

WESTWIND

WINTER 2021



JOURNAL OF THE ARTS

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Journal of the Arts

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A LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR...

The work in this edition of Westwind is atmospheric and strange; vibrant and loud. While in some ways I hesitate to define the Winter 2021 journal so explicitly, I don't think it can be disputed that each writer and artist we've printed has a style and voice extremely particular to their own experience and sensibility. Aesthetics are sometimes faulted with hindering emotional depth or raw authenticity in art, but I'd argue that each of our contributors uses their particular aesthetic and tone to express ideas and feelings that are quite piercing and real (and often very funny). I hope this edition of Westwind, with all its quirks and lovely, strong voices, brings you levity, and perhaps even a deeper understanding of your own voice.

-Lillian Mottern

Managing Editor 2020-2021



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Jade Lacy

Poetry

The poems in this journal could not be more different. Some poke fun at the ridiculousness of the human experience, some handle delicate images with the most careful of language, and some viscerally recreate memories so strong that they are passed on to the reader. However, what these poems share is a drive to preserve something—just at the moment they tear apart the world to reveal it. These poets have taken extreme care to bring out the exact form, the exact words, the exact detail that will memorialize their experience forever. In the winter, so much can be lost. Even the time we spent putting this journal together seems to have slipped by without any warning. However, these poets push against time. They make us remember that life is worth remembering. Many thanks to all of our poets who have made this journal, and our entire quarter, so special. Finally, I am eternally grateful for our poetry staff who have challenged, entertained, and impressed me immensely through these long winter months.





HANDLE ME LIKE SAND

MATT DUBE

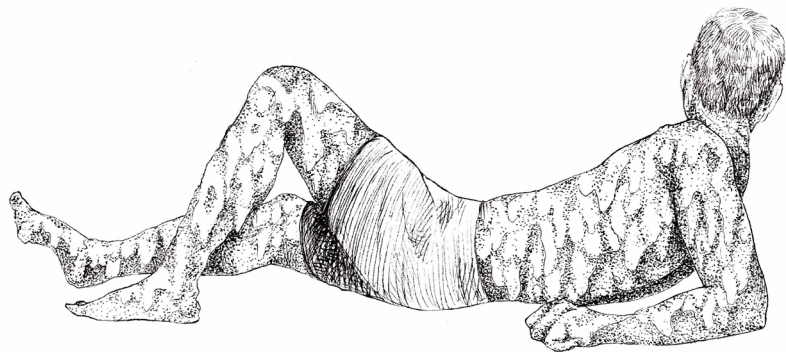
Kick me across the beach. Scatter me
in sprays of silica. I'll fill
your footfalls, cover your tracks. Pack

me stone-tight, grain on grain
on grain. Spit on me, fill me
up with water. Slap me till I turn
your hand red. Build me up

into castle walls. Leave a trail of
me, layered in colors or indistinct.

Take me all together or let me
go. I won't feel the passing, just the

slide. Forget me, forgo me, let me be
the ground beneath your feet.



NIGHTSHADE

MISHAL IMAAN SYED

alight, nightshade, on a child's brow
watch the fibers twitch, the space
a purgatory, suspended time.
antennae probe

plot a thousand gilded futures
mapped in gold, a searchlight gleam
weaved into dreams, then wander
rudderless

into night's deep heartbeat.
a starless radiance: smog-dense air
and wavering cityscapes. The next
child, doll-like

slumbers in honeyed haze—
thread each violet dreamscape
against the hushed velvet heat of
flushed rosebud

cheek, and flutter nomad-winged
into winking darkness, as the city
shivers at the glow of oncoming
dawn.



ALL AMERICAN PAINT

SKYLER "CHARLIE" STETSON

It's a California summer but my back feels the weight of September only inches away / she cut her heart out and gave it to me as an early birthday present and I left it on my nightstand to bleed. I haven't needed a new clock since / I put on a record player to drown it out but the wounds still fester / she says she loves me like a VHS split in two / I told her that these teenage hands would never touch hers again

Word of advice: Marble stars don't bend, only crack

The midwest is too small for any eight year old girl, her heart is already the size of the Ozarks / after dark it'll shrink and fit into the kitten heels you bought her / girls who wear blue dresses always cry after prom so you always buy her matching shoes / all dogs go to heaven but good girls go to the place where every candy tastes like strawberry and you can't see your reflection on the road / you drove past a sign that said "hell is real" and I asked you if that was true, you said only when daughters forget their mothers

Word of advice: Never take your daughter shoe shopping before midnight

I count every step like it's a prayer, god said drunk drivers are the loneliest people in west Texas so I take the long walk home / I was too drunk to see but the wind on the sand sounded like coyotes while I waited for her on that beach / three hours is long enough for that taste of gravel to wash out of my mouth but not long enough for the blood / I've already abandoned the moon and Antarctica so why not this night too?

Word of advice: Check your bathtub for rip currents

SKYLER "CHARLIE" STETSON



If you steal gasoline it'll make your car run longer, but the highway will dissolve you like a pill on its tongue / I named the paper airplane after you but I never threw it. Does that mean I love you or that I don't? / The windshield wipers can't keep up with the rain but I can feel your racing heart in the dark just the same / Will you bare those feral teeth just for me baby? I heard it hurts most just below the jugular

Word of advice: Pull your teeth out with wire and say yes to everything





COUNT CUMULUS

CATHERINE TAGHIZADEH

your wispy breath
 sends gilded shivers down my back
 and i can almost smell
 the translucent rainwater
 in the sheen of your moistened skin.
 cumulus counts the fingers
 i trace down the curl of your soft hair—
 since when was your skin so pale?
 your eyes match the mist in the sky
 so you know i've conquered cumulus
 and i know you've cried comets.
 i can still crave you and your pink-copper sunrise,
 can't i?

i feel you when you're heavy
 and in my voice lives
 the weighted whisper of congested cheeks.
 it feels like wet cotton
 when your storm is brewed that way.
 count on me to enlist in your cumulus
 and perhaps i can hope
 to soak in your sunken rain.

