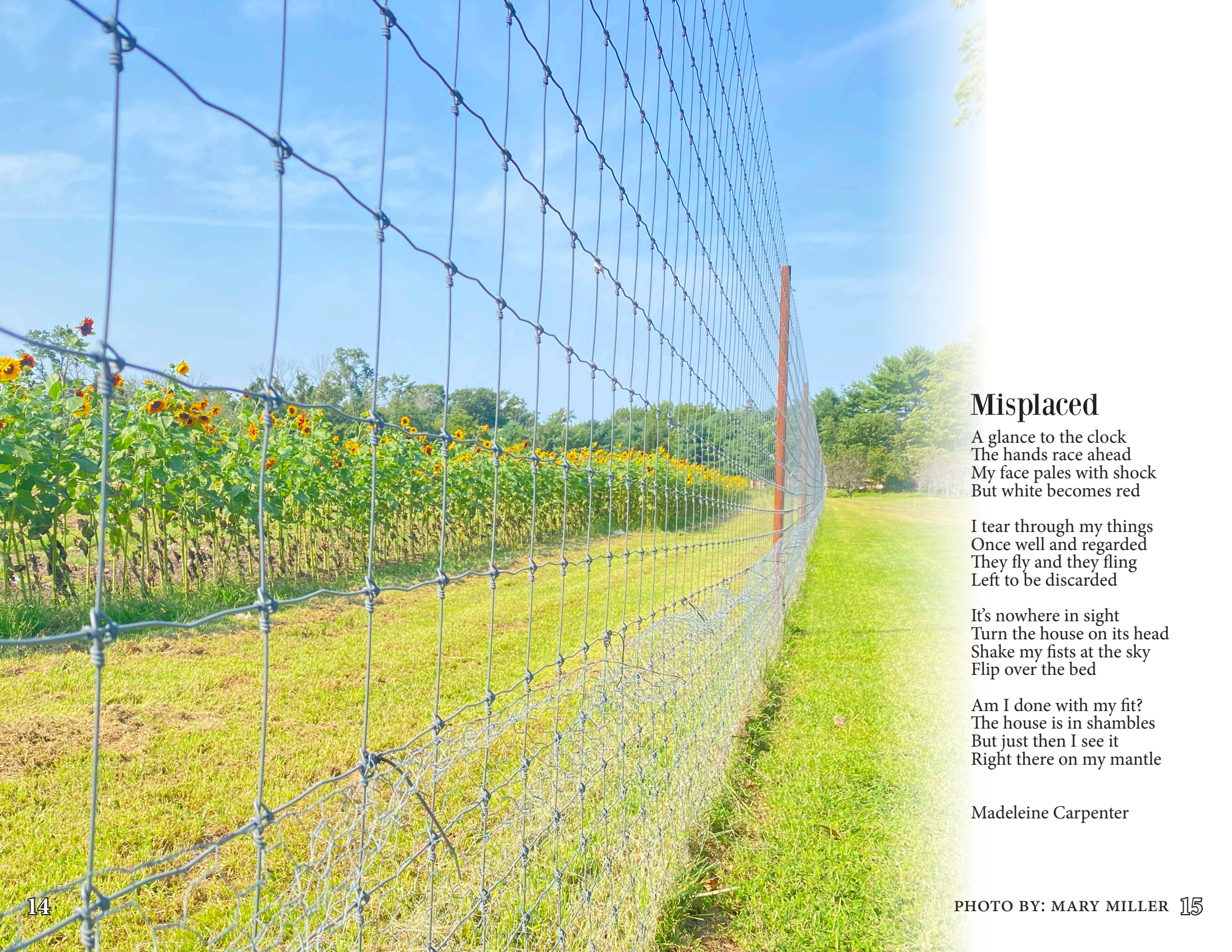
The shark, simply feeding on nearby fish
Has no intent of a human snack
But still the people swim far away
Leaving the shark, alone, in the abyss

The human sailing on quite a large boat
His fishing poles upright, ready to provoke
The shark, alone, still feeding on the fish
Looks up to see a great shadow of black

The human has only one intent: attack-
The shark now dead, soul permanently cracked
Along with the water, feeling empty in fact
All that is left lies in the human's eyes: black

The human, satisfied with his act
Will now invade the shell of what the shark once was
For its fins, organs, skin, and teeth, to be exact
Now who is the real victim of attack?

