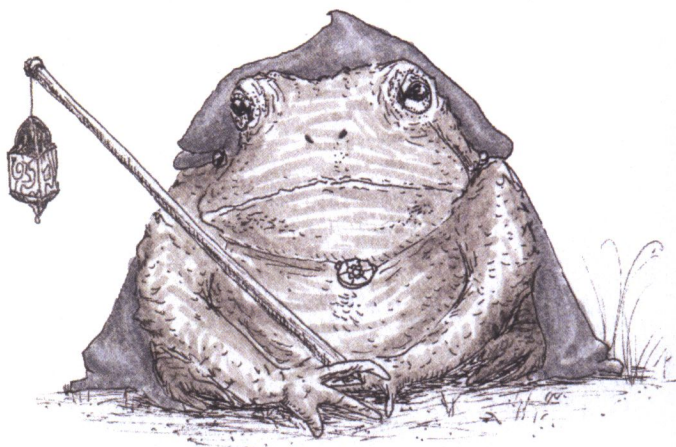


THE MILL

2018

PERIODICAL STACKS



The Mill

Willamette University

2018

a run of The Mill publication.



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Note From The Staff

Some of the content in this publication may be triggering.

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Mestre Centro Tram Station

Felicity Helfand

A leaf blows past the huddled few—
Fanny packs, weatherworn caps, and carpetbags all.
Once spilled into empty seats
they hope to return to history,
which is why they spend their time
gazing forward.

After Nu Wa

Madelaine Au

She molds an image out of clay, I am yellow
earth. Mud figures crushed between my toes. I spit
tobacco half-chewed and raw like the crescent moons on my skin red.
The sky creaks warily, cracks blue

pillars collapsed. She tired of mending the sky, *noblesse oblige*. In the year 2018,
drenched

in February downpours, stomping between enchanted green moss. I wield
a snow jacket converted rain jacket; pale
skin tastes like winter. I devour a God. Tails intertwined shimmer,

sacrifice a ginkgo leaf and a stone carving of 12 year-old me: bloated thighs,
metallic,
cold, and unyielding.

Shoutout to my ex, or, 10 fun facts about my body

Kate Castellana

1. months before you saw the inside of my bedroom, you told me you would still love me no matter how much of me there was to handle. i kissed you, said thank you.

thank you for cutting me down to size, for peeling so restlessly to get at that skinny girl you told everyone was inside me somewhere, thank you for throwing away the extra so at least that much of me got away

thank you for ruining vanilla wafers, the park across the street, blue umbrellas, and my full name but leaving me all this goddamn skin. fuck you.

2. anyway i'm so fucking hot, hot like stinging your tongue, hot like burning the fingerprints off your dirty hands; hot you won't ever touch me again.

3. there is so much of this body you never got to see and thank god for that- freckles and birthmarks the little love notes to how big i've gotten; the things i have carried since birth.

4. you didn't look close enough when you were between my legs so you didn't see the scars. and i never thought those mementos would become safe places on bad days but they remind me that i have been through worse things than this, and you.

5. sometimes my body is something i have to come back to.
sometimes i forget what a clean mattress smells like, or i lose
track of what my name is, or i can't remember what my skin feels like
draped over my bones. sometimes my body is something i
have to find my way back to, but i always do.

6. you called me gentle. your hands were on me and
your eyes were full of wonder. you asked me how i got so
soft, and laughed about how you could probably live in my skin
for days and not go hungry. you were so busy burrowing into me you
didn't hear me say "wait" or "stop" or "stop" or "stop" or "please"

you never used your teeth when you were with me but i still felt like
i was bleeding sometimes i still feel like i am bleeding and i
can't stop remembering how after you taught me to spit to get
the stains out of my sheets.

i can buy new sheets.

7. even though the memory of your mouth
starving thing
still turns my stomach, i will not be your set table. the bone and
muscle in me will never suit your tastes.

8. my hands shake but they are still good hands.

9. i was silent, dead silent, but at least playing dead means
i was unflinching.

10. my body is soft and gentle and strong. my body
is good. my body is healing as it spits up shame that never
belonged to me. my body is getting me up for good days and
for bad days, my body is beautiful in all this light, and
most of all, my body is still mine.

Marriage

Emily Sperber

I have scented trash bags that smell like Fresh Linen but if I had fresh linen I would think they smelled like trash bags.

is(n't)

Evan Dilley

Geese kannever water flowers

Just can never

like you

love you

(Lach(en))rymation ensussed

[And/From, front & back]

the ruminations

Over what exactly that means;---

That only movement is real

This

How?

Just

like

lemonade

run runnerlegs run

Abigail Lahnert

Sit outside move as
 light moves

(right leftwise along the concrete bench)
the light makes and unmakes
squares on the carpet

vanish right before eyes
re-form moments more
(a cloud passing right leftwise)

The bricks made in little squares like that,
no glow, woodworked mudworn
what if they did the same?
(a magic trick, they'd call it)

a library a house a post office
—built with them!
here gone here gone
How to run the errands?

Acknowledgement for—
none?

not from red chair 1
not from red chair 2

Who knows who knows who?

ran the errands over
under.

those runnerlegs.

out car window
over shoulder

yell yell yell.

some misplaced expectation
maybe try where you keep your keys.

locked-no vacancy-nothing open
at this hour-nothing going-nothing gone.

A day kept in this keeper of key-pings.

haven't been called yet,
got an email.
(I didn't expect you to, either)

The ribbon too silky
two fingers flush with water—
somewhere for it to go?

(you feel so out of control)

It goes in, of course. In, en, ein.
Quite handsome, a sign above reads "Mujer."
a whole section.
Snip, snap, solves that.

(you could watch me get ready)

Mujer, lo! Watch those locks
get locked up or freed
each strand a lemming, blue or green.
Watch them defy gravity.
a magic trick, they'd call it.

(your best friend is not going to be)

And I then, too, am not I.
Who am Who am love you.

Won't own.
not unknown. not felt.
run over

go to big blue house
go to dingy flat
pull everything out
put it on the sidewalk.

Walking-side, that's really it.
white boards shuffle past
fence rooted in deep.

(think about all the times...)

my shoes his shoes
mud mud mud

(...you have been frustrated and exhausted)

Once the big red chair
and a phone call.
Twice tan colored floor
not sand not sand
but nonetheless quick.

(make a flow chart)

I go in, en, ein.
someone's got the right prescription
of glasses, I know.

and in the morning rent paid and
5 twanging forks on
5 chiming plates.

Chewed up the bread and oil
become breadoil.

(remembering how much you love celebrations)

All four doors shut.
elsewhere, no doors.

no ownership
won't own it!
Throw it out—no bathwater?
Throw it out anyway!

Runnerlegs running
taut, taught—what is it past? he asks.

One day the pin drops
hair pin on the tile floor
locks loose, *running*

old hat-rack story.

over coated women
coated over
in sweet glaze.

wearing all the hats.

But this then:

Waiter waits for the
waiting wanting to be
waited on—

I'm that I.

I then, too, am not I.

cup of coffee
cup of coffee

f
f

e
e

not unknown, not felt.
deficiency?

No phone call yet today,
email—read left rightwise,
opposite the light.

Salt

Claire Alongi

Yesterday I passed a girl
who wore a dress
like the one I wore to the beach
that day the ocean swallowed me whole
and spit me out
tumbled and wild
and full of fear
before I ran back in again
laughing.

The girl said to me
that I looked as if
I had forgotten something,
and I told her
I had lost the taste
of salt on my tongue.

Babysitter Wanted

Troy Conway

Teppola Prizewinner

No wonder we evolved from apes.
These kids are beating their chests
and scaling the stairs.
My vocabulary
contains a steady diet
of "Stop," "don't touch that," and "No."
Only four more hours,
I motivate myself.
Lets play a board game
you little shits.
I walk in the musty closet door
and wipe away the death powder
that gathered atop the red box.
The word "Operation" poked
its head through the dust.
The children were finally contained,
sitting round like Kumbayah.
Dissecting a man
with more problems than myself.
"There's a piece in his throat!"
"No shit, that's the point of the game,"
I mumbled as I ventured the
Twittersphere. The monkeys
came and mauled my legs.
I tried to decipher their howls
when I looked and saw the tall one
twitching on the carpet.
I sprinted over
only to find him still and lifeless
on the jungle floor.

