

THE CRUCIBLE

Earlham's Literary & Visual Art Publication

2019-2020

THE CRUCIBLE

Volume V, New Style

Editors

Mairead Blatner

Illianna Gonzalez-Soto

Yeheon Hong

Masha Morgunova

Grace Mulamba

Lee Tran

Selection Committee

Margaret Bartimole

Lauren Hanks

Ian Murray

Damil Nuñez-Reyes

Salaam Odeh

ethan pickett

sulay ranjit

madi reynolds

Madeline Wallace

Faculty Advisor

Joann Quiñones

Cover Art

“Observer” by sulay ranjit | digital painting

Cover Design by sulay ranjit

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the Earlham College English Department and Joann Quiñones for their support in the creation of this magazine.

Please visit our website to read past editions of The Crucible :
earlhamcollegethecrucible.wordpress.com

Printed in Summer 2020 by InfnitPrint Solutions, inc. 14 N 10th St. Richmond, IN 47374
Earlham College, 801 National Road West, Richmond, IN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Note 9

Poetry

Flamingos 13
Caroline Wolfe-Merritt

Curandera / Healer 15
Julia Baker-Swann

Found Landscape 17
Thomas Baker-Swann

Mille-Feuille 22
Damil Nuñez-Reyes

Paradoxical Belongings 25
Mallory Crosby

ingénue 31
Madeline Wallace

My Guitar 33
Bella DeJoy

Ascent and Descent 35
Ian Murray

fatherhood/in transit 38
Margaret Bartimole

Space 47
Anonymous

one who once had known me 48
Madeline Wallace

On the First Dead Bird of Each Summer 50
Opal Harbour

Here	52
Eleanor Baker	
Prayer for the Child in My Sister's Womb	55
Julia Baker-Swann	
love story in 8 ≈ sonnets	57
Margaret Bartimole	
liminal witness	60
Anonymous	
Museum of Glass	62
Ian Murray	
How to Be a Lady	65
Monique Tribble	
obsessive-compulsive order	67
Salaam Odeh	
don't read the DSM	69
Anonymous	
Tempest	79
Kudzai Mushongahande	
Candlelight	87
Grace Nickeson	
The Deluge	89
Kudzai Mushongahande	
The Airport Bird	91
Opal Harbour	
Prose	
Loud Noises	19
Kehau	

Sweet Lou (1): Philadelphia	27
Lee Tran	
Dissolution: A Recipe for Borax Crystals	36
Emerson Jakes	
The Echo Project	41
JP Dongo	
How Far Is It To Bethlehem?	71
Eleanor Baker	
Silhouette of a Violet View	81
ethan pickett	
The Girl Who Swallowed Her Jewels	84
Maxwell Bennett	

Visual Art

Alen and Simon	16
Masha Morgunova	
Untitled	18
Asa Kramer-Dickie	
Moons Conversing	21
Padgett Gustavo	
ashore	23
Hanh Le	
In Boxes	24
Ila Beinart	
Enter Jim Kelly	26
Mollie Lyon	
Connected	29
Hanna Craig	

Thin Section Under Cross-Polarized Light Libby Fox	30
Selkie Annalee Shields	32
Philippine Edge madeline gullion	34
Untitled (The Shell) Eliza Vardanyan	37
Untitled (Sasha) Masha Morgunova	39
She's over there Brookes Jarvi-Beamer	40
red red red Sage Phillips	46
Baltimore I sulay ranjit	49
3 Saints Sage Phillips	51
lateral sun shifts madi reynolds	54
Stagger Vase Set Kaydra Barbre	56
Isolation Hanna Craig	61
Moon and Sun Brookes Jarvi-Beamer	64

Sarah's Dream	66
Jakob Posti	
If They Die, We Die	68
Kinsey Emerson	
Indie Cow	70
Julia Shuler	
Cernunnos Hanging Mask	77
Eve Corbett	
My Old Kentucky Home	78
Emily Jade	
Germanic Glaze Combo Jug	80
Shawn Gibson	
Warrior in a Garden	83
Mollie Lyon	
seed index 2	86
madi reynolds	
The Kiss	88
Evan Hill	
glare	90
ethan pickett	
Migrations	92
Caroline Wolfe-Merritt	

EDITORIAL NOTE

Friends,

To say that this edition of *The Crucible* has been forged through fire would be putting it mildly. Through our struggle to remain printed, through our added transition to the digital world, and through continuing to work as a team as our campus shut down for the semester, we have found that it is more important than ever to connect and to create. We remain dedicated to the printing of this magazine into beautiful, colorful, touchable pages, even if that printing happens on a very different timeline that we hoped for, and we look forward to the day when you hold this magazine in your hands. Still, we are committed to making this creative work accessible in these times of social distancing, Zoom communication, and quarantine. For that reason, we are publishing this year's issue online, along with the magazines of the last three years. We are very conscious of the tensions between tangibility and accessibility, and we hope that our decision to print in the future as well as publishing online strikes a balance between supporting the free spread of creative works and places value on that which we can touch.

When we set out to create this year's magazine, we hoped to make something that reflected the state of the world today. We wanted works that touched upon subjects from the personal to the global. We wanted works that inspired empathy. We wanted works, especially, which inspired one human to relate to another. The six of us gathered many times in the cramped *Crucible* office in Carpenter, the midday light streaming through the window, and conferred upon the creative works that reflected these goals.

We have always believed in the power of creativity. We could never have imagined, as we sat in mismatched chairs during lunch times in our tiny office, just how imperative creative works would become. We know the world is at an especially turbulent time. The pandemic has created significant ripples in our Earlham community and across the globe. We know, too, that the works in this magazine may remind us all (perhaps a little nostalgically) of a kind of normalcy that now is hard to imagine. These works by our contributors may be a relic of happier times. But we invite you to consider that through crucibles of anxiety, separation, and yes, despair, there are ways in which hope, beauty, and creativity will always thrive.

We are, as ever, deeply grateful to our talented contributors, to the entire creative community that supports them for entrusting us with their work, to our lovely readers, and to our faculty advisor Joann Quiñones. Thank you for your unwavering support and for your continued belief in this small but mighty literary magazine.

We encourage you now, to let the creative works in this publication inspire you.

Use them as a springboard to create, and to hope.

Use them to escape for a short while.

Use them to feel, for a moment, at one with another.

With love,
The Editors

Please join us in a moment of silence.

Thank you.

The collapse of stars sounds like
the business of home renovation
gone wrong.
Imploding.
It sounds like the
absence
of noise, as a rainbow
of spray cans erupt from a pack;
a kaleidoscope of shattered colors.
Colors, which
-- before knowledge, somehow whole --
filled my heart with
flamingos

Stars grow exponentially.
Expanding like a mosaic table
piece by piece,
tile by tile stuck into mortar
'til, so heavy,
perhaps the only way for growth
is collapse.

Shards fluttering down
-- whatever is down anyway? --
from dust,
to land on Mars, Jupiter, Earth.
Each bird a fleck of
stardust,
which made my heart sing like
flamingos

Curandera
Julia Baker-Swann

I plant the medicine by moonlight.
Herba buena, *manzanilla*, and *anis*
sacred seed tucked
under the warm earth blanket.
Some seeds root only at full glow.
I must be that pearly seed. I drink
the silver milk that pools
on thick mango leaves and drips
from silk tasseled *maíz*.
My nourishment, *mi medicina*—
this feast of quiet.
Each drop enough.
I never know how long it will last
when the next will summon— “Dona Ena!”

14

My garden knows blood. Today
Jorge’s machete-sliced leg, last week
his brother’s crushed hand. I wrap
their wounds in banana leaves and prayer.
In the dark of new-moon
Gabriella’s twins came in a fury
of tears, blood and song. I remember
her first time at my door
moon-blood between her legs.
All she needed then was *té de canela*,
a hug and hot *tortillas*. Tonight
only one of her babies, the girl, still breathes.
This is what I do, try to keep them breathing.
Sometimes I cannot.
During the rains little lungs fill with a river,
fever in their eyes. I press
ajo and onion onto their tiny purple ribs.
They teach me, like the moon.

Siembro medicina a la luz de la luna
mint, chamomile y anis.
semilla sagrada, escondida
debajo de la manta cálida de la tierra.
Algunas semillas sólo germinan
bajo la luminosa luna llena.
Yo debo ser esa semilla narcarada.
Yo bebo la leche plateada que se empoza
en las hojas de mango y gotea
del fleco sedoso del *corn*. Mi alimento,
my medicine—este banquete de silencio.
Cada gota suficiente.
Nunca sé cuánto durará, cuándo
el próximo me llamará—“¡Doña Ena!”

Mi jardín conoce la sangre. Hoy la pierna de Jorge,
cortada a machetazos. La semana pasada,
la mano machacado de su hermano. Vendo
las heridas en hojas de banana y oración.
En la oscuridad de la luna nueva
los gemelos de Gabriela llegaron con la furia
de lágrimas, sangre y canción. Recuerdo
la primera vez que vino aquí,
sangre de luna entre sus piernas.
Sólo necesitaba *cinnamon tea*, un abrazo
y tortillas recién del comal. Esta noche
sólo una de sus bebés, la niña, respira aún.
Esto es lo que yo hago, tratar de que sigan
respirando—a veces no puedo.
Durante las lluvias, pequeños pulmones se llenan
de un río, fiebre en sus ojos. Yo presiono el
garlic y la cebolla en sus costillitas moradas.
Todos ellos me enseñan, igual que la luna.



Alen and Simon
Masha Morgunova
silver gelatin print

that moved into my touch
in the most surprising way

not the granite of the Grand Teton
I lived under one summer
hard rock

this strata flows
along the ribs and hips of
your skin

the brush along the dry
river bed waits for the
next flood
rushing pulsing rain

you walked in with
tender whiteness like snow high
from a summer storm
a field laying
 like your belly
 where a lake could gather

the earth closed its seams
when you were formed
born to the sky above
and the depths below

under these endless canyons
the Green river still cuts

where to go in this surprise
I ask the alpine pine

a fresh fragrant breeze
across your nape
as if the wind alone can
bring one to lie and listen
to the heart

guide me
to these slopes and
rises which form this landscape
I did not see
when living just on what I
know



Untitled

Asa Kramer-Dickie

wool, cotton, barbed wire | 16 x 20 in

Loud Noises

Kehau

"I'm afraid of the sounds the drops make," he told me as they sprinkled along our rooftop.

I gestured for him to cover his ears the way I showed him, with his palms directly over and pressed against his ears. Then I kissed the back of his hands and slowly brushed the tips of my fingers over his eyes sliding them shut. I tried to ignore the screams shaking the walls, but I couldn't even hear myself think. I left him there, cuddled up inside, the blanket wrapped around and tucked under his feet because they were always so cold. But I paused just before I went out the door to look back and whisper,

come find me when the screams from inside scare you more than the small sound of their footsteps.

The air felt drier and heavier as I climbed. His clumsy footsteps raced behind me as he shouted for me to wait for him. I waited. We stopped once we got to the top of a hill high enough to look over the path we had taken up. He grabbed my hand as we looked at the spots of tall, thin bushes. Their stillness felt like a pressure against our ears we weren't used to. His grip tightened as crackles and pops sounded suddenly, threateningly, in infinite directions. There was no wind; and yet, the patches of thin twig-shaped bushes bobbed under an incessant dropping weight like a telegraph key.

Up that high, the drops found their way down with ease; and I smiled as I felt his scared eyes find my face. The tension in his body laxed and he closed his eyes too. 19

"Are the plants transforming, Auntie?" he asked with a sudden loudness.

