

NORTHERN LIGHTS

ART & LITERARY MAGAZINE



2020-2021

*Cheers to a year of chaos but faith,
frustration but love, isolation but connection.*

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A Poem For Mary

Jess Blackwell

Mary Elizabeth

A three-year-old summertime darling
with lemon juice bleach-blond locks
trailing over her shoulders like sunlit streamers
and sweet, ripe blueberry eyes.

A tender child who knew darkness far too early
who lost trust in the world before she saw all of its
wonders.

Married at 26

and under a spell that held tight for thirty years
until she cleared her home of the dirty floodwaters
scrubbed herself clean of red wine stains and ashes
rebuilt her body from her rough and tired heels
to her angry shredded lips.

A regrown woman she strides through today.

Mary Elizabeth

A fifty-one year older mother of two
with arms that feel like sweetly sung lullabies
A soul of vibrant wildflowers.

Her new and strengthened legs hug her horse's belly
energy seeping into the veins of her animals

A teacher, a mender, a healer.

Two years sober of her haze
she dreams on a new mattress
awoken by beams of a new day and
giggly whispers of her grown babies down the hall
she warms their palms with her wisdom
as she conquers the wondrous world.

The Stars Are Watching

Parker Fariello

I've been praying to the silence of the desert
and to the stars that hang low by weak strings
Like rusty marionettes.

On nights like these I think I can see
Ghosts in the mountains,
I wonder if you're one of them.

The saguaros are lurching their way across the land
Trying to find home
But I tell them to turn back.
There is no home for them here.

You told me you'd see me in space one day,
But all I could see
Was your smile,
The rest swept up in a sandstorm.
So I never knew if you were
Telling the truth.

I hope you were because I'm getting tired
And this familiar landscape
Is growing heavier upon my eyes.
Maybe I can wade in the stars with you.



Your Move
Mia Vitiello

Winding Down

Joshua Zalot

there was a beauty in the stillness--
in the quiet cascade of dust
drifting down from stain-glass doors
in the pale pauper yellow
of the stillborn sun.
in the houses,
empty, muted, strange
everything winding down
to somber blue oblivion.

A Heavy Sigh

AM

you should've seen the poems i wrote
about you the tears i cried for you
the number of times
i tore myself down and built myself up again
only to be shattered by a heavy sigh from you
how could i feel so much for you
and now feel
so incredibly
empty.

12:16

Anonymous

At 12:16 am your mother comes home and sets down her bags. From upstairs you hear your father greet her. He sounds tired but she sounds relieved to be home. She tells him he didn't have to wait up from her. He tells her he did.

You hear them walking down the hallway, he's carrying her bag for her. You creep back to your room but stand behind the door to listen.

They're murmuring to each other. She asks how your brother's soccer game went. They lost. She asks what happened at your checkup. The usual. She asks how your sister's test was. She got a B. They go into their room and close the door behind them. You can still hear indistinct conversation, but after a while their light goes out and the whole house is silent.

It's the first time you realize how exhausting it must be to take care of you and your siblings. And it's the first time you realize how hard it must be for them to be apart.

And it's the first time you feel selfish for existing.



Home, School, Work, Repeat

Ryann Lambert

A Eulogy for the Person I Couldn't Be

Mandy Holliday

For the eldest daughter:
with golden locks like silk
and icy eyes that pierced;
their endless depth forming a cave
where her untold secrets laid dormant

The one who had such difficulty
loving herself and her image;
the sour pucker of the media's lemony cries
consumed her pallet...

*Would she have flinched at her reflection
if the magazines never existed?*

In memory of the girl with perfect grades:
her tower of homework crumbling around her,
a blanket of anxiety hugging her tightly
Its taunting demands
the reason why she never went home after school

The girl incapable of vulnerability
because like a siren,
their expectations wailed throughout her
Hollowing her to the center of her core

In remembrance of
a social butterfly,
who gave her friends
reflective advice
in penance
for the solace she failed to seek

cont'd

Because once you peeled
back the mask,
you would see her
for what she truly was:
A little girl trying so hard
to be what she was told
she had to become

Today,
may that girl
I once knew
Rest in peace

May the cracks
she left behind
allow more light
to come flooding in

Because if not for her,
the sun couldn't glisten down
as it does now,
intertwining with my skin

Allowing each cave
once left bare
to ignite with fire

As I become
who I am
destined to be.