JUST TAKE IT ALREADY!

Abigail Lahnert

she took it
she took it

shaken shaken
shook it—

loose gums
flap flap
loose legs
clap clap

over under hurtle

she ran it
she ran it

for me? too far!

one body, only one.
one body: hers, mine.

discomfort coming toward her
the “big kahuna”

told to take it
told to take it

she took it!

3 empty cans of corn.
lip skin, mouth skin.

she made it
she made it!

and when she left I
ate it whole.

Dumbass Love Poem

Raquel Reynolds

Today I was asked to write a dumbass love poem
By a friend for Valentines.

Yeah.

So I write:

*You invoke the world into a temporal dream of color
We speak of love like light but it is dark close pressing itself into one comfort
A religious and philosophical truth
The hidden, the profound, the sad and beautiful
The truth
Devoted in its elegant carelessness*

She looks at me so blankly after reading it.

So. I write her a 'roses are red' verse.

Ungrateful bitch.

But.

I mean.

Fuck.

She's right.

Its shit.

Goddamn it

Fool-proof

Daniel Sean Santos

Need:

A no.2 pencil
A pink eraser
A pencil sharpener
A pen with black or blue ink
5" of any color string
A standard deck of playing cards
A box of matches
7 AA batteries
Open-mindedness
99 dollars in cash.
80 isosceles papyrus triangles
28-31 grams of pure cane sugar
3 kilograms of purled passion fruit
A sprig of jasmine
A kukri
Inflammable or flammable clothing
An acoustic bass
Green neckties
A fake handlebar moustache
More than one way to skin a cat
2 ounces of liquid xenon
One ring to rule them all
Vicente Fox
The memory of Jackson Pollock
An elementary understanding of existentialism
The real Panchen Lama
The Real Housewives of New Jersey
A bullhorn
Manatees
Some scented candles

Dark chocolate-dipped strawberries

Fear itself

The Russian Federation

Plenty of water

Plato's cave

A battalion of silver horses

Love

What could possibly go wrong?

Would You Take it the Wrong Way?

Alexandra Lloyd

My older sister and I were born just over two years apart. As such, we did everything together. We were grounded and rewarded by our parents together, we collected bobble-heads of early 2000's Sacramento Kings players together. We stood, white-robed, on various catholic altars washing the hands of various priests as they went through the various slow motions of their masses. We quit altar-serving together. We each leaned on the other's shoulder as we slept on long drives into and out of the night the two times we moved across the country. Our hands took after our Grandma's, rolling lumpia to sell on the sidewalk. We sat in rickety chairs in some basement room in Philadelphia where we attended meetings for children who have experienced trauma. We took up basketball, my sister eventually finding her home on a rubber track while I found mine in the grass. I was a better jumper than a runner, but I joined track & field because of her. We became a package deal with most things, and I kept pretending to like sports to continue as such—after each track meet, the two of us wound up, magically, at the same table at the same pizza joint at the same time every Sunday, wearing cotton t-shirt jerseys with our names and the names of local businesses printed upon the backs.

I've noticed over time the different ways to communicate, different variations of language. Sometimes my mom simply grunts all huffing-like into the air to indicate something we've said the wrong way. Sometimes I exaggerate a word, *exAAact-ly*, and my language becomes not one of expression but performance, the vowels extending with my arms out into space and then beyond. Like kissing, and the many ways in which a kiss can be enacted by two mouths and two tongues and two sets of teeth, the softness of some ways and the roughness of others, the blood of biting too hard. Think of the infinite ways in which a word, *love*, can be expressed, and how such ways can set up different ways in which such love can fail. But language complicates, in the same way that knowledge can make you feel so much lonelier. Our growing comprehension of space makes us vastly more aware of our smallness within such space.

My sister and I do not speak much at all. We never did, and I still blame myself

for it. But as kids, this didn't matter. When our parents would leave, we would play video games in the living room for hours. We would eat our dinners in front of televisions and watch gameshows on repeat. Our language became one of arc and curve, that lonely smile I spy when I say something only she would find funny. This feels good, to speak without tongues for a little while—a day, an evening, a childhood, but not an entire lifetime.

One fall, our mom was sent to a psychiatric hospital somewhere in New Jersey. My sister, my dad, and I drove out to see her one weekend. My sister was just old enough to understand these things, her composure being the only thing I remember from my mom's hospital room itself. I didn't realize then how much my parents were trying to keep something they had built from dividing. I didn't realize what kind of love, both of self and family, was needed for my mother to say *I need help*, or for my dad to say *you need help*. The architecture of love, of how we use our bodies to support what can be lost, is a bridge you drive over in fog.

That weekend, my sister and I spent all our time together while my dad stayed by her side. We watched movies with a bunch of other children of patients. We ate ham sandwiches from a strange cafeteria that was always empty, and we loved that we could talk about Harry Potter loudly. I tried Ketchup for the first time and the last. My memory fades there. I don't think we talked. I think we tried to sense the other's need for movement and learn to move as one. I want to say it was easier for us than anyone else. But it was probably hard, and frustrating. My sister was there to cover my ears when plants were thrown by my mom. There were probably moments where we each tried to pull our separate ways and realized we couldn't. I think of blood now as whatever fabric they used to bind my sister and me. I have a hard time giving blood.

I knew things would change between us when she left for college, and would change even more when I finally left. We would continue in silence, with an added element of distance. We return, the moment after, the day after, the years after, to all these different counts and all these different ways we know of arranging what is and what once was and what will be. We return to each other, or leave, or start anew but no longer completely whole, only small broken bits stitched together with blood and red yarn. And so it is like this again and again and again. What we do when we lose things, how we shape it, how we say *I need help*, what we choose to remember in silence. I think of how far apart we are now, how I try to feel her here in the same way.

But you have tender in your arms when we embrace and for that we are always alive, weightless and carried by all softness and clouds and open sky, the whole

goddamn mouth of it, the wet drip, the way it feels like a home you carry with you, the way scabbed skin peels, how it finds rest and so do we.

If I told you I love you, would you take it the wrong way?

This Heavy Heart that Always Reaches Me

Dawn-Hunter Strobels

Yesterday my heart was tomato soup

smooth and acidic

it burned my throat and sloshed between my ribs

I thought of all the birds my mother loves.

she stops in her tracks for the small

black cap of the Goldfinch and weaves the

yellow belly feathers together in the name of

something sacred.

it has been some time since we read the poem

about the Egret and I admit if I saw one I would

mistake it for a Heron.

today my heart is beef stew

thick and chunky as I look at the Starlings

the only bird she does not like.

She sloshes between my ribs.

HER

Maddie Cleaver

my friends call me Hoarder

my dad calls me Woman of Excess

I keep things for other people but all of them are me the other people are me
my other people in the next years months in the last years and days almost
never now

none of these things for me

things with multitudes and a romantic turn them precious

fruit grows to ripen (watch)

heavy, precious, heavy fruits

fall (watch)

rot, remain, (watch, mourn)

precious/wasted

rot!

haunted, rotted

I am being haunted by P O S S I B L E

imagination!

but what if I knew (I don't)

MY favorite color: one side of "Revlon Emery Board"

and my hobbies? fucking, flossing. only

Woman of Excess Hoards possibility Hoards things she hates,

things she likes,

things she wants to like,

things for

Other People

Other People do not appreciate these and others

do these haunt or heal? do you want to heal are you trying to heal

October

Asalia Arauz

Do not walk around held high, telling the broken girl afraid of the dark that everything is alright when you're by her side.

You won't always be

You'll leave & the dark will stay.

No la enamores porque si te vas,

No,

cuando te vas

ella se quedara con el sentimiento de ti.

Pero why?

Don't you understand?

No entiendes?

She loves you pendejo

She's made a home in your company

Mi casa es tu casa

She'd give the life she's fought for to give you the feeling of peace and safety
you gave her

Didn't your Madre tell you que no muerdas la mano that feeds you?

This isn't an open door policy

Si entras es porque te quieres quedar

Searching for the Sky

Lilia Watt

Teppola Prizewinner

I want you to imagine what it's like to fly. The best part is breaking the cloud barrier. At first, all you see is white. Thick and wet, like a sea of fog. Then it falls away and that's when you see it. The sun. The clouds swirl beneath it, tinged with a soft golden light. Above you is the endless blue of the sky. And you think....you think that if there is such a thing as an afterlife it would be something like this. The light. The silence. The stillness.