A surprised laugh fell from my lips and like a chattering projector he rambled of a clumsy flower, of a shaky white outline dancing along the backs of his eyelids. My silence along with his own voice excited him more, and as the sound of their steps grew he exclaimed, "they're transforming like the Transformers!"

We both laughed this time and he asked me, "can you see it, Auntie?"

I opened my eyes then hoping his smile remained. The ease around his closed eyes slowly became strained as their footsteps grew louder. We were surrounded. But I whispered to his tiny ear:

Don't be afraid. Go ahead, offer out your hand.

Their soft padding danced along our stone-scaled path, and as moments passed, achingly, without their touch, we finally felt the plop of their feet along our arms and faces. I let my eyes join his in their cool shade, eased by the confirmation of their trickle tickling what little skin was exposed. I bent down to him and kissed the plumpness of his cheek as a cold wind threatened from afar. He nuzzled into my outstretched arms as I requested:

Come back down with me where you sink slightly with every step. Where our warped and soggy floor hugs your feet. Do they feel heavier now?

The drops plopped down from our crooked roof, fatter and greedier than before. Like tiny invisible frogs, they made the leaves jump as they landed and hopped and hopped. He watched with amazement, exclaiming with a thrust finger, "look, Auntie! Look, there goes another!" The layers of bedded leaves beneath our feet

weighed with each one of them that fell. He looked up trying to watch their descent, shading his eyes as if he were looking at the sun. He smiled and cooed to me, like it was a secret only I could know, “green is my favorite color because it’s the color of all the trees from the parks you took me to.” I smiled then, wondering if what he said was true as the leaves still above us sang with each gust of wind. Their pitter-patter, echoed faithfully by both the leaves still strung in the sky and those that had fallen before them, bubbled the air around us.

Do you feel the cool touch of their song? Just listen now. Feel their trickle along your arms like a thousand tiny kisses, I said to his back.

Screams came from inside again and he became cold as if he knew what would come. Before I could reach out warmth to him the drops rushed down in long-stranded torrents, like a thick curtain, blurring his image until he disappeared. They rolled from the right, splitting across, cutting off my words telling him that I had to leave.

When he found me again he was so grown. He cried that the drops had found him with an inescapable aggression and he shivered as their rumble turned harsh like the sound of rocks being pelted along the tops of our roofs. The lightning struck, it flashed its chosen moments, immortalized them in a blaze, and then grew black. So I told him to remember:

The loud noises can’t harm you even as they chop your world into frozen bits.

20

And he replied, “I’m not afraid, Auntie. I just cover my ears with the palms of my hands and listen to the lava like you told me to.” My smile felt feeble, but I didn’t have to explain to him this time. “I know you have to go,” he said. “I can hear their screams over the rumbling of the rain. Come back to me when your legs grow tired from fleeing.”

Even though I left I made sure we watched together when the drops and their roar grew too loud. He never got over his fear for their sudden appearance and disappearance. Through our shared view we watched as the drops gathered and heaped in puddled blotches sprinkling our path. With the softness of bubbles bursting at his skin, I enveloped him. Unsure of how time would find us, but most uncertain, how his aged feelings would find me, I gave my dearest declaration:

When it rains for you, my baby, I hope it smothers you whole. And when you look up to catch its drops within the billows of your wandering eyes, wherever the drops may find you, know that it rains for me as it rains for you. If the thought of me storms upon you and rages your insides against each other, I hope you forgive me for leaving.

The drops came down haphazardly, out of my control. But he found his way to me and I found my way to him, and we watched as the storms brewed in the distance and then passed—again and again.



Moons Conversing

Padgett Gustavson

salt fired stoneware, ceramic vessel | 11 in

Mille-Feuille

Damil Nuñez-Reyes

What is it that the rain carries with it?
is it the tears of men?
or the milk coming from their mother's breast?

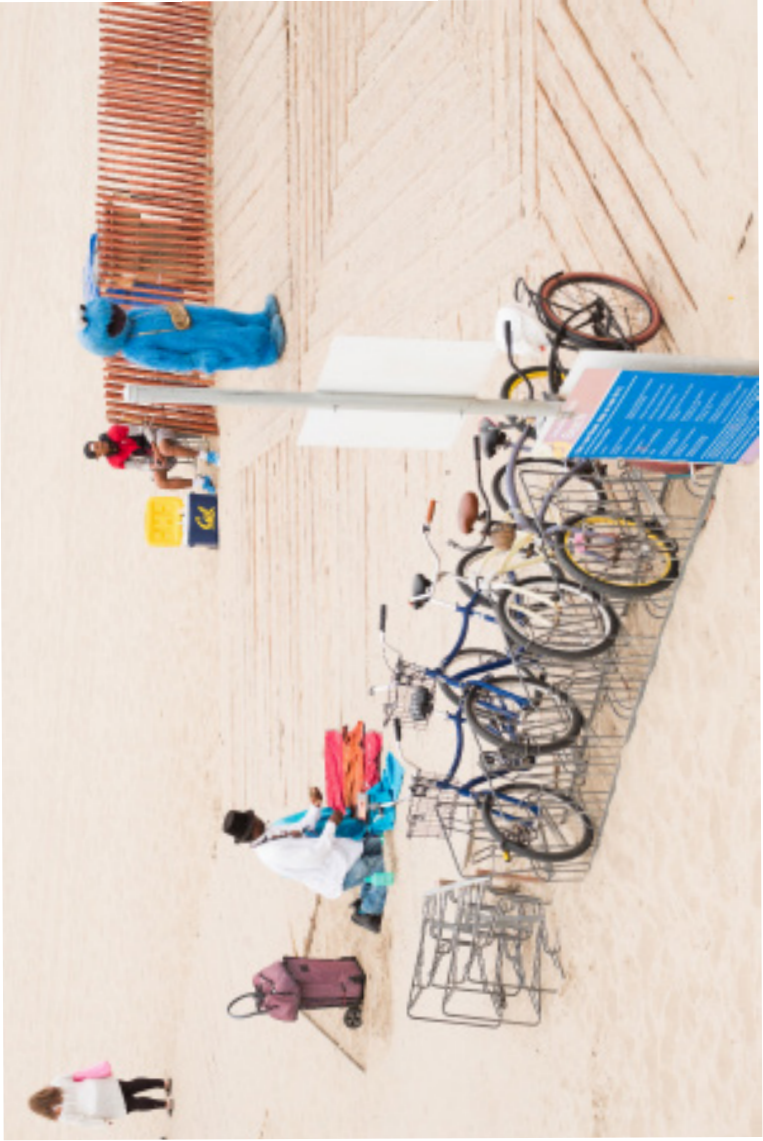
As blue men run their tall figures
across foreign lands, they knife their feet
onto ground that was never theirs.

22

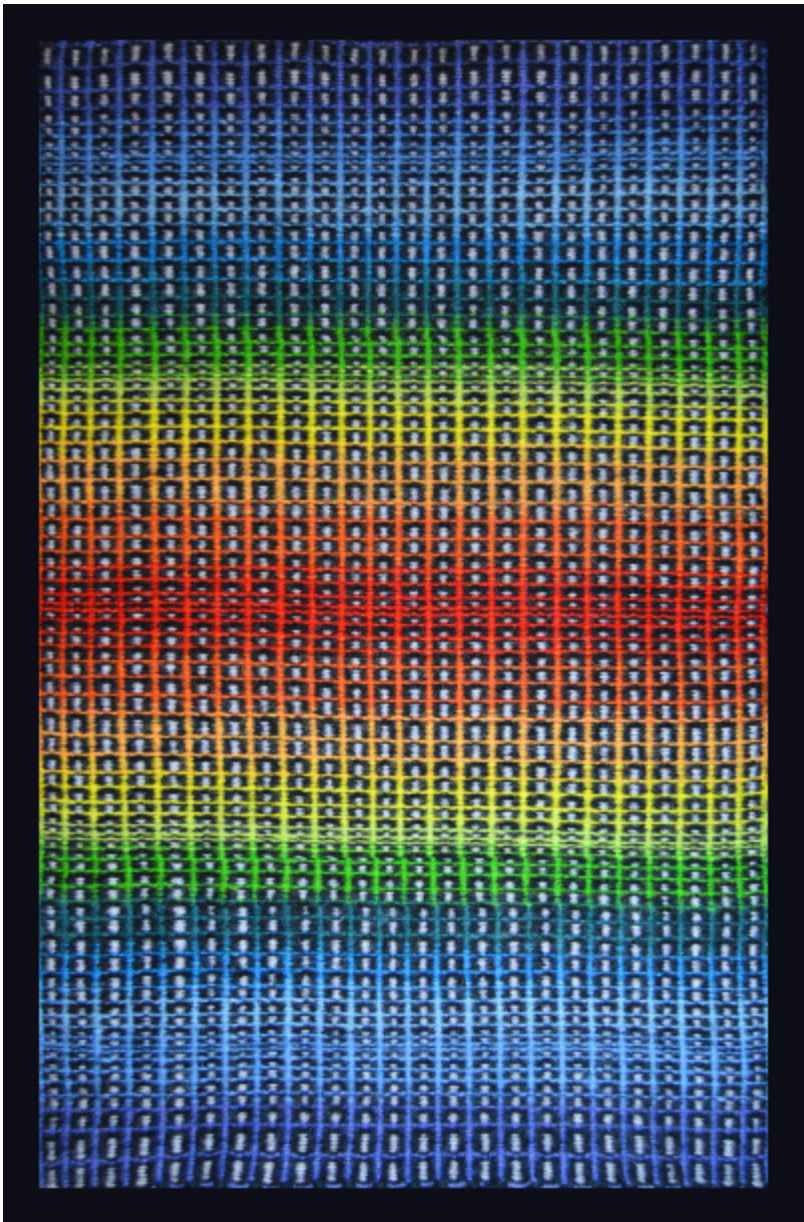
While children born from the clay
fall as leaflets filled with names,
an overweight man sings "honor" to his maid.

Napoleon sits on his desk
wearing layered boots
filled with bags of cotton

The five-eight stature:
An illusion of grandness
Created amidst insecurity.



ashore
Hanh Le
digital photograph



In Boxes

Ila Beinart

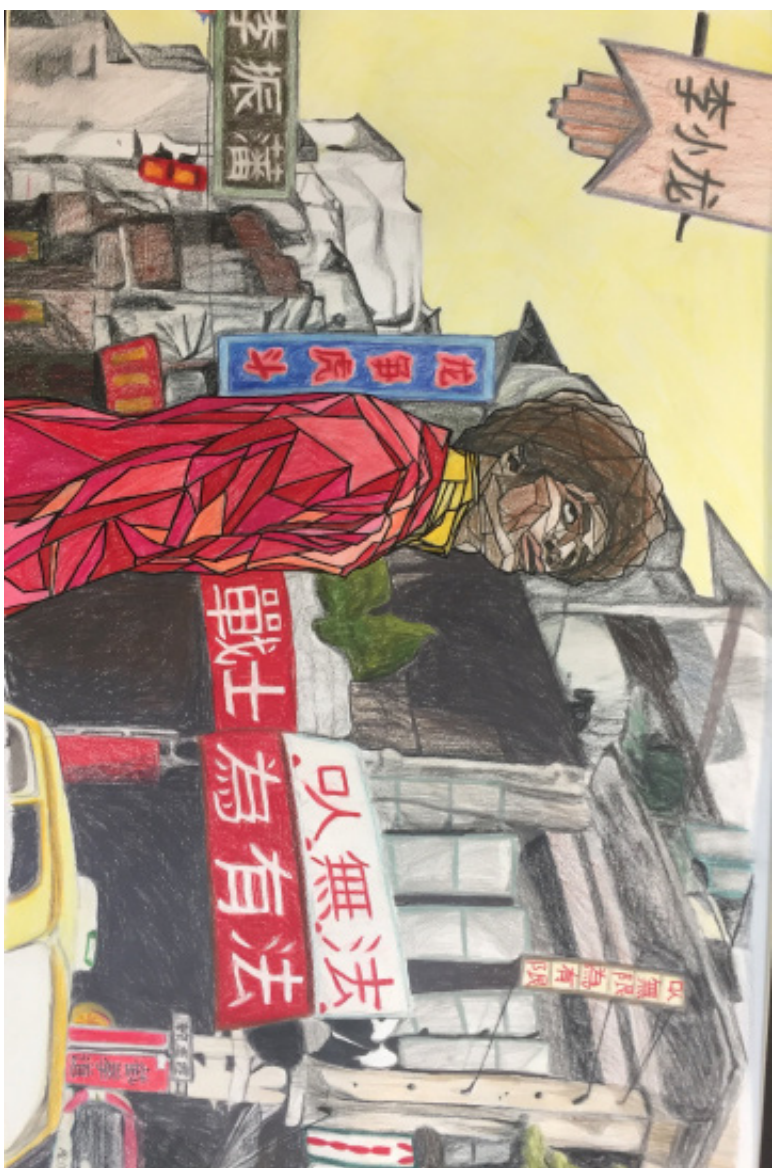
wool | 11 x 21 in

Paradoxical Belongings

Mallory Crosby

“So, here you are
too foreign for home
too foreign for here.
Never enough for both.”
—Ijeoma Umebinyuo, *Questions for Ada*

