

2023

REFLECTIONS

RED BANK CATHOLIC
LITERARY & PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINE





Advice in Spring

Skies cry
While snow dies
Flowers bloom
No more gloom
Springtime has arrived
Trees that have been deprived
Time for them to thrive
It's well advised
Take a walk
Around the block
Look around
Spring is found

Abby Zebick

All Alone, The Dollsmith Sings

With careful hands, and heavy hearts, with threads
of twine, and fabrics dark

All alone,

The dollsmith sings.

Callused palms weave intricate patterns into the
stranger dead and gone.

An empty heart.

It stares back at him

Listening

Waiting

Watching

His hands caress its delicate form,

A labor of love for nothing more than a figure from
the deep

Recesses of the mind.

What will we do today?

Playful buttons blinked back the evening's dew.

The stray thread must be cut

An imperfection removed.

Where will we go today?

Metallic screech from longing lips

Cotton fountains broke through tender feelings of
words never said

Gone.

The threads tied together,

Life has been given to a masterpiece once more.

The last of the night's warm embrace fades

Into cooling sun.

The dollsmith sings.

Jamie Gill



Back to Reality

Endless ticking of the clock passes
Light moves throughout the day east to west
A bottomless pit leading forever
Falling in reverse hoping to grab, hold
To something that reminds us of the
Past. Time, What exactly is the meaning?
“Nothing lasts forever, nothing stays the same” -
A statement of ultimate value.
Isn't it strange- time changes every day.
My parents always say, “Don't carry the past”
I questioned what they meant, able to
Utilize my time as best I can.
Somehow time escapes my grasp, my tight grip
Loosened, allowing the days to move on
The ticking of the clock brings me back to
Reality. Again, time is pulled out of my grasp
And I'm falling in reverse yet again
Another day older, wishing I could
Stop growing up and hold on to moments
Tick-tock, tick-tock, back to reality.

Gabriella Graham

Broken Home, Sold

Dear home, truth be told, we treat you as though you do not get old

We say that we own you, though it's clear we stole you
When was the last time we thought to console you?

You've given us gold, yet our attitude is cold

We take for granted the beauty you hold

There's grace your mold that cannot be owned

How are things growing from dirt now store sold?

If it doesn't sparkle we treat it so awful

We tear you apart, act like we're owed

Strip you of all that cannot be posed

Even when we disturb you reward those who serve you

In the eye of your mess there's success and distress

You're just one paradox but we're stuck in a box

I will broaden my thoughts, stop thinking like robots

The truth is I fear what one day will unfold

Will my kids ever see the power you hold?

How many times has this story been told?