November 20th, 2020

AM

what if we could go back to that day,
that calming eerie friday.
where all our troubles we weren't able to see,
when you could be my poe, and I your annabelle lee.
when your voice filled my stomach with butterflies,
and you brightened my life with your emerald green eyes.
but time, my love, is written in pen,
unable to erase or to live through again.
and one day oblivion will cease the day,
and all my what ifs will wash away.



Misty Mornings

Julianna
Palestina

Exodus

Anonymous

Listen:

if you need to cross the line,
you can go.

Just be careful what you see.

See, my song, it's not perfect, my sin, my
self, we're an abomination
of divine truth.

And I'm sorry

but I can't

spend eternity burning.

Your God of angels,
of anger

is keeping score.

I don't feel it;

my God is perfect love.

I feel like I could be saved

from my own deceit

even as I hide my truth again.

It feels hopeful

that He's not afraid to

accept me, but

the silence of Baptists is horrible.

I love them.

I try to be one, to

play the game.

I lose.

I'm born again.

Celestial

Parker Fariello

I was looking at Neptune through my telescope last night.
I caught him smoking a cigarette,
Blowing rings to form new nebulas.
I wanted to look away,
But he met my eyes and pulled me in
With his stained glass smile.
The light from the stars glinted when
It caught on the cracks.
I wonder if the other planets know
What their brother gets up to when they're not around.

Oil on Canvas

Aaliya Mansuri



Idyll

Selina Zhang

Why have one sun when you could have four
Cream colored skies instead of blue
Eyes closed, the idea of grey day overcast is no more
While around you the golden-winged warmth flew

Then the opening of the eyes
To burning light bulbs and living room ceiling
This idyllic paradise was really fabricated lies
The deceitful mirage of wishful thinking



The Falconet

Selina Zhang

She's Still There

Mia Vitiello

She's still there, you know.
Sitting on the basement step,
Skin stuck to the damp hardwood plank
Thighs shaking, heart interrupted.

She's still there, you know.
Sweeping through her own head,
Caught in the same loop
Did I do something wrong?

She's still there, you know.
Soaked pillow case and all,
Twenty five years later
Using the same way to fall asleep.

She's still there.
Charred orange filter between the fingers,
Tainted smoke blowing away
As if those were her problems.

She's still there.
Clinking ice against the glass,
The sound of her poison
The sign of her weakness.

And she's still there.
Victim, martyr, saint.
No escape from the memory,
No escape from the pain.



I'm Still Here
Mia Vitiello

Call It Fate, Call It Karma

Maya Day

“Too sensitive. Too emotional. Too hyper. Too much.” I rub my eyes, suddenly feeling so exhausted. My reflection in the mirror brings back those old, unchanging feelings. Just like the falling snow. “I ruin everything. It’s starting to feel like.. this happens too much. Like my feelings, like they *repulse* people.”

When a relationship starts, it’s like a black and white picture---the color slowly fading in as it blossoms. I trace every line in the photo, drawing it over and over in my head---desperate to see the colors fill in. Sometimes they do, but I forget about them. They get left in the sun and turn this ugly blue. Encapsulated in winter, forever.

I don’t mind it, though.

It’s 5:42am, no work, no anything. I’m just so damn tired, nothing seems to pique my interest anymore. Going through the motions, I suppose. She told me once that “paradise isn’t the shape on a map, but the shape of one’s heart.” But she’s gone, and I was never one for shapes.

Since then, I’ve never felt at home---and I’m starting to wonder if I ever knew it in the first place.

cont'd

I don't want to wake up anymore, but I dread falling asleep---a double-edged sword. My dreams always leave me at the beach, but the water is the color of ink, and it slowly makes its way towards me. I look into it, hoping for an answer to too many questions.

The sweet nothings it spouts are absorbing me.

I decided to take another look in its dark abyss, already knowing who would stare back. To be honest, I would rather see anything else. I always wake up from the dream hoping that the darkness would've just suffocated me already. Maybe it just wants to see me suffer. *Makes sense*, I think.

The vast, inky ocean never leaves me alone. It seeks me out; it's my shadow, it's the photo that I've traced over and over, and it's that damn lamppost outside that she would always stand at.