Growing up as a sunflower in a field of daises,
Who knew the lack of color could be so blinding?
Even now, as other sunflowers have taken root around me,
Their centers bright and looking towards the sky,
Mine is dark, lost to the tradition of worshipping the sun.



26

Enter Jim Kelly
Mollie Lyon
colored pencil on paper |
18 x 24 in

Sweet Lou (I): Philadelphia

Lee Tran

Lou came to Philadelphia as a fresh faced youngster after high school. He knew that he needed to make it somewhere to get a shot at making it big. Luckily for him, Philadelphia called his name at the last second. To hear his name called by the commissioner was a sign of relief for Lou. He had been waiting to see where his destination was, or whether he had a destination at all. Being picked 45th in the NBA isn't the best, but at least Sweet Lou knew he had a foot in the door straight out of high school.

Lou's first few years in the city were tumultuous. Philadelphia as a city was gritty and tough, and thus the organization pushed him to match that grit in the way he worked. That tough form of love fit Sweet Lou like a glove — it was almost as if Philadelphia was a second home for him. In his future life he would travel to a lot of places and love it. But back then, Philadelphia was the city that took him in. Lou worked hard at his craft and the city grew to love him. Through sun and snow, Lou would walk through Philadelphia exploring his new home.

Philadelphia doesn't embrace easily—you need heart and perseverance to feel the warmth of its love. Lou had both in abundance. Some people take the opportunity to promote their generosity, but Lou wasn't built like that. He didn't like the fanfare that came with self promotion. He preferred to do good on the low key. People knew him from TV but they also knew him for his humanity and his caring soul.

27

The winter in Philadelphia is cold. Heavy snow and biting wind. During his winters, Lou would be out there. Buying hats, snow coats and gloves for everybody. Conversely, the summer in Philadelphia can be hot and extremely humid. During his summers, Lou would set up camps for the neighborhood, and have ice cream present at all times. The people loved his smooth persona but even more so, they loved that he went around and helped the community. A bond between Lou and the city was forged. The city adopted Lou as its own.

Everyone has at least one night where they truly fear for their life. For Lou, it was a cold Philadelphia evening in the month of December, near Christmas. Lou was looking in the mirror, and spontaneously decided that his hair needed a change. It was one frigid day, but Lou drove his car to the barbershop. He spent quite some time there, chatting up everyone else in the shop while getting his hair done. It was a good time for all. Before too long, it was evening, and Lou needed to go. He paid for the cut and walked out of the door.

Lou left the shop feeling real good. He walked out into the winter and heard the howls of the wind. Felt its presence all over his body. Lou quickly got into his car, and started to type on his phone, responding to a text. He heard a sound near him: *click* *click* *click*. That was strange, no one should have been there. Lou turned to the window trying to see the face of the person who knocked. Instead he saw the sleek barrel of a gun stare back at him. He felt a coldness in his stomach,

and it definitely wasn't caused by the winter. He rolled the window down.

"Give me your wallet, man. No funny business. I'm watching. Get out of the car, and slowly."

Lou hesitated. He knew that refusal could mean the end of his life. Thus there was but one option. He got out and as he did, he made eye contact with his would be robber.

A flash of recognition shone within the robber's eyes. They were light blue, the color of Lou's shirt. It was obvious to Lou in an instant, that the man trying to rid him of his possessions recognized who he was. He started to point the gun towards the ground, and told Lou this:

"Damn Lou, I can't even do it to you. Man, as much as you do for the city, as much as you do for the neighborhood, I can't even do you like that. But I just got out of jail. I'm hungry. All I got is this gun and a bus token to get home."

As soon as he told Lou the situation Lou could see the wild desperate eyes that looked at him. Lou had his own struggles to survive before making it bigtime, and at that moment he knew. The man wasn't a bad man, that much was certain. There was no malice or hatred in his eyes, just the reflection of the sadness of a broken man. Lou was still scared. His mind was racing, trying to save his own life.

28

He saw a McDonald's nearby. Its golden arches beckoned to both of them away in the distance. Lou saw that it was still open, and knew what he had to do. The moment he did it was terrifying, but Lou broke the silence.

"Hey. If you pull up to that McDonald's right there I'm gonna buy you anything you wanna eat, man. Just order anything, man. It's on me."

The guy hesitated. All he knew was that he was hungry, and that he wasn't gonna rob Lou. He put his gun down, and gave out a pleading look.

"Look, Lou. I'm down and out out here. I got nothing."

Lou slowly gave him his most encouraging look despite the fact that he was scared shitless. Hunger can cause people to do things, and Lou knew that. But he also knew something else. Lou went to shake his robber's hand.

"I get it, man. God bless you, but this ain't the way."

They realized that they had reached the neon light of McDonald's: common man and NBA player united in this moment of unexplained closeness. The man placed his order. After this it was simple. Lou paid for the man's food and left, knowing that he had been spared that day. In Philadelphia, it's about respect.



Connected
Hanna Craig

digital photograph | 3024 x 4032 px



Thin Section Under Cross-Polarized Light

Libby Fox

embroidery floss, glass seed beads, sewn onto linen

He spoke about
volatility
at the meeting last week
lights overbright
piercing my eyes
squinting, tried to snag some
meaning
a patchwork of playdough thoughts
molded and
molding
stale coffee, split ends
musty when I raised my hand to
ruffle the strands
spoke about a daughter
spoke about Sundays
spoke about the way the wind can lift
and shake
the hair
at the nape
of a neck
or was that me?
I'm a daughter
blinking dumbly
into blaring
glaring
fluorescent
silence
and rambling about
tangerines
the softness of a thumbnail
piercing skin
sunset release
the softness of a thumb
brushing a cheek

ingénue
into some fist
cut with a cough
at me
a blackjack smirk of shears
smize, slice
and then
release



Selkie

Annalee Shields

oil on paper | 9 x 9 in

My Guitar

Bella DeJoy

Why won't you stay in tune?

cold doesn't shape you like it shapes me. you eat it up even when it shakes you to the core.

these months have warped me, though; when i go outside my neck bends so uncomfortably, and steel thinks about snapping.

What is your favorite song?

it draws out of me like water from a hot spring, echoing into caves and shooting forward like endless stars into galactic clouds.

then, it shimmies around tall evergreens, skipping into spongy moss, and falls, exhausted, into the blue canvas hammock.

What do you think of the capo?

you might think he holds me down, restricts my movements, but really it is the opposite. we work together, subduing certain strings to create a new register, and so your piece has transformed. now you sing in your key that fits your voice perfectly. and his metal clamps mine, pushing and pulling creating a different melody.

Do you enjoy being played?

always there is an ache to be caressed gently, each time slightly different from the last, even when you think it should be the same. don't you want to be loved? to be shown what passion feels like? i always try to let my own character shine through what my love creates. movement is fluid like the music that is pulsing in my veins. vibrations wake me up even during my deepest sleep.



34

Philippine Edge
madeline gullion
wool, various weights |
19 x 12 in

Ascent and Descent

Ian Murray

It's a long way up— from one single cell to an ape in a tree
it's a long path on a poster
From an upright man with a spear to a downcast man in a business suit
Who's going to walk with you, all the way down that line?

It will take a long time to explain how you were sculpted from the mud,
How you came to live in a tin-walled box and a thousand ghosts
Came to brush your face- or maybe you were found lying
Out in the sedgegrass, with the milkweed and sage and discarded tires
Who's going to tell you that story?

Will you find the book with the preamble that lays it all out for you?
About your father, who had his blood drunk up like wine by bosses
Of the railroads and the restaurants. How his second lover told him
"I'm bored now." About your mother, who couldn't abstain even for nine
months,
And piled bottles on a shelf.

35

Who's going to carry you down from the mountain? Down into town
where
The clerk at the store will smile down and say "you're turning out
beautifully,"
Like you were a cake in the oven. The pastor will kiss your head, the fat
sheriff
Will introduce himself, like you'll understand him.
Who's going to bear you triumphantly down main street?

Who's walking with you down that line and charting your progress,
Like a scientist desperate to prove his hypothesis,
And watching you climb down from that tree spear in hand?
And when I'm far away, who'll tell the story secondhand?

Dissolution: A Recipe for Borax Crystals

Emerson Jakes

- 1) To make borax crystals, sodium tetraborate decahydrate, take a heatproof container and fill it with water. Bring the water to a boil, let the whole thing tremble against the perfect glass.
- 2) Open up the box of borax, take a 3 tablespoon measure and, with much difficulty, pour me into a cup. Some will dissolve on contact, some will need some stirring to disappear. Try not to clink the spoon on the glass, let the smoothness of the little tornado inside watch you. The water will go clear again, it will just be water with a secret inside. Each secret surrounded by aligned water molecules like petals of a daisy.
- 3) Set me somewhere, I've done it on the side of a bathtub, I think it'd be prettiest by a window. Let the water sit, enjoy the view. Let me rest in solution: floating, hydrated, hiding, aqueous, silent. The sunset will glint against my beaker, by then I will contain shimmers of irregularity, little rivulets of distortion if you peer closely. Do not peer closely. Turn out the lights and go to bed. I will be waiting in the morning, aqueously waiting as a distant streetlamp catches my rim.
- 4) In the morning, I will have slept until rebirth. I will be jagged and spikey as the water laps at my shores, I will be bright and reflective and multifaceted. I will no longer be powder, but a perfect crystal to loop around a fir tree or tape to a poster for an elementary science fair. I went from dust to supersaturated to jagged-beautiful. I went from gone to more gone to here, brighter than ever. Dissolution created me and will create me again, just boil water in a heatproof container and try again.