It takes the ships over a hundred years to transport passengers from Earth to Kepler. By the time they are brought out of cryosleep everyone they used to know is long dead. It's a depressing thought. For a mission like that, there really is no going back. Kepler is, at best, an uncertain future. There's only one colony there and it's.....well, let's say it's in its early years. Basically, it's a chaotic mess that never has enough of anything. Not the greatest prospect.

So, uncertainty ahead, no way to back out. Why would someone go? More specifically, why did I go? It's complicated. I wish it was easy to tell you. I wish I could just write you a list of reasons and it would be enough. But it isn't. It's not something I can really capture in words. Not like that. I'm going to need you to imagine again.

It's quiet the day before you leave. Or maybe that's you. For months it didn't really feel like you were actually leaving. Today it's beginning to sink in. You will soon learn that it will always be this way. For you, things move either too fast or too slow. There is no in between.

You're in the cramped room that's been half yours for as long as you can remember. The holographic image of Kepler flickers in front of you. Power isn't the greatest.

A breeze drifts in through the cracked windows. It's warm and dry and smells like dirt. Kepler floats in front of you. It's blue, so very blue. Like the images of earth before the wars. All ocean and mountains and valleys. You feel drawn to it in a way you can't explain. It's like a magnet tugging at your heart.

The door creaks open and your roommate, Thea, steps in. She's the only other kid who's been here for longer than eight years. Tomorrow, she'll be the only

one. After the war, there were too many children and too few orphanages, so there's been a pretty steady stream of children coming and going. As soon as they're old enough they're farmed out for labor. The only reason you and Thea are still here is because you're one of the only ones who know how to repair the rusting machinery used around the farm.

Thea glances at the hologram. She looks tired. "You're really leaving tomorrow, aren't you?" she says.

You shrug. "I'm not going to change my mind at the last minute, you know." She sighs. "Yeah, I guess not. Was kind of hoping you would though." She pauses, then forges on in a hurry. "You know, there are plenty of farms that could use a good pilot. With all that nuclear waste they're always going to need help." You know. But...she doesn't understand. It wasn't easy for you to get this far. You built the Wing yourself out of spare parts. At first it crashed more than it flew. You worked three long jobs to be able to afford piloting lessons. Then it was only due to an unexpected stroke of luck that you were even able to get in. The classes were full, they were always full, but for some reason one of the students dropped out last minute. You were the only applicant who hadn't made other plans. What other plans were there to make? So, you were accepted. Then there was getting there. The school was a two hour walk away. Everyday, in the burning sun, for three years. You didn't go through that just to fly over the same strip of land for the rest of your life.

Thea's watch beeps. She starts, then puts a hand on it muffling the sound. It's 7:00. She needs to leave soon if she wants to be at the farm on time.

"I need to go," he says. She pauses at the door. "Look.....just make sure you say goodbye before you go, okay."

"I will." You'll still be here when she gets back.

You take the Wing out after she leaves. It's early but the sun is already high and blazing down on you. Behind you, the miles of dirt hills and sand dunes that composed Astoria fall away. They grow smaller and smaller, until they're nothing but a dark spot in your rear window. You wish it would stay that way. You wish you didn't have to go back.

"One more day," you tell yourself. One more day.

It's late afternoon by the time Thea gets back. The heat has subsided enough for you to clean the wing. It's still warm against your fingers. Most of the cleaning consists of dusting. Here, the dust gets everywhere. Everything is covered in it, no matter how many times you wipe it off.

Honestly, you don't know why you bother. You're leaving soon. It's not like

you're bringing the wing with you. You're getting a new one.

At first Thea doesn't say anything. She watches for a while, then picks up a rag and begins to polish the other side. There's a certain care to her movements, like she's handling something important. There's a strange tightness to your chest.

"You know, the corn mazes are going to be weird without you," she says.

You frown. The corn maze isn't for another two months. October. Your favorite time of the year. You love the corn mazes. The bonfires. Hot apple cider. The night turning the hay bales into a myriad of strange silhouettes.

And you wonder, do the leaves change on Kepler? Would they be the same colors?

You draw in a breath. The tightness in your chest is getting worse. Like your ribs are closing in. It hurts and you don't know why.

Thea pauses. "Hey, are you okay?"

You don't answer. How can you? You don't even know. Instead, you say, "I was thinking about taking the Wing out one last time. Do you want to come?"

She does. It's strange, having someone with you in the wing. Letting them see the world like this. For you, this has always been a private act. And yet, here she is, her face pressed against the window as the world falls away. The wonder in her eyes matches yours.

Below you the world spreads out like a map. You've seen this place a hundred times over and yet it feels like the first time you've ever really seen it. There is a word. *Vuja de*. The opposite of *deja vu*. To see a familiar thing as if you've never seen it before. That's it. That's what this feels like.

You push the throttle forward and the Wing shoots downward. The earth rises to meet you. The Wing echoes with Thea's scream. You smile and pull the throttle back, mere inches from the dirt. You know what you're doing. You've done this before.

The wing skims easily through the canyons. This is what it was made to do; maneuvering through small spaces at high speeds. You love this part. The speed, the closeness of it all. The way your flight path moves with the curves and dips of the earth. You know these caverns, every inch of them. You know where to turn, to speed, to slow even before you get there.

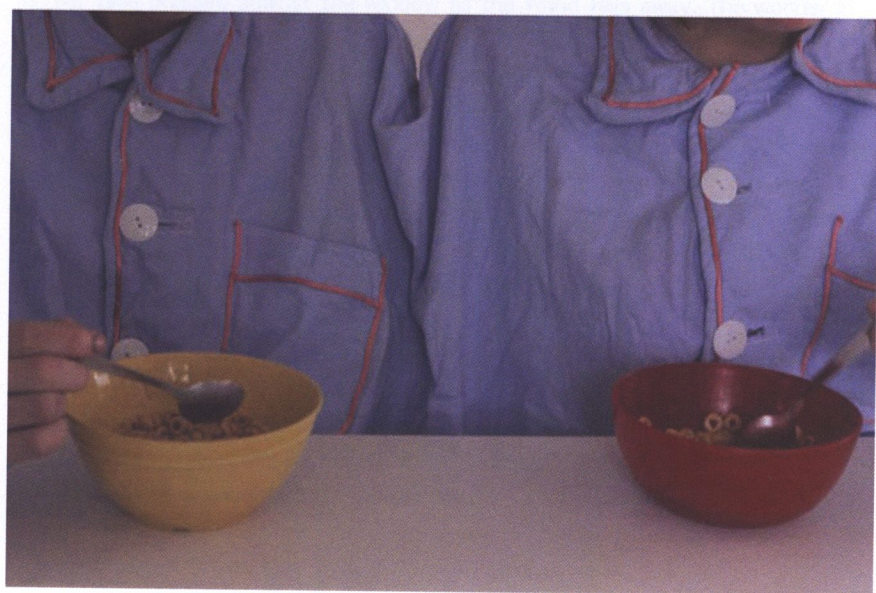
It's the same with the Wing. You know every part of it. After all, you built it. You've driven it for so long that it feels like part of you.

And now you realize... This is the last time that you will ever fly this ship. This is the last time you will ever fly through these canyons. After tomorrow, you will never see them again.

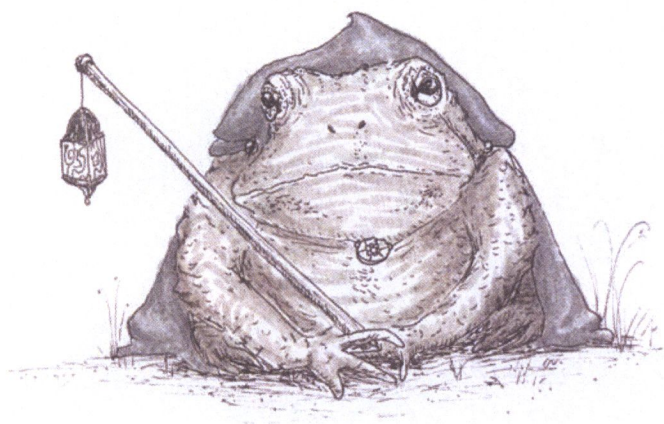
Behind you, Thea laughs. Her face is giddy with wonder. You used to hike these canyons together. You, her, and another girl. Aurora. She had fiery red hair and when she laughed, she would throw her head back and laugh unreservedly. She

left a while ago. Something about being a guide. You miss her. You realize that now. You miss her and you will miss this. These caverns, this old, creaky wing, those blue, ghostly mountains in the distance. You thought you hated them, but somehow they've wormed their way into your heart. The realization hurts. It's like a tear in your heart, but there's a rightness to it.