"Little do you know the subtle electric fire that for your sake is playing within me."

why would i give up on you

Aaliya Mansuri

the world is beautiful

each day the sun rises and falls

each night, the moon comes out to light up the night

i think the moon is beautiful, that nothing in the world could
ever compare

i see such beauty in the moon it amazes me

with every glance to the sky, i see the moon, so comforting

i see you.

you manage to add light to my world when it seems so dark

in my darkest times, you were the one that was there for me

you bring me happiness in a way i've never felt before

you are my moon, and i hope to be your stars.

i hope to be there for you, with every step

i hope that i can return back all the light you've given me

i hope for you to see your own beauty

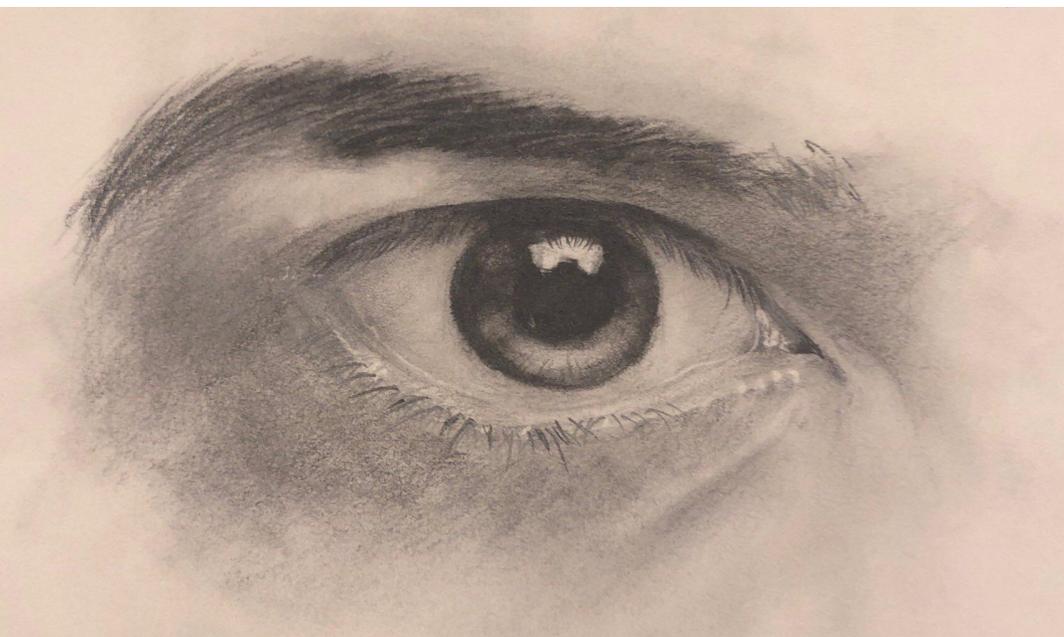
to see the light you bring

you think of everyone and in the end,

you forget to think of yourself

the moon is always there for the stars,

for you, the stars will always be there for the moon.



A Window to the Soul

Selina Zhang

True Freedom

Tyler Guidetti

A situation like that,
no destination.
I went for a walk,
the woods deep with snow.
Everything I owned,
I just let it lie.
There wasn't anything I could say.

Not a dollar in my pocket,
I asked, "Where are you going?"
I replied, "Wherever I'm headed."
I couldn't control the destination of the eastward journey,
but it was mine.