Elena Dimitri



Misplaced

A glance to the clock
The hands race ahead
My face pales with shock
But white becomes red

I tear through my things
Once well and regarded
They fly and they fling
Left to be discarded

It's nowhere in sight
Turn the house on its head
Shake my fists at the sky
Flip over the bed

Am I done with my fit?
The house is in shambles
But just then I see it
Right there on my mantle

Madeleine Carpenter

Losing Someone

Losing someone.
One of the hardest things
We all face at least once
In our lives.
Sadness fills your body
And the tears start falling
Down your face
Like rain on a spring day.
Your mind goes blank
And you question why you lost
That person or why
He left you.
Everything happens for
A reason. All you can do
Is be grateful for the memories
You shared with him.
No matter if you lost that person
Through death or a breakup, you
Must be appreciative for
What someone lost has taught you.
One of the hardest things we face
Is losing someone.

Ariana Garmany





The Light

Light starts to trickle down
Pouring over on God's Earth
Bringing joy and clearing winter's frown

No longer covered by a blanket of gray
Leading animals out of their rest
And bringing blossoms back to stay
With brightness touching each person's soul.

Brooke Marinelli

History Repeating Itself

I always wanted to tell a story
One of those tales where the world stands behind a fearless leader
With moments of victory, defeat, and everything in between
And the lines between good and evil were blurry
But the world has already written those chapters

From innovation to depressions, from growth to pain
The world's traditions have always stayed the same
The pattern always starts with peace
Followed by illness and a war that litter our streets
Only to learn the century has only just begun
Who would have thought in millions of years we still cannot
break this trend

People used to tell me that life was a cycle
We are born to live; however we are also born to die
The funny thing about our history, even at its pinnacle
Our world has written our story and wants to read it again

Isabelle Akunwafor

The Beach

The beach.
I sit in my blue folding chair
Reading as the wind blows through my hair.
The waves slowly crash down
As people walk by from this small town.
The sun shines bright on me
So strong it lets me see out onto the sea.

The beach is my favorite place to be,
I can sit here all day paying not one fee.
As the summer begins to fade away
There goes another season gone in a day.

Isabella Holovach

Florida

The sunshine state will forever hold
A special place in my heart.

From my coastal upbringing
To a coming-of-age story
Full of past loves
And tan lines
To coconut water on a beach
And the salty residue of the ocean's kiss
Life in Florida is a bliss.

From memories with friends and families,
The days spent every spring break
Staying awake until the early mornings
And rising again to watch the sunrise together
A daily routine.

The sunshine state will forever hold
A special place in my heart.

Emily Heller



Gymnastics

Flipping through the air
With the wind in my hair

Then performing with grace
There is no better place--

Whether win or lose
I know it is my muse

Alongside my best of friends
I hope this never ends.

Avery Shaughnessy

Springtime

out of cave! out of hole!

bear, rabbit, little mole, hatch from egg in nest in trees the birds are
back and so are bees the flowers bloom the leaves are green how do
they know it's spring?

build your web! the bugs are back!

little spider dressed in black, bears, rabbits, birds, and bees, flowers,
grass, and trees, just like me their faces are warm- that's how they
know spring has come

Casey Prior

Adventures

I turn the pages
Adventure awaits me here
Reality fades

Savannah Issacson

Summer

Summertime is almost here
And the days are drawing near

Soon our days will be free of worry
Come, let summer hurry!

Veronika Baksht





I Dream of a World

I dream of a world that is free of grudge
Where people are not so quick to judge
Where we approach things with an open mind
And avoid seeing them from one side

I dream of a world that is colorful in sight
Where bright and countless stars illuminate the night
Where bodies of water are free of contamination
And we treat our Earth with adoration

Even if we start making a change with the smallest steps
Lending a hand, giving a compliment, or picking up trash helps