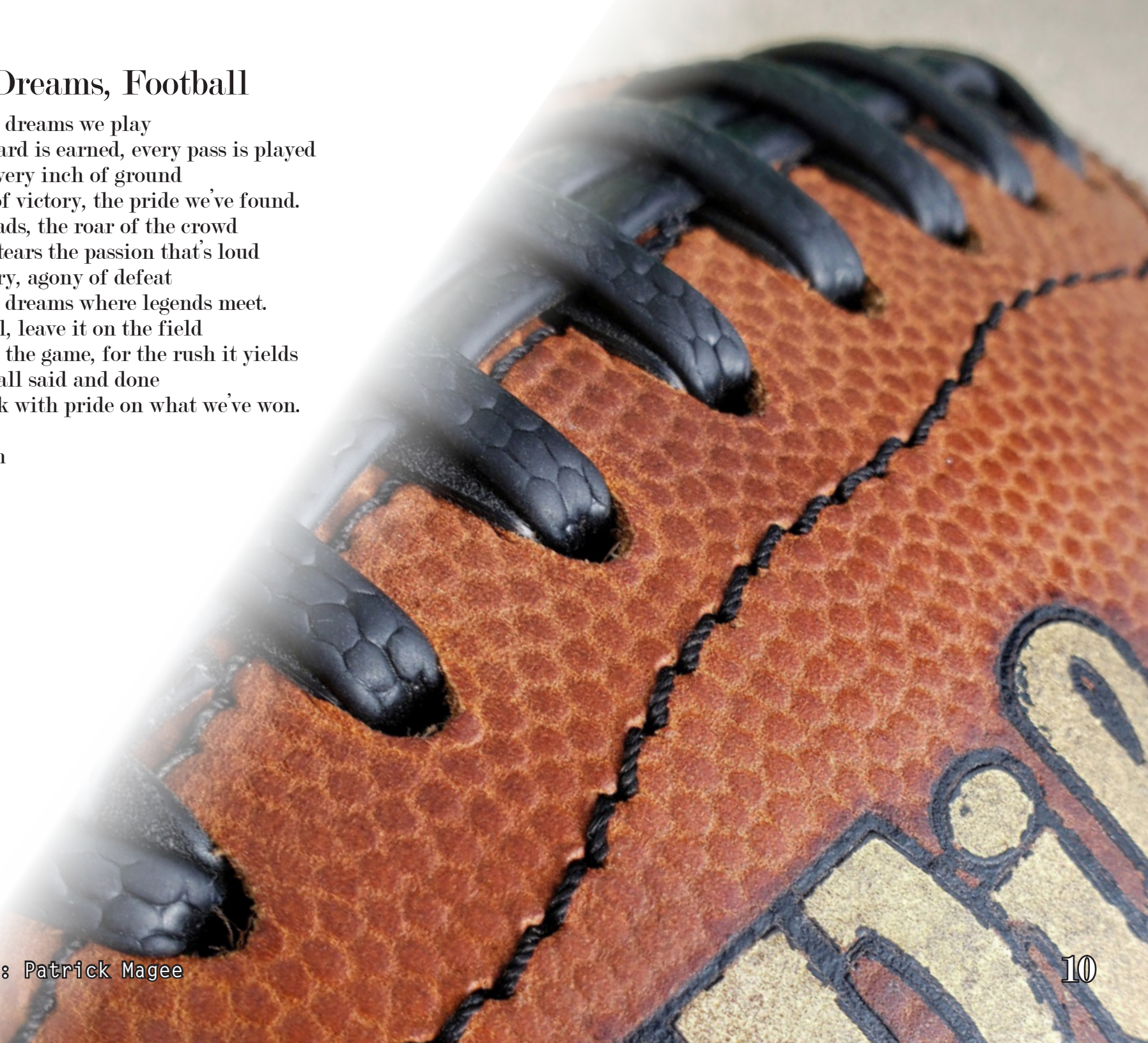
Malena Martinez



Field of Dreams, Football

On the field of dreams we play
Where every yard is earned, every pass is played
We fight for every inch of ground
For the glory of victory, the pride we've found.
The clash of pads, the roar of the crowd
The sweat the tears the passion that's loud
Thrill of victory, agony of defeat
On the field of dreams where legends meet.
We give our all, leave it on the field
For the love of the game, for the rush it yields
And when it's all said and done
We'll look back with pride on what we've won.

Logan Graham



Fool Nazarite

His noble head lay sound upon her lap,
The cool metal of the shears had warmed to her touch
And soon his once beautiful hair lay dull and dead,
Falling away in brown tresses littering the moonlit pillow.
He seemed to diminish, even right then,
But she wouldn't shed a tear, not for Samson.
So, she kissed his shorn head,
For he was still beautiful.
It was Delilah who lamented,
Even as his hand closed over hers, and he knew what she'd done.
Even as they dragged him away, bound and eyeless.
Let them remember us like this,
She thought, as her palm bore the mint of the coin.
The Lion and the Snake.
Samson was God's great weapon.
One whose strength rivaled no other.
He was destined to lay the Philistines low.
But Samson was only a man,
And for her, equal in beauty and cruelty, he fell to his knees.
They would call him a fool for it.
But if Samson, a plaything for a fitful God,
Was made only to fall from Grace,
To melt his wax wings,
Then let it be her who ruined him.
So on a night quiet and still
When it came time for Delilah to ask him,
Samson's voice came low in her ear.
The answer escaped like a sigh,
But it escaped all the same.
Let them remember us like this,
He thought, even as he brought the temple down.
The woman from Sorek, and her fool.

