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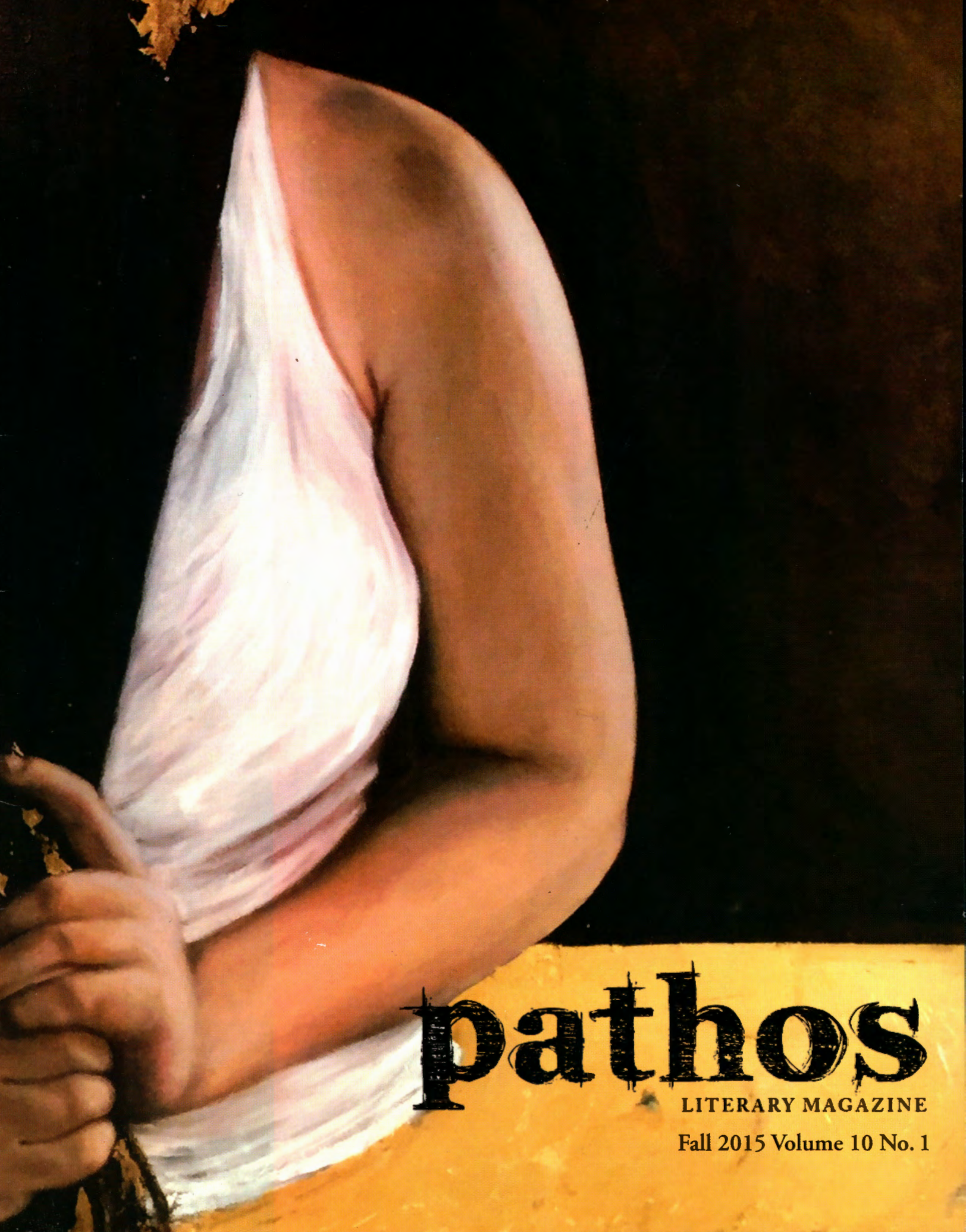
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pathos

LITERARY MAGAZINE

Fall 2015 Volume 10 No. 1

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Immersion
Kelsey Birsa
Gold leaf & oil
on canvas
24 x 36"

Letter from the Editor

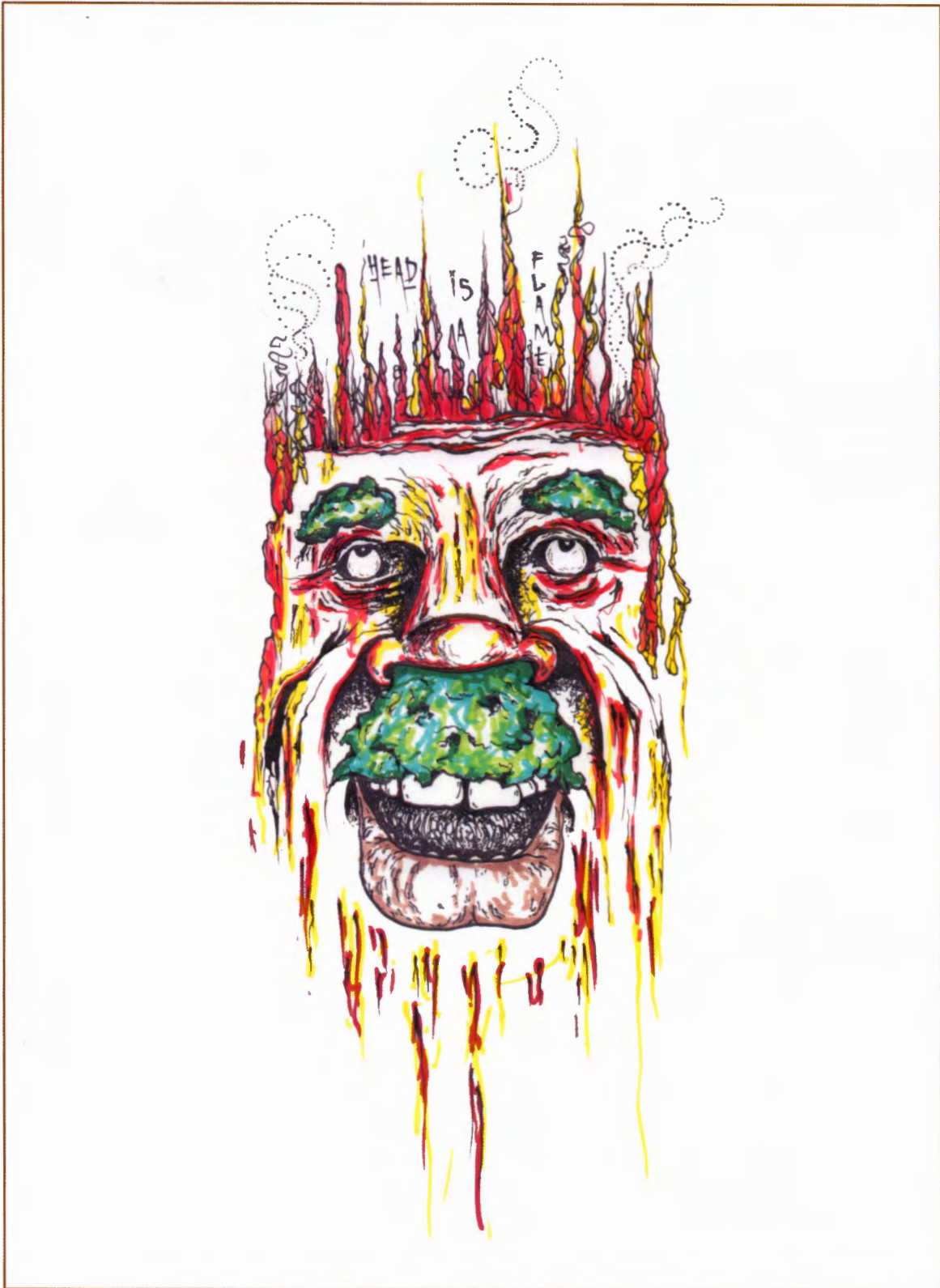
Pathos Literary Magazine is Portland State University's only student-run, student-centric literary arts publication. We received a stunning number of submissions this term and were overjoyed by the response from our creative community here on campus. Our mission is to offer PSU's emerging creators a dedicated outlet to showcase their work. While many alternatives are open to students via the Internet, the world at large tends to prioritize the publication of work from graduated or professional creatives over work produced by students. In accordance with that mission, this term's edition of *Pathos* is organized a little differently.