EMPTY BED

ERIC UREÑA



We lay here on either side of this california queen bed,
 with a chipotle-vinaigrette-stained blue bowl holding the
 peels of two bright orange sumo tangerines

Your cotton skin reflects the sun like that night when
 hundreds of cars turned their eyes on you and bathed you in
 yellow

I softly rub my feet together underneath this thin white
 blanket, pretending my left foot is yours, and my body fills with
 swaddled satisfaction as I go between the softness of the
 blanket and the side of your foot, back to the blanket and
 -back to you

I touch your belly button and caress your hazel hair as you
 lay your head on my chest

And I know you'll never be as good as the pillow version of yourself
 I hold when daydreaming of you

As self-inflicted pain escapes my eyes, my nose clogs and
 I breathe out of my mouth, I hold you tighter and squish your
 mass produced feather lungs

When my nose runs and my bladder swells, I wipe my
 nose on my sleeve and start to make my way to the bathroom
 but stop, I don't want to leave you alone in this empty bed



RATTLESNAKES MAY BE FOUND IN THIS AREA
(GIVE THEM DISTANCE AND RESPECT)

KATHERINE KING

Deep purple silhouettes of desert mountains
held the dusty star-flecked sky
that night.

We stared out at the valley below in silence.

Highways, cacti,
city lights gazed back,
unknowing, unfazed.

It was clearer there than in LA,
quieter, colder.

I couldn't help
but think back to that morning—
the orange grove,
the neverending rows of green.
It was beautiful there, really,
but how I wish the fruit had been ripe.

I would have been a jewel thief,
picked two dimpled citrine gems,
one for each of us.
We could have ripped them open in the dark,
that night,
felt juice drip down our chins instead of tears.
We could have spoken of their sweetness,
smiled at the sticky streams,
just for a moment.

How I wish I could give you rest,
bring you distraction
where peace is unwelcome.

How I wish I could have held you
so tight that I soaked up all of your pain.

KATHERINE KING



I would have
shredded it, plaited it,
fashioned a nest for you and I
to curl up beneath
the dusty star-flecked sky.





COUSIN

AMY VAN DUZER

Under the verdant boughs
We sit cross-legged,
Unaware of the hour
Or any conceits.

The fields glow with a
Soft, starry yellow film,
The western sun setting
Casting shadows in evening.

We traverse fields
You and I, hands held,
Chubby cherub fingers,
Our smiles, our glimpses.

I am running behind you,
Fast with the intention
Of beside you, but my legs
Lag as you fly ahead.

I see your mother's home
Stark in the distance now,
The red roof beaming
With the sun's goodbye.

And as your pace slows
You begin to amble,
I catch up but my breath
Is shallow and humbled.

AMY VAN DUZER



At your mother's doorstep,
You hand me the key,
And run inside while I
Float for a moment.

I stare at my hands,
The sound of glass stacking,
And plates being placed
On the dinner table.

Later, when we possess
The debts and the titles,
The papers and aches
We'll look back...

And remember
The way the sun glowed
When we were children,
Cousin.



DOUBLE-DOUBLE ABECEDARIAN: DELIRIUM TREMENS

GRANT QUACKENBUSH

“My kingdom for a nuclear gin fizz.”
—Barbara Hamby

“ABS! ABS! ABS!” the TV screamed. “Call 1-800-EAZY-ABZ by January 1st to claim your FREE consultation today!” Calling would’ve been tough, though. I’d lost my iPhone X drinking at a bar the night prior where I sniffed some POW-erful “nutritional powder” this tattooed vegan Bev from Beverly Hills told me was like super good for you. Granted, I didn’t believe her. But she was asphalt-hot and I was stone-cold drunk so I gave her fifty bucks in exchange for a line and a high I don’t remember, just regret. When I woke I was missing my vintage Shaq kicks not to mention my iPhone (X!!!), faux Rolex and backup loot which I’d put in my tube socks. I looked like a hobo minus the bindle: barefoot, bearded, sleeping on a bench in Newport Beach. Ugh. I’m not sure if it was the rum or a lack of water or (more likely) that so-called nutritional powder but I hadn’t been so hungover since I took Quaaludes and tequila shots at a Mexican discotheque in TJ. Right then I decided I was done. Finished. Vincit qui se vincit. He conquers who conquers himself. A rough translation by which I simply mean I had sworn off drinking. Until that evening, that is, when I quaffed half a bottle of vodka to calm my head. This was back in Oceanside where I was watching an exercise infomercial in bed. Xmas was over and I was in worse shape than ever. A horrific year for my liver. I thought about taking a taxicab to rehab, zonked out instead. But not before taking a long drag of vodka.

Around noon, after catching a few hallucinatory *Zzz* below the glow-in-the-dark star stickers on the imaginary constellation of my ceiling, I fixed myself some Trix

GRANT QUACKENBUSH



downstairs. But all I could do was stare into the rainbow eye of the bowl like a lobotomized nut staring at a busted TV. Forget cereal. What I needed was a warm café au gin, a shot of alcoholic medicine to soothe my ginger root hands like a friend, keep them from trembling like palm trees in wind. I felt queasy, as if I were reading in a vortex or jalopy. The bowl with the spoon in it became a capital Q. Knowing what was coming, I hunched over and abruptly threw up lime-green gunk that smelled like a skunk taco con mayo: malo. So there I was, hungover again, an injured birdman nursing my pain by regurgitating on the linoleum, owl-style. Well, bozo, there goes that infomercial promo, I thought, glancing up at the microwave clock: quarter to one. New Year’s Day. I figured I’d make a PB & J rye bread sandwich since it was lunch (though a martini sounded better) but the only bread I had was brick-hard French. (True fact: the word for “bread” in French is pain. Just saying.) Unemployed and behind on rent, I couldn’t help but wonder if venture capitalists ever struggle this much with life, what with wads of dough and all. I might as well have had X’s for eyes my body was so exhausted, not to mention toxic. Yet: how I hungered to change! To sparkle! To burst from the Rob Zombie double I was into something beautiful, once larva.



WOMAN WHO RUNS WITH WOLVES

SKYLER "CHARLIE" STETSON

I gave what we had a name, just so I'd forget it, but I am always betraying myself with these words. These lines are nothing but halls for holy ghosts to roam / My days are a splintered disorder of sleeping and dreaming too much. Like I'm trying to find God everywhere / Star child are you listening? Your want is too wide for you to cross it / My anger is a big white house covered in ivy. I live there alone / I've learned that suffering feels like religion if it's done right

I let my dreams fall like a body off a balcony, like snow, and lick them up like a dog / I wear your scars like a medal of honor, I'm nothing if not the one you chose to dig your teeth into / I want to love you carnivorous, dangling on the leash of my own longing / I am the phantom bruise that howls its hunger, and everything is holy when you are never going to die

I took a photograph of your foaming and bloody teeth and I use it like a bookmark, or a credit card. I'm always trying to forget that I can't save you / You can flip the lake we swam in upside down and you'll find a reality where everything is true, where all of us are real / Your face.