Madeleine Carpenter

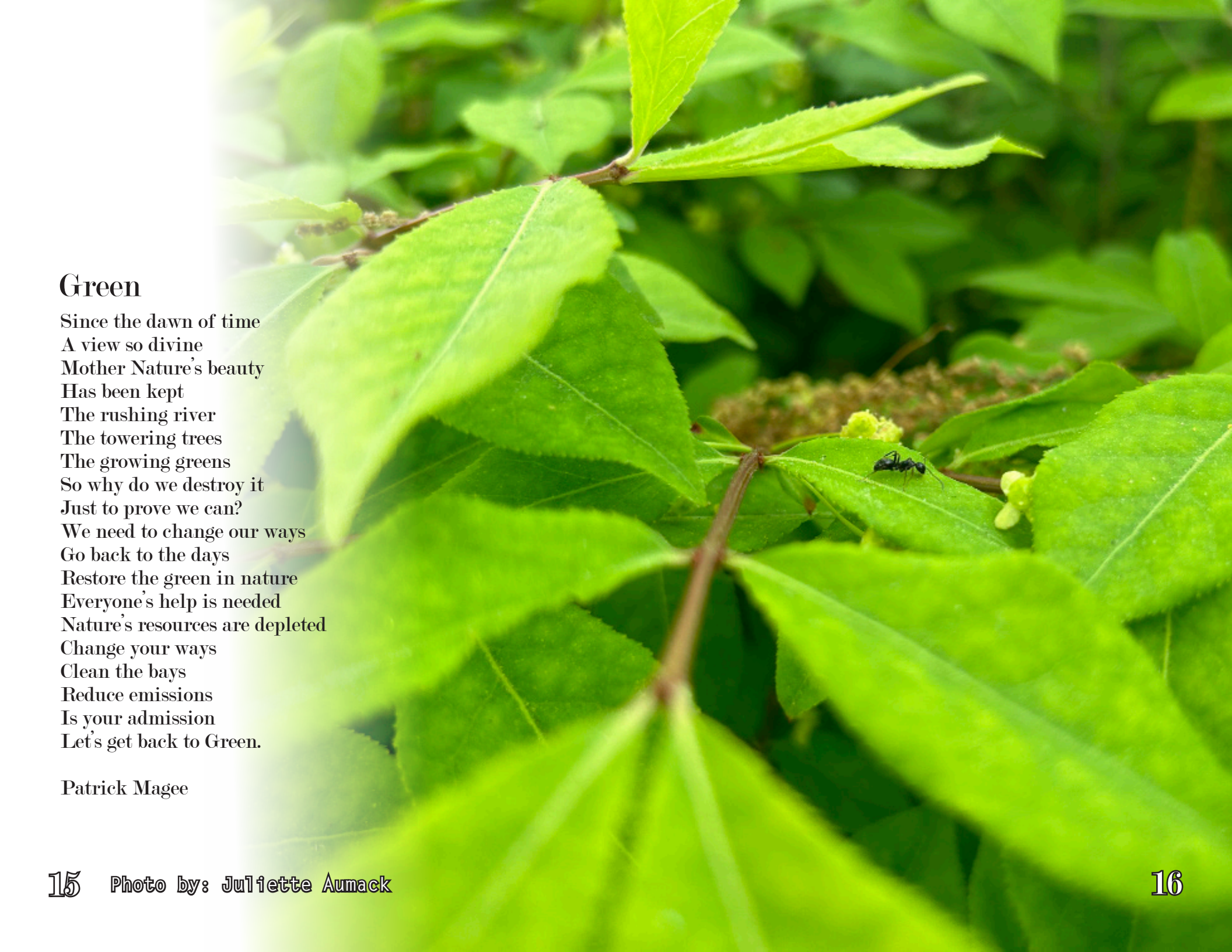




For the Love of Science, Unite

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
Used to keep our survival less hectic
Some have embarked on journeys to infinity
Some left behind heritage lasting for eternity.
In our modern day a gap the world faces
Diversity is a tool we ought to embrace
Underrepresented groups, they are named
Hidden jewels in stones, some were named
Removing stereotypes, discrimination
Striving to establish a foundation
That encourages and provides opportunities
For the passing of the torch- Unity.