Last academic year, *Pathos* had a tumultuous run. In spring term of 2015, though we collected and voted on submissions, we failed to produce an issue, so we failed to fulfill our responsibility to our community as set out in our mission. This term, we are following through on our promises and publishing seven pieces from four contributors who had been accepted for publication in the spring but didn't receive gratification due to a number of personal, managerial, and academic reasons.

A few pieces accepted for publication this term have, as a result, been curated for publication solely online at pathoslitmag.com. We regret that we were unable to offer a corporeal vessel for these select works, but we don't wish to repeat our mistakes. Since these pieces were selected fairly through our anonymous voting process, it seems right to put them into the world (albeit the virtual world).

This issue also features two works from the winners of our **Spontaneous Art and Poetry Contest**: Joe Michel and Brenton Lee. In addition to publication, they respectively received a \$20 gift card to Mother Foucault's Bookshop and a \$15 gift card to Powell's City of Books.

Without further ado, *Pathos Literary Magazine* presents to you...



First Prize

Joe Michel

Marker & ink on paper
9 x 12"



Second Prize

Brenton Lee

Pen on paper

9 x 12"

Self Definition

Brandon Sanford

Chris-ti-an-i-ty /ˌkrɪstiˈænəti/

1. the Christian religion, including the Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox churches.
2. Christian beliefs or practices; Christian quality or character: *Christianity mixed with pagan elements; the Christianity of Augustine's thought.*
3. the religion I was raised to believe in.
4. my self-identity as a teenager.

gay /geɪ/

1. of, pertaining to, or exhibiting sexual desire or behavior directed toward a person or persons of one's own sex; homosexual: *a gay couple.*
2. of, indicating, or supporting homosexual interests or issues: *a gay organization.*
3. *Slang: often disparaging and offensive.* awkward, stupid, or bad; lame: *This game is really gay.*
4. an abomination in the eyes of god.
5. me.

show-er /ˈʃəʊər/

1. a bath in which water is sprayed on the body, usually from an overhead perforated nozzle.
2. a method of cleansing oneself.
3. cold tile floors.
4. a place to cry.
5. a place where prayers are said but go unanswered.

loath-ing /loʊðɪŋ/

1. strong dislike or disgust; intense aversion.

col-lege /ˈkɑːliʒ/

1. a school that one attends after high school : a school that offers courses leading to a degree.
2. an inevitability in my family.
3. a place of ideas.

So-crat-ic /sə-ˈkra-tɪk, sō-/

1. of or relating to the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, his followers, or his method of asking questions to discover the truth.
2. a method of introspection.
3. we studied Socrates in my freshman core curriculum. Late at night I would sit in the darkest, loneliest hallway of my dorm and ask myself questions. Do I like men? Does that mean I have to be gay? Do I have to stop being Christian? My answers were inconclusive: I could not reconcile being gay with what I had learned about my religion. I couldn't not be gay, I had tried. I didn't want to not be Christian. I decided to hold both contrary truths and hope someday something would give.

de-pres-sion /diˈpreʃən/

1. the state of being depressed.
2. sadness, gloom, or dejection.
3. a constant feeling of claustrophobia.
4. a lack of motivation and energy.
5. the sensation that the sky is always overcast, even when sunny.
6. a state of either sleeping for extended periods or suffering insomnia.
7. exhaustion.

dis-own /dɪs'oun/

1. to refuse to acknowledge as belonging to oneself; to deny responsibility for, repudiate, or renounce:
to disown one's heirs.
2. in college I dated Tim, a guy from a Mormon family. He said the only reason his father didn't disown him was so Tim could go to school, because "There's nothing worse than a useless gay man."
3. something my father swore he would do to any gay son of his.
4. when I came out, my father did not disown me. He told me that I had created a rift between me and my parents and that if I didn't turn from that road the rift would only grow.

relationship /'rē-,lā-shən-,ship/

1. the way two or more people connect.
2. family
 - a. when I came out, my mother did not understand how I could have lied to her. She saw me as a stranger; she did not understand why God tested her in this way.
 - b. she went to see a counselor, needing a way to connect to me. She read books about being gay. She changed the dreams she had for me: now she pictures me living in a condo with a lawyer. She realized I'm still the same person.
 - c. she started a gay support group at her church.
 - d. she still calls my partners "friends."
 - e. when I graduated college, my dad told me he'd never been more proud of me.
 - f. he and I have never spoken about the day I came out.
3. friendships.
4. romantic or sexual relationships
 - a. starting dating in college sucks. I did not know how to handle my emotions healthfully, or judge who to put my trust in, or how to behave with kindness, or what I was looking for.
 - b. I have been cheated on.
 - c. I have cheated.
 - d. I have loved.
 - e. I have had sex with far more people than I ever thought I would.
 - f. I have loved.

queer /'kwɪr/

1.
 - a. worthless, counterfeit.
 - b. questionable, suspicious.
2. differing from what is normal.
3. a sometimes offensive term for homosexuals.
4. a word called from the windows of cars and trucks.
5. a word I still hear.

su-i-cide /'su:ɪsaɪd/

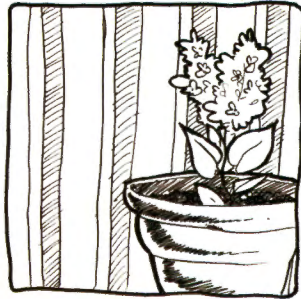
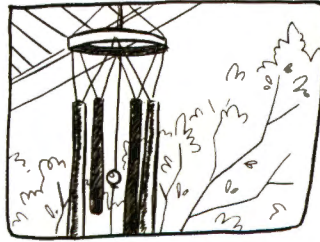
1. the act of intentionally taking one's own life.
2. a person who intentionally takes his or her own life.
3. my friend John, who jumped off a bridge.
4. my friend Gabriel, who shot himself in the head.
5. my friend Mathew, who didn't expect to wake up after so many pills.
6. an unforgiveable sin.
7. a selfish act.
8. a way to exact revenge.
9. a way out when no other option seems viable or the pain is too strong to bear.

antonyms:

10. there was a time when I knew about suicide but could not understand why anyone would do it; I think that time ended when I was around twelve.