37

Untitled (The Shell)

Eliza Vardanyan

silk painting (batique) | 23.6 x 23.6 in

fatherhood /in transit

Margaret Bartimole

i arrive to the loading dock early in the morning
i carry a hardboiled egg, and a whaling daughter

she is biting at her fingertips & in the midst of tragedy,
senses herself a robot of sorts, affixed with braces on her tiny teeth

she is egg drop feathered, a bleating shell shard
the sharpness only indicates the smallness of particles
& her teeth have extended into blades to her gums.

she is ripping at them and i picture quiet.
sometimes i start crying too, in moments like these.

frustrating to see her hurting and frustrating
to feel red/fire/burning at her, to feel my nails in my thigh
a tired and empty hand.

i roll the egg on my punctured leg to crack
as we fume silently on the silverpurple ferry

38

she looks at me and sees my face reddened
& halts, cries softly as i look forward

she takes the egg unraveled
looks into my eyes and bites, as soft white
squeezes through metal crevasses on sore teeth

she bursts-a sheep
& i laugh forward
she bleats sideways

we both have watereyes
we both can see-
eachother and the island

where she is the egg
& i am the winner of the egg drop
island of metal daughters.
mouths like sinks.

she waves goodbye and i smile till she turns, i drop/fold onto
my kneebeds/ignite/buckle/whisper a scream/ burst into flames



39

Untitled (Sasha)
Masha Morgunova
oil on canvas | 23 x 23 in



She's over there

Brookes Jarvi-Beamer

clay, silver, wool | 6 x 9 in

-Now serving number 204-

The monitor was white, polished, impeccable, lacking even the slightest blemish. It was immaculate just like everything else in this forsaken purgatory. The infinite whiteness of the walls, the polished black floor, the glass window so clear that if I hadn't felt it a thousand times, I wouldn't believe that it was there. Outside the window the clinical purity continued, the hallway reflected the same color scheme as my box. The perpetually obsessive cleanliness was maddening. The only imperfection in my world was me and believe me I could see my asymmetric reflection in the perfect mirror. The puffy redness obscuring my pale eyes and long unkempt hair. My skin, sickly, hollow, opaque, and devoid of color. I see in it the emptiness of my life, the ceaseless asepsis hell in which I am forced to exist. In my lap, in the folds of my bulky jumpsuit, was one slip of paper. Wet paper. I could feel the paper straining to hold itself together, having been severely weakened by the water. My tears had maimed the paper, it bled red dye from its center, permanently erasing the scarlet number it had proudly bore just hours ago. It didn't matter anymore; I had memorized the number. I had memorized every number they gave me. The numbers never mattered; I would never be called. Yet still every day I wait. I wait because I refuse to relinquish the last tendrils of hope. You might say that I have become hope itself, at least I would say that. In such dire circumstances there is little else for one to do. I have long since forgotten my name, long since forgotten the reason for my quarantine, long since forgotten what it is that was so great about the world outside, if such a world even exists. All that I have left is my hope, hope that there is something more than waiting, something outside of this hell.

41

-Now serving number 56-

Time crawled as the day drew to a close; I would have to sleep soon. Even with only artificial light I could feel my body getting tired, it was amazing how tiring emptiness could be. Yet still I persevered, my eyes would not shut until the screen shut off. Then in the darkness I would rage. I would destroy the immaculateness of the room; I would shatter the mirror and spit on the floors, I would scar the walls that held me, no longer would they mock me with their purity. I would tear up the perfectly black floors and escape into the ambiguous darkness of the night in the light of the stars. I know about stars. I said I have no memory of world, that may be true, but I've seen them in my dreams. I saw them for just an instant, webbing out across the sky, holding the world up. One day the

spider that wove that web will come to devour the world, one day when I am free, and it will be me who stands alone to welcome him and watch him devour this horrible world.

-Now serving number 109-

One more number. Please let there be one more number. One more damn number and I know I would be free. I could walk out through the impossibly clear glass; it would be powerless to stop me. The day workers that walked past with mops and bleach would no longer stare at me or laugh when I hissed at them. This time my snarl would be deadly. No longer would I wake up to blurry eyes and bleak numbered slips of paper. I would be out.

I stared at the screen with a focus so intense it could not be sundered by my own death. The screen never flickered; my eyes didn't blink. The room melted away, the bleach-white walls disintegrated, and then dropped out into the emptiness beyond, the screen became my world. There was nothing but that number. 109. Surely it would change, it must, I couldn't stand to be here any longer. The next number had to be mine. Time stalled and I saw myself, not my bleak perfected reflection in the mirror, no, I saw my true self, I saw the eerie symmetry of my face contrasted with the imperfections of my body pushing out against my jumpsuit. I saw that one ear was higher than the other and my eyes were two different shades of gray. I saw what the screen saw day in and day out. Every day I had watched it and learned its nature. I knew it intimately, as it was the key to my life. Just as I knew the screen it knew me, it had watched me as I lived and breathed its numbers, as I slowly became obsessed with freedom. The screen was the extent of my world and I the extent of its; our existences were completely without meaning without each other.

Flicker

-Goodnight from EE Industries-

FUCK! I flew off of the bed rammed my fist into the mirror, hard, just as the lights from the screen and the LED lights from the hall were shut off. I watched the mirror shatter; I saw my face and body splinter. For a fleeting instance I watched the room crack before it was plunged into darkness. Darkness erases all pain, for in the dark we have no form. The light's cruel gaze cannot touch us in the dark. I could rage, I could scar the walls and mangle the bed as I had so many times before, but it wouldn't matter. The carnage I inflicted would be masked by the darkness and erased by the light long before I woke up.

Exhausted, I sat down on the bed and slipped the jumpsuit onto the floor, I was only allowed to do this in the dark. Before I hadn't been forced

to wear it. But when the day laborers stopped cleaning the hall by my room because they couldn't stand to look at me, I was forced to wear it.

In the darkness of the room there was no difference between closing my eyes and opening them, but I closed anyway and allowed myself to drift off to sleep.

-Now serving number 834-

I woke up with the monitor. When I sat up, I saw my whole reflection, no splintering, the mirror had been changed again. I looked down to find myself dressed and groomed. The night laborers had been here. The night laborers were very unlike the day laborers. Their bodies were completely encased in airtight plastic suits. They wore masks and glasses to obstruct their faces, but they could not hide their eyes. Their eyes were terrifying. I could tell that to them I was nothing, just a mass of parts in a room.

I had only seen them once before, back when I refused to sleep during the night, back when I didn't get tired as easily. I could tell they were different by the way they walked. They didn't stop or hesitate to stare, they just came right into my room, the invisible glass did nothing to slow them. They strapped me to the bed and experimented, they injected me with things, cold things, hot things, painful things, and pleasant things, I screamed that night, I cursed them with every fiber in my body, I sent my venomous words coursing through their veins, until they stopped me. I screamed for the last time that night. That night I got my jumpsuit in exchange for my voice. Now I sleep at night so that the next time they come I would only be able to tell by the new growth on my colorless body.

I looked down at the floor to find my slip of paper, and as I reached to grab it, I looked out the window to find myself staring face to face with a night laborer. I froze with terror. Why was he here? The lights were on, I should be safe. The night laborer's disgusting eyes pieced through me without so much as a blink, they were as unforgiving as the screen, and yet I could not understand what it was thinking. I stayed crouched on the floor waiting for the demon to approach, but it did not move, it simply focused its gaze to the floor, to the slip of paper with a red number. 834.

834.

834?

Could it be? 834. I looked at the monitor. 834. Back to the slip. 834. There was no mistaking it, the night laborer had come as my escort. I rose and sat back on the bed. I looked from the slip to the monitor, then to the night laborer, etching an invisible triangle in the air. I could tell at this point that the night laborer had grown impatient and so it waved its hand into my room, evidently to show me that the window had been removed. It looked at me intently in the eye now and spoke.

“Come,” the night laborer’s voice was scruffy, it sharply contrasted the purity of the prison in which I had lived forever. Its voice was oddly comforting, I felt that I could trust this mysterious thing to bring me to the end of the hallway into the light of the stars. I stood up from the bed and inched towards the window, I didn’t even stop for a moment to consider this could be a trick, I knew the window was gone, I was going into the hallway.

Passing from my room to the hallway was not nearly as fulfilling as I thought it would be. I had seen this hallway thousands of times, on thousands of days before. I could angle myself to see pretty far down the hall from my room. All that I was focused on now was the night laborer in front of me. It had a much easier time moving down the hallway than I did. Its gait was smooth and uninterrupted thanks to its symmetric body and long legs. Movement had always been a problem for me. My body’s asymmetry made moving without the help of a wall a trying task. And so, I shuffled after him hugging the wall making every effort not to lose him in the straight white hallway.

We continued like this for a time until the tall, mystically symmetrical night laborer stopped suddenly in front of a piece of metal jutting out from the wall of the hallway. Without missing a beat, it pulled the metal down and the wall swung open. From inside the wall intense light poured out, it was still artificial, but much more powerful than the dim lighting of the hallway. The room inside the wall was just like my room, only bigger. In the center of the room there was a complex contraption that upon squinting, I realized was a bed. The bed was vastly different from the one I had in my room, there were strange arms branching out from it, arching over giving it an arachnidan appearance. Were we outside? I wondered. Was this the outside world? Just more fucking bleached rooms?

No, there are no stars here.

The night laborer had walked to the other side of the room where he pulled another level to open the wall, and a creature glided out into the room. This new creature didn’t even lift up its legs to walk. When the creature came into the light of the room, I knew immediately that something was not right. I was looking at myself. Was this a mirror? No, the creature clearly had four legs, and I two, yet it was unmistakable that it bore my face. I stared directly at it and saw that though we looked the same we were not. The creature was not four-legged, I was mistaken, instead, it was the same thing as the night and day laborers, seated in a mobile chair. His hair was white and his skin pale, nearly translucent, and slightly yellow from disease. Just like the night laborer his body was symmetrical, nearly perfectly so, two matching arms, two matching legs, neither ear was slightly higher than the other. I was looking at the perfected form of myself.

My thoughts were interrupted by the scruffy voice of the night laborer, it was talking to another creature that had entered the room behind the first.

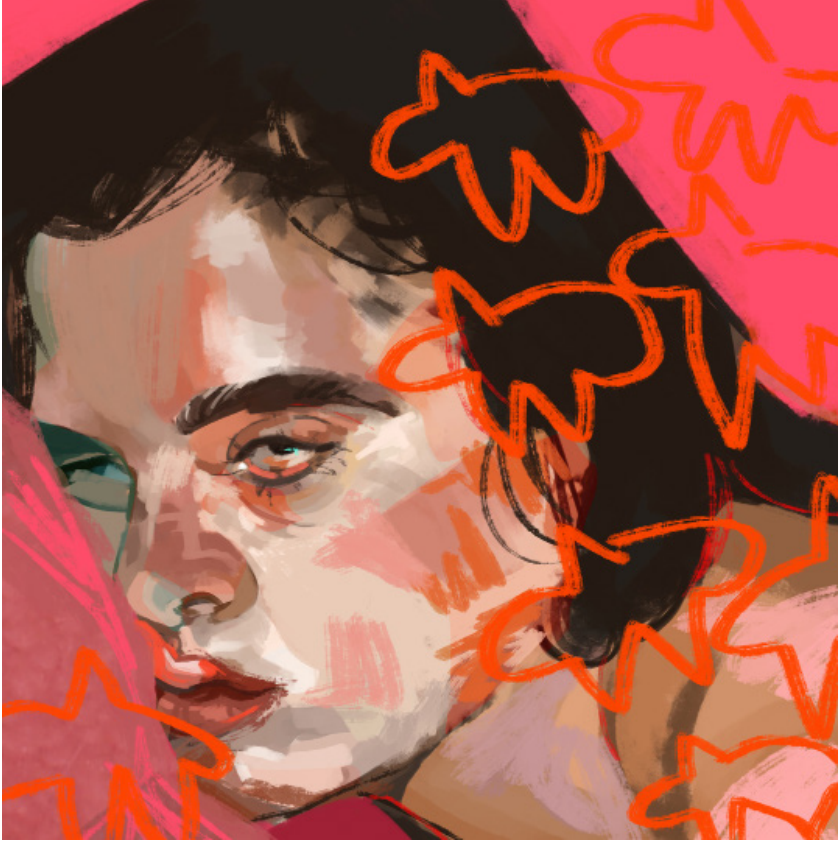
“I apologize, I know the Echo is not fully developed, but under these circumstances, this is the only option.”