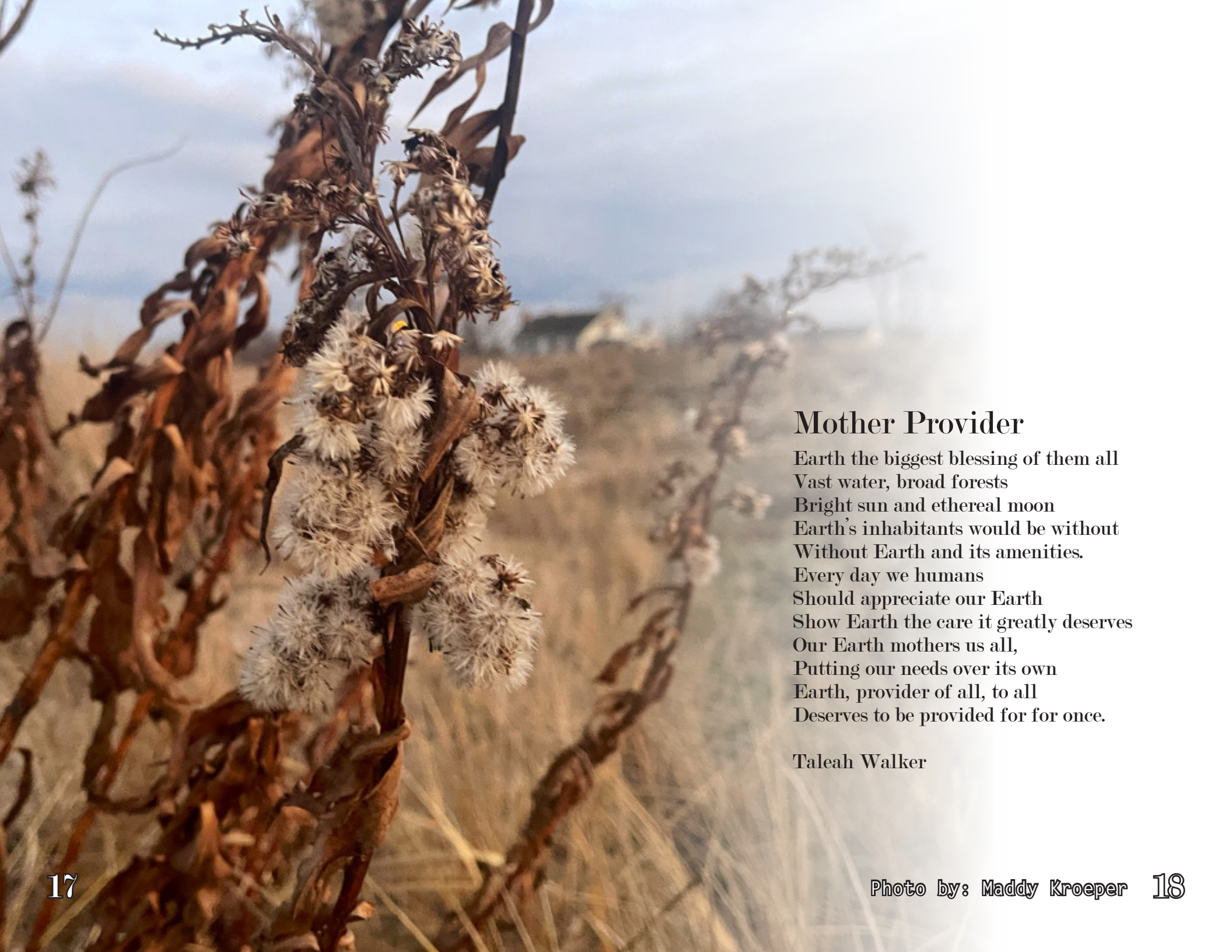
Huy Le

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of lush green foliage. The leaves are bright green with visible veins. A small black ant is visible on one of the leaves in the middle-right section. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle glow on the left side of the image.

Green

Since the dawn of time
A view so divine
Mother Nature's beauty
Has been kept
The rushing river
The towering trees
The growing greens
So why do we destroy it
Just to prove we can?
We need to change our ways
Go back to the days
Restore the green in nature
Everyone's help is needed
Nature's resources are depleted
Change your ways
Clean the bays
Reduce emissions
Is your admission
Let's get back to Green.

Patrick Magee



Mother Provider

Earth the biggest blessing of them all
Vast water, broad forests
Bright sun and ethereal moon
Earth's inhabitants would be without
Without Earth and its amenities.
Every day we humans
Should appreciate our Earth
Show Earth the care it greatly deserves
Our Earth mothers us all,
Putting our needs over its own
Earth, provider of all, to all
Deserves to be provided for for once.