Burnside (opposite)
Kerstin A. La Cross
Digital illustration



Sanctuary (top)
Little Explorer (bottom)
Kerstin A. La Cross
India ink on paper, 11 x 14"

Your Face Was from a Dream

Madi Hinze*

I know you
will never read this
but old habits die hard
I guess. I just wanted you
to know that all the reflections
of the sun from every peaking wave
that's ever crashed on any shore
in all of history flickers at once
when we lock in on each other,
like the law of gravity is equal
to the law of the heart.
I drive through town
hoping to spot you;
I know you look here for me.
I am close to you but always so far.
If only I'd listened
when you touched me—I know it's fleeting.
I know it's not reality,
and I was doing really good
at not obsessing over you,
but whatever we ignited
wants to be alive.
We will burn in this heat.

*Note: This poem is composed entirely using lines from
“missed encounters” postings on craigslist.

C.H.U.R.C.H.

Melina Hughes

The New York Times Crossword,
In pen: his holy
S.A.C.R.A.M.E.N.T.
12-down on a Sunday morning
In the coffee shop.

Give unto him the bread of the printing press,
The blood of the ballpoint pen,
Whose blessings are ink stains on fingertips:
E. U. C. H. A. R. I. S. T.

The only 7-across he knows—
L.I.T.U.R.G.Y.
Coffee, ink, and paper on a Sunday morning.
This, in pen, is
The New York Times Crossword.

Maraschino

Madi Hinze

My mouth is bloodied
by cherries, fingertips stained
the shade of red
that makes you want things
you can't have. My heart—carnivorous,
wildly unforgiving.
I sink my nails into flesh
just to feel powerful again. Anything
can fit into a narrative if you force it to.
I wonder if I swallowed all the pits,
if the cyanide inside would absorb
into the lining of my stomach
and make me bulletproof, or kill me.
I'd take either.
Instead, I juggle them
around my tongue,
pretend I can taste the poison
just enough to dull the desire,
to resist the urge today.
Whoever said heartbreak was bearable
must have been stronger
than me.



Blue Sweater

Anne Fudyma

Oil on canvas, 12 x 33"

Textures

Tina Lagerquist

A touch,
mundane and unremarkable.
A nudge in a crowded hall,
unwelcome, uncomfortable.
A handshake,
just a banal greeting.
Meaningless.
A touch,
grim and impersonal.
A brushing of elbows
anonymously on the bus.
Time drags along
like a wounded animal.
Deplorable.
Your touch,
and suddenly I awaken.
Your breath against me,
my breath quickens.
I ebb with your movement:
you are my moon.
Infatuated.
Your touch,
slaking yet exhilarating.
Whispers caress my ear,
heartbeats racing.
The lingering ghost
of your lips tingling.
Insatiable.
Your touch,
rough but comforting.
Your fingers, calloused.
I welcome the texture.
Your heartbeat, loud breathing:
a soothing lullaby.
Contentment.



8 (opposite)

Andrew Gist

Ink on paper, 6 x 8"

Strata

Brennan Magee Meinke

THE LIFE went out of us slowly that summer. We huddled together for warmth all through the early nights in a little orange backpacking tent we'd picked up in Carson City. We staked out a spot in a vacant lot beneath the mural of a vast imperial eagle frozen forever in paint.

Mornings, we begged for change to supplement what we'd brought with us. The so-called Christians did not meet our eyes, would not speak to us, kept on turning until I was certain they circled us like sharks.

We spent hours alone in that tent. We smoked East Asian cigarettes—packaged without filters or warnings—and coughed until we bled. We laughed and read each other stories plucked from the air.

She still called herself America, sometimes, like she did the first time we met. Her dyed hair had faded from red to pink, like a shirt left too long in the sun—her eyes blue like pale fire. The nights passed like a drunk, moon wheeling slowly overhead. Sometimes, when sleep eluded me, I counted her breaths. I stared at the pockmarks covering her tattooed skin, like acid spattered across etched glass. She was pale—almost transparent, too skinny to cast shadows.

All around us, the dispossessed gathered. The tents multiplied as the summer gained strength. First scattered handfuls, then pockets of dozens, coalescing here and there, drawn together by unseen centripetal force. A city formed within the city, stretching across its parks, filling its crevices. No one met its eyes. They stepped around it in conversation, kept their eyes doggedly on other topics, as if not looking would make it go away.

Another couple offered to buy us dinner, and we split a bowl of noodles and hot broth beneath a neon sign somewhere on the East Side. They taught us slogans to shout. Gave us flyers. Put the first stones in our hands. Took us to rallies. Days flashed by as fast as the sun glinting off broken bottles, and the crowds swelled toward the banks of the park. Red and blue lights girded its edges. The hard-edged men in riot gear inched always closer. Voices bounded back and forth over bullhorns, each exhorting the next to hold the line.

But we drifted away, always breaking ranks and slipping back into the recesses of the city. We'd run out of continent, pushed up against the ocean with nowhere to go but East.

"The end of Manifest Destiny," she said one night, and I laughed, though I didn't understand. She held my hand and rubbed her fingers against mine to the rhythm of some forgotten anthem.

The summer turned hot and dusty. The sky stayed blue for weeks. Desiccated asphalt cracked under our sandaled feet. Water stopped running for two hours each day. People took to washing themselves at drinking fountains. The lines never fully went away. At their worst, they stretched for blocks. Temperatures settled in the low triple digits, but the nights stayed cold. Hard winds swept the heat away from the city and toward the interior.

I don't know when, but we began to see each other as they did. Out there, on the margins, how else could we see ourselves? I avoided her eyes so I wouldn't know that she avoided mine. We no longer smiled when the other smiled. I still watched her sleep, but my eyes fell always into the pockmarks, spinning around their edges, never escaping their gravity.

I remembered to kiss her for the first time in three days. She opened her eyes and curled her lips in a smile but made no effort to return the gesture. She lay there, stiff and cold like I was stiff and cold. We needed something to hold close at night, but we slept with our clothes on and stopped touching each other—each of us pressed against our own wall of the little tent.

Even the parks evicted us. One August night, the police swept them clean, transformed our City into a sea of smashed tents and trampled grass. The crowds disintegrated. We glimpsed the couple who'd once bought us noodles, their eyes wide, before they vanished back into the black.

We lingered on, and I stopped sleeping altogether. The money had almost gone. Her pink hair had never stopped fading, overexposed like the copy of a copy of a copy. I spied a beige inch of bra strap at the edge of her shirt and tried to pull her close, but she remained inert.

I spent hours that night walking the sex district, but I couldn't escape that beige inch of fabric. I drank heavily, spending money we didn't have—paid for dancers and dancers' drinks. They glowed as if splitting at the seams, like tin-can lanterns. I poured money on the fire until there was no money, drank until I could not stand, and still they glowed, vanishingly close, like an oasis.

I spent an hour behind a dumpster, alone with myself, and I woke there the next morning, sticky and covered in flies beneath a days-old newspaper. A picture of a dead man I thought I knew graced its cover. Tall, smiling, in the instant before his life vanished.