Echo?

The new creature looked at me with pure anger. Anger that had been building for years, and finally on this day been released. I whimpered and shuffled back to the door, but instead of reaching the safety of the hallway I was met with the calculating plastic covered hands of another night laborer. The hands pushed me forward, away from the familiar hallway to towards the fangs of the spider bed in the center of the room. I fought with all my might against the growing number of hands on my back, but each time I struggled more night laborers came to move me. There was nothing I could do against the overwhelming number of them, my awkward body was no match for them. Before I knew it, I was strapped to the spider ready to be devoured.

The light in the room grew more intense as the night laborers ricocheted around the room preparing tiny little utensils and filling syringes. My heart was gripped in fear, this was exactly like the time in the darkness when the night laborers had ripped out my tongue. This time, however, I could see everything which, of course, made it so much worse. A second bed was brought out and the frail creature was lifted onto it. He watched in horror as the night laborers took off my jumpsuit and revealed my true form. A form I had forgotten the sight of since being forced to wear the suit. He saw my four arms extending out from my torso, three on the left and one on the right. There used to be six, but one morning two of them had fallen off. He saw the partial exoskeleton on my back that forced my body to be rigid and thus hindered my movement. My two legs didn't seem to shock him, in fact I would venture they looked quite normal save for the left one lacking a knee joint. It saw my imperfect assemblage in all of its glory, and it was satisfying. Satisfying to know that he was I and I him. Satisfying to know that he saw our similarities. Satisfying to know that seeing himself horrified him.

I let the spider devour me, I could see the end of the world in the man's eyes. Even if he stole my body and my life, he would not escape the terror of his own existence, my existence. I stared into his green eyes as the light in the room faded, as the light in my mind faded. I left the world with hope. Hope that in the same way I had shown him fear, he would, one day, take me to see the stars.



red red red
Sage Phillips
digital painting

Before liftoff, I told you-
you're the only one I talk to.
For God's sake, I asked, would you look up?
Would you tell me about the constellations?
Because if you can't see the stars,
I'll have to put them in the sky myself,
And then I might not come back down.
I might stay with the satellites-
With the forgotten rockets, now suspended,
Now turning in an infinity of things.
Did you know-
that we are ninety-two million miles from the sun,
But only an instant from its light?
This is what I mean when I tell you "Give me space."

You say I have been known
To swallow my fears. It's true, but
they never seem to stay down for long.
If I am Cronus then you are the stone in my throat.
With you, I often dreamt of fire-
A Promethean tail blazing across the sky
Carrying me away.
Sometimes- carrying us.

For so long, we were flying
In a Rocket emblazoned with the names of our deepest secrets-
Apollo, who cannot dwell in darkness.
Gemini, who cannot live alone.
Did you know that I too eat pomegranate seeds
Whenever I fear your winter is coming?

We forgot that those who fly must come back down.
And so it was that by the time our rockets had flames,
and our souls had dreams,
Our minds had wandered to grander things
And we forgot
Why we made rockets at all.

one who once had known me

Madeline Wallace

woozy, *woo me*, wooing, wooed
it's peppercorns and stains,
this mood

precarious and passionate
all half-lived
attitudes
affix to me and drape
a cape
to stew in spineless brood

wishywashy wishing wells
and fervent
wishful spools
that unravel
and unwind
while vice and virtue
rule

48

I've had three glasses
ice cubes clink
cracked between back teeth
sharp wince

It's all too much
though not the drink
to speak
would be remiss

Your hand, my skin
a cardigan
roped snug about my body

A lifevest meant
to circumvent
one who once had known me



On The First Dead Bird of Each Summer

Opal Harbour

The cat, perennial bastard that he is, comes stalking into the house.
He's younger here, as a necessary function of time - and look at me,
Explaining time to you, like it's not a little worm in your heart, too -
But the thing with cats is that they are so much softer in old age,
And so much kinder.

Every cat is a little tyrant in his youth,
And I do not get to explain things to you often but you never owned a cat,
And you can't know the way their muscles start to slack,
Or the way the hairs around their nose sprout silver;
The way they seek out your cold feet when you stumble in the dark,
And the way you kick them, not ever meaning to,
And the respondent yowl is more brittle than it used to be.

The point is that he strolls in, cock of the walk,
With the sparrow held soft in his jaw,
So gentle, like you would hold an ornament
(Although I know that I've told you that I no longer hold glass ornaments,
That too many times I had sunk my fingers into the glass
Unthinking
And let the shards cut into the meat of my hand like fruit).

It's too late for the bird - another function of time.
They look so beautiful, even in death,
Little fish-hook talons curved,
Feathers all in place.
The dying makes their bodies fragile things.
But if you're careful, you can scoop them up,
Feel their cold weight rail against the outer limits,
Against the paper skin,
Against the being.

I wonder if I will be beautiful one day.
I won't be small like a bird but
Maybe my feathers will be in place,
And maybe a cat will be there, one not too old,
One whose eyes aren't clouded like schoolyard marbles yet,
One who still chases bees in the bramble out back.
Maybe you'll be there, too,
And you can meet the bastard cat.
You might like him more than you'd think.



3 Saints

Sage Phillips
oil on canvas |
28 x 60 in

Here

Eleanor Baker

My father did a podcast with a man with a southern accent.
But a man whose voice wasn't quite
as calm as his.
His voice always stayed
so calm.
Even when he was telling me to
stop,
it never got too loud
or too mad.
Or it would just start to-
then, he would hang up.

He stopped calling.
I was young,
maybe twelve,
and he told me it was my job
to call him.

52

When he said,
“Here is what is wrong with you,”
I stopped calling.
I didn't hear his voice anymore.

But I could still listen.
In the podcast,
he talked about art.
But I didn't hear.
I didn't hear
“My daughter? Her I love.”
But I didn't listen to the whole thing.
I didn't hear most of what he said.

I heard his voice.
Calm.

I heard,
“Here, look at this rock I found
in Elkhorn Creek,”

I heard,
“Here, this is the garden
I designed,”

I heard,
“Here, turn here.
Harrodsburg Rd.,”

And I heard,
“Here is what is wrong with you.”



lateral sun shifts

madi reynolds

pen on paper | 11 x 6 in

Prayer for the Child in My Sister's Womb

Julia Baker-Swann

May you know what it is to dive into the quiet silk of an Alpine lake after a ten-mile hike. You will be born into a world with magical things like fire-flies. I want to be there the first time you catch one, your little hands cupping wonder. May you breathe deeply on crisp winter days filling your lungs with raw sunlight. Listen to Bach's Cello Suites, close your eyes and let the strings glide through you. When you kiss someone you love and they love you, may you savor the way your bodies have created a third other. May you experience every bliss and enough pain that expands your heart. May you grow old, eyes rimmed in laughter and bones that creak wisdom. I hope someday you and your Mother sprinkle my ashes over the Pacific crying gentle tears laced with poems saying *all is well*.

Every cell flowing through my rivered body prays all this will be so.

Yet dear one, it would be dishonest not to name that you will tumble into a world that is groaning. Embarking on this thing called life is never easy but I am afraid you may be facing a particular enormous devastation. The grownups that have come before you have not done a good job of tending the earth for future generations. Some have tried very hard, and will keep on, but you will soon see that this world is complex. It is very hard for humans (especially the grownup kind) to deal with pain. Undealt with pain coats everything in its path like black tar in the sea. So when the howl is strong, when winds come with their flames of fear remember the Silence from which you came. The heartbeat at the center of the story carries the secret—you already have everything within you for this very moment. Whatever is to be may you know that Love will never go extinct.



56



Stagger Vase Set

Kaydra Barbre

English porcelain | 5 - 7 x 3 - 3.5 in

love story in 8 ≈ sonnets

Margaret Bartimole

i never ate meat before because dad
married mom on condition us kiddos
would be raised with lettuce but sometimes at
night when i am alone i close my eyes & see
cow blood & the sear that those men with grills
lick their lips for & i think oh lord i am
spiced rotten because i am warm for that
sound of oil sizzle i want to sink my
teeth in & sauce my nose & i don't know
the difference that heat can make but in
my dreams it must all be close to raw 'cause
it is so so red like my cheeks when i
think of the first time i kissed you after
you ate that steak & maybe i should try
meat since they aren't even in love anymore

we go to a people party in the
big bellow-y house & you are wearing
electronics around your neck & you
jaw-wag at a morphed video of old
ladies playing duckduckgoose & you laugh
& laugh because they all look so happy
& then our eyes meet & your shadow moves
across the projector screen & you say
i'm so glad you came & then a boy falls
holding the gin bucket he goes down down
& everybody shakes their shoulders
& half-jokingly screams & we don't
break the zip zap connection our eyes made
like you are the outlet & i am the plug

this is a poem in which i am the
porous stone & you the pale blue liquid
percolating through me like the fluid
from the toilet paper commercial oh
it looks so clean so sweet like raspberry
blue the imaginary color from
the imaginary fruit you are the
fruit & i am that imaginary
color someone else decided it made
sense & oh how it does it makes sweet sweet
sense any way you flow through me slowly

sometimes i poundbeat for that flow sometimes
i have an idiot heart i flutter west
i poke at the dried love drool on your chin
it is our last day together on this
planet & we are wrapping ourselves in
aluminum & i am red hot when
you leave the house without saying goodbye
you come back with lunchables you sauce my
lips belly button you sprinkle cheese on
me & i tear up because we are both
so close it is too much & too soon &
i am the cracked & crooked crossbite &
you are the light streaming through it & the
jagged edges make us scared make our jaws
clench tight so you don't exist & oh what
if you are a dirty crook what if you
steal all my sweetness, leave & never stop

58

i shudder at the thought of you being
my laura & o' what am i turning
your silver mind & black hair into o'
you are not golden or sunshine today
you are a circuit board & you are from
the future & oh it's overwhelming
because i am a pair of tweezers
trying to pluck at the little blue wires
but i am held by shaky hands or hmmm
maybe i am the hands & both of us
are feeling like such fragile things like we're
2 glass globes balancing on each other
mid-air, you okay you need space no thank
you do you think you could come sit by me

o' white silver red have become colors
of us & my heart is like chewed gum
that you squat to look at on the sidewalk
my favorite sound you make is the breath
in before you open wide to tell me
about the soul of your computer &
the virtual space between us where i
am squeezing your ankle-tendon & we
don't even own cell phones & we ask the
same number of questions & can design
that city we have been talking about

where everything's on stilts with wooden
bridges hanging to cross the sky there are
rivers in glass tubes & beautiful colors

i haven't laid my non-virtual eyes
on you in months & we are searching for
a cabin to grasp at each other &
we are helpless to the thoughts breathless for
a tongue you are on video eating
prime ribs & oh this is daggerlove this
is gaud speaking through fingertips o' this
is a tiny cherub flying out of
your throat landing on the console stum-bling
a happy drunken step towards me &
hiccuping in my ear 'she doesn't mind
your clammy hands' & pulls my arm towards
philadelphia i am facing east
my hands in your stomach. your h& is mine.

now that i have learned, everything else is
fiction. i do not have memory of
a life before you asked me if i would
like a bite of that steak diane & i
said yes. everything for the first time
has an ending & sometimes it is happy
& sometimes it is being five years old
at a lovely farmers market & each
bite of firm red pepper or of bloody
strawberry exposes soft horrible
worms & there is nothing you can do &
no food or drink is relief they just keep
coming you are horrified your mother
is rubbing your back screeching for a gaud.