Taleah Walker

Painting a Picture

There's a problem with this generation
We must fight for equality in this nation
If you're not standing you're sitting
Against all odds there will be no quitting
United we stand, divided we fall
I pray for change and justice for all
Martin Luther King Jr. remember the name
Take action, remove color from the picture frame
It's bigger than black and white
It's a problem with the whole way of life
It can't change overnight
But we gotta start somewhere

Emanuel Ross





Path Through the Woods

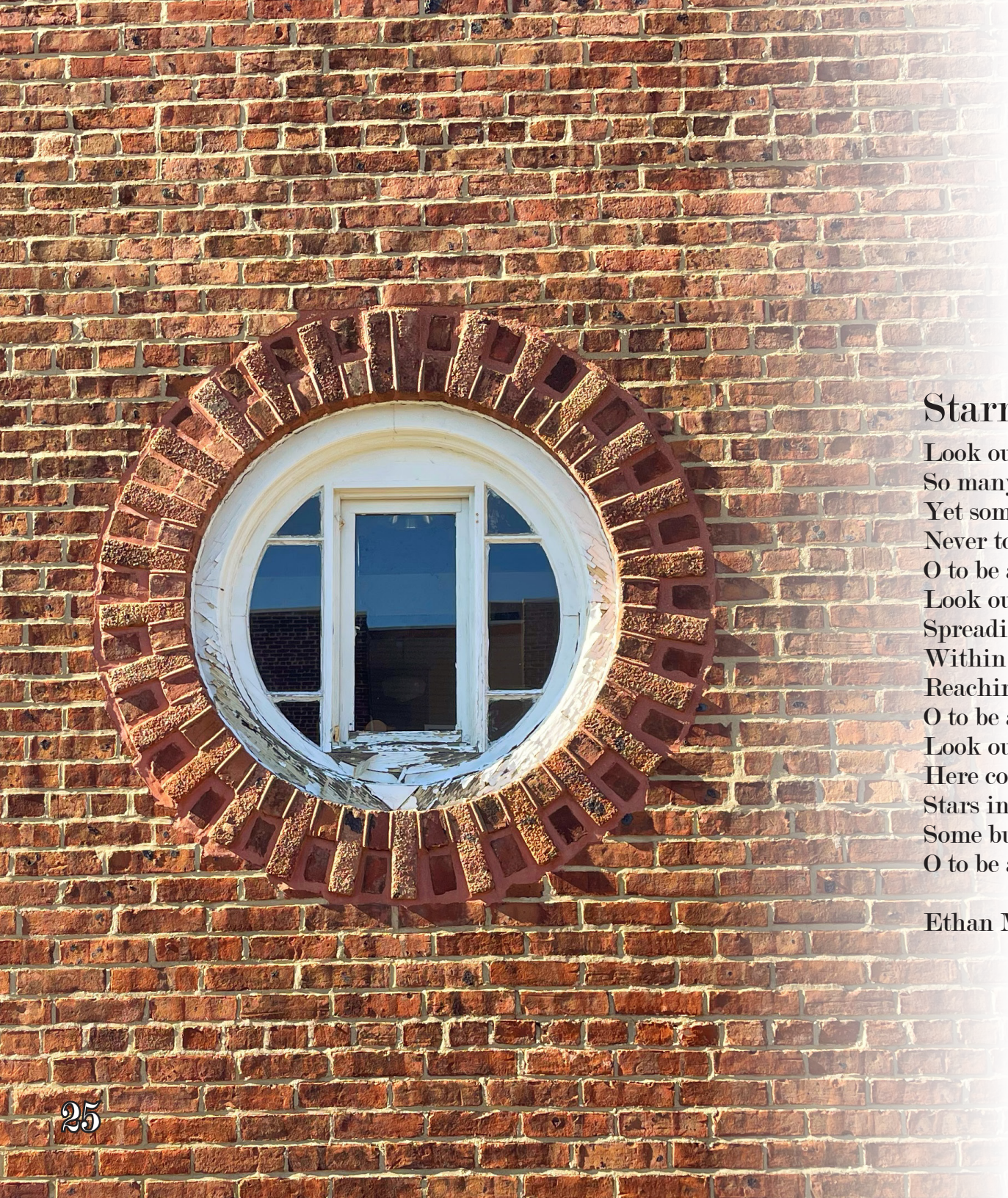
Path through the woods
Fifty years ago
And at the moment you would not know
The climate has finished it once more
There was a path through the woods
Prior to that they seeded the trees.
It is beneath grove and heath,
Only that which the guardian sees
And the thin coral
And the wood pigeon offspring
And the hounds at ease.
There was once a path through the woods.