Glittering malls towered above me, reaching for the sky. I stopped outside one, doubled over, retched myself empty. People parted around me without comment or recognition. I stared through the windows at the mannequins, perfect and unmoving.

I thought of the bone-thin girl in my tent and scrounged the change for more of the fiberglass cigarettes we liked. I lit one and let the racking cough cure me, taking little glimpsing gasps toward the surface. When I could see again, my eyes burned like I'd been staring into the sun. The smell of smoke mixed with the scent of a chlorine pool exhaled from the vents of a luxury hotel.

When I returned home, the tent was empty. I panicked in the moments before I found her sitting on the hood of an abandoned car, pale eyes staring into the sky.

We moved through the shadows an unfinished skyscraper, relocating our tent at its base. Its skeleton rose thirty stories above us. We watched it for days. The workers never came back. I pulled the fence up from the ground and we slipped under. We wandered its columns and floors, its naves and its vaults, spiraled up unfinished stairs into the sky. The winds teased us, urging us higher and—once the stairs ran out—toward the margins and the city beyond.

We followed our own dusty footprints in circles across the concrete floors for hours and stared out over the city until the sun sat low against the horizon. Silent shapes moved beneath us, woven together on roads and sidewalks like static on a TV screen. We couldn't smell the cigarettes and exhaust. Couldn't see the mangy bark of the city trees.

She unwound her fingers from mine, shivered, and took a step out along a metal girder, arms outstretched. She walked it like a plank. The wind lifted her hair, and she wobbled, turning back toward me. And she smiled. Reached toward me, beckoning. I took a step out on the narrow length before I even knew I'd done it.

"Come on." She mouthed the words. The next step brought me close to her. She kissed me as I took the third one, before pulling away. She stepped out into air and put her foot down on the next girder over—then the next. When she was four girders over she stopped and turned back.

She smiled again. Follow me, it said.



Waking up Is Easy to Do

Torin Huff

A head of untamed hair.
Untangled, wild, and always
trying to climb into my nose.
One leg wrapped
over my back,
the other taking the other half
of this queen bed.
Breath,
depending on the night before,
either fermented hops
or a fresh-blended margarita
of toothpaste and drool.
A hand latched onto one of my
branch-like arms.
A koala burrowed in its
blanketed tree.
I am home.



The Color in Pain
K. Ryan Gregory
Digital photograph

Invented Worlds II

John Holsinger

Acrylic on canvas

18 x 24"





Invented Worlds II
John Holsinger
Acrylic on canvas
18 x 24"





drunk/luck/coffee

Melina Hughes

Coffee rings like dirty promises lie at the bottom of my un-drunk,
too-sweet, growing-cold cup of happy-go-luck
in the morning. Liquid gold turned to rust, this coffee
nestled between my hands, heartbreakingly cold
now from sitting so long and forgotten
on the table where I last thought of you.

"I like it black as it comes and scalding hot," you
told me and frowned at my cup. But I smiled as I drank
my milky, sugar-sweet latte, hoping all bitterness could be forgotten.
It was by chance anyway that we found that place, pure luck
on the first day we met. My fingers numb and cheeks red from cold,
when you asked me if I wanted to go out for coffee.

Two years passed. I had three boiling, unsweetened cups of coffee,
watching the grey skies out the window before leaving with you.
In the cemetery I was so cold.
After, I had two whiskies to warm up, you were drunk.
But we buried her in the end, in the rain—that was just her luck.
Barely a year. In the muddied ground, she was forsaken, but never forgotten.

You had forgotten
that morning's coffee.
Down on luck
that night, you
drank
it cold.

The winter after she left, that freezing winter, what remained grew cold.
The rest was forgotten
as you spent too many nights distant, silent, drunk.
So it was rust, dust, ashes to ashes in the graveyard of my coffee
cup—the one I bought after our third date; the one that you chipped. You
claimed it was just bad luck.

Growing up, Mother never taught me that black cats were bad luck,
but I believed it anyway. The autumn day we met, so cold
it felt like winter, I should have known about me and you.
Still, hope-rattled and superstitions forgotten...
I should have run as that cat crossed my way, black as your coffee...
But I followed you to that café, already love-drunk.

Never mind. Tonight, to you, I wish the best of luck
as I walk home drunk and numb-cold.
I laugh when I see on the table my forgotten cup of coffee.

Equinox

Alana Diener

It's bitter here,
and regret flows slowly,
thick like blood in the grout between bathroom tiles.
It's summer behind the shower curtain,
heated, humid, hot like suffocation, old gas-oven fantasies.
Your veins are roadmaps beneath your skin.
She used to trace them like she was driving on an unfamiliar freeway,
trying to find her way back home,
and now,
you look at your body like a door you lost the keys to.

If you wait here long enough,
everything turns the color of classroom ceiling tiles.
The memories of her voice become fading television static.
Outside the curtain, the days are dull as dying light,
and it's winter in the shower when the hot water runs out.
Your breath hits the air as steam,
like you're trying to warm the earth with your lungs.
You used to slip your hands into hers like gloves,
but your fingers are still numb.
You don't write like you used to anymore.

The days fall away from the calendar
like bodies plummeting from office buildings.
It's autumn,
and men fall.
For all their strength, they are lighter than the leaves you crunch beneath your feet.
Weeks pass with vague sounds fizzling out in the background.
A rhapsody fades out before it can pass your lips, shiftless fingers,
just like hers, that used to pluck your heartstrings like a guitar.
A symphony,
a crescendo,
a funeral march that you wrote for yourself.

You tuck it away in the back of your throat
and sing for them in a voice like spring.
Her eyes were brighter than the afternoon sky on the first clear day of the year.
She was an equinox, a break in the cycle before it began again.
You sing for them about the grey film
that wraps itself over your eyes when you step into a blooming garden.

"I'm dying in increments," you tell them.
"We all are," they say.
"Yes, but mine are bigger."

Marrow

Alana Diener

Years later I still hear the serpent's hiss of your voice in the back of my head.
Heavy and hollow,
I suck the starlight from the sky.
I feel my bones turn to ash beneath the weight of my own shame.

My lungs constrict
like the bound back of a notebook.
You turn the empty pages of my skin
until you find a sentence worth repeating,
until you find that I have no words to say to you anymore,
just the thought that things won't be the same.
Tear out a page and write your note against my ribs.
If you were truly human, you would have the decency to say goodbye.

You climb the trellis of my bones,
stumble up my vertebrae like a stairway.
We all have different cures for a universal disease.
I know the way the loneliness festers in your arteries.
With every passing second,
something gets carried away from your heart.
Something gets smaller.
Something gets lost.
If you were truly human, you would have the decency to say you're sorry.

Your fingernails scrape an angry melody against my skin,
like tearing out pages of a book to burn as kindling.
I give you charred remains to make a shrine to your ego,
I build your altar out of mirrors so your god will always look you in the eye.
I give you coffins for my dignity,
my hipbones caskets for the fading shreds of my humanity.
If you were truly human, you would have the decency to thank me.