Mine. It's all giving you away, baby. Everyone's onto you / I climbed the fire trail in my dress shoes for you, the least you can do is wipe my blood off your hands

I hung my heart out to dry and it waited for the blackberries to ripen and stain the sink red / I'm trying so hard to kill you but you won't die. You animal. You neighborhood coyote / I ferment in love like a dark wine. I drink it up like a rabid dog / I perform for God in the subway cars of New York, who else would be my audience? Who else has died twice?



MEMORY

ANNA AARYN KHEN

Sometimes there you lie
between seconds,
behind blinks,
wading through the sea of my eyes
into my dreams at night.
There are bookshelves of you,
unpublishable,
written in the sacred language of memory.
Someday I will find a way.
I will paint the ocean
the color of your name
so it breathes you back to me
with every single wave.



TIME

ANNA AARYN KHEN

A sun-soaked evening,
 mango melting sky,
 the wind purring
 through summer's
 golden lips,
 me and my life
 on the front porch, praying
 time never storms out,
 but slips quietly by.

REYNISFJARA

ANNA AARYN KHEN

Find me at the dark shore
 where volcanic temples crescendo against the sea,
 where elves conduct their sad, salt music,
 kissing pebbles with quiet magic
 in titanic pockets of rock.
 The wind peels soul from body,
 steals civilization from bones,
 and all alone I stand on the universe
 and walk the night sky.



THE RITUAL

TATIANA ZINN

In the empty early morning I cut my fingernails over the floor.

I let the little pearly ribbons of me rest on the cherry hardwood
 so the Roomba can have a snack
 and so I can feel them kiss the skin of my heels.

Me on top of me.

When the tea is almost ready,
 I cut the last milky shred of keratin off
 and I let it fall.

Then I bend over
 and I pick it up
 and I take it to the trash with a lot of ceremony for someone who cuts her nails over the
 floor.

I place it on top of peach skin
 and mingling crumbs
 and soaked tea bags.

Then I look at the jar of honey on the counter
 and the basil plant on the windowsill
 and the little blisters of CO2 that overturn the lemon in my glass.

I see myself scattered around the kitchen
 and I wait for the rest to arrive
 and I wonder how many more of me there are to come.



BUBBLEBATH ORNAMENT

KYLEE KROPF

I used to rise
misstep, recollect, recover
Redirect from the stomach
to the side

Bare, stumbling
Posture the palm
to the temple

Posing, you called it
Your bubblebath ornament
a sud hardly shrouding my
left nipple

Pale, fat foot
clambering
the porcelain wall
One foot in, one out

You,
on the toilet
Palms greased
with babyoil

waxing me
till I reeked

I let you do it.

Odalisque,
Our routine

KYLEE KROPF



Suddenly you
sacrificed the silence,
desecrated the ritual

And I,
lavender, half-rubbed, seraphine
sat, leaning as you said

Kids aren't supposed to have rolls

Now the mothers are
huddling behind the
Suburbans

Took the chisel to my
stomach and kept
cutting

So mom took me in
for a bee sting
Left foot ripe, pulsing

I tilt right as I step on the Scale,
Avoiding eye contact
with the scoreboard

I am a model
prisoner, I do
not speak or vomit on the carpet



KYLEE KROPF

Cantillate the alphabet while I
urinate with the door cracked
I have no shame.

This is what perfectionism looks like when it eats itself alive—

Babyoil on the
bathroom floor,
chapped calves and
You pummeling my
bedroom door.



I'M SURE I'VE TOLD YOU THIS BEFORE



JASMINE REDDY

back atop the bed
your baby blanket hands treasure mine
worn voice gently scratches
vivid memories open
and I follow you in

*your brother burnt his head in the open fire
the ants got into his wound
so she poured hot water on it*

*the bright yellow
turmeric and lemon
antiseptic guardians
kept the ants out*

*yellow rice
for a long train ride
looking out the window
hand in your hero's*

*your father
married to your mother
she sometimes seemed a stranger*

*when you came home
the still air sent you
up to the roof
where the hot summer stars
were so clear*

*inside Krishna's mouth
ghee and the universe
our after-school special
I pressed a bindi to my forehead
climbed into the king bed*

again I clambered onto your bed
and curled up into you



Kurt Klaus

Fiction

There's something about writing an editor letter that's tough. Okay, yes, a lot of things are tough, and maybe with the year we've had I shouldn't be complaining about something so small. But since I have your attention, please let me share some of my current thoughts with you: How long should this letter be? Is it possible to avoid sounding pompous? Who should I thank? Do I need to mention the plot of each individual story? And so it goes.

To be honest, most of those questions have subjective answers (except, of course, the pompous one – it really is impossible) and, accordingly, I will keep the rest of the letter short and sweet. Thank you to the wonderful Fiction staff at *Westwind*, for showing up every week prepared to discuss each submission. Thank you to our authors, whose stories this quarter both inspired me and made me feel emotion after emotion. Thank you to Lillian, my co-Senior Fiction Editor, for always being diligent and incredible to work with. And thank you to you (yes you), without whom this publication would not quite do its job.

Lillian Mottern

Fiction

The more a short story is discussed and dissected the more it changes shape and takes on new meanings. Every week, the *Westwind* Fiction Staff gathers over zoom to talk about short fiction, and by the end of each meeting, I always find myself viewing the work we've discussed in a new light. We are selective, of course, about what we choose to publish in our journal, but I also consistently feel that the Fiction Staff considers each piece we receive thoughtfully and with a certain warm generosity that is vital to successful discussions. The stories in this issue of *Westwind* are peopled with distinctive and eccentric characters who are often (but not always) compelling reflections of their authors. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as we have enjoyed picking them apart and redefining them for ourselves. My sincere thanks to our incredible Staff whose comments are unwaveringly insightful and intelligent (and make me laugh), and to Kurt, my co-Senior Fiction Editor, for his levity and perspective. And to our contributors -- we could not have these conversations without you; thanks for trusting us with your work.



ACROSS CAMELLIA BOULEVARD

ANAYIB FIGUEROA

The gentle pitter-patter of the rain echoed in Olivia's ears, but she was sitting just out of reach under the awning, safe from everything but the occasional stray droplet. Not that it mattered much to her, she'd always loved the rain.

Watching from her balcony, she let her gaze wander over the busy boulevard. An archway of trees lined the street, stretching across the entire block, each one draped from base to branch in white fairy lights.

Between the branches, a messy blur of cars, trucks, and the occasional stray umbrella — nameless, faceless figures rushing home to escape the rainfall.

Across the street, the neighbors' balcony railings were wrapped in frosted garlands and glistening lights. And even through the soft blur of the rain, it was clear that the apartment right across the way had guests over. An intimate, little get together in the midst of an upcoming storm.