liminal witness

Anonymous

8:04AM

i give my ticket to the bus driver
who tosses it in the can

Sheryl is here so is
a woman with a blue scarf and
blotched-blue starry neck tattoo

her son's dead,

she said, he
ate a bullet

i'm remembering the details of last night's Facebook scroll,
suddenly
the town COPS page posting live from the scanner
4:22AM SW 5th St gun shots heard delayed post
one caller
update hysterical second caller, requesting medics

60

Sheryl gasps. oh honey oh honey
honey, no. the blue star
is enveloped by wooly sweater. the driver asks
"where do you want to be dropped off, honey,"
"who are you going to,"
"i'll take you straight there,"
"it's cold out,"
"oh honey, oh honey,"



Isolation

Hanna Craig

digital photograph | 1242 x 2208 px

Museum of Glass

Ian Murray

My first trip to the museum of glass
I was only a boy, clinging to my father
It took me a whole day to navigate
All the exhibit rooms, my breath
Condensing on the plastic display cases,
Where I stared through at
The artisan-blown shapes of human heads
Wearing rigid hairstyles of shards
A crystal house with little people
The glass wife yelling downstairs for
Her glass husband, who reclines on his glass chair
But she couldn't yell too loud or everything would shatter
And the swollen soft shapes
Of vases, jugs, pillows,
Donuts and mobius strips
Their edges were blunt and organic like river rocks
I just wanted to run my fingers over them
I whined until my father drew his finger to his lips

62

My second trip to the museum of glass,
I was accompanying my father while he brought
My youngest brother, who was in the stage of "why?"
And "how" and "where did all this glass come from,
Who made it?" The security guard who overheard him
Had a sagging belly and gray caterpillar eyebrows
He explained "The original curator collected it himself,
Now he's dead, but all this survives him.
Where it was before that is not important.
What is important is that you two,
I know it's tempting, but...
You two don't run or yell or
Anything like that. It's all very fragile,
It can all fall apart, all the curators legacy,
Without responsible behavior." He turned to my father
And relaxing a little, said
"Sorry about that. I just want to avoid disruption
I mean, just last week, you see, we had a woman
Give birth over by the candelabras,
Paramedics and everything. That
Is the kind of thing I'm trying to avoid"

Both adults nodded to each other
Even then, I could see my brother
Barely restraining his urge to go running
Even then I could see
the blue chandelier above us, from Paris
So the placard said, shaking at the sound of our voices

My third trip to the museum of glass, I drove my own car
On the door, a red sign proclaimed "CLOSED," I could only assume
Some bauble had been shattered, some child screamed too loud,
Some guard went pale at the sight of the damages,
Or the mere thought of what could have happened
And so I lingered outside the museum for a few moments,
Hearing no sound from inside
Outside, the rain spattered down
Onto cars clattering over the rutted pavement
Onto pedestrians, onto the crooked sidewalk leading away from the
museum.



64

Moon and Sun

Brookes Jarvi-Beamer

pierced NuGold rings | 1 x 1 in

How to Be a Lady
Monique Tribble

They tell me not to yell
 “it makes you look ghetto”

First of all lets begin
How can I look ghetto
And what if I need to yell
What if I’m tired of holding everything in?

Then they tell me to
 “Smile”

Why do I have to keep a smile on my face
 “So you won’t look like you got an attitude”

What if I do have an attitude
What if I’m mad
What if I’m not in the mood

 “You need to chill out”
 “You’re being crazy”

Let me say it like this

BECAUSE NOW I AM GETTING PISSED

You tell me what not to do as if you’re going to respect me more
 “Well I might”

What are you going to respect me for?
For holding in how I feel?

So you can feel better about yourself and the way that you made me feel?
 “I am just telling you how a woman should behave”

See, that’s the deal

I am not going to make myself feel less than
For a man

That want me to give up everything I got
When he’s not even giving up a lot.

But shame on me saying what’s real?

No shame on you for telling me to chill.



Sarah's Dream

Jakob Posti

silver gelatin print | 5 x 7 in

it is excruciating for me to ignore the correct capitalization of words.
things must have

structure.

this is the fourteenth time i have written this sentence. something
atrocious is around the

corner of this document, i'm sure. i must put things back in order, but i
must

not.

the jagged blue lines shrieking at me to fix my mistakes are burning
through my eyes.

and now,
the thought of something burning its way into my eye sockets

will keep me up for the next five to six nights, until i find something
more

creative. the

seventh night will be about the belt i left hanging on my squeaky
doorknob, the one i turn a complete revolution so that it creaks all the
way, until there's

no
creak
left

unheard.

otherwise i'd be up for an eighth night.

tonight, however, i'll quietly plague myself with regretful thoughts of
having submitted this exquisitely disorganized piece of

trash.

and lastly, I will choose to suddenly capitalize my I's because I've now
realized I've become comfortable

with the consistency of the un-capitalization of it all, and that
messes up my entire exercise

and also,

screw the periods



If They Die, We Die

Kinsey Emerson

enameled copper | 3.25 x 3.5 in

manifesting
a strong croc jawline onto my own
believing /if i scream
i can follow it convincingly
with a snapping of teeth

unfortunately,
the DSM has informed me this is abnormal behavior

so too is the urge to fling myself to and from windows
channeling Auden, if you will,
among other crooked neighbors

so too is the whistling i hear

it is a delusion to hear sirens

“Delusions:

1. Persecution
2. Reference
3. Influence
4. Grandeur ”

69

interestingly enough, most of the time
the first three's primary subject is the government

it is a delusion that it persecutes you
it is a delusion to believe it refers to you
it is a delusion to believe it moulds you
it is a delusion

/of grandeur/
to believe otherwise /or when you seek to upend it /so you are diagnosed
with

the relatively permanent condition of dialectic
after which you may experience the following symptoms

a prickling on the back of your knees
when standing on heights

tinnitus resembling
disembodied screams indicative
of 10,000 years of
our collective grief

innumerable sighs.



Indie Cow

Julia Shuler

oil on paper | 11 x 15 in

How Far Is It To Bethlehem?

Eleanor Baker

"I think I'm almost ready," Millie called to Clay from her place at the sink washing dishes to his place on the couch. "I think I've got it."

Clay looked up from his laptop. "What?"

"My solo. It's "How Far Is It To Bethlehem?" I've been practicing a little every day and now it feels- it's gonna be okay. I'm not nervous. Your father, hah, he would always be more nervous for me than I was nervous at all. But I suppose he was nervous about everything. He would say 'Now, Mil, don't you mess up. Don't you mess up' over and over. Anyway, I'm not nervous." She looked up only to see Clay typing quickly on his laptop and frowned. "Who are you talking to anyway on that thing all day long? Is it Crystal?"

"It's Crystal."

Millie pursed her lips and shook her head. "Well," she began, "You know how I feel about that girl."

"She's leaving for good, I think."

"To go where, exactly?"

Clay paused. "I don't know. I've been asking her."

Millie continued to shake her head as she dried a plastic plate and placed it on top of their only piece of china, which had a thin crack down the middle that curved a little right at the end and hugged the small painting of pale pink flowers that adorned it. "All I have to say is that I don't know where that twenty-three year old nine miles of bad road could end up that would make her life any better than it is here. I mean, godblessherheart, but that girl has wanted to get out of these mountains since she first realized she was in 'em. And frankly that's just no way to live."

Clay sighed. "Mom, she's just trying to do what's best for her baby, I think."

"But it's your baby too!" Millie cried. She put down her drying towel and rubbed her forehead. A little more quietly, she said, "It's your baby, too, Clay."

Clay opened his mouth but was interrupted by the sound of a series of Facebook message alerts from Crystal.

They read:

The job at the hair salon came through.

Gonna live there with my aunt until I can get my own apartment.

We're leaving tomorrow.

You can still come, you know.

"What did she say?" Millie asked. Her voice shook a little.

“She said she isn’t sure where she’s going yet.”

Clay could hear his mom breathe out. “That’s good. Means we’ve got some time. She won’t leave before Christmas. We probably have at least two weeks, don’t ya bet?”

He knew Millie couldn’t see him, but he still nodded his head anyway. “Hey, Mom,” he started as he stood up from the couch, “Let me finish the dishes. You just sit down and watch your shows or something.”

“Isn’t that sweet of you?” She handed him the dingy yellow towel she’d been using and walked into the living room. It wasn’t huge, but it was cosy. It had wood paneling and a lime green carpet that had turned more forest green over the years. And there was the brown couch and matching brown recliner. One wall had a fireplace, never used, and a tiny silver TV, used a lot.

But there, in the other corner under Christmas tree, was the nativity set. It was only plastic, and one of the shepherds had been eaten years before by a dog they no longer had, but it really made it feel like Christmas for them. The tree did that, too. It was fake, draped in a plastic cranberry garland, with ornaments, new and old. The best part was the twinkly lights. Millie had arranged the small pile of presents below the tree wrapped in white wrapping paper with red and silver stars adorning it. She moved to plug in the colorful lights.

72

When she stood up, she knocked a picture off the fireplace mantle. It landed face down. It had a simple black frame, a little dusty, and held a faded image of her and a tall man in glasses standing off to the side of a highway, ready for a picnic. They are smiling and the man is holding a little Clay, sleepy from the ride there. She is holding a delicate baby wrapped in a pale pink blanket. She picked up the picture, wiped it, and placed it back on the mantle without really looking at it.

She took a seat in her recliner and turned on the TV, while Clay dried the last of the cups. Later that night, as Clay was going upstairs to bed, he saw his mother asleep in her recliner. He took a cotton quilt, edges ragged with use, and placed it gently on top of her and kissed her head. As he stood up, he noticed the same picture, the one he never quite looked at directly. He saw it now, staring straight at him. The smiling faces in the photo kept his gaze for many minutes, until the Christmas lights reflected in the photo surrounding the family flickered, and he blinked and shook his head. He unplugged the lights and went to bed.

∴

Millie and Clay’s house was never bright in the morning. The back of the house faced east, but they were bumped up against the mountain; the morning light was always more of a morning haze. The light in Bluefield

Valley only shone from ten until two, even on a bright day, so waking up was hushed and grainy. There would be the dim seeping in of reflected light through Clay's window and the crackling of the radio turned down low matched with Millie's quiet, croaky humming of old mountain songs only she knew all the words to.

There was a soft knock on Clay's door.

"Come in," he said, all his words exaggerated as he stretched his limbs and yawned.

"I made you lunch to take with you today," Millie began. "And I was thinking after you get home we can drive into town and get you a nice shirt to wear tonight because all your shirts are older, you know."

"Thanks, Mom, that's nice of you to think of." Millie stood in the doorway of his room as Clay stood and moved to his closet. "Mom, I need to get dressed. Is there anything else you gotta say?"

Millie was wringing her hands as she said, "I just- It's just- I'm worried... About tonight. What if no one comes, and what if it goes bad and I forget every note?" Her eyebrows furrowed while she spoke.

"Well, if no one comes and you mess up your notes, no one will be there to see it."

Millie's face unwound and was overtaken by her tumbling laugh. "But I'm serious."

"Every time you perform, you do great. Tonight will be no different. Just let the music take over." Holding his clothes for the day in one hand, he hugged Millie with the other, and moved past her to the bathroom. "You're the best singer in the world, Mom."

"Hey," Millie called after him, remembering something, "Do you think Crystal would bring your baby to the show tonight?"

Clay paused and flinched. "I will ask."

"Today is gonna be ok. It's gonna be ok." She walked back to the kitchen and began to hum her songs again.