I give you bones to crush to powder.
I only have myself to blame when I can't stand straight.
If I lie flat as a doormat,
how can I say I deserve anything more than the dirt off the soles of your shoes?

I hand you your empty flask when you go.
I give you nothing but the blunt ends of my bones.
I'll sell my marrow so I can tell myself I'm still worth something.
I hand you your empty flask when you go.
If I were truly human, I would have the decency to kiss you goodbye.

Invisible Crowns #1

Samantha Love

Acrylic on wood panel

12 x 12"





Wrong Bodies

Andy Barnaud

You kissed me at the streetcar stop
and everything came storming back.
Don't you know by now I'm dead
scared
of the thirteen-year-old inside
still safely dreaming of the Portland
woods
he'll never creep into?
Don't you know my days
have been spent ignoring how heroic
I was the day I left them? One
by one, I left them. In wrong bodies
you and I took a bath and I counted
the ghosts that still haunt me—by now
you know I drowned all the people
I have been and those
who've been with me, too. You
kissed me at the streetcar stop
and everything went dead silent.
Kate, am I anything but the man
you've grown to love? Am I the girl
my parents named
twenty-three years ago in a Paris clinic
on a hot summer morning?
In wrong bodies we make ourselves
and, Kate, I am dead scared
of the scars you wrote
when they called you fat and I am
dead scared of the needle needed
for me to feel heroic, for me
to feel like a man but I
don't see how we could live without
them.
Do you?

Silence in Neukolln

Samantha Love

Acrylic & gel transfer on panel
32 x 40"

Scattered Ashes

Clayton Cranford

An interstate highway whispers before cluttered trailer homes,
crumbling, unloved teeth that gnaw on mountain belts, unraveled
scrolls spilling over the horizon. But I don't see
any of this.

I blow smoke through a slitted window, shaking my head,
remembering dirty jokes Grandpa used to tell before
he ran off with his fifty-proof true love.

His prodigal ashes—swaddled in cardboard—depress
like an exegesis against my lap,

a dead heavy weight rolling over grated roads, toward a hill,
a river, the woods, some soft pine bedding he might appreciate now
that he's sober.

I stand with Grandpa and his daughters—my mother, my aunts—
all of us, strangers to him, all of us quivering lips and trembling
hands, impatient to cast his memory over nobler decay

when wind spins little punchlines around us, embers trapped
in a diminishing fire. A sooty cloud
hangs over

and hugs me like family, holds us all
like the world holds roots—tousles our hair, plants sooty kisses
against our cheeks, and turns tears
into porcelain and muttered prayers
into choking laughter.

Housekeeping

Jesse Tomaino

“MAMA JAMAICA, wake up, hon. We got work today.”

The woman they called Mama Jamaica sat up, throwing aside the blanket she slept under on the packed dirt floor. She recognized the voice calling through the door. It was Fala, the young woman who lived down the road in a cinderblock building much like her own, lopped-off ends of rebar sticking through the patchwork tin roof in preparation for a second story that would never be built. Sometimes Fala had too many rooms to clean in one day and would bring her in to help. Three or four times a month was enough for her and the baby to eat, but it wasn't the life she was hoping for when she left Barbados.

That's why they called her Mama Jamaica, they couldn't distinguish her rich accent from that of an island hundreds of miles in the opposite direction. She seemed like all of the other faceless women who made their way here each year chasing stories of a stronger economy, jobs, and real houses. She didn't bother to correct them. She hadn't used her real name when she first got here and took a job in the gentlemen's clubs by the tourist beaches. She wouldn't have been able to stand hearing the name her mother called her come out of those fat leering mouths in that glorified whorehouse. Even the manager of the club only knew the name the johns used when he fired her for being stupid enough to get pregnant.

"Thank you so much Fala. I'll be right out."

"You leave that baby with Souci today hon, she say you g'wan down her place now'n she watch her."

"Thanks again." Mama Jamaica quieted her daughter and smoothed out the cleanest dress she owned, preparing for a long day spent scrubbing the toilets of timeshare owners while they lounged on the beach. She carried her daughter and as much food as she could scrounge from her larder down to the old woman who watched the babies when the other women from the neighborhood found work. Mama Jamaica found her sitting outside her house with dogs, children, and chickens competing for her attention, scrabbling in the dust around her feet. Souci accepted the plantains and uncooked rice with a smile short on teeth.

Mama Jamaica piled into the back of the Jeep with Fala and the mop buckets for the trip across the island with Fala's boss driving in silence, smoking one cigarette after another. In only a few minutes they were away from the tin roofs and cinder blocks—surrounded by an explosion of flowers and birds in colors so vivid they looked artificial. The road changed from gravel to dirt to asphalt and back as they wound their way through the interior of the island. They passed a small wooden sign serving as the international border. She looked up to read

its announcement that they had just passed from St. Martin to Sint Maarten, French to Dutch.

The vacation rentals on the Dutch side were massive palaces. Floor-to-ceiling windows looked out on stretches of beach dotted with chaises lounging underneath umbrellas and thatch gazebos. Kitchens covered in the sticky remnants of umbrella cocktails and light beer blurred together. The morning passed as she got in and out of the Jeep at each stop, mop bucket in hand, ready to help polish the veneer of opulence and joyous abandon cultivated by the tourism agents.

The Jeep stopped in front of a glass-fronted mansion perched on the hill above the Koolbaai District, and Fala's boss punched a code into the keypad to open the gate. He unlocked the front door for them and went back to his Jeep to smoke cigarettes and nap while they worked. Fala started on the bedrooms while Mama Jamaica loaded the dishwasher and mopped the kitchen floor. A bottle of red wine had been set down on the counter days before, and the ring it left on the marble defied Mama Jamaica's attempts to scrub it out. She knelt and looked through the cabinet underneath the sink for something better to go at it with, a piece of steel wool or a wire brush. She pulled out a heavy paper bag and opened it, hoping for something scrubby. The entire bottom of the bag was filled with neat, banded little rectangles of cash. Nothing like the piles of dirty balled-up bills the girls at the club would smooth out and count at the end of the night—these were fresh, clean bills that had riffled through a bank's counting machine then been squared and labeled by a smiling teller. American hundreds, euros, guilders, she had no idea how much was there, but the heft of the bag grew heavier as she stood there thinking about what that much money—however much it was—could mean.

She closed the cabinet and stood up. Folding the top of the bag to hide the primary-color glow of the bills, she tucked it into the mop bucket, covering it with her rags and apron. She paused in the front room, turned around, and went back for the mop. The bucket would raise fewer suspicions if she were also carrying a mop, she figured, beginning to formulate a plan that might stand a chance—as long as Fala's boss was asleep outside in the Jeep rather than smoking and playing on his phone. With no choice but to hope, she put her hand on the knob and exhaled as she opened the door and stepped into the afternoon sun. She walked right past the Jeep with soft steps, careful not to let the handle of the bucket creak or the mop bang against the ground. Fala's boss had the seat reclined and his hat over his eyes. She kept walking downhill and didn't look back until she was well out of the fancy neighborhoods and down in the narrow streets of Philipsburg.