The usual ache in her chest throbbed a little harder this time and against her better instinct, Olivia returned to the memories she usually fought to keep at bay.

Closing her eyes, she thought of the warmth and laughter packed inside the cramped living room of the Amato siblings' apartment, her former home away from home.

To the left, a Christmas tree, nestled in the corner—grand and regal and classic—its base overflowing with stacked gifts and dollar-store trinkets.

To the right, Gracie Amato, Olivia's best friend, had just sat down at her brother Eli's neglected piano, the one they only dusted off for special occasions. Her fingers glided over its antique keys and a soft melody drifted through the air.

Just beyond the snack table, Olivia stood atop a rickety dining room chair, hanging up a mint-colored birthday banner.

Gracie and Eli's twin cousins, Chip and Winifred (Freddie for short), assisted with the other decorations, all the while they "argued" about the superior dip to pair with tortilla chips. Chip argued in favor of nacho cheese, an all-time classic, as he cut pieces of tape to hand to his sister. Freddie insisted homemade cookie butter was the way to go while she added the tape to the back of the metallic snowflakes and handed them up to Olivia.

Stepping into her line of sight, Olivia's boyfriend, Eli, walked into the living room and tossed his chef's hat onto the couch. "I'm officially off kitchen duty," he announced, running his hand through his sandy blond hair.

ANAYIB FIGUEROA



"Did Benji kick you out?" Olivia teased as she taped the last silver snowflake to the wall.

"It was a mutual break up," said Eli, extending his hand out to Olivia as she stepped down from the chair. "In fact, I kicked myself out, thank you very much."

Gracie's melody picked up speed, soft and light.

"Care to dance?" Eli asked, still holding Olivia's hand.

"With you?" She motioned for him to come closer and brushed away a faint streak of flour from his cheek. "Always."

Smiling, Eli took her hand again and spun her around. Olivia giggled as he did, her dress fluttering as she twirled beneath the mirrorball. The piano's delicate melody floated through the room, dancing along with them. And as it happens every once in a wonderful while, a careless, glittering bliss hovered in the air—above, below, and all around them—and as they basked in the fleeting perfection of here and now, Olivia knew with absolute certainty that Eli was—

BEEEEEP. BEEEEEP. BEEEEEP.

Benji's latest creative concoction had caught fire in the kitchen, jolting the fire alarm to life.

BEEEEEP.

"Need some help there, bud?" Eli called over his shoulder.

"I can handle it!" insisted a voice from the kitchen.

The music came to an abrupt halt and Gracie yelled over to her boyfriend, "Benjamin Fiscella, tell me my cake is alive and well!"

A moment of hesitation while the alarm rang on.

"It, uh, might be a little past the point of 'well-done,'" Benji called back.

Olivia bit back a grin and Eli tried not to laugh.

"Benji!" Gracie called, feigning indignation.

Olivia looked up at Eli, "I think he needs your help."

"Oh no, I'm off duty. He insisted he had it under control."

The fire alarm's incessant blare continued, somehow louder.

Olivia looked at him with raised eyebrows and, trying to look as stern as possible, she wrinkled her nose, insisting, "Go save your sister's birthday cake, Eli."



Eli smiled, a flicker of amusement dancing in his amber eyes, and said, “Aye, aye, captain.”

He then pressed a kiss to her forehead and snatched his chef’s hat off the couch, disappearing from view when he turned the corner.

And her mind lingered there for a moment, focused on the dimming beauty of a fading memory. But before Olivia could prod her wounds any further, a clap of thunder startled her, bringing her back from her reverie into the aching present.

She eyed the familiar sandy blond hair in the distance and the ache in her chest grew louder, stronger.

Toying with the phone in her hands, her finger hovered over the call button for a few seconds. A moment of courage seized her and she pressed it, regretting it almost instantly. Eyes fixed on the apartment across the street, she listened to the phone ring.

Olivia held her breath. The ringing finally stopped and a familiar voice spoke with a hint of levity, “I was starting to think you wouldn’t call.”

Olivia grimaced, her guilt gnawing at her.

“Hey, Gracie.” she said softly, grateful her friend wasn’t upset with her. “Happy birthday.”

“You coming tonight?” Gracie started, hopeful.

Olivia started to respond with the answer she had rehearsed in her head. “You know I can’t—”

“Babe, Eli said it’s chill. Plus it’s my apartment too. Come over already, I miss you!”

Olivia watched as Eli came back into view, this time with his arm around a brunette.

“I can’t.”

A muffled song to the tune of “Happy Birthday” started in the background.

“Hold on, they’ve started singing Happy Birthday.” She called into the living room, “Guys, I’m on the phone! Give me a minute!”

“Go back to your party,” Olivia forced herself to say, dreading the end of the call.

“But you’re my best friend. I want you here.”

Olivia winced. Still, she held firm.

“Save me a piece of cake,” she said, forcing herself to sound cheerful.



Gracie sighed, resigning herself to the new reality of things. “Okay, well, I love you.”

“Love you too,” Olivia replied, her voice almost a whisper.

With that, Gracie hung up the phone.

Olivia stood up and lingered at the threshold into her apartment. Once more, she caught a glimpse of the blurry figures of her friends from across the street. Then she retreated back into her empty home and locked the door behind her.

That was enough dancing with ghosts for tonight.





DON'T LIE TO ME

JINHO MYUNG

"Don't lie to me. Did you take it?"

I came to get my bag. That was it, just the bag. But in usual "David Altman" fashion, he would not let me leave without an interrogation. For the first ten minutes of the tirade I awkwardly stood by the front door, my right hand holding the bag and my left hand resting on the doorknob. Just like all the times before, he knew my hand on the door knob was a signal that I wanted to leave.

"Get your goddamn hand off my door knob. You're not leaving 'til you fucking tell me." *Well, okay.*

The missing \$60 *apparently* meant the world to David, and he wasn't stopping 'til he found it. I leaned against the wall, jacket tucked between my arms.

"Tell me the truth Hyun. Tell me the fucking truth!"

Moments like this made me wish apartments didn't have hallways. They were echo chambers for everybody's business. Having lived in dorms and apartments, I've always felt embarrassed and worried that whoever lived on the other side of the wall could hear me, eavesdropping on my drama as I often did on theirs.

I noticed a brown residue seeping from one of the many cracks in the walls of his apartment. *Nasty.* His dad was the "Wall Street" type- money, stocks, that kind of stuff, but David chose to live on the Lower East Side in an absolute shit hole that I wouldn't even call a "half bedroom."