"I'm going to miss the corn mazes too." You say.



Pajamas
Abigail Lahnert



The Hermit

Anna Neshyba



Goldfish
Eurydice Chen

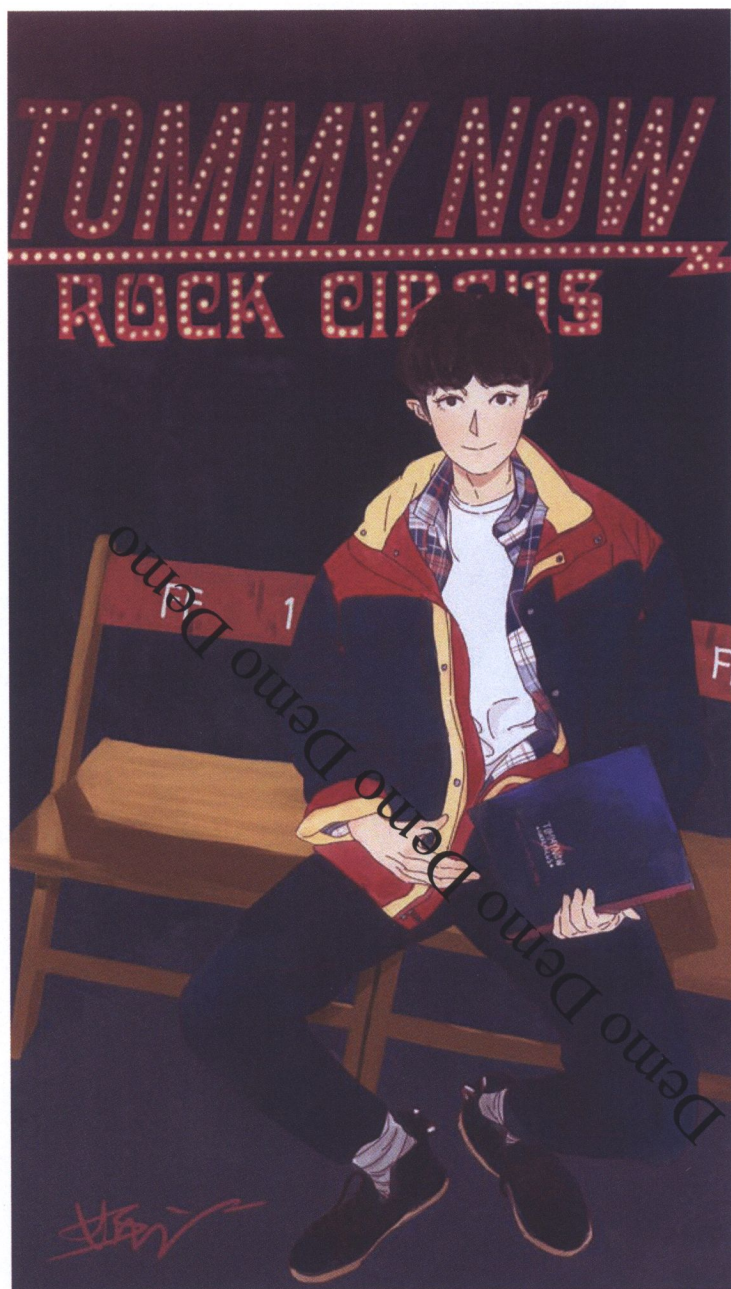


The Magician

Anna Neshyba

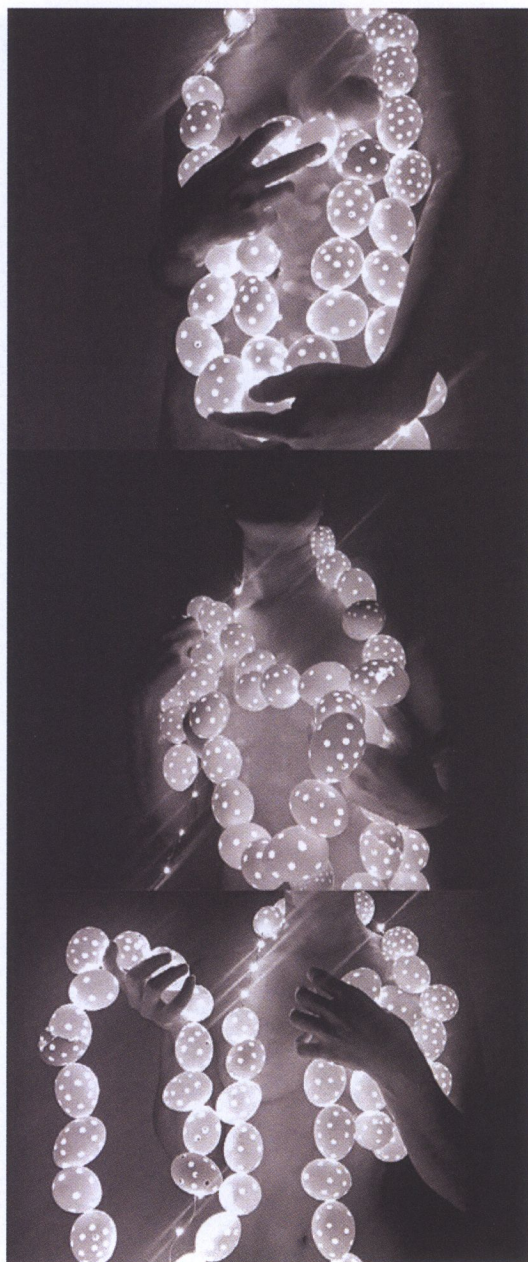


Untitled 1
Sherry Chen



Chanyeol Tommy

Eurydice Chen



Nurturing Myself

Kyley Nishimura



Anastasiya Nykaza <anykaza@willamette.edu>

Feb 19 (10 days ago)



to Karen ▾

My heart belongs to the Cascadia Earthquake forever.

-Nastja



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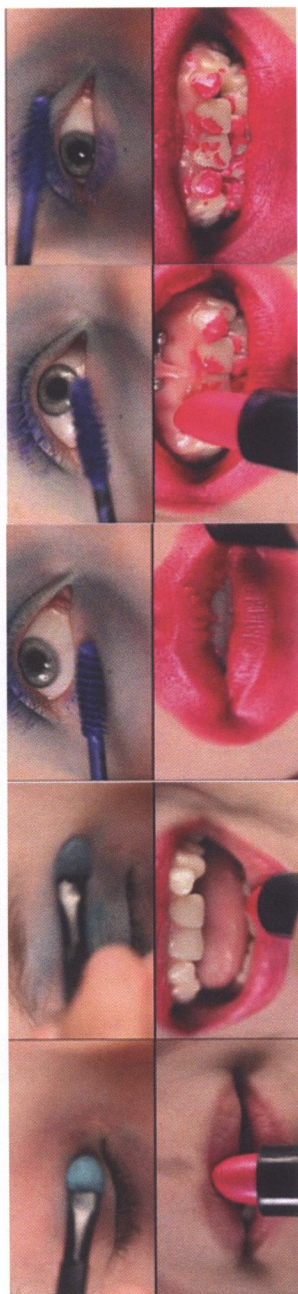
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Nastja Nykaza