A cruise ship had ejected its passengers into the merchant stalls and restaurants of the port city for the afternoon so the streets were crowded, and she passed unnoticed through the throngs like a specter, invisible and insubstantial. A few blocks shy of the water she found a waiting rank of taxis, their drivers lounging in the shade, not expecting much business from the cruise-goers.

"You take me to Marigot?" she asked the group.

"Yah, I go on over French side, you pay? Prob'ly twelve, fifteen?" one of the drivers responded as he stood, flicking his cigarette butt into the street. He loped toward the first minivan in the line at the curb and motioned for Mama Jamaica to get in. She opened the sliding door to the back, got in, and put the bucket between her feet.

"You can sit up here wit' me, I not gonna bite," he said, smiling at her in the mirror.

"Thank you, it's okay. I'm okay back here."

He pulled away from the curb and headed through the traffic of underpowered motorbikes, inattentive sunburnt tourists, and speeding taxi vans like his own. While he was occupied with some vigorous, good-natured cursing at another cabdriver, Mama Jamaica worked her hand down under the rags and into the bag. She peeled a single bill off the first bundle she felt and slipped it out of the bag without looking down or distracting the driver from his animated, one-sided conversation. In her hand was a €50 bill. Perfect. Maybe a little too extravagant for her to be carrying around most days, but it would be just enough to blind the driver to anything suspicious. She crumpled it up in her hand a few times, trying to take the shine off, and leaned over into the front seat as the driver came up to the traffic circle at Bishop Hill Road.

"I need to go to Rue Columbier."

"You say Marigot!"

"Yes. I still need to go to Marigot, but I need to go to Rue Columbier first. Just for a minute. It's okay. I will pay," she said and handed him the €50.

"Arright then. I take you to Columbier, but I not waiting 'round all day 'fore I take you to Marigot."

"No, no, it'll just take a second. Thank you. Just down to Rue Lotterie and turn left."

She had him park a few houses down from Souci's place, hoping no one she knew would notice her getting out of a taxi—not an everyday occurrence in this neighborhood. She got out of the van clutching the bucket and marched down the street, eyes scanning the shady spots in the yard for the snoozing babysitter. She didn't see her daughter outside, so she went through the doorway, plucked her daughter from the shocked woman's hands, turned on her heel, and strode outside before the old woman could speak.

"Okay, to Marigot now please," she said as she climbed back into the taxi.

"You didn't say 'bout no baby. Four dollar per person more."

"I gave you fifty euros. And you can keep it all if you get me to Marigot. Really. Thank you."

"Yah, yah. You got important job to do. You got ya' baby. I got ya'. No problem, no problem."

"Thank you. Really."

She pointed him toward a small hotel on the corner of Rue de Charles de Gaulle and adjusted her daughter in her arms so she could carry her with one arm and the bucket with the other. She was a few steps away from the taxi when the driver called out to her.

"Hey ya'! Your mop! Not gonna do no job without this," he said.

"Oh, th-thank you. Again." She went back to the van and shifted the baby so she could lean into the backseat and get the mop. Gripping it and the handle of the bucket in one hand, she fumbled with the sliding door, managing to bump it closed with her hip. Not waiting to see if the cab pulled away, she made her way down the street and turned the corner toward the water. She ducked into an alley behind a seafood bistro and squatted between two dumpsters piled high with shells reeking in the heat. Unwrapping the money, she pulled the stacks of bills out of the bucket and hid them in every fold of her clothing she could. Pockets full and her waistband lined with a snug fortune, she wrapped the remaining bundles up in the baby's blanket, remembering to peel off enough cash to see her plan to its end.

She soothed her baby, reassuring it that everything was going to be fine. Standing up from the mop, bucket, and rags, she smoothed down her dress and composed herself as she strode out of the alley and walked the last two blocks to the Gare Maritime. The woman behind the counter smiled at the baby as she walked up to the window.

"A ticket for the ferry, please."

"That's a beautiful little girl there. Oh, aren't you a li'l cutie? Aren't you? Well, she doesn't look old enough pay for a ticket, but that's eleven dollars for you. Your passport, please."

"Here you go." The woman who had been Mama Jamaica reached into her bra where she kept her passport—close to her heart, never needed nor thought about—but always close, always safe. She handed it to the clerk with the money for the ticket. With the oversized purple stamp from the Customs Department of Anguilla, Kela Hillaby existed again. No more nameless outcast girl no one wants. No more stereotypical caricature of someone she's not. With one more boat ride from Anguilla she can be anywhere, anyone. No one will be looking for her, they'll be after Mama Jamaica, who will never be seen or heard from again. Kela will be who she has always wanted to be, and her daughter will never know that she was ever anyone other than herself.

Make Believe

Clayton Cranford

I'M AT WORK trying not to listen to retail rock, taking bagged avocados out of a box and putting them onto other bagged avocados on a shelf, hoping my boss doesn't notice I'm not rotating stock—thinking about being thirty-two years old and how I was taking these same avocados out of this same box and putting them onto that same shelf ten years ago—when I notice a young couple that I notice shopping in my section almost every shift.

They're always tired and happy. They have a son, maybe three years old. He's no longer confined to dad's wiles, to the insides of mom's stretch marks, to the seat of a shopping cart. Now the child runs around a table piled with wax-covered apples, playing alone, pretending he's somewhere else. He's better at it than I am. Kid's wearing a shirt that resembles a super hero's uniform with charcoal armor, a green sigil, and a utility belt.

I forget what I'm doing and watch him play make-believe.

The skin crumples between his eyes as he looks at what's past me, over my shoulder—the enemy's mountain fortress. With all seriousness and a sense of urgency my boss would admire, he growls a command into the radio communicator I just realized he's holding, probably urging Track—a quasi-sentient super-craft—to make all haste to his coordinates. The translucent alloy contraption arrives in a tumult of smoke and flame to welcome him, and the young hero buckles in, flicking dials, pulling levers. His landscape—dark, wild waves swinging like fists, beating against a crumbling bluff beneath cumulonimbus clouds kissed with lavender—blots out much of the world I grew accustomed to ignoring. He taps on some gauges lining the console and wrests the throttle into superdrive. The engine screams, rising in pitch as he rockets forward, fiery turbines shattering the fluorescent lighting between me and the clouds as he races toward destiny.

A bag of avocados is torn from my hand as the jet stream breaks against my face like the end of a falling dream, but the force of the craft pulls me out of the child's mind, and in between the ramshackle bins of summer fruit and winter squash I shake my head a little and try to shrug off the illusion of adventure, remembering I already determined my fantasy: my destiny is rolling away from me, overripe and slightly bruised. I gather the fallen avocados and toss them onto others just like them and wonder how much longer I have to wait until my next break.