all in between

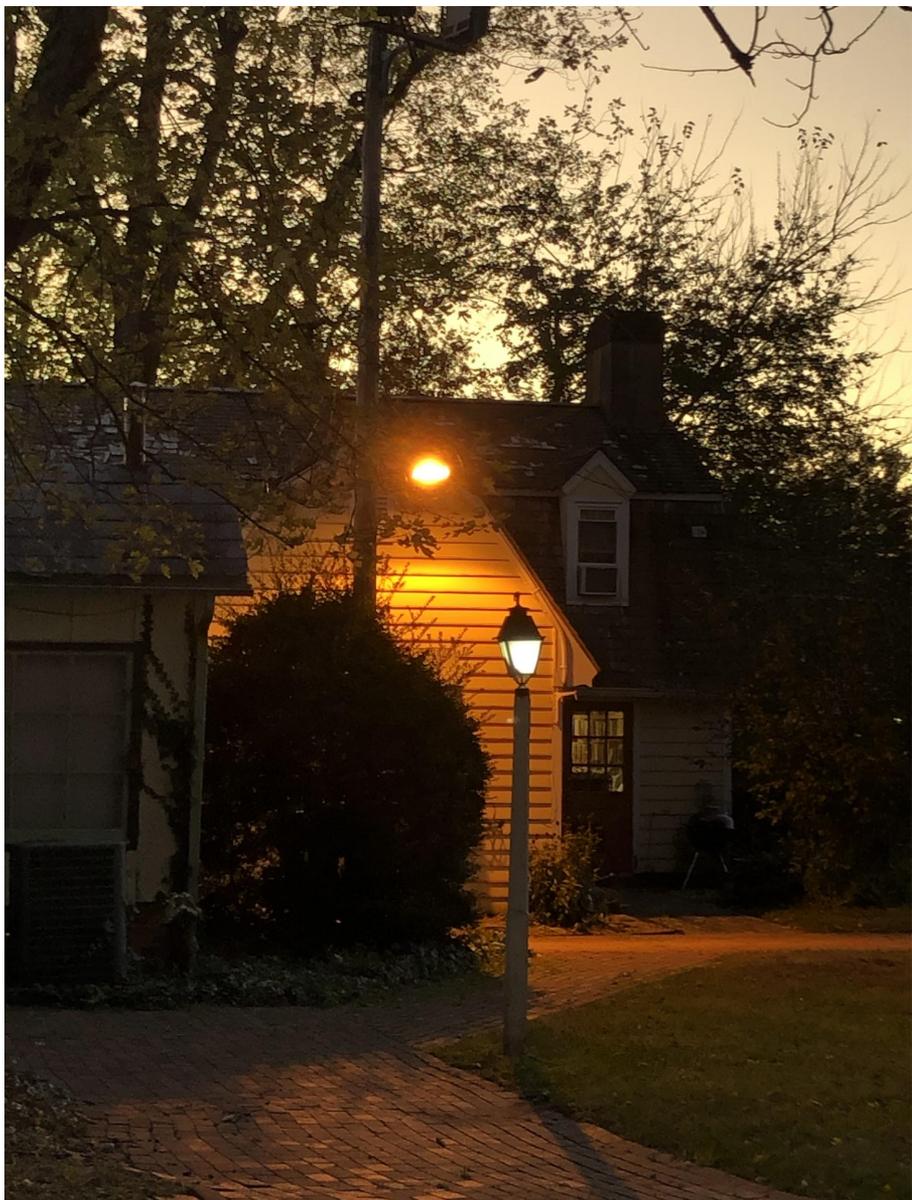
Lily Fasciano

a crackling fire
a brisk autumn breeze gives me a chill
and all at once the world is in black and white

as color drains
i'm surprised by the lack of contrast
everything is gray

it all blends together
and i wonder why no one else
thinks we're all the same

just shades of the same colorlessness
in varying shapes
but what does that matter when we are all in between?



Fall Light
Selina Zhang

Antagonist

Selina Zhang

I was night to your day
The shadow to your light
In people's hearts you stayed
And I was the feared metaphorical dark night

You became the protagonist
The bringer of justice and right
I became the antagonist
The one who clouds the future's sight

I was led to you
And you were led to me
Hurling towards this destiny, the final battle, we flew
And then from my '*tyrannical grasp*' the world was set
free

But I won in some way
I made you stronger than you alone could have been
You ushered forth the distant radiant day
I answered the question of when

Your glorious crowning daybreak of dawn
Rays of light and shadow both cast by the sun
After all, it is after the night
Then do we appreciate the light

She.

Ashley J. Tomson

Five o'clock,
19th of January,
the light of a half-moon,
passed through the winter morning,
as I kindled her fire.

She was a mysterious journey,
of a little girl.
She was lulled by the cessation of coach-doors,
and bewildered about darkness filling the air.

Her soul sat on her lips,
a swelling spring of pure, full, fervid eloquence?
Her spirit spoke of books,
of knowledge they possessed,
expanding at every sounding line.

She wore patience in her heart,
a murmur of pleasure ran through her companions.
Pioneering her tenacious wits to a higher class,
outrivalling the Tower of Pisa.

I Never Met Zion

Lauren Salemo

I haven't lived as many years as you.
The stars you saw that night in the valley
have faded.

You preached to me about the colors
not yet named.

I hated how I hadn't seen the same skies.
And even if I did,
I wouldn't have known.