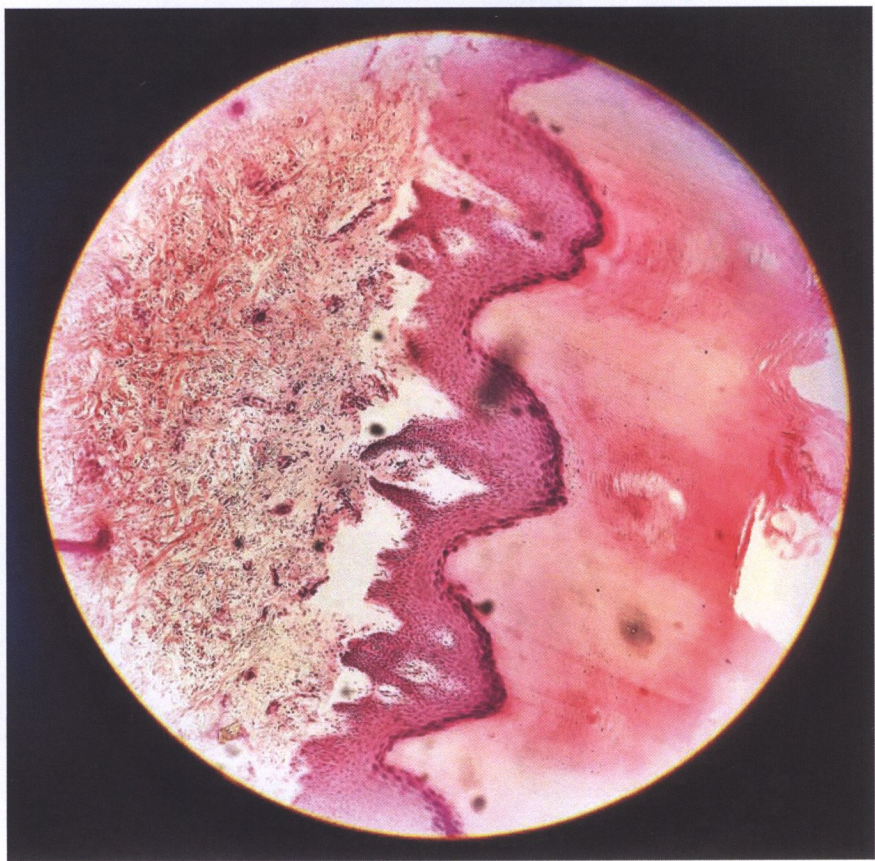
Saul Weir
Nastja Nykaza



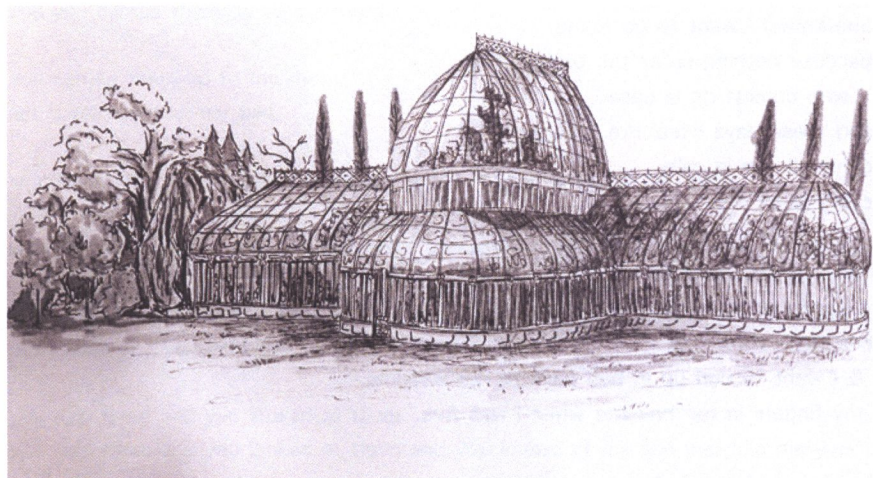
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Playing the Part of a Woman Girl

Nastja Nykaza



Untitled 2
Sherry Chen



Chartreuse Chaque

Anna Neshyba

Para Mi Alma

Asalia Arauz

I call her Saturdays thru Thursdays.
Fridays I keep for the miscellaneous things.

You are doing great, like always, do not stress, vas a estar bien.

She knows I want to go home,
because nothing cures the broken alma,
como comida de la casa
and these days I feel like a vaga,
comiendo en la calle
every night.

The way she used to tell me
Y que? No tienes madre o casa?
comes to mind
& I want to curl up in bed next to her sleeping,
my fingers in her hair like when I was five.

I make playlist called *para mi alma*
filled with canciones she taught me to love,
songs about love
songs that remind me of her love.

Father

Dawn-Hunter Strobel

you bought me oranges
oranges blueberries strawberries kiwis.
oranges blueberries strawberries kiwis bagels oatmeal.

you bought me oranges blueberries strawberries kiwis bagels oatmeal
and you carried them up to my room.

you carried them up to my room,
set them down on my bed.

set them down on my bed and cleared space in your arms for my worry.

cleared space in your arms for my worry brokenness heartache depression heaviness
tears.

you cleared space in your arms for my worry brokenness heartache depression heaviness
tears and you held them.

you held them and you looked at them.

you held them and you looked at them and you looked at me and you told me you
carry them too.

you told me you carry them too and there's nothing wrong with you so there's nothing
wrong with me.

you left and I put away the oatmeal
you left and I put away the oatmeal the kiwis the bagels.

I cannot put away my worry my brokenness my heaviness
but you carry them too.

you carry them too and there's nothing wrong with you so there's nothing wrong
with me.

Hog Tie at the Rodeo

Maddie Cleaver

The event is summarized easily: Grease Pig, Pig Runs, Men Run, Pig Caught?, Man Ties Pig, Man Wins

With the first: Grease Pig

What?

What constitutes a good pig, consider.

Next: What kind of knots

Bondage and Domination knots. Bondage and Discipline knots?

/Read Kink into Rodeo: easily.

Is the rodeo sexy?

What knots work

Next: Who do we root for

Man, Animal, Subject, Object

Very complicated in fact

Magnifying glass required (What ISN'T about sex !)

And

Rodeo is dirty is fast is violent is centered on control is risky is entertaining is too much too much

Grease

Sweat

Dirt

Hair

Rope

Leather

Whips (crops)

Circles (arenas)

Hoops

Poles

Men

Animals

Hogs and horses and bulls and other four legged things running around kicking up dust, don't get too close, the smells and the sights could technically should technically be overwhelming

Salt

Dexter McNally

Edith says I'm like honey

I'm marmite.

What use is a pillar of salt?

Can you use it as a lick?

What if I never climbed?

Would I still drink wine-
and consider the peak?

For Motzi

Kate Castellana

I. The house still stands. Quieter now but
the den is no less red, and the
kitchen tiles have always been
chipping anyway so who could make a metaphor out of it?
The wallpaper is still stuck kissing the plaster and
even the old dog is okay sleeping in the hall. This table
is still the one where I first covered my eyes
before I knew the words to bless the light - it just bows
a little more now, heavy with grief.

II. yes - the house is standing still but
the piano has been moved
out and for the first time the kitchen
has been sorted: spices swept up off the floor.
the old boxes of matzah unsalvaged. the house
stands easier now maybe because
it has been emptied. grief
has not been smoked against the walls of this place:
it is something we carry on our backs.

III. And anyway the house yawns more without you
the dog is quiet and limping and
never stays in the kitchen - i wonder if
the table groans not for the wake food but if
it too feels the absence of a mouth. prayers have begun
bursting in the bathroom pipes and the oven quit
and no one sits in the den anymore. the house leans more
without you. We took your sweaters and stuffed them
in the cracks
you are still keeping the cold out.

You Never Played for Me

Claire Alongi

[TRANSCRIPT, PHONE CALL MONDAY AT 11:53 PM]

I uh, I don't want you to think this is something it isn't. I mean, that is, this is just a courtesy call. I wanted to let you know you left your jean jacket here. I don't know when because you know, we were um... hanging out over summer but it would have been too hot then right?

[SHUFFLING NOISES]

Maybe it's from when we drove to the beach...

[MORE SHUFFLING, SETTLING]

You know, the day you called me up and I could tell you were smoking a cigarette because of the muffled way you talked, even when I told you it was bad for you and I hated the smell but anyway... And you told me you wanted to go for a drive and I thought you meant just out into the country a little bit you know? But then when you picked me up in the old Camry and... thank god you'd gotten rid of the cigarette but I could still smell it, filling up the whole car but it was okay because all the windows were down... and anyway I got in and you kept going and going and I knew I should tell you turn around but I didn't.