Glitter

Andy Barnaud

based on D. Gottlieb's "In Case You Ever Need It, It Is Here"

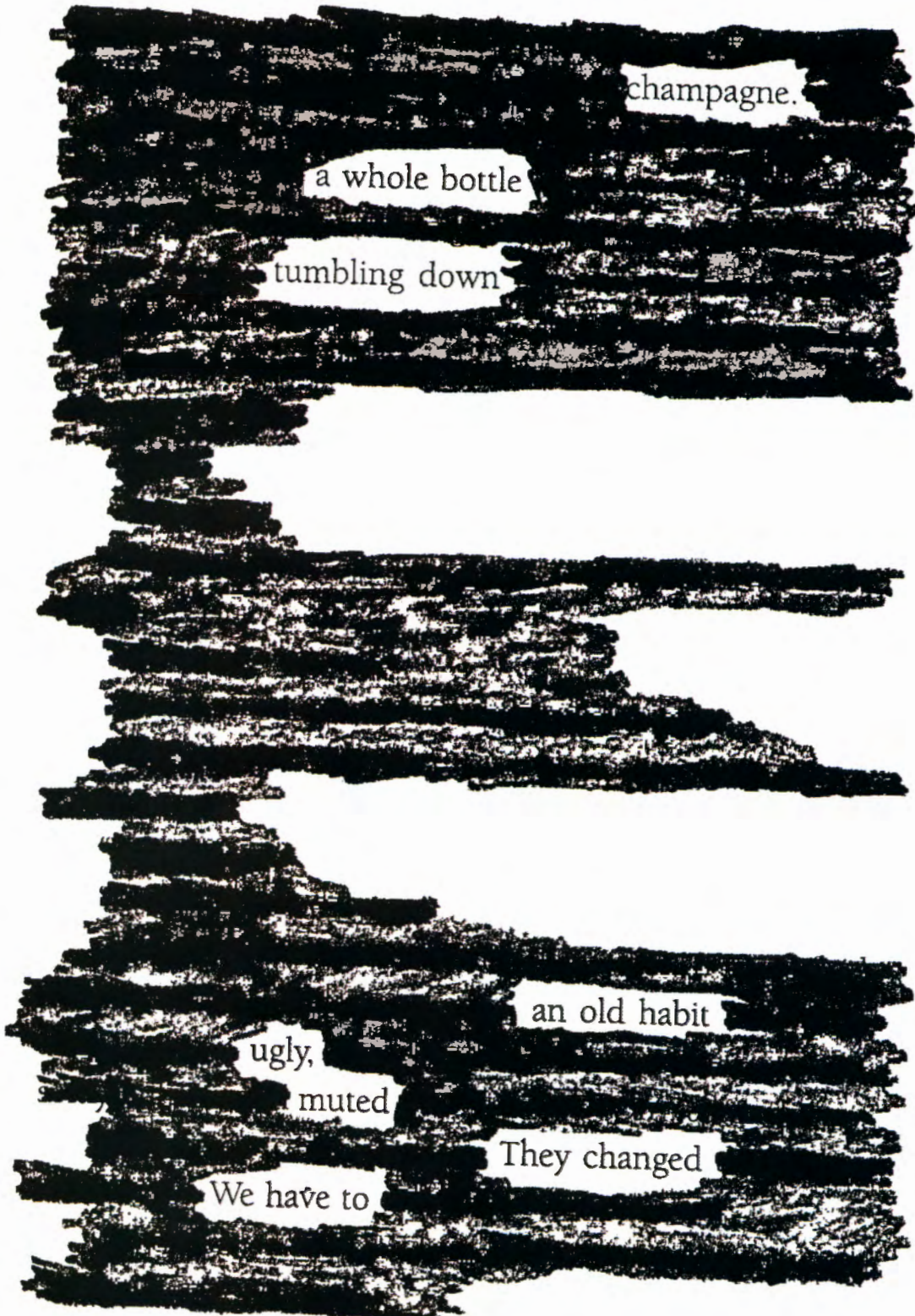
Be all the glitter you need, boy,
when they tell you loving pink
means you will never be a man,
when they smash you against lockers as if
your heart was anything small enough
to fit behind their prison bars.
It's okay to feel massive, even when
the number on the scale
is like the number of cuts
you make on your inner thighs:
always growing.
Your body will always be yours,
and you might say
it sounds like a curse, but your body
that's carried you this far
will carry you to the day
of your first testosterone shot,
of your first kiss with a girl who thinks
your pounds of flesh are cuddly.
You are not what happened
to your fat chest at puberty,
or what never did
to the emptiness between your legs.
Your whole life is not just this
pissing contest you can't join—
"Need help, young lady?" at the corner store,
or the look on people's faces every time you eat.
Your name is your own
even before you can afford
the one hundred and sixteen dollars
for the courthouse.
Some days, the fat
is a strong armor against the bashing.
Other days, the big of you,
the male of you,
the husky-in-pink shirts,
is an instrument
you play into the wind
as you wait for the harmony
to come back to you.

Pretties

Piper Livingston

PRETTIES

5





Surrealism Is in the Eye of the Beholder, or A Response to Anne Carson of the Cycladic People

Nitya Prem Brorson

Her voice was a thing out of Gormenghast.
A melancholic melody pierced, deep and unknowable.
It was then that the poem got out of hand.

-5-

(Mists of Avalon)

-5-

The prose started—interrupting, until it stopped.
A violent violin waited, taut and quivering.
It was then that the conjuring began.

-7-

(Rushing rivulets of tone)

-7-

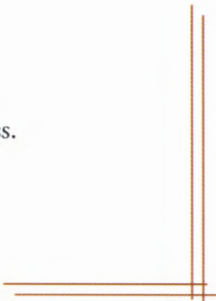
His rhythm was a storm from the Odyssey.
A broken bark stampeded, quick and thunderous.
It was then that the words lost all meaning.

-5-

(Ad hoc amnesia)

-5-

The mood spoke—clear as a murky rain.
A perfect porcelain floated, bright and lifeless.
It was then that the flowers wept.



The Will to Live

Adriana Stein

GRIZZLY BEARS: *My clothes are tattered and I hold a rusty knife in my hands. I am encased in dirt. I walk inside the camper to get something to eat; I search for an apple. I look outside the window and they are there: four of them, huge and light brown. They run toward me and I shrink down in terror. I shut my eyes tight.*

"It's just something you have to learn," my grandpa said. "I did it when I was your age. Your mom once rode for two miles with a broken arm and never complained."

The first trip riding horses in the mountains with my grandpa, he wrestled a rattlesnake to cut off its rattle for me. I still wonder to this day what I would've done if he had been bit. I imagined my mom's smile as I relayed to her our adventure story. I had to make her proud. I had to do the living for her now. She wanted to recreate her perfect childhood through me.

The second day, we encountered a group of bears. I knew that the difference between black bears and grizzly bears is that black bears are much more skittish; grizzlies will attack. I identified them as black bears as they stood eating carefree by a blackberry bush. I stopped my horse about one hundred feet away from them. They were young, judging by their curious looks and docile nature. After making sure we weren't their enemy, they quietly turned around and meandered away.

Water: We visit with my Aunt Marnee, but it is not her real house. Her house was big in reality, but not quite this big. Somehow she acquired a mansion, but it started to fill with water. So far only the basement leaked, but I know we will all drown soon.

My dad, his mom, my sister, my dad's girlfriend, Stefanie, and I took a vacation to Hawaii. We rode on a boat at night with a big group of other tourists. We put on used wetsuits and I watched my sister vomit after eating a watermelon. The smell made my nostrils cringe. The last time I'd been on a boat, I was lulled into a trance, in a place where no one could wake me up. When they tried, I punched them. The boat stopped near a cliff. I saw the sky overhead with faintly shining lights reflecting onto the ocean. Dark shadows swam around us. I didn't want to go in, but I knew my dad would glare at me if I didn't. It added to the list of things I continually did wrong. It didn't matter that I was a 4.0 student, spent hours volunteering, and stayed away from drugs. I disliked his new girlfriend because he'd had an affair with her while my mom was still alive then tried to buy my affection with presents. My trust couldn't be bought.