Veronika Baksht

Dreams

I dream of a world filled with peace
A home that is caring and kind

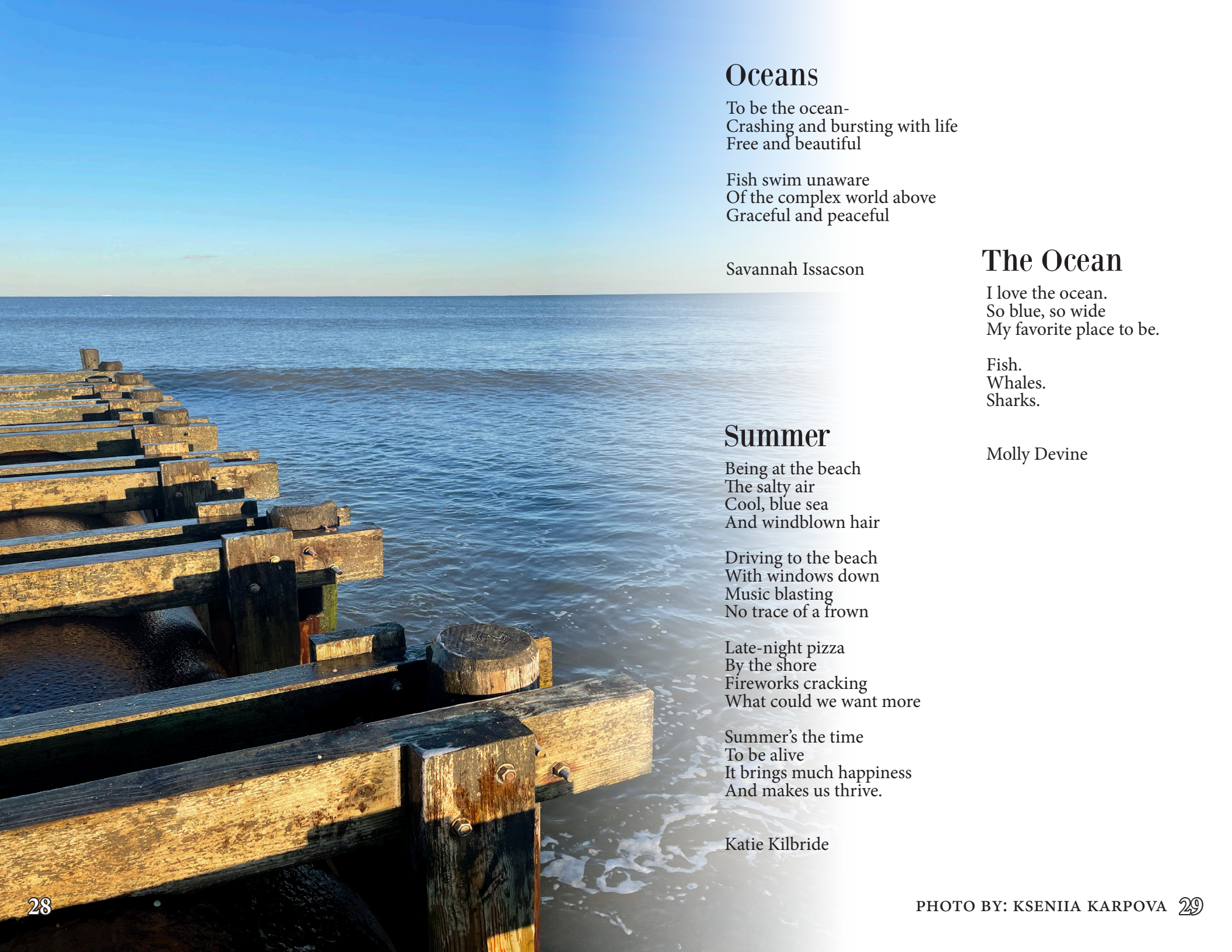
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I dream of a world that is close
A world that is tightly knit and full of community
A world that is tightly knit between you and me.

Grace Anderson



Oceans

To be the ocean-
Crashing and bursting with life
Free and beautiful

Fish swim unaware
Of the complex world above
Graceful and peaceful

Savannah Issacson

The Ocean

I love the ocean.
So blue, so wide
My favorite place to be.

Fish.
Whales.
Sharks.

Molly Devine

Summer

Being at the beach
The salty air
Cool, blue sea
And windblown hair

Driving to the beach
With windows down
Music blasting
No trace of a frown

Late-night pizza
By the shore
Fireworks cracking
What could we want more

Summer's the time
To be alive
It brings much happiness
And makes us thrive.