The mountains stood before me like gods,
but I didn't tremble—
partly because I didn't look them in the eye,
and partly because I didn't know who they were.

Red rocks were blurred in my mind.
Cathedrals of stone stood without steeples.
Emerald rivers kept secrets from me.
Heavens towered in front of me,
unrecognized.

I looked down;
all I saw were my feet.



Cotton Candy

Selina Zhang

The Aftermath

Natalie Bonilla

Left in the aftermath of a savage war
I can still hear the pounding of my relentless heart
Badum-Badum-Badum.

My thoughts were as tangled as wires left in a pocket too long
My body quaked in fear
My voice screamed into nothingness.

A war where I was broken, beaten, defeated
Who would have known that the adversary
Was myself all along?

I can still hear the pounding of my undying heart
But like the chiming of the school bell,
I am reminded to move forward.

My thoughts sing in a warm embrace
Sometimes they have faults,
But I forgive them.

My war-torn memories
Itch at my brain, leaving scratches and blood
And I kiss the aching wounds.

All I can do now
Is liberate myself
And rise from the fallout.

Badum. Badum. Badum.
My heart beats gentler
And I smile.

March 14th, 2020

AM

The night we met to be honest

I don't really remember

Guess I was too drunk on your scent

To keep in mind anything else

But that scent

Oh it was the most human thing I had smelled my whole life

The only thing I could think of

While looking into those deep emerald eyes

So excuse me if I've forgotten what you had on that night

I'm sure whatever it was

You looked absolutely handsome

But I remember how your cheeks became rosey

When I held you close for that photo

I remember your delicate touch on my waist

And your rambunctious laugh

Although forgive me, for I can't recall

The way you looked at me all night long

As I already said, I was too drunk on you

The night we met



Squint
Seromi Girvin

Untitled

Maya Day

i trace the windows with my finger
the condensation warps the evergreen trees

i think
if you were to even burn in flames
lighting up your being into an eternal ash
screams oozing out of your mouth
i would only idle
for you are something untouchable
unfathomable
and maybe
only a facet of my mind

please,
leave me.



Kitai
Ark OuYang

Undetected

Oscar Gladysz

I keep an insanely low profile,
attempt loose connections,
ignore and disengage friends,
conceal myself in the group.

I am an idiot,
my expectations are low,
crippled, in the wretched jungle
ruled by bullies and harassment.

I am hobbling on the floor
ridiculed, then tortured
under the staircase,
shriek at the wretched bastards.

“Forget I exist”

Trapped

Jordan Pai

On the day we had to say goodbye
We had all turned from the fate that lied
Returning to our homes forevermore
Now free from the prison we abhorred

Two weeks and the problem's still not solved
It feels like humanity devolved
Existing on a screen, we start to adapt
In Zoom meetings 9-5 we're trapped

We try to be free, disregarding rules
In the end, we are really the fools

Plum Flowers

Jordan Pai



A Good Samaritan

Ryan Gilhooly

Off-duty cop?

Not for him.

Working through days,
while others go out and play.

If help was needed,
he was called.

When he learned how to shoot,
he taught others how to ball

Every arrest went through him,
little went past his watch.

Even when locking guys up,
He'd reassure them their worth.

Lowering bail!

Helping in the soup kitchen!

These were told to his son,
in hopes he could become one.

Don't Let Them Win

Hannah Treanor

You said, nothing I do is ever up to standards,
and my stomach revolted,
time lost all meaning.

I choked to the very marrow of my bone, and

You mocked me,
reveled in the paralysis my fear had installed although
You knew the pain was too much.
You boast while I drop into emptiness. All
I give You now is a half-hearted smile.

Found poem inspired by *Today We Go Home*
by Kelli Estes



**Inverse
Panopticon**
Natalie Bonilla

Guardian Angel

Victoria Delia

Watching the sky,
my mind shouted the blessing.
The sensation of unspoken thoughts,
hypnotized by the mystery.

I saw her, the Angel's glow,
glamorous, shimmering, godly.
Heaven on Earth.

"Is this the end of the world?"

"No," says the Angel,

"Come forth, into His bright heaven."

Unrestrained and graceful,
I was falling into the sky, into heaven
with my Angel.



Ronan
Parker Fariello

Green; Brown

Addison Schmidt

I've been in this garden some time now--
sky blue on entry, gray mixed into the corners.

Sage green ivy
means warmth on my shoulders;
muddled brown branches
means warmth in my heart.