He'd always felt uncomfortable with money, well, really just with his own wealth. It was "reverse financial insecurity." It never made sense to me; it made me suspicious. He'd adopted a "starving artist" lifestyle, even though he had it all. It was like he romanticized the idea of living "check to check," even though he had never worried about paying a bill in his life. In the morning, he put on a pair of dungaree trousers and a khaki work coat: a uniform fit for working on an oil mill. For David, it was simply attire to an afternoon seminar uptown. At times, I actually thought he was noble for wanting to establish some sort of financial independence, but I couldn't understand how appropriating a quasi blue collar wardrobe would give him that.

JINHO MYUNG



"I know you took it. I don't know why you won't just tell me. You fucking come here with your bullshit once a week anyway!" he said.

Mocking him, waving my hands in the air, I asked if he had to say "fuck" in every sentence. "Fuck this, fuck that, fuck you, fuckity fuck. Right, David? There's just no other way to say it, huh? The English language is just too limited for you? Maybe the sixty bucks got lost in the eighty grand going to Columbia this semester *which clearly* hasn't done *fuck* to your vocabulary. Either way, it's sixty dollars dude, who fucking cares? That's what you spend on your oat water shit or whatever that is."

"Hey, can you guys please shut up?" It was the blonde who lived right above David's floor. She was sticking her head through the window from the fire escape. We both turned and together said, "sorry."

"Don't mind us, just a lover's quarrel," I added.

She closed the window. We waited silently to confirm she was gone. The ladder made a rattling noise and we heard her window shut.

"Oops," I said, "she probably thinks we're screwing now. There goes eight months of your stagnated attempts at flirting with her in the stairwell."

He picked up a mason jar quarter full with a green vegetable blend, and gripped it tightly like he was about to wind up for a pitch.

"What're you gonna do, throw it or something?" I asked, laughing, "you paid \$8 for that nasty ass drink, and probably more for the artisanal cup. You sure you wanna do that?"

"You're an asshole Hyun," David replied, "You're the assholiest of the assholes."

He told me to "stop being like this," and that I knew what I was "doing." He said I always came to him for something "fucking new." And at least in the past I'd "been honest about it."

"Now, you're lying?" he asked. "When'd that become a thing?"

"What do you mean, I'm *lying*? How am I *lying* to you?" I replied. "I mean, if you want the truth I'm more than happy to tell you it. I didn't take the money."

It looked like he believed me, but I didn't want to leave it at that.

"If you want honesty too... I'm not the one living in a shitty apartment on daddy's dollar just to make myself seem interesting. And I don't have to buy friends, like your sorry ass."



He fired back, "Screw you, at least I'm doing something! You sit in Central Park five hours a day for what? Find any inspiration? How's that going for you? You gonna have a diploma next year? No, I didn't think so."

I was working on a novel, or at least that's what I told people. I was really just visiting the city, wandering aimlessly, surfing couches of college acquaintances. Two days at a rental in Harlem, four in Jersey, a week with a distant uncle living in Flushing, and three days at a friend's place in Bed-Stuy which, apparently, wasn't pronounced "Bed Stew-ie." David always made sure to correct me.

I didn't want to go back home, and I didn't want to go back to Vassar in the Fall. There were too many guys trying to be the next Baumbach and too many pretty girls with violet hair.

Rather than writing, I'd rant about how it'd never be possible to gain success as a writer. I'd sulk on the notion that, unlike my collegiate peers, my father had a limited network; he was *just* a pharmacist. It was a matter of bad luck that I wasn't of a family whose dinner friends were producers or other big name hotshots in whatever their industry was.

And, yeah, it was true. Every week I usually did end up needing to come to David for something... usually money. Despite the fact that we didn't live with each other, we had each other in a weird way, we got really good at coexisting, ranting, dwelling, being conflicted together, and that was nice. I wondered if it actually was my insistent asking for money that irritated him or the fact that we were past the phase of being new friends, too afraid to cross any lines, any boundaries.

"What is this really about?" I asked. "Seriously? Are ya havin' a rough week? Is it something about a girl? Talk to me bud. Is your Dad putting more pressure on ya?"

He was pissed, and I went on.

"Listen, I'm not your fucking charity. I don't need your money. If I did, I would've asked. It's not even funny anymore you're just being a bitch."

"Hyun, I could have gone through your bag. I could've, but I didn't," he replied. "I wanted to be decent. But nah, fuck that and fuck you!"

He started toward my backpack. It was hanging from my left hand. He looked like a child searching for a toy at the bottom of a cereal box, an unhealthy look of excitement blistering in his eyes. He interrogated me and, one by one, objects were pried from the bag



and thrown somewhere near my face.

A pack of Marlboro Reds, "you needed sixty dollars for this?!" Condoms, "for this?" A copy of *The Catcher in the Rye*, "Jesus, Hyun... I really hope not for this." The poor bag was being peeled of its dignity. I could see it getting lighter and lighter. Its organs thrown in my direction. Then, he stopped.

"Empty your pockets."

"What?" I asked.

"Empty your pockets."

I froze. My conscience spoke to me, *you fucking idiot*.

Then, with laughter and in David's voice, I heard it again. "You fucking idiot." I didn't move. He walked in my direction and began to pat me down; it felt weird. "Hey! Easy there, easy there." I said. He didn't reply.

He dug into each of them, one by one. And, finally, in my back left pocket he took out three, twenty goddamn dollar bills. Sixty dollars.

For a minute, David was quiet. I didn't know how to feel. I was so caught up in the heat of the argument, I had actually begun to believe that I hadn't stolen the cash in the first place. I didn't even bother to disperse the bills or cover my tracks. It was as if I left them in my pocket to be discovered.

He pocketed the cash. "Don't come back here man. Get the fuck out of my apartment." *Was he crying?*

"It's barely even an apartment," I whispered.

"Get out Hyun. Please, j-just... leave."

He was crying.

David looked up at me and let out what could have been a laugh. He shook his head and walked into his room. "Do whatever you want." The door shut.

I stood alone in the 8x7 foot living room. I looked at the clock; it was almost midnight. I left and went to get a slice at the dollar place on the corner of Broadway and Jefferson, it was a two minute walk from David's place. They were always open 'til 2AM. It was where we usually went after spending the night out.

I didn't feel like a winner, but I didn't feel bad. I refused to be held responsible for David's own emotional devastation. It wasn't the reaction I wanted. Guilt was the last thing



DON'T LIE TO ME

I needed on my conscience.

I began my process of rationalization, trying to convince myself that by finally leaving David, maybe I was doing something good for him.