You were wearing the jacket then I think. Yeah, yeah you were because it was that trip when you got that stain right on the bottom left corner, kinda near the first button. It was from that chocolate ice cream remember? We drove for two hours and I realized I didn't even care where you were taking me because I think I knew then that you didn't give a shit about me, or at least not enough to really make an effort once this summer was over and we had to be in different places. Or maybe you did love me and were just too fucked up to really try. Anyway I knew this was your way of kind of saying goodbye so I guess you could have driven me straight into the ocean, and I would have just waited for what was next.

So. The ice cream. It was from that cafe right by the beach. Soft serve. I got mine swirled and you got straight chocolate, and we took our cones out onto the sand and just walked the way you drove, aimlessly without any concern for coming back. It dripped right there on the jacket, and you tried to get it off and then I just grabbed it and I licked it. God that was so gross. Lord only knows where

that jacket had been and I just stuck it in my mouth. It tasted of the smoke I hated, of chocolate, of dirt, of something metallic.

[SHUFFLING, RUSTLING DENIM]

I guess I figured you'd want it back because I also found stuff in the pockets. I mean, not anything like super valuable. Moneywise at least. There's the ticket stub from my sister's play.

You probably remember that. The Crucible? God... I don't know why they did that one, they were young enough they probably didn't get it anyway. But she was Abigail and was so excited and you read lines with her for hours. Remember? You did John Proctor and you guys just yelled at each other back and forth until she could recite her part and everyone else's. Do you know that's when I realized I was in love with you?

Sorry, I'm thirsty, hold on.

[FOOTSTEPS, GLASSES CLINKING, RUNNING WATER]

Oh, there's also a guitar pick. You said you played, but you never played for me. I did see a guitar at your house once. It was the first time you took me there, and I accidentally walked into the basement instead of the bathroom because I was nervous and afraid to ask for directions again. The place was fully furnished with soft brown carpet that felt plush against my bare feet, and a huge TV hung right across from an overstuffed couch. A hulking shelf crammed with ancient books filled most of another wall. And on the opposite wall, an old acoustic guitar was mounted with little flowers painted on the glossy wood. But everything was dusty, like I'd walked into an abandoned museum and I was so confused until you came down the stairs and told me the bathroom was up the steps and down the hall on the right. You told me everything there was your dad's, but didn't elaborate. I remember later when you cried telling me he had left years ago, it wasn't cute or sweet; the tears were just ugly. I'm sorry but it's true. You wiped salt water and snot all over the sleeves of that jean jacket while I held your hand in a vice grip. You put on such a front you know? You were so cool and charming but you were, are still, made up of more broken parts than most of the rest of us. Fuck I just...

[SIGHS, SIPS WATER]

Back to the point, I think you left the jacket here after the beach. You let me wear it because I got cold, and I fell asleep riding shotgun, disappearing in layers of denim as you drove back through the twilight. And uh... as I got out of the car I knew I was still wearing it and should give it back but you know... I think I thought if I held onto it you would have to come back and get it. You didn't get out and open the door for me, so I just walked over to the driver's side and leaned through the open window. Do you remember if we kissed? I can't and that's so bizarre...

I didn't realize that until just now, but I honestly can't remember like... Did I

block it out or something? I feel like we should have kissed but I swear I can't remember. I can't... I can't. I mean, it's like, I don't know, a scratch on a DVD or something. God. Did we kiss?

Fuck I mean... anyway. Anyway. I came back home for winter break and found the jacket. Just wanted to let you know I have it if you want it back or something. That's it.

[SIGHS]

Yeah. So. Yeah. I have the jacket. Bye.

[END CALL]

My Uber Driver And I

Eli Kerry

my uber driver and i
communicate using lithe flicks of the tongue
and gentle hisses
like how snakes would communicate
probably if they had languages.

our connection
which could almost be described as telepathic
if it wasn't so empathetic
is interrupted by the arrival of two
straight people
who talk like they're making out
blindly in the back seat.

a thick smoke or fog
on a road at night
coils umbilically
around and between us.

this kind of thing isn't soluble
like a snake's venom
or considerable
like a landmass's size
but it will come back to haunt
a place without people
in a spectacular waste
of both time and energy.

Natalie Wood

Emily Sperber

who wouldn't touch water,
floated into the ocean and came back
floating on her stomach
was it bad enough to face your fear, Natalie
and bad enough to let that fear face you
and take you under its current
maybe it was a miracle on your 43rd street
maybe you waved your scarf to your own finish line
now you've become what you feared
water in your lungs, you've become your own
ocean
one you wouldn't be afraid of
you were beautiful and still are
I would come watch you like an aquarium
if I could, Natalie Wood

the girls

Madelyn Jones

Somewhere between the cropped shirts and plaid skirts
lives a fear
felt by girls on sidewalks,
whether cold so socks touch thighs or barely peek out of rims of converse
a supposed-to-be glance from a man,
indifferent eyes suddenly full of intent, lingers

unfurling the fear that was temporarily dormant.
The fight they always say will arise
drains, leaving them to think if they should blame themselves.

The man starts to follow and the fear deepens
heads: down
hearts: thundering
feet: right, left, right, left

Finally, they join a larger group of friends,
the fear slinks away with a wink. Residual lingers,
adding another tally into the book they are all keeping.

Remember: I am in a room

Madelaine Au

that is like somewhere I've been before. Knives
dance and shake my hand. Light-fixtures wear a twisted grin. I wanted to tell you,
(how many times have I told you in my head?) shards
of white picket fences. Knit them into my skin, mother:
Are you coming to Valentine's day? Remember: it's about the love of Jesus. AND Pizza-shaped

hearts, and bible verses smeared on toast. Everyone (the fam bam) laughs until their faces
turn upside down, their bodies fleshy evergreens, and I remember that we are in an attic
that is like somewhere we've been before. Jesus, how long have they kept us
here. He laughs and I can no longer tell the difference between lemons and limes.

No One Should Ever Have To Look At Themselves

Alexandra Lloyd

Wearing headphones surely reminds you
that you will never leave your own body

I'm so impressed by how intelligent
watching star trek feels next to you

We went to bed and had the same dream
about maybe dead ocelots

god stretch their skinny cyborg hands
And celestial colors for bodies

Summer

Dexter McNally

maybe it's just like me
to be sold off and
stuffed with dust and twine
or pickled in a moment

i'm tired
of steel toed boots and bleach burns.
to taste my conservative sweat
is to taste degreaser
and butter

to come home
and undress
one half or another

When Blue Combines With Light

Felicity Helfand

The Jewish Ghetto is always cooler compared to the rest of Rome. I shiver in my coat outside the synagogue while I wait for it to open for the arrival of Shabbat, but several elderly men who have also arrived early appear comfortable in double-layered sweaters.

The chill has been a fixture in the ghetto since it was created in 1555. Confined within its walls and next to the flood-prone Tibur, Roman Jews had to build upwards for more space, subsequently blocking out the sun.

But the Great Synagogue of Rome, built after the ghetto was almost completely demolished in 1888, emanates light. It is immense, both in size and majesty, with a signature upside-down four-cornered dome that reaches for the sky in a way that the ghetto's past inhabitants could only dream of. An engraved Star of David rests on its facade, facing St. Peter's basilica directly.

Now that the guards holding sentinel at the synagogue know me, getting through security on Friday evening is much easier. The female security guard who rigorously grilled me last week ushers me through, no ID required, and turns me over to her partner. When he asks me where I live, unsure if he means in Rome or back in America, I answer, "Trastevere." He nods, satisfied, and gestures at me to walk through the turnstile.

Passing through the heavy doors of the synagogue brings me to the entrance chamber. The door in front of me leads to the gleaming main hall where the ark housing the Torah rests. In front of it is the bimah, the desk on which the Torah is read by the rabbi, assisted by the cantor. If you skirt the seats and hug the Southern wall, you reach the section of the synagogue reserved for women and children, separated by the mechitzah, an iron partition with carved palms and supported by a mahogany base. But that is on Saturday. Today is Friday--we're going up.

Back in the entrance chamber take the flight of marble stairs on the left and you'll arrive at the south balcony facing the bimah. The service has already started. Hebrew spills from the cantor's mouth as he sings the prayers at a dizzying rate.

A woman diagonal to me quietly matches him word for word, while another rocks back and forth, tracking the characters with a finger. For some

time I do not try to follow along; just hearing the words is enough to make my soul catch in my throat. Once I start to listen seriously and use the siddur in my hands to determine where we are, however, a problem becomes apparent. Aside from having to use an Italian-language siddur, the cantor's speed is impossible to follow.