Katie Kilbride

Fascination

Four years of high school come to a fast close
Four years of highs and some very real lows
The lessons I've learned have made me better
And something I will always remember

So many friendships that are good and true
I'm ready to move on to something new
A future filled with new friends and places
But I will always miss childhood faces

So many new troubles will come my way
But I will face them each and every day
And although I will miss my only home
I am excited to live on my own

Out with the old and in with brand new
Looking forward to college and what will brew
New things to see and new places to go
But I will always find my way back home

As I put on my gown and put on my cap
I remember that I'm close to home on the map
Walking down the aisle at graduation
Four years at RBC were truly a fascination

Lauren Mason

Dreams of Equality

I dream a world where all lives are accepted and none will be judged for who they are

I dream a world where no one faces discrimination for looks or opinions

I dream a world where people respect each other and spread only kindness throughout the globe

I dream a world where people respect the earth, where climate change is not an issue

I dream a world where the earth is a beautiful place

With vibrant plants

And lively animals

I dream a world where we can roam freely, with no restriction

I dream a world full of peace and affection.

Molly Kelly





Dear Best Friend

it's like dropping a taco.
carefully constructed
vibrant masterpiece
surrounded with care and
packed with love

it starts to fall apart
only bits at the ends, then a tremor
a crack that runs too deep
tears one into two
suddenly nothing holds

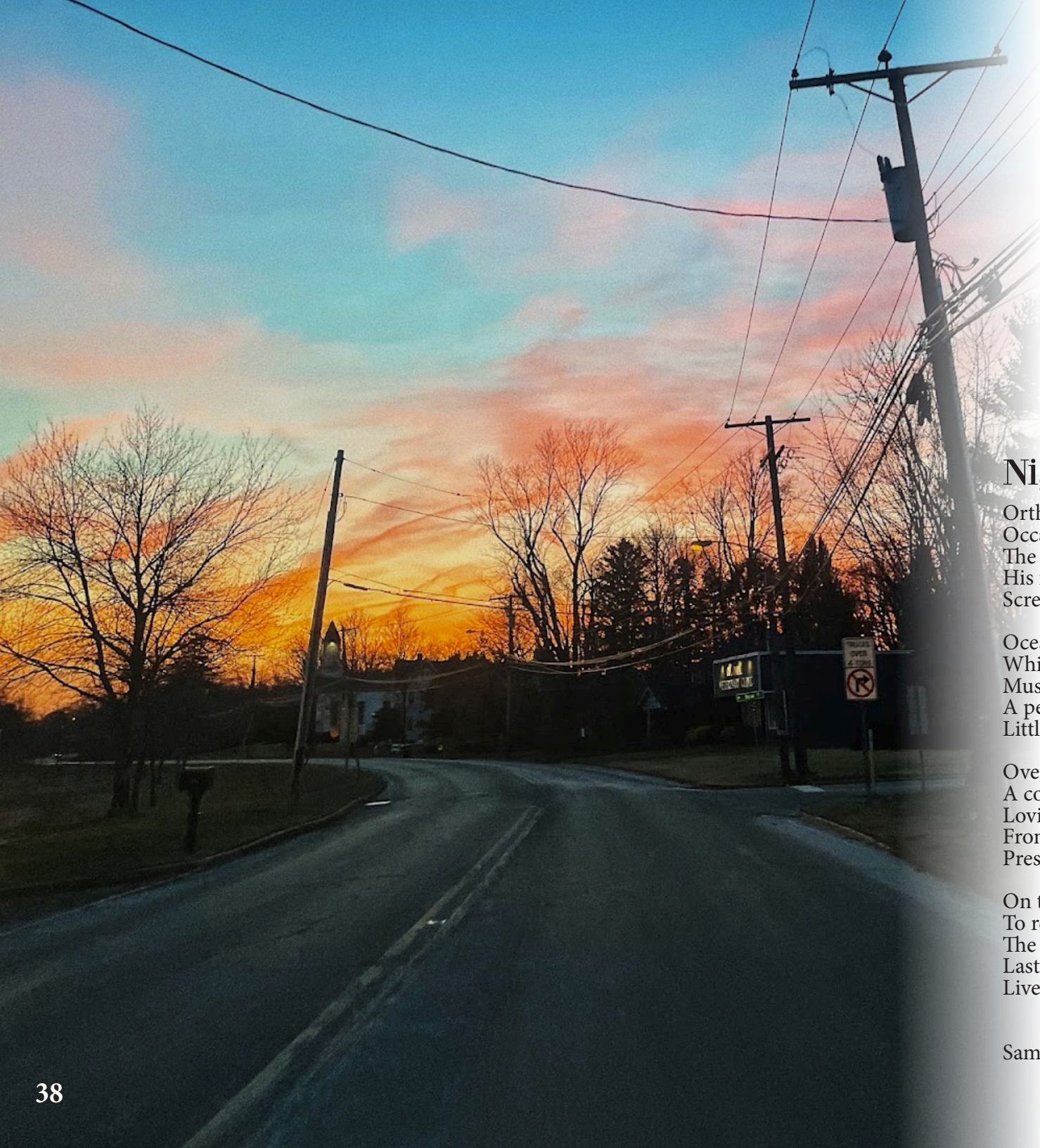
scattered pieces on the plate
craving something to bring them together again
and only realizing then
dropping a taco is like
losing a friend.