If not, it was sixty bucks. I've fucked up friendships for less.



NADYENKA

DAVID EGAN

What idiot leaves a computer in an unlocked car? So assured by his hubris, his faith in the goodness of humanity, or simple goddamn carelessness he thinks it will stay there unnoticed, unmolested, and unstolen.

To be fair the locks broke in the still sunny winter and stayed as such for a season and a half. I kept parking every day on Faring Road where the bougainvilleas erupted huge and pink in the spring. There was no limit to my hope when I was eighteen, when my attempts to lock the doors could still be fruitful and the car's machinery could fix itself by miracle. Bougainvilleas are pink in a way that many would find unbelievable. I did not find it unbelievable.

My parents' anger didn't upset me. Not my father saying it was probably some punk from Fairfax or my mother that she should have taken the car to get fixed herself. I wasn't even mad about the stolen laptop. The effortless intrusion made me uneasy, imagining someone opening and entering my car and grabbing the most valuable thing they could find.

The loss was an ugly break, like meat torn from a bone with tendons still dangling. But the grace of God or sheer luck cleaned it bare on the last day of spring. It was the first time I fell in love – the locksmith's daughter, Nadyenka, who called me naive – and the last time I saw the flowers for only their pink. It's all thorns down the stem.

I drove to Komarov Lock & Key on a bright hot Saturday. When I parked in the lot I saw someone smoking weed behind a donut shop. It was the kind of Saturday where it feels like everyone is friends with everyone else. Come summer in Los Angeles, the heat rolls in and renders us comrades. I thought I could have asked him for a hit. I would have slipped him a dollar.

I walked into the lockshop and saw stacked safes lining the back wall, some as tiny as a cellphone, others as massive as a human being. What could anyone need such a big safe for? A massive grandfather clock or silk evening gowns hanging by the dozen.



“Hello,” an older man said, walking out of the back room. “How can I help you?”

I explained the situation and then followed him out into the parking lot where my Buick seeped into the cloudless afternoon baby blue sky. I handed the guy my key and took a step back. He drove it in with ease and gave a couple turns. He checked it out with a cool assertiveness. There was much less hope in his attempt, compared to mine on Faring Road where I bent over the car and twisted with a sad forcefulness. But in the end it wasn't hope that would fix the locks.

“They're broken alright.”

“You think you can fix it?”

“I can fix it.”

That's when I saw her, when we walked back into the shop. Long legs crossed and black hair down to her shoulders, she sat across a window; sunlight hit a golden lock she spun by the shackle. Never before had I wanted to be a lock.

“It'll take a couple hours to fix,” the man said before disappearing into the back. A couple minutes later he came storming back into the store, telling me he needed to pick something up for the car. Then the girl said something to him in what sounded like Russian, quickly and loudly. He replied and then walked out the door.

“Do you work here?” I asked the girl sitting on the stool.

“Oh,” she said, looking up from the lock. “No. I'm his daughter.”

She told me her name is Nadyenka. Goes to Larchmont, a senior. She asked if I was excited to graduate. Told her sort of but I don't know what I want to do with my life. I asked if she



was. Yes, very much. Going to art school, photography. Very cool, I said, or something like that.

“I'm going to get pizza down the street,” she said, standing up and walking toward me. “Do you want to come with me?”

We sat outside at a table next to a busy street. She told me she traveled to Saint Petersburg with her father last summer. She showed me the photos of Leningrad.

“My grandfather, he left the Soviet Union in 1937. He told them he had to meet with a blacksmith in Bessarabia,” she said, swiping through the photos on her phone. “He and my grandmother Lada crossed the river and got a visa from their residence in Brasov. They came to America in 1941. When my grandfather was 23 he moved out here and started the shop.”

Nadyenka put her phone on the table, picking up the pizza and tilting her head to take a bite. She dabbed her mouth with the napkin.

“Why did they leave?” I asked, taking a bite of pizza.

“Yezhovshchina. They killed my great grandparents.”

I covered my mouth and wiped my lips with the back of my hand, feeling it wet with grease. Nadyenka took a bite and looked into the busy street, squinting her eyes at the sun starting its descent. I didn't know what to say. *Sorry* was all I could manage.

“Oh. It's okay,” as if confused why I apologized. “What brought you to the shop?” she asked.

“The locks in my car. They don't work,” I said.

“They don't work?”



“No. And someone stole my computer so I thought I’d get them fixed.”

She looked at me and smiled sweetly. This is where she called me naive. I was deeply ashamed and instantly enamoured. Looking back, I can’t help but wonder if those can ever be separated, the awareness of your pathetic state of affairs and a glimpse of the heaven that might be waiting.

How to get there is another issue, but when I looked at her I was ready to sacrifice whatever was needed. I didn’t have much – my youth, I guess, my broken locks. Or maybe I had everything.

“Do you have a boyfriend?” I asked her.

“No,” she said. “Why?”

“I was just wondering,” I said. She sipped what little lemonade was left in her cup. I finished my Diet Coke and crumpled up the paper plate. She didn’t ask if I had a girlfriend. It’s what I would have done if I were in her shoes. But I was glad she didn’t. I couldn’t exactly say why.

The sun set behind the mountains and we made our way back to Komarov. I couldn’t stop thinking about how she called me naive, and then I was thinking about the stolen laptop too, not the act of theft but the stolen property itself. I clenched my fist, remembered the thorns of the bougainvilleas, and for the first time wanted to confront the thief face to face. Walking next to Nadyenka, I figured that if she went on a date with me I could forgive her for calling me naive.

The lights in the parking lot of Komarov shone artificial and bright on my car, which sat in the lot like a Matchbox on the black pavement. The man was no longer smoking weed. Nadyenka’s father called me over.



“Should work now,” he said. I put the key into the side of the car, and for the first time since the autumn my car doors locked.

I paid her father and then met Nadyenka again who was standing in the parking lot. I willed myself to ask her on a date, something I’d never done before. I had to remind myself of the stolen laptop to muster up the courage for some reason. “Okay,” she said. It’s not that I felt happy as much as grateful, which was actually way better. Okay didn’t have the eagerness of a yes or the nonchalance of a sure. It was prudence, trepidation, and I marvelled. Then she walked back into the lockshop.

Before getting in my car I turned the key back and forth just to hear the locks click. I had the sense that my life was starting all over again with the summer.