Before too long I give up trying to find my place and look up. Perfectly parallel to us is the ark and all around us is light. Suspended chandeliers cast down light from above, while small golden globes perched on opposite balconies send light up, illuminating the decorations: dusky orange murals gather all the light within themselves and stained-glass windows steadily darken with night's progression. Everything else is white and gold and blue, like the ceiling rendered a miniature sky, with the oculus as its sun and the chandeliers and globes as its rays.

The rabbi steps in to recite the prayer, and I flip through the book once more to no avail. Craning my head to catch a glimpse isn't an option; the mechitzah has been moved to the bottom of the balcony, obscuring him from view. It is beautiful up here, but isolating. Perhaps the feeling of dual separation from both faith and community is what the inhabitants felt long ago.

A brother and sister, about 7 years old, soon catch my wandering attention. The girl stands at the mechitzah, reading quietly. Her brother bounces around the seats, no siddur in sight. The women continue their meditation without a glance. Provided it doesn't interfere with the service, children can do as they please. His aunt feels otherwise. She lifts him into her arms, tenderly adjusts his kippah, and bids him pay attention. He promptly squishes his face into the seat and pulls out his toys.

I return to my pretend reading with a smile until out of the corner of my eye a little face peeks at me through the seat gap. When I glance up from my book, the boy's huge eyes, dark with long-eyelashes, fixate on me with innocent curiosity. Smothering a giggle, I go back to reading, but my focus is incomplete. Moments later a toy dinosaur appears on top of his seat, wiggling back and forth when its presence alone is not enough to get me to look up.

As the minutes pass, my resistance withers, worn down by the uselessness of finding my place, and makes a break necessary. I lift my eye off the page and stare at the dinosaur for a moment to increase the suspense, lean forward, and carefully tap it on the head before going back to my book.

The dinosaur disappears only to be replaced a second later by a red fish. I repeat my actions with a smile and the fish vanishes. Satisfied, the boy turns to new entertainment, much to his aunt's exasperation, and I return to my siddur, not caring that I'm out of sync. The lights are brighter than before.

All at once the service is over with a single note rising from the ground up into the sky, holding in a lingering vibrato. The lightness fades away but

leaves an imprint on my soul as we descend the stairs. Merging with the rest of the congregation we file out into the night while the streetlights burn, illuminating the guard posts placed on every corner.

Maria Adillia

Asalia Arauz

Me enseñaste a rezar
Y que tengo un Ángel que me guarda

Late at night
When I do not know where or who I am,
I find myself crying to the angels.

Pero
Me enseñaste a ser fuerte
I left our casa like none of your babies did
I was terrified to walk an unpaved road
Pero no me dejaste llorar
Porque "siempre estoy con ti"

Me enseñastes a coser and in 19 years a hole
No es razon to buy something new.

Me enseñastes lavar y amar.
Me enseñastes cocinar y perdonar.

M at the Piano Ad Infinitum

Abigail Lahnert

Soundshape—mouth. “o”

M’s neighborhood an impression on the endpapers.

Soundshape—voice. “Ohh”

singing in the small room

the large room

the long room.

the room with the velvet couch

the couch eating the sound.

the sound eaten by the couch.

the crowded room.

the cool room.

Emma on the couch making matches,

I on the couch striking them.

vs.—at work. My body knowing better.

He says, “You know how to move it.”

It’s not threatening, sensual, or anything really,
with his:

Soundshape—lips like old plastic bags.

thinking is vs. is

constricted chest, release.

(sing)

breath is release

(SING!)

I hadn't thought so.

M at the piano

M at the piano

M at the piano.

he won't be anywhere else now—

M at the piano

I thought he would give it to me, but he didn't give it.

I thought he didn't

teacher at the piano

I think of M.

His neighborhood an

impression

My neighborhood,

impressed.

M at the piano.

M at the piano.

Soundshape— "O."

Fisheye Lens

Evan Dilley

I stare into the mirror and all I can see looking back at me are these dull unthinking, unfeeling insect eyes. This is a frequent refrain of mine, and one which I often refrain from conveying to anyone save my own self and my self of the mirror. It is, nonetheless, a sentiment which I am sure many others develop for themselves when they look upon my blasé, bland, unremarkable face. These are the eyes of newspaper hawkers, elderly merchants, young women with round faces, young but slightly older men with oval faces, fabric-store employees, et cetera in the same vein. It is perhaps not so much the eyes themselves as how they are set, for the sockets would surely have the same effect were I to gouge out the eyes with a spoon. Others would receive a sight of the same empty holes, and with ineffectual perception being such an integral part of my character as a slightly melancholic, insect-eyed figure who gazes on with even less expressive power than a dumb cow, I would in all likelihood still be able to see. Perhaps even better than I do now, as nothing has no shape and can therefore not be too long for the optimal processing of light. Seething in a simmer, I turn myself and proceed out the door after turning off the lights. It is important to be mindful of one's energy consumption. It is likewise a hallmark of good, clean living to follow the edicts of President Jimmy Carter and wear a sweater indoors rather than use more energy in the pursuit of heat. The human body has plenty of energetic, feisty heat when supplied with a diet of nice, nourishing cornflakes®. This ought to be supplemented by a sufficient quantity of raw onions. They'll add lusty vigor to your loins, pep to your step, and fire to your belly. In my buggish way, I prefer mine in tiny bits taken throughout the day; like mints, only more frequently and made out of raw, blood-temperature (from being kept in a tin, close to my thigh) onion. That said, there are many acceptable means of ingestion. I've known a man who ate them like apples, although he was a premature ejaculator. In the tradition of that glorious abortion of a State, Prussia, *Suum cuique, Cummi quique*. On the note of teutonic republics begat of teutonic kingdoms, their armies tend to be good but their uniforms lack flair. England as a singular example from which to extrapolate, et cetera. I am an authority on this subject. I then proceed to dress myself. This was of course preceded by the selection of garments, but this is a private process. To share with others these most intimate facts would be

scandalous. Unthinkable. My naked body, still hot from the shower, slides into the most enticing and erotic garb I can conceive of. Decked in a conservative grey sweatshirt, jeans of a regular cut, not at all tight, and white tennis shoes, I walk out the door. You see, I'm naked underneath my clothes and nobody knows. Only the insect-eyed can tell.

Help I'm Blind

Raquel Reynolds

Naiveté
Reminds me
Of a butterfly
That upon looking
Closer is
A moth

Vantage Point

KC Crawford

Teppola Prizewinner

From the front step of my parent's house, I can see the whole village. Fed by the winding road bellow, is a large mass of miniscule, short-bread tin, postcard, cottages. These are mashed together with two small pubs: the "stabby one", prone to fights and sirens and the "nice one", with its French wine and fine food, which face one another from other sides of the street, either side of a class divide. A few family-run antique shops full of old swords, car parts and grotesque jewellery, a general store and a post-office complete the main street. The further I crane my neck over to the left, I can see the road out of the village, flanked with a doctor's surgery that isn't open anymore, a barely-manned police station and two grave yards, depending on "whit wan" you may be. My bottom is cold on the old stone step, wellington boots paired with fluffy socks and a cosy coat with a collar like a polar bear draped round my shoulders. This is my protection against the damp, cold. I shiver and draw the white mass of fur closer around my frame. Cigarette in my right hand providing warmth to my forefinger and thumb, the rest of my exposed skin is slowly ravaged by the cold.

Here "whit wan" matters a lot, catholic or protestant, it depends on what pub you go to and to whom you're related. The family trees of this village have messy, incestuous, tangled roots. The local gentry are buried in private cemeteries, not mixing with either the "Tims" or the "Huns", unless it's to stand in line at the only shop for miles to buy alcohol. The further you go out of the right side of my vision, the road turns single track, the houses get larger and larger and so does the conservative vote. The Queen's cousin lives in the biggest house by the loch, I used to sell her electricity when I worked in the tiny, overstocked post office. She used to sneak, snide comments through her crinkled, tissue-paper lips; my hair, my piercings- I would never get a job. Yet there I was serving her. That job was depressing, sad tourist paraphernalia and toys no one has heard of since the eighties, riddled with damp and mould, lined the wooden walls of the post-office. This makes for an interesting obstacle course for the elderly to navigate in order to retrieve their pensions from the counter at the back of the shop. All the important information in the village goes through the post office. An information exchange, both written and vocal, few secrets were safe from the friendly, but inquiring line of the post-mistress. Her best trick was to ask peo-

ple what was in their parcels "for security reasons" with eager, poorly disguised glee, a tale could always be spun from the contents of a package. When I worked there I was never short of a lurid tale of adultery, or the final score after a fight, even jail sentences and divorces were projected for all the occupants of the tiny, cramped shop to hear.