Oh, how you blossom
you sunshine, you starlight;
how do you fly and falter
all at once?

I learn your patterns through the colors,
but the purpose is a guessing game.
There's a sound ringing through the grapevine now;
is it just the trees,
or are these cherry blossom whispers
an outside kind of promise?

I ask the birds,
high on their perches, higher in their wisdom
about these whispered, whining words.
What are these silent screams
that I must leave my years behind?

cont'd

Must they be shedded like snake skin,
remnants in the clippings of the grass?

Their sharp notes weave melodies
into the trails of honey,
hanging off my fingertips.

I ask,

and ask,

and ask again--

their songs leave me no answers.

Lately I've been dreaming of deserts
where I find myself changing;
not for the sake of letting go,
but for the sake of mastering the art
of letting go and holding on at the same time.

Fly, falter

Fly, falter

The burn of my stomach--

lit by the singing of the sun,

carried through the shade of the moon

fed by this new pattern of life--

it no longer aches because of the pace,

but because of the desire to be something more.

cont'd

I'm reaching an ending now--
the sunrise painting me gold,
honey on my hands once more--
but lately I've been feeling silver.
The stone archway beckons me,
past the brown
past the green--
warm,
warm,
warm.
I'm sorry to leave you behind.

Once more:

to fly or to falter?

I want to be the kind of person
who can do both
and still find themselves growing.

Prayers

Jordan Pai

The Sun nearing its peak
In the sky.

One of those magic moments.
Eyes watching the little child
Splashing gently in the surf.
Time wandering slowly.
Tears filled my eyes from
The beauty of the spectacle as
I thanked God for this sense of
Comfort.

Found poem inspired by *The Passion of Dolssa* by Julie Berry



Spring
Jordan Pai

Among the Stars

Lily Fasciano

I yearn for it all to come back.

All of the people I'll never see again

All of the meaningless conversations

All of the times I wished I could move on to the future,

Where things would be better

I yearn but I know none of it can ever come back.

None of the joking around like we'd be together forever

None of the not knowing what was to come

None of the reaching for the sky,

Where things would be better

I stare up at the stars.

Sprinkled across the blanket of the night

They seem so far away and futile

I've been running towards them my whole life

And now they are in harmony with everything I've been running away
from

cont'd

I stare up, but all I see is everything I will always yearn for and never get back.

I think, maybe, it's all up there

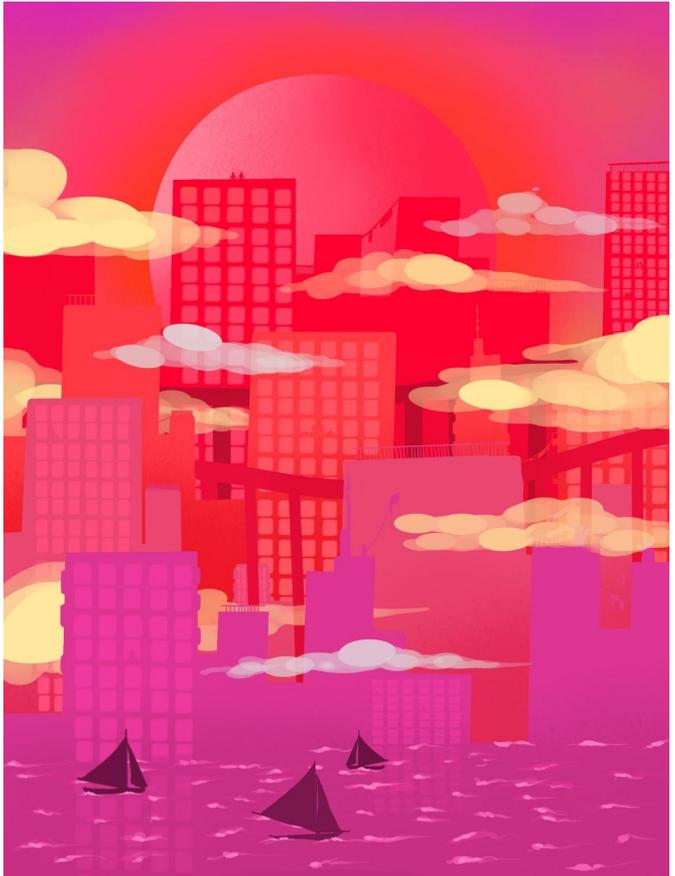
Interspersed between all the planets and all of the beautiful space