To avoid another screaming match, I jumped in the water. It was colder than I'd anticipated. Many people were already in the water, while others were still jumping in. We were instructed to grab a hula-hoop to keep us together and kick our way over to the right. Soon enough, my goggles were the last part of me that wasn't in the water. I put them on, looked down, and screamed. The creatures had oval mouths like giant vacuum cleaners. They were black and white and shaped like stingrays, but much larger. The motions of their fins made the water jerk violently back and forth. Manta rays are harmless, the guides said. They can be up to twenty-five feet long and weigh three thousand pounds. How could these things be harmless? I tried to kick away, but other people were kicking me instead, holding me down. Minute after minute passed by with my heart racing. I'll never do this again, I thought to myself. This is my last "family" vacation.

Aliens: The year is 2050 and yet again I'm sitting in a camper. It looks exactly like the one Walter White uses to cook meth in in Breaking Bad. The smoke makes it impossible to open my eyes all the way. Shadowy images in the distance grow nearer. My grandma screams behind me. She will be the one who gives us away. I think they have guns.

The first hunt was important to my family, a rite of passage. I practiced beforehand, but the gun never felt quite right and hurt my shoulder when it went off. Everyone went at twelve years old (that was when it became legal to shoot), so I gave it a try even though I knew I wouldn't like it. It was my grandpa's whole life; it still is. He grew up in the Ozark Mountains and shot squirrels for dinner.

He called me a hypocrite once: "How can you eat meat, but you don't know where it comes from?" But I just couldn't do it. I still believed I was going to grow up to be a veterinarian. I'd seen plenty of dead animals before, but never at my own hand.

My mom insisted I go hunting that year because she wanted me to go before she died. We awoke at 4:00 a.m. and jumped in the car. The smell of coffee lingered on my grandma's breath as she turn back from the front seat to reassure me. We drove into the woods for miles and then stopped at a clearing. We didn't have to walk far before my grandpa spotted a deer. It always felt like cheating to me, an innocent life taken with little to no effort. I watched my grandma's gun go off, and the deer shook its tail.

"I think you missed," I said (I hoped).

"No she got it," my grandpa said. He knew what shaking its tail meant. He ran down the hillside after it. Within five minutes he called to my grandma and me as we

waited by the truck. We followed his voice to the corpse. Its eyes were wide open and blood ran down its mouth. I couldn't go near it. I imagined it felt cold already, but in reality it was warm.

Giant Trees: There are two boys and a girl beside me. We are all young and strong. The forest has made us tough. We believe ourselves immortal. We are surrounded by trees who tower over us with bright yellow and green eyes.

When I was in third grade, my dad used to burn the field around my house once a year to keep the weeds out. He would start a fire in the pit and we tasked ourselves with keeping the fire alive, so we deemed the game "Stranded on an Island." My classmate Jenny, my sister, and I ran back and forth getting weeds from the roadside outside of the fence. We kept this up until my dad said we had to go to bed. By the time we were finished we were drenched in sweat. We also played "Lions" on the trampoline, where Jenny and I were the king and queen of the lion kingdom, and "Soldier Fort," where we would violently jump down a hill when a car drove by. I jumped again and again until I beat up my hands and knees. My mother went from a crutch to a cane that year after falling and almost breaking her hip, so my scars always felt like nothing. She later moved to a wheelchair, then finally just a bed.

Ominous Light: I hear a loud crackling noise, and a green light comes nearer. It looks like lightning in the sky, but an odd silence pierces my ears so that it feels like the world stopped. The field is empty except for the whispering blades of wheat grass. Even the crickets are silent.

My dad ran over my cat on Christmas Eve. He was sixteen years old, black and white, and had been my mom's until she had passed away the year before. Some days he would sit in her lap and drool on her, while other days he hunted gophers and deposited their mangled bodies on our doorstep for appreciation. He'd been there through everything: Mom randomly losing use of her right hand and the ability to drive; increasingly heavy pain meds that changed her calm demeanor to an angry panic mode; the constant respirator use cutting off her ability to speak normally, so my sister became her interpreter, while I remained angry and impatient.

We sat on the living room floor: my dad, sister, and I, all of us crying. The only time my dad cried was when an animal died. I warned him beforehand to watch out, but he hit the cat anyway. I can't remember a Christmas Eve without tears, usually brought on by my dad.

The next morning, I refused to see the burial. I'd put too many animals in the ground, especially cats. My mother would have been devastated to know it was my dad who did it, but she would have continued on with

her stern chin, folded hands, and that determined look in her eye. After having lived four years with ALS, a rare and degenerative autoimmune disease, everyone talked about my mother like she was the toughest person to have ever lived. Maybe she was.

Nondescript Stalker: He grows closer. I am covered in sweat and dirt. I run all the way down a mountain to reach the city, but it's empty. I find a drainage hole and jump in. I had no choice in this change; it just happened, and I became a survivor, just like I had always learned to do. I force myself to wake up.

When my mother was sick, the couch faced the screen door. Our TV was in the corner. My hamster cage sat next to the TV. She always sat in the middle cushion. We did quilting and scrapbooking there. She slept there too. Eventually the couch was replaced by a bed. It moved up and down at the push of a button. After she died, the bed was removed, never to be seen again. It stayed the same until my dad remarried and moved: the couch positioned against the back wall, the screen door to the right, the TV on a newly handmade stand opposite the couch. The TV was the focus now. Without my mother, where else did I have to look?

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Calling all Portland State writers and artists!

Maybe you lost track of the deadline amidst a slurry of assignments, midterms, post-summer post-partum, or eight-hour work days. Maybe you submitted work, but it wasn't quite ready for showcasing. Maybe you've found *Pathos* just now! All of it is o-kay! We received a full, vibrant collection of poems, tales, paintings, drawings, and photographs this term, and it was difficult to choose the brightest diamonds from the rough. But don't worry, we'll be opening our next reading period sooner than you expect!

Mark your calendars for **January 4, 2016** and send us your newborn dreams of winter break hibernation, your memories of fall, even your dusty relics of summer and spring. We'll be waiting. While we were excited to see so much quality visual art and more emotive writing than we expected, *Pathos* would especially love to see your photography and short fiction next term. Many famous writers have completed important works while tucked away from the elements and the university during winter break: 'tis the season for introspection! Let's work together to manifest some of those thoughts into the world—why wait for the snow to thaw to get your creative waters flowing?

Keep an eye on our Facebook page, our website, and our Submittable page for announcements, blog posts, and more specific information about how and what to submit. Don't worry, the process is easy, straightforward, and takes less energy than you might think—and you can submit anything you're compelled to create, including music, video art, napkin doodles, animations, and more.

In the meantime, you can email us at any hour with any questions or concerns you may have at pathosliterarymag@gmail.com. We look forward to working with you.

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