OF THESE SEA STUFF, SHE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT

ICARO CARVALHO

When the presenter announced Amanda's name, she couldn't believe in what was happening. As soon as all the faces looked back at her, Amanda realized that it was not a dream nor some hallucination; she had won a raffle for the first time in her entire life. The wheel spinning, several names wrapped in plastic balls, the stage assistants waiting in anticipation, the announcer shouting disconnected words of encouragement. The lottery balls spun, spun, spun inside the globe, the seconds turned into hours of anxiety. Amanda saw the little white plastic ball come out, the announcer tried to create a little suspense, told jokes, time stopped the second he opened his mouth and brought the microphone closer. "Amanda," he announced. "Amanda," people around were shouting. She had been taking in the scene for too long and had forgotten to get up to get the trip ticket. Before she reached the stage, a huge poster came down from the ceiling, just behind the presenter, with a gigantic image of a beach. Amanda had never been to the beach.

In four hours of traveling on an old bus, Amanda had enough time to imagine what it would be like to feel the sand for the first time. Would the grains be visible? Or invisible to the point that we only notice them when they're together in massive amounts? She did this while she looked at the trip ticket. Amanda didn't even hear the mess that took over the bus as the other people on the tour drummed, sang and played. They seemed happier than Amanda, even though the only one who was traveling for free there was her. The ticket was blue and contained a large image of a probably fictional beach. The name on the back was "Amanda." A-M-A-N-D-A—like that, in separate and capital letters, hastily written by one of the draw stage assistants. It made the ticket even more unique. Amanda, her, was going to see the beach. The windows opened to the maximum by the other travelers at some point allowed a completely new smell to enter the bus. The smell tasted and also seemed to have color. A dark yellowish tone, a mixture of water and earth, but different from what Amanda had already experienced when it rained on the grass of her garden. It was a new smell. She felt strange, the smell made her uncomfortable, the bus swayed, her tour companions were running around, the smell was dark-yellow, the shouting, children were crying, the bus was shaking, the smell was getting more and more colorful. It became more and more bright yellow. Amanda opened the bag of snacks and threw up.

ICARO CARVALHO



When she raised her head again, the beach finally appeared before Amanda's brown eyes. What surprised her, however, was not the sand, but the sea. The sand functioned as a huge red carpet that takes its guests to the final award. Amanda's gala night had arrived, and her dress was a swimsuit lent by her boss (who had also done her a huge favor of dismissing her from work on that day of the trip). Amanda would have to come back anyway. She felt the incredible sensation of walking on top of that surface for the first time. She thought that the sand might not belong to this world, that it was something alien. It was so weird to feel the grains between her toes. Sometimes soft, sometimes hard, she stumbled through the little hills. She was afraid to twist her foot and end the trip right there. At that moment, Amanda just wanted to touch the sea or be able to keep forever in a photograph what her eyes saw.

She walked on the sand, she felt time slowing down as she went, she felt like a little plastic ball in a drawing wheel. She remembered the scene, how the draw balls turned slowly, how her steps moved in slow motion across the sand, how she would be forced to leave her city for the first time. The plastic ball looked like it would never be drawn, the sea looked like it would never come any closer. How beautiful the sea was. Blue. A color Amanda had never thought could exist. Her feet no longer touched the soft sand, now they touched the slightly moist hard sand, wetted by the salty water every few minutes. What a feeling that was. Touching the firm sand, feeling the icy water just being close. Amanda was cold. The sun was hot, but even so the wind that blew from the ocean made her shiver. The cold water made her afraid, she thought about returning, looked back, everyone on the tour huddled in the sand, arranging the beach umbrellas and the towels. She turned her head forward and saw the most beautiful scene she would ever see in her life: a little boat, at the bottom of the horizon. It was a woody spot in the middle of the blue immensity; Amanda felt as if she wanted to be that little boat, floating lost on the high seas, beyond the worries of the breaking waves.

As one small wave approached, she ran a little further towards the soft, safe sand. And so she stayed for a few minutes, running away from the water every time it came too close to covering her feet. Of these sea stuff, she knew nothing about. She breathed, felt the warmth of the sun on her back and encouraged herself. One step, two, and at last she had her feet submerged. To her surprise, the sea was not blue after all, but transparent. Her feet could be seen in full. She noticed how big the feet were when in the water.



One foot outside, small, one foot into the water, huge. She enjoyed herself, even though the wind that touched the bones of her ankles, which were wet but not submerged, made her cold. She laughed for minutes looking at the difference in size of the submerged objects. She took bolder steps, spreading her arms like a tightrope walker over a precipice. She thought about the day she had felt the coldest in life and compared it to the moment she was in. She then just realized that the water had already covered her waist. Amanda looked back; the beach was already far.

Amanda was perhaps in love with the sea. The sun was disappearing at the same rate that Amanda dared to go deeper and deeper, until the moment that the sun disappeared entirely. Amanda's body was submerged almost entirely, except for her face and shoulders. The waves at that depth came calm and made Amanda jump in order to pass them without getting her face wet. Each lasted no more than a second or two, but during those jumps, Amanda felt that she was floating. She felt like an astronaut capable of saving the space mission by jumping up and down to Tranquility Base.

The other people had abandoned the water. The weather had overcast, and the storm was coming from behind the island that adorned the postcard. The people on Amanda's excursion noticed that the woman was missing; some crowded on the shore shouting for her to come back, that the storm was coming, that the bus might leave. Amanda would not come. Amanda did not hear them. Without noticing, Amanda had become alone in the blue expanse of the sea. It was just her and the salty water that surrounded her like a hug. She was loving that feeling of being embraced by the sea. The color, the sound, the cold of the water that used to give her chills, now massages all over her body. Amanda had no expectations of living, in her life, a moment to call the best moment of her life, but, if she had such a desire, this split second would possibly be the chosen one. Amanda remembers the routine in the city, remembers the boss snorting because she had lost the draw, remembers her colleagues laughing, remembers the things people shouted at her every day, remembers not having had a love, remembers never wishing to have a love, remembers that she missed the smell of the pillow she stole from her mother's room as a child.

The sea seemed to sing in her ear a calm melody, a light voice and a balance of waves that made jumping more and more difficult, the sea seemed to say that nothing would hurt her there. Amanda lets herself be carried away, the island, the gray cloud, the sounds, the water that took her weight and withered her fingers, the salt in her mouth.



She looked around, saw nothing but blue. The little boat was already gone, maybe the little boat was now herself. Amanda walked a little, felt her steps not touching the sea ground, felt that her neck could not stretch any longer than it already was. So, looking at the sky, she saw the water touching her chin, she felt the sea embracing her face, she felt tickles on her nose as the water approached, she let her lips be covered by the sea. Amanda was probably being kissed for the first time. Her ears, flooded with water, felt pressure and heard a beautiful sound. She felt part of it all, she felt that she had lived all these years in order to recognize herself in this very moment. She didn't want to go back to the bus, to the life she used to have. Amanda just wanted to go back to the sea, even though she was still in it. She wanted to feel the sea for every second of her life. When she saw no way out of there, she closed her eyes and let her face fall into the water. The sea, when it embraces you, seems that it will never leave you again, and it never let Amanda go.