Everything I've been running from is now

Among the stars

City of Life

Jacqueline Dawn
Callahan



Angelic ending, Human beginning

Parker Fariello

A creature is kneeling in the dirt,
The night is cold but
He does not feel it.
Some seraphic thing curled in on
Itself, arms lifted over head
Bent towards his back.
His blade sawing at the base of
Feathered wings.
Blood runs down across his skin,
A frightening sight,
The severing of joints.
Disgusting and painful,
But it had to be done.
In order for him to become what
He wants to be,
He must shed what
He is supposed to be.
The buzz of anticipation
Fills the cool air.
Broken feathers litter the ground
Among the leaves.
The sickly sweetness of change.
In the coming months wildflowers
Will grow from the blood that has
Soaked into the soil.
But now the moon is hanging low
And he is lying on his side,
Faded eyes, parchment tongue,
Pale and sweaty.

He is changing
He is growing
He is becoming

When he wakes up
The world will look different.

Ama L'ignoto

Lauren Rose Stanzione

In Little Italy
I buy a book: *Living Italian*
falling through pages,
I search for myself
down the spine.
Matt sends me pictures
cacio e pepe
he uncovers
our blood
plasma in parmesan
the only part
of our world
I see myself in.
Women on the street:
their hair sways like gentle linguini
eyes water against sicilian shores
skin pale as flour lathered on dough
they are thin, orderly
like the tip of the boot,
foreign mutterings in my canals.
La donna
Our fingertips
dance across the ceiling
The Creation of Adam
I reach out
where is Eve?
did Michelangelo
forget how
to paint?

I breathe in pages,
imploing them to whisper
between the folds of my brain.
grazie ciao prego
words of
zucchero on my tongue
tu sei una ragazza
LEI NON APPARTIENE
the green cover
stains my *mela verde* tongue
with proper Italianness-
listerine
the english on my breath
untangle
the women I
can't fit inside
arrivederci Lorena!

I write my grandmother
ama l'ignoto
love the unknown
she tells me
she's never heard
Italian spun
so beautifully.

cont'd

As I walk home
I think of my mother
our blood boils
the same 37.777°C
our kitchen
the thermosphere
beyond our walls
the mesosphere,
liquid ice
on earth.
She shivers, telling me
go Lauren Rose!
Go!
Italian girls
need
Italian women.

I fly to the top
of the Vatican
cracking open
a dome
of goldy heaven
collecting fistfuls
of light
between my webs
I watch home&unhome,
dimensions of Lauren
the arches
and ridges
of my architecture
silk
against my palms

I tell myself:

AMA L'IGNOTO
Italian girls
need
you, Lauren.

Butch

Parker Fariello



A New Day

Alyssa Swope

The moon slowly fades away beneath the horizon
And the planet begins to rise from its slumber.
The scent of change is in the air, fresh and clean.
The sun peeks over top the mountains,
Smiling down at the world as a new day begins.
Birds belt their ballads as they float from tree to tree
And greet each other as they greet the new day.
The pond is as still as glass, until its smooth surface
gently wakes as the breeze brushes against it.
The soft and gentle wind begins the rustle the leaves
As if Mother Nature was lovingly combing her
fingers through the branches.
She tends to each of her children,
Coaxing the flowers to open with the promise of warm sun,
Asking the clouds to part
So that the warm sun will kiss the skin of people rising from their
slumber.
Tulips begin to bloom through the cold ground,
Welcoming spring once again.

Trust

Amy

The boy in front of the line yelled out "But Ms. Avery, why does it say class of 2025?"

I looked up at the big blue banner that hung above the hardwood door

CLASS OF 2025 written in big bubbly letters

"But the year is 2007 not 2025!! That's like a hundred years from now"

Ms. Avery looked at all of us and smiled

Guys

2025 is when you graduate college

2025?? That's so far away

Growing up takes forever

I now realize

Growing up did not take forever.

Everyday I have lived has led me here

Sitting in my bed writing

Allowing my inner thoughts to live on paper

This is where I am supposed to be.

cont'd

Trusting my light to shine through

Trusting my mind

I know who I am

I know where I need to go

Sometimes I wish my days didn't speed by me

Flowing more like a river (2)

Slow and steady

Calm and collected

But I am grateful for the moments that have shaped me

Good or Bad.