Sean Muller

Song: The Ocean Blues

Gasping for air
Frantically looking for relief
Trying to find my way through the darkness
To survive
Why are they trying to hurt me
Take my friends and family
Destroy my world
What was once so vast and blue
Safe and sound
Now scary and deadly
I struggle to live another day

Colin Earnest



Starry Night

Look out at the starry night filled with light
So many promises, filled full of life
Yet some die, burn to a crisp
Never to reach as high as a star in the sky
O to be a part of the starry night
Look out at the starry night surrounded by dark
Spreading around the planet not a speck uncovered
Within the darkness a beauty so bright
Reaching up to the heavens this starry night
O to be a part of the starry night
Look out at the starry night as it slowly goes
Here comes the day filled with chances
Stars in the day full of life
Some burn to a crisp
O to be a part of the starry night.

Ethan Marzo



Summer Dream

Swish! Swoosh!

The calm wind is against my face
The sun beaming on me with all its rays
As I take in the smell of the salty ocean.
Seagulls fly above me.

I'm tranquil and
My mind is cleared.

I rest on my towel with
My feet deep in the warm sand.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

The wind moves swiftly again.
I rest my eyes as I hear the crashing waves.
My surroundings have taken away
The stress and anxiousness from my mind
And I doze off into a deep long sleep.
The next thing I know, I'm awakened
By my teacher.

She shakes my shoulders to wake me up
And there I am; I'm in my classroom
And all of my classmates stare at me
As if I had spiders all over my face.
What a wonderful, summer dream.

Ariana Garmany

The Enemy

When the world loses my short-lived color
Who's even there to meet me in the black?
Surely my youth wasn't really so bright
And my age could not really have been so dark
Memory serves not in time's broken flow
Like a misinformed narrator pitted
Against our very continuity
He chooses the important days, weeks, years,
Recalling past times gives warped retellings
Where unneeded emotions change meaning
The enemy of our own mind completes
The malicious mission when we've seen the most
But remember the least, and can taunt us
With youthful days where time's length was different

Samuel Fertal



The Way of Water

The way of water has no beginning
The way of water has no end
The way of water is soft enough to give life
The way of water is tough enough to drown it out
The way of water gives
The way of water takes
The way of water brings tears of joy
The way of water brings tears of sadness
The way of water is perfection
The way of water is destruction
The way of water connects all things
The way of water is within us.

Rylee Wickliffe

Tick Tock

On the bricks I sat, up high, observing.
-Tick Tock- A woman walked past, catching
a man's eye. The woman stepped
into the humming train, the man into the next.
-Tick Tock- The man approached the woman
with two coffees in hand. She accepted.
-Tick Tock- They walk together hand in hand
into the humming train. A bell sounds.
-Tick Tock- Glistening bands appear on their hands.
They look at me and run off in a hurry.
I'm always watching people live their lives,
from afar. I tick away, informing
them. They watch me too. They depend on me.
A bell sounds. Everyone rushes away.

Margaret Fisher



Time Cannot Be Touched

When we see the clock on the wall
We believe we can see time with eyes.
The hands tick by the minute and hour
And we think time is something we can hear.
We touch the surface of the glass and wood
But time is a thing that cannot be touched.
Time has a unique ability to be
Everywhere in our lives and yet
When we reach out it is not there to touch.
We often think that time is an object
But it is not something that we can hold.
We try to have enough time and we try again
Even as time runs out.
We have only the time in our lives
That we are given, and although we might
Do everything we can for more time
We should not waste time.
We should use time
For its real purpose. Living.

Ellie Donohue

Warming, Fumbling

The earth is warming
Seas are rising
Is it a warning?
Or are we just living?
Forests are crumbling
People are mumbling
Phones are fumbling
Does anyone care?
We only get one shot at this
We should do our best
To keep our mother earth
As beautiful as she can be

Luke Krzyzkowski



A photograph of a sandy beach with a seashell in the foreground. The ocean and a blue sky with clouds are in the background.