Aly Sweeney

The Race

They jump the gun, the ones wearing white sneakers
Their head start doesn't lead to disqualification.
The official says, "It is what it is- just do your best".
The rest of us run with out worn-out shoes, using all our strength
attempting to catch up
but it seems our best just isn't good enough.
I'm nearing the halfway mark ready for a water break
I arrive but there's nothing left to drink
I see the ones in white sneakers gulping their water down, feeling
recharged.
The spectators are cheering and praising them for their hard work,
but they turn their noses up at me and the others.
I feel blisters form as I run faster and faster
I've endured the pain of The Race and I'm hungry to win.
My legs move more quickly until everything around me is a blur
I pass all those who started in front of me- I hope they feel conquered.
I'm so close to the end I can almost taste the victory,
but before I cross the finish line I'm pushed onto the ground.
My hands and knees are skinned, the ones behind me run to help,
I'm waiting for the official to call out something, please just anything
I look up my eyes teary from my injury
Everything seems to be against me
I get back on my feet trying to regain my tenacity
I look up but the white sneakers have already crossed the finish line.

Ella Whille



Nights

Orthodox house, darkened by the silence
Occasional click of keys permeates
The warm gentle air, open windows touch
His face, eyes eager and wide facing the
Screen, strategy, surreal situations.

Ocean avenue, lit by stereo
Whistling, drawing, beautiful sound setting.
Music and wind light up the best of her,
A perfect symphony of breath, waves, rides.
Little did she know these Nights wouldn't last.

Over the country, new friends brought new life:
A cohort of players, bound together
Loving the game, the rush, and each other.
From quarantine arose The Nights, ever
Present, in the unlikely form of smile.

On these Nights, time forgot its own purpose:
To realize, to remember, to live in
The moment, to appreciate every
Last second of sound, every memory.
Live in these Nights, dreaming of memory.

Sam Garcia

PHOTO BY: MONICA GREENBERG 39



Time for Annapolis

There are six weeks until my departure,
Induction day is just around the bend.
I cannot wait to meet many new friends,
Like-minded people on to greater things.

I will begin each day at five-thirty
Starting with making my bed and cleaning.
Then, morning meal formation and training,
Moving into the afternoon and night.

Each day will bring many challenging tasks,
But there are none that I cannot handle.
I have prepared for the adversity
And I strive to reach for prosperity.

After six weeks of hard work and trials,
I will see my family and my friends.
It will then be time to begin my journey
As a young and true navy midshipman.

The naval academy is special,
It produces excellent young people,
Men and women bound for greatness
While serving their country with honor.

Anna Gotterup

Winter Weather is Ending Soon

Winter weather is ending very soon
There will be no more snow for us to see
There are many flowers, butterflies and bees
The trees will grow their leaves in the spring sun
The children will play outside and giggle
Day by day the sun will go down later
It may rain a lot but that is ok
Everything is better in the springtime
The cold will be replaced by the warm days
The sun is shining high above the sky
People are smiling all around the town
Nothing is as wonderful as the spring
Every year I am grateful when the spring comes
It's spring, it's spring, it's spring, it's spring, it's spring

Wendy Truong

Flight

The question stands in learning how to fly
I watch as my companions spread their wings
And soar above the never-ending sky.
So patiently, I wait for my own time.