The river splits the village; a physical chasm that correlates with the class divide. Sometimes it would swell wildly, the few shops and houses on the main street would employ sand bags. The streets became trench lines and the village would fight the elements until the river was tamed once more, back on its winding track. On one side of the river there was the queen's cousin, with her unkempt hair, fraying clothes and the kind of accent that only arrives as a result of boarding school. Toffs are careless my mum used to say, what a good way to articulate the complacency that comes with wealth. The sight of her blonde, weak chinned, offspring in front of the nursery school on polling day, a fun experience which required walked through streams of small children in order to vote, the huge "conservatives care" signs in their impossibly soft hands. People respect their opinions, I wish they didn't. They're house sits atop a small hill, five minutes from the village, overlooking the loch. The large bay-windows facing down the loch to let in as much natural light as possible, or at least, I expect they do. People from the village aren't invited in often. Sometimes great displays of charity come from that house, someone of some importance gives a great sum of money to something that doesn't impact them anyway. We villagers are grateful for their contribution, so there they stand at the polling station with their signs and encourage us to vote for the same government and system that is as responsible for the village divide as the deep cut of the river.

The other side of the river saw women of their early twenties, weighed down by children, decked out in matching Celtic Strips, so as to easily identify to "whit wan" to which she belonged from the field of shamrocks that surrounded her. Appearance is essential when it's all you've got. Last march her boyfriend launched a 6 ft plastic ice-cream cone though the window of (now) former-sweet-shop because they wouldn't give him cigarettes on tab. He's in jail now, she's now with a man called Squirrel. She is always plastered with swabs of orange cement, building up her face, keeping her smile supported, over-drawn eyebrows give the appearance of alertness. Keeping up appearances is essential in a village where everyone knows you, knows your name, knows your family. Boys that are branded "wrong-uns", bare the mark for years, moving far away from the beady eyes, they are still spoken about. Girls that drink too much are shunned from jobs. private conversations remain in the public mind for generations. It's hard to get a reputation which is good, in a place where people need someone to talk about, someone to learn at, someone to be afraid of. "Faggot" is a word I heard a lot in Highschool, "dead" was another, it is not without wonder then perhaps,

why my relationship with the local elite isn't friendly; I'm foreign to them. A stronghold of Hungarian immigrants nearby also makes them uneasy, their children in the tiny primary school making friends and sharing aspects of a home country they probably won't see again. Once 'concerned locals' tried to remove a Hungarian man and his family from their house for selling drugs to teenagers. Word was one of the well-off boys had been sold a gram of oregano, and wasn't happy. The true story is likely somewhere in between: people with prejudices rarely see the benefit of the doubt, they very rarely compromise.

From my vantage point the smell of damp leaves, cliché as it is, permeates the air, they decay and produce clouds of invisible comfort when stepped on by walking boots. A sleepy snail may make his home on one until Mrs. McFadden from next door brings her collie past. The pup bounces jovially down the road, Mrs. McFadden gives me a wave. Ash cascades down my arm as wave back, the burns provide some relief from the freeze. People have dogs here for work as well as companionship. Children are raised on farms to work with the sheep-dogs, hunting dogs park angrily at pigeons during off-season, the local hairdresser makes her house calls with her Pekinese. The bottom half of it's fluffy mass is nearly always drenched, weighing down it's little body, overcome by big puddles. The best place to walk dogs here is down by the river where they can run, chase rabbits, in the winter time the hill with all the burrows on it snows over. Kids sledge jovially on the icing powder; the dogs eat the flakes and sometimes the little granite school is closed and instead convenes on this little slope to enjoy the festivities. Along the skyline where the sledging hill lies sad and damp in the autumn hue, a smattering of interestingly shaped bits of land, tree and human dwellings cast inky shadows.

A black skyline of trees is clearly visible against the concrete sky. One large oak sticks out above the rest of the tree on a hill. When I was younger I thought it looked like a nipple. I still do. The nipple was a large Oaktree, which supposedly acted as a tomb for a 15th century minister who had told the villagers the secrets of the faeries. So, the faeries turned him to a tree, now children hang ribbons on his bark-clad limbs and make wishes. When the roots of a village are laced with legend it leaves a pervading air of magic. My mum still blames faeries for misfortunes, in an archaic attempt to make sense of the world. The Reverend's tale is taught in schools, city folk travel in to study the old oak tree. It may be unnerving to think that as children, we bonded by linking hands and singing, round the entombed corpse of a treacherous holy-man. Perhaps this morbidity contributes to the low life expectancy. Here expectancy is not measured in age, but in what one can expect to accomplish living in a remote Scottish village, where they still teach you about faeries in schools. To grow up here is to graduate from high school with around 40 peers, you take your pick out of the 20 of your preferred gender, one has at least three children, marry the other genetic

component to those children to avoid a reputation. Those children hold hands round the oak, speak to dead men in trees and the cycle continues.

The phrase "a blanket of fog" is the best metaphor for the way the grey reclines, lazily over the top of the pine trees that encase the village. Behind me lies the north, the highlands, more magic, kelpies lye in dark pools of water in wait of children, faeries and elves make burrows in the solitude of the tall trees, the Tuatha Dé Danann¹ make their homes amongst the patchwork of greens and browns. Following my eye line to the hem of the blanket of fog, behind which, to the south lies Glasgow, the veritable metropolis, the hub of sectarian anxieties. Growing up as "neither wan" has its own stresses. The ginger of my hair warranted comments of "dirty Tim!", my east-side accent marked me as a "Hun", the answer of "neither" was not enough for people that form their entire lives around the structure of ancient prejudices. I look over my left shoulder, follow my street up the hill to a hair pin bend, where I lose sight of it. It's hard to be cynical about magic with a view like this up the hill. The hills breathe great sighs and their warm breath turns to fog in the chill air, the miles on miles of dense forest hold dark spaces for great and ancient creatures and adventures, faeries and dead priests in trees seem the least of our fascinations. I draw the mass of fur tighter still, around my neck. It is my protection against the ravaging's of the increasingly biting wind. The chill is starting to permeate the tight knit of my Aaron jumper and the fur around my frame is getting coated by a thin film of damp. I consider my vantage point and what it means to see magic, faith and violent religion interact with the new age and all the anxieties it champions; like the Queen's cousin and I, face to face, with just a shop counter between us, the myth and legend dwells in the river and the towering trees, as we villagers try our best to valiantly navigate the ground.

As I leave the remainder of my Marlboro to crumble into the stones at my feet, I sigh, taking in a last gulp of leafy, pine-scented air, the kind people try to make into scented candles, and drag my weary wellingtons inside.

¹ Supernatural deities and spirits of Celtic mythology in pre-Christian Celtic countries

Klonopin

Alexandra Lloyd

i wanted to feel sleepy and happy and comfortable

i wanted to stay bored with my ear on the pillow wanting things

fuck

the water is cold and it coats my esophagus and the cold goes through my stomach and my heart starts to pump cold blood and my brain shivers and makes a noise against my skull and i get a little nervous but it is fun and i go lie in bed and rollover and i am having a nightmare

but the nightmare is cinematic and there is no plot but it is coherent and i am impressed with the number of periphery characters that don't affect anything and the silent vast landscapes

there is no director even though it is a hollywood spectacle and millions of dollars worth of effects are used in explosions and cgi stunts where someone somersaults and stabs me in the heart then cartwheels into a pit of fire and there is no plot but there are themes and there is telepathy instead of conversation and i think i am sleepy and happy and comfortable

Or have I gotten things all confused now in my head?

Evan Dilley

Give, mich; a miche!

Or a boule

Or a bâtard

But definitely not a baguette!

I don't remember the last time I went to the theater.

I'll see you by the mir!

We can pet a gateau; or eat a gato,

But right now I've really got to go

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