∴

Clay worked with a construction company, as was what they called a runner. He drove supplies from the warehouse to the sites. This meant he was taking thousand of pounds on the skinny backroads of the mountains, the only thing between him and death being a rickety metal fence and the grace of God. It wasn't the best job, but it was what he could find.

It was a windy day and the mirrors on the side of his truck rattled. While he was driving, he heard the ding of a Facebook message and briefly looked down at his phone. It was from Crystal and read:

Yes, we'll stop by at 7:30 on our way out.

Clay let out a breath, and looked up. Too late. His car was veering toward the edge of the road and the cliff. He quickly turned the steering wheel the other way, but overcompensated. He slammed on the brakes and came skidding to a stop.

“Damn it!” he yelled, breathing heavily. He got out of the car to shake it off. He walked to the edge and looked at the view, then down. A few hundred yards below was another road and a little pull-off with a picnic bench.

Wind whipped around him. Clay felt really dizzy all the sudden. He closed his eyes and stepped back from the cliff. The picture on the mantle came flooding into his view. He put his head in his hands. It all rushed back then, in one sudden swoop, as it did every time he dared think of it. It was a spot so similar to the one from the day the picture was taken.

The picnic had been with Clay’s father’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Paulin. Millie was nervous. They were only agreeing to meet Millie now that they had a second child, and they thought things might be serious between Millie and Clay’s father. She wanted them to like her because she wanted everyone to like her, but she also wanted them to really be part of their family. They hadn’t come to the wedding. Clay’s father had been married before, and there were certainly some women between the first wife and Millie.

74 It was all going well. They were eating the little pimento cheese sandwiches Millie had prepared for the day and drinking the sweet tea Millie had made herself. The secret was taking the time to make simple syrup, she was telling Mrs. Paulin. More than that, they were laughing at Millie’s little jokes.

Clay was playing off to the side on his new baby sister Katherine’s blanket, unconcerned with tea and sandwiches. He unwrapped and rewrapped her swaddle. He leaned down and gave her forehead little kisses. He giggled when she giggled. Millie laughed when Ms. Paulin laughed. It was a good day. It was the last good day. Katherine came down with pneumonia a week later and died within the month.

Millie and Clay’s father divorced soon after. The picture on the mantle was the only evidence of any of it. Oh, and that little pink blanket Clay knew Millie kept under her bed. Sometimes, when Clay was younger, just before he’d fall asleep at night, he’d have a little thought: *You shouldn’t have been holding her so much. You shouldn’t have given her little kisses. You shouldn’t have unwrapped her blanket.* But they were just little thoughts, and he didn’t tell anyone about them.

A honk made Clay jump. He moved out of the way of the car and nodded as it drove past. He was back on the cliff. He knew he should get started again, but he glanced down at the pull-off. *A good day.* He nodded again, but to no one. Then, he faced the mountains. He breathed deeply

in and out, which made a small cloud around his face for a moment. When it cleared, he saw the crisp winter frost that had made a mosaic of the branches. The light reflecting through them made looked like the lit window of church on Christmas morning. The breeze stilled for a moment. He was only a child then. He gulped in the living air of the mountains and nodded one final time.

He got back in his car and drove on, but kept the mountain view in the corner of his eye.

∴

The Christmas program Millie was singing in was at the Bluefield Baptist Church on the mountainside. Just the right number of people were there. The lights and green and red garland strung up everywhere made the little building feel like a holiday oasis on that cold, winter night. Clay sat in the stiff, wooden pew towards the back, with his new navy blue button-down and slicked-back hair. It was ten 'til seven when it started. Millie was standing by him, rocking from one foot to the other. She asked if Crystal would bring his baby, and he said maybe. Then someone came out and turned on the microphone, tapping it. Millie said she ought to go get ready. He gave her a final hug and told her to break a leg.

The lights dimmed a bit and the program started. A quartet of older women sang "Lulle Lullay" and a children's choir sang "Rudolph." At about 7:30, Clay's phone buzzed. It was Crystal. He quietly made his way outside just as her car pulled up. Her mom was driving, and the backseat looked packed with stuff. Crystal got out and went to the back to open up the door, so he could see the baby. Clay moved towards her.

"Hi, sweet Katie," he said, bending down into the car. "I've missed you, little one. Merry Christmas." He tucked her blanket in around her.

He stood and hugged Crystal. "You look nice," he said. "Merry Christmas."

"Thanks, and you too," she answered. They were quiet for a minute. Clay wrung his hands, but stopped and planted them at his sides.

"So, has your Mom sung yet?" Crystal asked suddenly. "We can't stay. But tell her we know she did incredible. We just really want to get started. We gotta make it to Pike County by tonight."

"No, she hasn't gone yet. They put her last because she's the best one. But I'll let her know. And, it's ok."

Crystal nodded and a sharp wind picked up between them.

"So, you're really going?" Clay asked.

"You could come with us, you know." There was a certain plea in Crystal's voice.

Clay sighed. "I've been thinking about that all day. But we tried living

together-”

“We don’t have to live together.”

“Well, that’s not the only thing-”

“We tried living together and you were so nervous all the time that the baby was gonna get hurt. I get it. But you don’t have to live with us. Just move with us. Just be nearby. Be around.”

“But what about mom? She can’t be here alone.”

“You could ask her what she thinks— you can’t live with your her forever, Clay. You know that.” Crystal moved to close the car door.

“Wait,” Clay said. “Just wait.”

He bent down and gave Katie a proper forehead kiss. He stood again and stared at Crystal. She raised her eyebrows. The wind became hushed, the only sound the dull music seeping out from the church behind him.

“I will talk to my mom,” Clay said, nodding. “Maybe I can convince her to leave the house. Maybe I can- Well, I’ll just talk to her, ok?”

Crystal, now quiet, nodded, shivered, and got back in the car. They said their goodbyes. He told Katie he’d see her soon, but her eyelids were beginning to droop. Clay watched them drive off until the only thing before him was his own long shadow.

Clay turned towards the light of the church that was streaming through the wooden-framed windows into the dark, chilly night. Inside, Millie was just getting on stage. She smiled when she saw him, but it faltered when she saw he was alone. He shrugged as he slipped into his back pew. Millie focused, looking straight ahead, and began to sing.

Clay tried to sit up straight, but he ached a little. His vision blurred, and he blinked into the strings of twinkling lights above him to help clear his eyes. The lights cast down on his face dozens of intermingling colors. They softened the lines that were worn there. He turned forward as he heard Millie’s soft, warm voice, croaking sweetly and sincerely, singing:

*God in His mother’s arms
Babes in the byre
Sleep, as they sleep who find
Their heart’s desire.*



Cernunnos Hanging Mask
Eve Corbett
glazed white stoneware | 12 x 10 in



My Old Kentucky Home

Emily Jade

silver gelatin print | 6.5 x 8 in

Tempest

Kudzai Mushongahande

like a flightless bird,
caught in a storm,
I find no solid ground.
but,
my soul knows where peace prevails.
oh valiant soul,
could you guide me
when all else fails?

80



Germanic Glaze Combo Jug

Shawn Gibson

stoneware | 11 x 4 in

Silhouette of a Violet View

ethan pickett

Steady calloused hands reach for an opaque black pot of coffee that constantly feels like it's about to run out. They tip it too far to make sense, but strong flow says there's plenty still left. I hear it go down smooth in gulps, amazed at how shaky he isn't on an empty acid stomach. The two of us have sat in this same place so many times before, me mulling over a menu when I know exactly what I'll get before I sit down, him reading descriptions verbatim aloud, something I've found myself doing with my other friends when I'm not with him.

Silent pauses always last a fixed, uniform amount of time before we both begin speaking again, each of us able to withstand the exact same amount of lull. Part of me wonders how much of this is hereditary and how much is learned, but it doesn't matter because either way I get it from him. He asks about my brother and sister, even though I'm the one that lives out of town. He reminisces about his career on the Philadelphia Phillies with a shit-eating grin on his face because it never really happened.

I tell him how our family talks about him when he's not around, saying how they think something's wrong. They tell stories about him that I've heard before, but in a different order than he tells them. They share concerns about him that he laughs at when I tell him about them. I let him know that I listen silently, regurgitate mostly what everyone else wants to hear when they ask me as his expert. I've always found it easier to be more honest with him than anyone else.

Then we talk about books. We've often read the same by mistake.

This routine between us has become comfortable and rhythmic. I can't bare to ruin our communion, so I wait. I want to tell him how I think I have to leave. It's time for me to move away, more permanently and further than when I left home before. I keep swallowing and he asks what's wrong but we both know what's coming.

He knows because he tells me about when he moved out of his parents' house. It's a story without jokes. He excuses himself to go to the bathroom, comes back blowing his nose. Now it's his turn to swallow down thick spit until he can tell me it's okay to have to leave.

I stare down at salt-stained boots, catch tears before they can make that deafening sound they do when they hit the ground. Extended varicose hands reach to me for comfort and remind me of his sincerity. I tell him I love him and I mean it. His frame is back-lit by bright warm light and none of his expressions are clear to me. I can only hear him smile.

Glint on his face falls fast, but he's still sharp in his eighties, nothing ever gets past him. He knows the sound, too. There's too much to tell each other and talking about it will just make a scene, so we sit and we stare,

and I pray now that there's some alternate timeline where that moment never ends.

I want to tell him how unfair I think everything is. When you move away from home, you're supposed to move in with your best friend and start your new life together. All the advice I've ever gotten tells me that I need to keep closest to the people I love the most. I want to tell him how he should come with me, how I can't stay here any longer for so many reasons, how he's the reason I come back home anyway.

I'm sure there are things he wants to say, too. He finds it in him to break the silence, he's more used to loss than I am. He just tells me he's proud. He places a soft hand on the back of my neck and his hands shake unsteadily as he squeezes, pats twice.

He tells me to call him on the next palindrome date. When I do, I can hear him smile on the other end of the line. We talk and I let the tears fall the whole time now, since he won't be able to hear them from where he is.



83

Warrior in a Garden

Mollie Lyon

acrylic on plywood | 4 x 2 ft

The Girl Who Swallowed Her Jewels

Maxwell Bennett

Once when the girl was very young, her Bubbe, her father's mother, told her how her great great grandmother swallowed all their jewels as the Nazis came for them. How she chose to hide her treasures in her body rather than let them be stolen along with her humanity.

The girl listened with fascination, though she never truly understood stories like these, and asked about it again hours later, running to Bubbe in her chair.

"How did she get the jewels back again after she swallowed them?" She asked, her four-year-old mind unable to find an answer. "Did they stay in her tummy forever?"

Bubbe smiled the way that Bubbes everywhere smiled at questions like this and she held the girl's cheek in her hand and said, "Don't you worry about that, Julian." And that was that.

Julian.

A boy's name.

She was a boy, after all.

Everyone said so, so it must have been true.

And boys did not wear dresses and boys did not play with dolls and boys did not cry so much, even when they were very tired, even when the scrape on their knee was the worst they'd ever felt, so sometimes she thought she would rather not be a boy at all, but such wishes were silly and out of her grasp.

The best she could do was imagine.

Only when she visited her cousin, on her mother's side, whose name was Young-Hee but who everyone called Angela and who knew nothing of swallowing jewels, could the girl touch girlhood. When Angela brought out all her toys, her dress-up clothes and play makeup, and made the girl into a doll of her own, her Julia, in sparkled fabric and blue eyeshadow.

And Mommy would come to get her in the evening and laugh and laugh, "Julian, what did she do to you?" And wipe all the pretty colors from her face.

It was only a joke after all. Just another mean thing to laugh about tomorrow.

Once she stole a necklace from Angela's room.