We Wonder, a Sea Wonderland

A wonderland under the sea
Deep in the dark waters of the ocean
In the heart of the earth
Live colorful gardens of flowers, coral reefs
Like beautiful young girls they grow
Home to myriads of fish and animals
For millions and millions of years
A wonderland under the sea, hidden from humans
Why are they dying today?
Will they live for another million years?
Who is destroying this beauty?
Is it you? Is it me? Who? Why?
Who is going to save and protect her?
Is it you? Is it me? Who?

Rayna Yu (Qiaochu Yu)

Whispers of Nature: a Dance Tune

Amidst the concrete jungle we call home
Nature's whispers can be heard, as we roam
In the hustle and bustle of our daily life,
Environment, sustainability are unsung strife.
From the smallest seed to the tallest tree,
Every living thing connected, don't you see
The air we breathe, the water we drink
Gifts from Mother Nature we should rethink.
Earth is a garden we must tend
If we want her bounty never to end
A cycle of life, a dance with the land
We hold her future in the palm of our hand.
We must tread lightly, with every step we take,
Make choices that reduce carbon footprint's wake
Innovate and create with the earth in mind
Leave a legacy future generations will find.
For the earth is a canvas we all share
Work of art beyond compare
Let's paint a picture of a world that's green
Where sustainability and environment reign supreme.

Dylan Ciorciari



The Concert

The concert was loud, I can still hear the singing
Though the world has turned quiet, my ears are left ringing
As I leave the applause and flashing lights behind
The events of my night go from material to mind

I lived in the moment as much as I could
But the moment has died; I knew that it would
Its melodies will be sung again and people will cheer
But for now its existence lies within my ear

Though every concert will one day reach an end
Its songs live beyond, inside of our heads

Christian Sherman

Thread of Hope

My colors once vibrant now have turned gray
From sapphire to slate, evaporated away
Disregarded, neglected, turned lackluster
A miserable mess, a chaotic cluster
Plummeted from the pedestal, no longer perfection
Just a shell of a person, afraid of her reflection
The shining spotlight now a dwindling light
Starved of adoration, yet a persistent will to fight
With all these tribulations, how does she cope?
What keeps her going: a single thread of hope.

Maya Rodriguez





Not a Stranger

I told a stranger I liked her sweater at the grocery store,
No one knew that what I meant to say was,
If she ever decides to marry, I hope her husband doesn't
under appreciate her endeavors.
I hope she can sit with herself without daydreaming
about every person from her past and I
wanna ask "What aisle did you find your placidity in?"
But I can't say all that, so I stick with "That color looks
amazing on you."

Ali Campillay

Sojourner Truth and Kobe Bryant in Heaven After Hans Ostrom

They call each other the G.O.A.T. When Sojourner
Brings freshly squeezed lemonade to Kobe, he teaches
Sojourner how to shoot hoops like a pro. Swish Swish

In heaven, Kobe has his curly, short dark afro just like he
Had it in his glory days. Sojourner dresses herself up in vibrant
Skirts, zesty blouses, and Gucci flip flops. Kobe digs her style

And asks her to assist him in finding suave garms like hers. They
Spend endless time admiring each other's perseverance. Kobe thinks
Sojourner's experiences are more daring and fearless.

Sojourner teaches Kobe how to publicly speak, while Kobe takes diligent notes
and waits to give his own input. Kobe never realized the importance of reading until now,
while Sojourner never recognized how much fun one could have playing basketball.

The two have endless fun in the rich meadows, dancing, listening to the bristles
of the wind and not giving a care in the world about the occurrences around them.
Why couldn't life be this easy on Earth? Maybe it could have been.

God used his paintbrush to paint these two in his image. He paints
Because it's his passion. He loves what he does and he loves to paint
More artworks like these beautiful souls. God is an artist.

David Adighije





2023 Reflections

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Alexa Gatta	38, 40
Maddy Kroeper	2, 18, 26, 52
Nicholas Leonard	22
Patrick Magee	cover, 4, 6, 10, 36, 42
Luke Mascarenhas	34
Jake Vowteras	24, 30, 46
Anna Wingerter	8, 20