Light shines better in the dark (3)

There's no time to waste

No more slowing down

Life is just beginning

Man's Best Friend

Selina Zhang



Go Blue

Mikaela Lewis

“Decisions come out today at 3:30.”

He told me as if I did not already know,
As if I had not spent all week trying to forget,
As if this was not the most important day of my life

Two hours until I found out
if all the sacrifices of the past four years would be validated:
Countless weekends doing nothing but studying,
Spending 100 hours preparing for the SATs
& taking it 5 times,
Giving up travel hockey to focus more time on school.

At 3:28 the email came through
“Click here to check your application status”
The loading screen like a silent record player -
spinning, spinning, spinning - with no end in sight

Then finally the blue and maize confetti screaming
in contrast with the white screen
Like a firework, I burst out of my chair
“I got in!”
Like the sweetest cake, my mom and I celebrate

One click burst the pinata of college decisions,
My hardwork spilled out
and made all of the long days and late nights worthwhile
My message from Michigan
Stays open on my desktop a month later
As an inspiration and a reminder:
It is nearly time to board the ship,
Assume my role as the captain,
Embark on a new journey,
Set off for the greatness to come

It's a Seasonal Thing

Anonymous

The sun slips behind the horizon
And the world prepares
for a cold winter's night
Wood logs are stacked
Leaning gently on houses
As if tired and ready for sleep

Blankets are on the couches
In massive towers
Marshmallows dance in hot chocolate
As snow melts off of shoes
Left discarded on the floor

Behind a closed door
Someone is crying wintry tears
As their sorrows are sent echoing
Off of the piles of snow
And a heart freezes over
As a nearby lake does the same

Hidden behind curtained windows
Another soul cries out
School books lay in a heap
As hands
Tired from equations
Rest on wet eyes
That have been staring at the dark
For too long

Blue Wind

Mia Vitiello



Moving On

Anonymous

One chapter of my life ends very soon,
and with it will come a new one filled with possibilities.
It feels like diving into a cool, deep, dark body of water.
You can't see it but there's so much happening around you,
and so much to come.

Do I make a splash and dive right in?

Or do I take it slow and just dip my toes?

The sound of the ripples feel soft upon my ears
as I continue to mull over my decision.

I decide to let the waves come to me.

Deal with this new chapter as it comes,
instead of forcing my way through it.

I have not been looking forward to this next portion
of my life for a while now,
but I think I am finally ready.

Along the Harbor

Amelia Milza

At the harbor, we scrape our sandals against the gravel trail,
Beginning to let our toes feel the melting rock
“Can’t we turn around and sit with Mom and Dad at the inn?”
“Dinner and drinks can wait a little longer,” I say
Everything is silent as the water’s lips lapse against the hulls
For a moment, the world moves a little slower than usual,
Giving the sunset a sold-out audience
Hulls rock like cradled babies amongst the rippled waves
I want to pick a boat and open its wings and smooth its billowed feathers
July is not a month for crew necks, but the wind will require a spare layer
Kites could soar here, but no one dares to disrupt the sky’s finale
Like I said, the sunset sold every single ticket
Me and Sophie walk to bench, and our sandals are quiet
Near the cliff, we can see the big boulder
Overlooking the faces of the neighboring islands
People have tried to push it, but our arms can only skip stones
Quests end when our bellies summon thunder to our bodies
Roaring as we dream about red-bellied lobster and haddock bathed in curry
Sophie and I resume the soft scraping of our sandals, pebbles gathering
under our feet
Tours have ended for the day and adventure ceases to whisper in our ears
Under the belt of the horizon are more sunrises waiting to be called
Vast mountains and views and more kisses from the ocean
We practically sprint to the umbrella’s soft silhouette
Xenogamy passes from flower to flower
Yet we guide our eyes to the bow of the sunset
Zipping to its place beneath the Earth

A Loan of Trust

Danica Chakroborty

Father—
a hug can not make up
for wasted years.
Can he know?
God knows I wish.

Caught in the conflict between
his private interests,
his conscience,
and his love,
he would always,
in hindsight,
choose me as collateral.

And I know the day,
he raised his hat to me,
talking of happier days.
“Forgive,” he asked...

I said it was a loan of trust,
and when one is too far gone,
fully in debt,
the quarrel no longer lies with the bank,
it lies within.