They glide past clouds and travel to the sun
A warmth which soothes the feathers on their necks
The incandescent light, so full of love
They seem to be content, their time has come.

And time and time again I wait so long
For chance to grant me courage in its call
When I can join the masses and belong
In open air, the object of my heart.

Soon the day-star turns itself to night
The wind so soft it whispers in my ear,
Come closer, have no fear, and take your flight.
I slowly climb, encompassed by the dark.

Now it is here, the moment I so want
I let my instinct tell me what to do
My nervous thoughts, I seem to have forgot
My time has come; I breathe in, and take off.

Sophia Nazareno





The Cold War

As superpowers fight to protect their world
Against each other, countries must choose
Into a divide, many nations are hurled
So now the only choice they have is to lose

A once great capital split between the two
Soviet power has no intention to share
Over their troop the western power flew
Giving resources to once enemies through the air

Once one leader learns he cannot surpass the other
They work to improve a weapon to cause only pain
They spy and hide to create another
To win this cold war, each believes he cannot refrain

Throughout Asia, unity has not been mastered
For better or for worse superpowers show their aid
Wars fought with no winners only disaster
Countries are destroyed only for a message to be conveyed

As tensions rise to new-found heights
Our countries being their fight to win the race
The creation of NASA a Russian dog incites
Children learn how to get their country to space

The world as it is will forever be cold
As life is divided between Russia and our States
As we begin to believe the lies we are told
To fear the ones we have grown to hate

For a fear we've had since before we were born
Family and friends we loved are isolated in an instant
For the world has never been so cold
So we must all turn to ice.

Isabelle Akunwafor

To Anchorage

Wandering through the Alaskan wilderness,
a trip to which
has seemingly whisked away
all my worries,
vanquished quarrels,
eradicated wrongdoings

Perpetuating my beliefs in running,
not for sport, but away

Away from what lingers,
I fly.

Across the continent,
off of the contiguous United States
to a faraway place
where few may venture
I sit and ponder; how did I get here?
Six hours deep and twisted,
entrenched in the Alaskan wilderness
whistling rivers run rampant,
glacial breezes scratch my skin.

I will forever remember the moment when
the plane touched down
in a foreign land
and the place so far from the shore
felt more familiar to me
than anywhere I'd ventured before

The land where the Alaskan midnight sun shines
and all my worries have been washed way
by the sheer actions of
a United Airlines flight out of Newark.

Alexa Kiernan



Trust the Process

Art: never finished, only abandoned
The bitten apple, the fallen Eden

Year seven, worlds of imagination
Life with no individualization
The paint rest, a temporary adieu
A world of color that ceased until run 2:32

Grade seven, a stroke of paint to the face
Each brush drawing a brighter colored hue
A creation I felt proud to showcase
Until the world started to become blue