She didn't mean to take it, but she put it in her pocket when no one was looking and when she got home she found it was still there so she supposed that made it hers.

It was a locket, actually, designed like something out of Sailor Moon, and she sat on the floor and played with the latch, open and closed and open and closed, and the TV was on, and Mommy was cooking in the

kitchen, telling a story, speaking big words the girl did not understand.

Something about a coworker mistaken for a man.

Something about the differences inherent.

And a boy in the cartoons wore a dress to vicious laughter.

The girl rolled the locket in her hands and remembered wistfully the Cinderella costume her father had refused to let her have. And now Halloween was a week away; what on Earth did she want to be?

“What do you have?” Mommy asked suddenly from the doorway, soup simmering still in the pot behind her.

The girl closed her hands tight around the locket, hoping it couldn’t be seen.

“Is it something of Angela’s?” Mommy went on, stepping closer and holding out her hand. “We don’t need you playing with that.”

The girl shook her head. It was hers now, wasn’t it? It was hers, Sailor Moon.

“Julian, please,” Mommy said, impatient as she always was, and one more step.

And before she could reach her the girl stuffed the locket into her mouth, and swallowed.



86

seed index 2

madi reynolds

pen on paper | 8.5 x 5 in

Candlelight

Grace Nickeson

I couldn't, in as many words, explain how love felt,
In a time not so long ago or far away from here.
I haven't been feeling romantic love for very long
Due to a number of problems arriving at the right lover.
Problems of sex and sexuality, of fermented fear
Stinking like teenage body odor and molded butter.
Now that I am here, love feels like a little candle
Freed from a confessional, by a confession or two,
Giving soft light and warmth in cold hours spent apart.
The candle sits, in Earth's vast gothic sanctuary.
Cold stones echo back only aching sighs of loneliness
Which kiss the crumbling keystones of broken arches.
The candle's flame is strong enough to withstand
The onslaught of near-inaudible whisperings
Which pass it by daily. It is not fazed by sound,
By the shuffling of feet or the rustling of clothes.
But silence, time, melts away the wax to paraffin,
Anxiety pooled around a burnt wick, awaiting
Answered prayers, responses from courier saints.
Then comes the clanking of coins in a metal box
Reminding lonely love that there are more candles,
Endless tapers to burn, until cathedrals return to
From stones and bricks to crumbling chapels,
With cracked, ancient mortar holding them together,
Closer than skin on skin on skin on skin on skin.



The Kiss

Evan Hill

glass and ceramic tiles on wood panel | 4 x 2 ft

The Deluge
Kudzai Mushongahande

nothing can compare
to the strength of a mother's love
when the world around is falling apart
only her love remains
steadfast

yet
the grainy sand
slips through my fingers
slowly
into the abyss
as the rain streams down my face
a sign from the dead
bliss?

no,
it's grief

it feels like
you are in your own home
yet you're caged in
or like bile
rising in your throat
burning everything in its wake

grief is the insidious inception
it holds you by the hand
and you follow
and now you know
that no one is an exception

dead men tell no tales they say
but my father still speaks
of regret
of pain
of the times, they made him feel weak



glare
ethan pickett
silver gelatin print |
8 x 10 in

The Airport Bird

Opal Harbour

Here is how it is: ghosts and birds live best in Queens.
This is where you haunt me most;
Ambient LaGuardia seeping through fake leather at my gate,
Airport sparrows nesting in the rafters.
Two hours after my cab has left your hands are still ghosting through my hair,
And the security guard tells me, stern,
You can't bring those aboard ma'am,
Thumb tracing his boxy black radio like the concept of a gun,
This is no place for the dead.

And so if you come with me
Then I will have to drink you down, my twelve ounce ghost,
Will have to hold you like a film on my bones -
The way a subway pigeon holds a fry in its beak, or,
The way that rain holds a bird, or,
The way that the night holds an errant dog;
The way that teeth hold flesh between the cutting edges.
Gentle.

91

I will carry you in my ribs the way you carry an animal through security,
A frantic little thing, one that doesn't understand
National security, or the encroachment of personal liberties,
Or the politics of air travel,
But one that understands the realities of a cage.
I will hold you through the screaming scanners,
Through the ghoulish gaze of TSA,
Through the gloved hands of strangers,
Which search and grope for purchase on my summer skin,
While you press your beak against my vena cava.

Flying is a transitory state.
One day I will learn to breathe in airports
Without your talons tamping down the soft earth in my throat.
I imagine it like this:
I will step into the TSA line,
Look the agent in this eye,
And rip open your cage, all feathers and noise, and let you go.
In a few months you'll be just another bird lost in the airport.
But in the moment? Imagine the chaos.



Migrations

Caroline Wolfe-Merritt

digital photograph | 720 x 1280 px

CONTRIBUTORS

Eleanor Baker is a sophomore English major whose fascination with the 2008 financial crisis is her most interesting trait.

Julia Baker-Swann has many places she calls home. She just moved to the Whitewater River watershed to begin studies in Theopoetics at Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, IN. She tussles and plays with the complex wonder of embodiment through penned words and the flow of water-color paint.

Thomas Baker-Swann is a student in the Masters in Theopoetics and Writing at ESR. He is excited to be in the realm of theopoets and looks forward to a summer out west in vast space.

Kaydra Barbre has been working with ceramics for the better part of three years, with sculpture being her primary passion within this medium. She enjoys creating vessels and pieces that are not intended for replication in order to highlight the uniqueness of any given project.

Margaret Bartimole eats her hands as she writes about them.

Ila Beinart '20 is a Politics major from Richmond, Indiana who enjoys weaving and photography. "In Boxes" is a woven piece inspired by a local glass blower's bubble trap glass. It is hand-dyed wool in a krokbragd pattern, both of which were firsts for Ila.

Maxwell Bennett is a gay, transgender author who writes a lot of stories about being gay and transgender. He is a connoisseur of camp, he finds comfort in Yiddish, and when he grows up he wants to write the books that he always needed but never had.

Eve Corbett is a 21-year-old woman from Midcoast Maine who grew up fostering a love of nature. She is majoring in Geology at Earlham College and hopes to devote her life to paleontology and specimen preservation.

Hanna Craig is a self taught photographer and likes to capture little moments in everyday life. She is a Photography and English double major, and she is excited to see where in the world her lens takes her.

Mallory Crosby is a senior Neuroscience major who occasionally dabbles in poetry.

Bella DeJoy is a second-year Music (?) major who finds joy when creating anything.

JP Dongo is a man who lives in Connecticut, he will die a slow, early, painful death after his sister reads that he put her in his author biography. Sorry Christine.

Kinsey Emerson is a senior Art major with a concentration in Metals/3D Fabrication.

Libby Fox is a junior studying Environmental Sustainability with a minor in Studio Art & Film. She does rugby, dance, and is a peer career coach. Her hair has been going through a lot of colors recently, but she's okay.

Shawn Gibson makes functional stoneware pieces that take inspiration from the past pottery traditions and the idea of using natural materials.

madeline gullion is a junior environmental sustainability major and creative writing minor. she is passionate about yarn in all forms and can be found knitting, crocheting, punch needling, or weaving all over campus.

Padgett Gustavson is a senior and a Studio Art major, focusing in Ceramics. He predominantly makes high fire, handmade, utilitarian pots. For Padgett, handmade does not simply mean made by hand. It embodies work that is infused with the imperfections and individual identity that comes from the maker.

Opal Harbour is a persistent problem which we are working to resolve. If you see or believe that you have seen Opal Harbour in the history department or elsewhere on campus, please do not report this to Public Safety. We are aware of the issue and we will continue to update you as things develop. Thank you, and have a good day.

94 **Evan Hill** is a third-year Biology major at Earlham. He is missing his dear friends who are abroad this semester and is looking forward to when he can see them again. Meanwhile, you can find Evan practicing violin, running, and baking bread.

Emily Jade is a visual artist from Louisville, Kentucky. She is a senior, who is graduating with a Psychology major and Studio Art minor, with a concentration in Photography.

Emerson Jakes '23 is chemistry, art, language, dog, and horse obsessive. Their favorite plant is senecio rowleyanus, String of Pearls, and their defining personality trait is their love of the color purple.

Brookes Jarvi-Beamer is a second year Metals and English major at Earlham. They are excited about continuing their career in metalworking. Their pierced NuGold rings are made to look like the rays of light reflected by the moon, sun and the stars. "She's over there" was made as a physical representation of pronoun dysphoria. It weighs the wearer down as they go about their day. Cracked, the sentence loses its meaning and significance after it is said, but the wearer still must carry it with them.

Asa Kramer-Dickie is a senior Peace and Global Studies major. His piece is a reflection on his time spent on the Tucson-based Border Studies Program, where the violence, pain, and cruelty of the border was in constant tension with the beauty of the desert and the inspirational work of community organizing and resistance.

Hanh Le is an okay person.

Mollie Lyon “Warrior in a Garden” is a portrait of famous martial artist Bruce Lee and is inspired by the nature of Lee’s being and character. Her use of plum blossoms both represents his Chinese identity as well as his philosophy. “Enter Jim Kelley” is inspired by the Bruce Lee movie *Enter the Dragon*, geometry, as well as the lack of representation of minorities in cinema.

Masha Morgunova is from Saint-Petersburg (Russia) and is a sophomore Studio Art major and German Language and Literature minor. She likes the smells of peonies and turpentine.

Ian Murray is an Earlham sophomore, who lives in the swamp back-campus. In his spare time, he grazes on cattails for nutrition, and submerges himself in the water like a hippo.

Kudzai Mushongahande is a senior Global Management major and Geology minor who also writes poetry about the weather, daily musings and everything in-between.

Grace Nickeson is one of many Graces to grace Earlham’s campus, is a junior English and French double major who used to hate writing poetry, but now writes mostly poetry.

Damil Nuñez-Reyes is a senior majoring in English, with a minor in Creative Writing. He is an aspiring visual artist and writer hoping to find a home for his completed works after graduation.

Salaam Odeh studies Japanese Studies and Creative Writing at Earlham College. A few of her many inspirations include the New Age band *Sleeping at Last*, her home country of Jordan, and the contemporary author Stephanie Perkins.

Sage Phillips eats oil paint for a living, and damn does it taste good.

ethan pickett hopes you’re well.

Jakob Posti is an artist from Pittsburgh, PA graduating from Earlham in 2020. They work in Photography, Video and Painting and create mysterious images.

sulay ranjit also known as सुलय (sulaya), is an interdisciplinary artist uninvested towards any particular medium, or the notion of art as a product or an object. Instead, they gravitate more towards the conceptual realm. As a member of Earlham's class of 2020, they graduated with majors in Art, Human Development and Social Relations, as well as a minor in Music. sulayranjit.com

madi reynolds is a visual artist from colorado, they work in photography, painting, and drawing as well as other forms of fabrication. they adore taking walks and the fact that you, too, are making art under the Sun on the surface of this earth.

Annalee Shields loves oil paint, earth tones and folk tales.

Julia Shuler is a senior Art major and an introvert struggling with adulting.

Lee Tran is a senior English major. Art imitates real life and thus he writes stories with a realistic element, designed for a good few hours of thinking.

Monique Tribble is a senior English major. She writes poems and short stories when she has free time. She mostly enjoys writing about what is going on in the world around her. She also uses writing as a tool to clear her mind.

96

Eliza Vardanyan

Madeline Wallace is a senior English major who occasionally writes, reads a lot, and hopes to have a career in publishing. She appreciates words more than just about anything else (except for sugar and coffee, but always separate--never together).

Caroline Wolfe-Merritt is a senior Biology major. She enjoys spending time outside, and photographing mountains, forests, and creatures as she goes.

And anonymous contributors