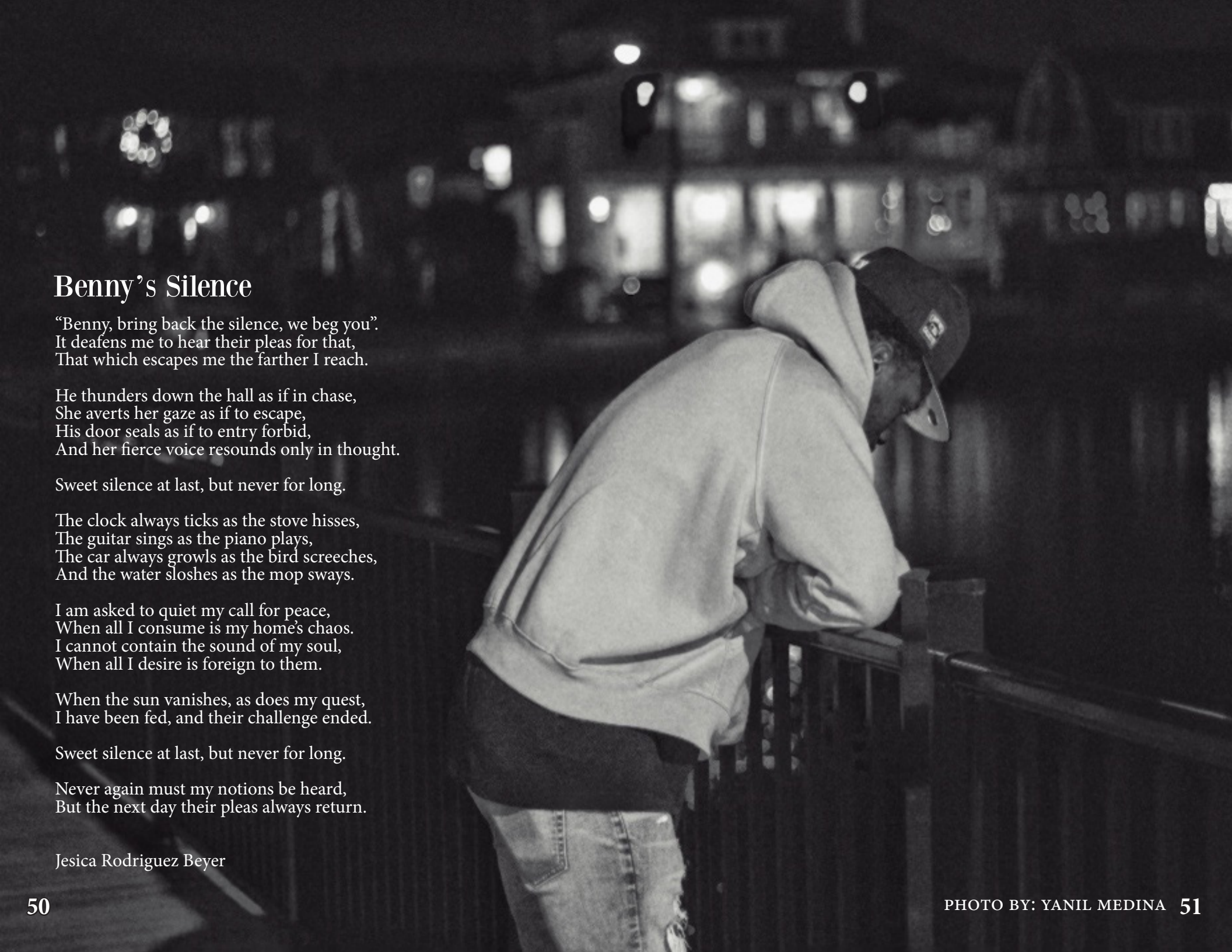
Seventeen, my creation, cardboard-packed
The global pandemic, a slight setback
A new world alone, the brush does not know
Who I am, and friends through the telephone

In seven months, a canvas of color
The wallpaper, a creation of my own
Negative voices, colored monotone
Reclaiming role as the illustrator

Times of seven drew the realization
Art is rewritten, never abandoned

Elizabeth De Julius





Benny's Silence

"Benny, bring back the silence, we beg you".
It deafens me to hear their pleas for that,
That which escapes me the farther I reach.

He thunders down the hall as if in chase,
She averts her gaze as if to escape,
His door seals as if to entry forbid,
And her fierce voice resounds only in thought.

Sweet silence at last, but never for long.

The clock always ticks as the stove hisses,
The guitar sings as the piano plays,
The car always growls as the bird screeches,
And the water sloshes as the mop sways.

I am asked to quiet my call for peace,
When all I consume is my home's chaos.
I cannot contain the sound of my soul,
When all I desire is foreign to them.

When the sun vanishes, as does my quest,
I have been fed, and their challenge ended.

Sweet silence at last, but never for long.

Never again must my notions be heard,
But the next day their pleas always return.

Jesica Rodriguez Beyer



A Dark and Quiet Abyss of Empty

A dark and quiet abyss of empty
Soon to be home of all to exist
A miniscule speck of everything
What we now adore and address as home
Though the knowledge we have is minimal

An explosion of beauty in silence
Brings up the infinity of life
The vastness of time cooks our universe
Every particle and breath of like
Given to this world by God above us

The beauty and horror of infinite
An unfathomable distance from us
Creation of uncertain origin
Perfection to a degree beyond thought
A gift from One we will not meet while here

Life emotion thought inanimate
Balance on an invisible metric
From an insignificant speck of all
Our beautiful universe has come from
A dark and quiet abyss of empty

Owen Cavanagh



2022 Reflections:

Moderator:

Mrs. Jacomme

Layout & Design:

Miss. Gasparini

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