WALLS

CATHERINE YANG

Until today, I had never seen his face.

I'm throwing out the last of the trash, the receipts and crumpled assignments, club flyers and empty bags of chips, when I see him. The trash is the last thing I have to take care of before I go home. It's that time again, the end of another school year. The apartment is mostly empty now – I was unlucky enough to have a final on Thursday night. My roommates have already left for the last time, flung across the country in cars and airplanes, their last exams long forgotten. My parents are picking me up later tonight to cheat the rush hour traffic. This apartment, my makeshift home for the past year, is once again as barren as when we began. In some ways, it feels like we were moving in, unpacking, decorating, settling down only yesterday. In other ways, it feels like the only life I've ever known.

It's one of the boys who lives next to us, our neighbors to our right. We complained about them constantly, about how they pounded on the walls – what reason could they possibly have for pounding on the walls? – and how we could hear shouting until the early hours of the morning. That's how we knew they were boys, because of the ruckus they caused on any and every day of the week. The clatter of a frying pan hitting the edge of the counter and then the hardwood floor and then “God damn!” and then laughter. We rarely saw them enter or leave. They were busy, and we were busy, and we never ran into each other. All of us living our own lives, except when my roommates and I would roll our eyes at each other over the sound of the TV and their cheers for whatever game was on that day. That's how we knew they were boys.

He has a keyboard hoisted over one shoulder and a backpack draped around the other. Our eyes meet, briefly, and I find myself speaking to him for the first time.

“Is that yours?”

I wonder if the resentment has finally spilled out into my words. On top of the shuffling furniture and the stomping and complete disregard for quiet hours, there was always that

CATHERINE YANG



He seems surprised that I've addressed him. I'm surprised that he's the one who plays the piano. He doesn't seem like the kind of person who would know how to play an instrument. With his brawny build and the blank, almost confused expression on his face, he looks like he would be more comfortable throwing eggs at a house.

It began sometime in the middle of fall, just as midterm season was starting. A familiar melody seeping through the walls and into our space. As the days went on, I overheard more and more songs that I used to have memorized, that used to be ingrained into my fingers, back when I had time to play. As I was cooking dinner, watching a movie on a Saturday night, rushing to finish an essay. The piano never shut up, even when it was past midnight and I just wanted to get some sleep before my morning classes. The owner of the keyboard was skilled, I could admit that. He wasn't one of those people who could only play one flashy, popular song over and over again. I heard the shape of his notes push and pull on different days as he experimented with textures and tempos. When the days were dark and the nights came early, the songs were slower and sadder. When spring arrived, the pieces were quicker, lighter, airier. A constant stream, as familiar as the voice in my own head.

He nods.

“Fuck you,” I say, and return to my empty apartment.



Katherine King
Creative Nonfiction



It's easy to feel consumed by our own concerns and ailments, especially when those of others go unseen. For isolated students chugging through yet another virtual quarter, truthful windows into the lives of our peers are few and far between. We certainly aren't getting many from social media (because, come on, all of our Instagram pages are curated), or any at all from Zoom room small talk. It's lucky, then, that we have creative nonfiction.

The Winter 2021 CNF selection is small, but mighty. In this quarter's issue, you will find "A Neutral Force," a visceral account of panic, pain, and the power of sheer will, and "Thị Kho Trúng" an exploration of what makes a home, and a family, through a highly sensory fusion of poetry and prose. While these pieces recall traumatic experiences, they're far from bruise-presses—they are displays of the most candid and courageous variety. Writing stories about emotion-wrought experiences is a powerful way to make oneself heard, reading such stories a precious way to not feel so alone. These pieces will bare wounds to you, but I hope they also assure you that you can survive your own.

I'll sign off with a big ol' thank you to this quarter's creative nonfiction committee and both of our accepted authors—each one of you were an absolute delight to work with.

Happy reading!



A NEUTRAL FORCE

EMMA LEHMAN

Welcome to the fifth season of Invisibilia. I'm Hanna Rosin.

And I'm Alix Spiegel.

Invisibilia is a show about all the invisible forces that shape human behavior, our thoughts, our emotions, our expectations. And today we have a story about the complicated relationship between pain and attention.

My filthy yellow Honda cruised down the 405 — too slowly, of course, because I drive like my grandmother — to the comforting sound of Alix Spiegel's low vocal fry. The sun was setting, a huge red orb sinking down behind the skyline and the smog that obscured it. Smog so thick, in fact, that I could look directly into the sun like Donald Trump during that eclipse in 2017. Everything swam in a hazy orange cast, a combination of red light from the sun and the atmospheric opacity from the general cocktail of Los Angeles air, smog and smoke and ash and pollution and fine particulate matter.

The freeway was strangely empty, only the occasional car whizzing by me, clearly annoyed by either my slowness or the fact that I'd been driving about seven miles with my left turn signal on, or probably both. It was still, both outside and inside the car. I shifted in my seat, getting a better view of the saturated gradient of sky stretching above me.

There's a before, and there's an after.

Alix was talking about a hangnail. She was also talking about a hero of hers: a man in his nineties with a catheter, late-stage cancer, missing organs and failing eyes, and a spine so broken he could barely walk. But Alix couldn't seem to tear her mind from that hangnail:

Pain is easy to dismiss in other people. But our own pain has a way of grabbing our attention and holding it like a vise.

She begins the main story: Devyn, a 14-year-old dancer, is experiencing unexplained, intense physical pain. It starts and spreads inexplicably, seeping its way from the origin point in her hips down her legs to her feet and up her torso to her arms, fraying her nerves and leaving her vulnerable to even the soft breeze of a fan. Doctors seemed to have only Vicodin and inconclusive tests to offer Devyn, and apparently she was not alone. A dozen voices, mostly those of adolescent girls, chime in to describe their experience.

It hurt everywhere.

Sharp, sudden pain.

EMMA LEHMAN



You're fine. You're faking it.

You want it.

Gabapentin, hydrocodone.

Sharp.

Fine.

Pain.

Fine.

Pain.

The girls' earnest, troubled voices vibrate my steering wheel as I try and fail to merge in front of a 16-wheeler. Vivid descriptions of radiating hurt in their nerves and bones and teeth cause me to do a scan of my own body.

It felt paradoxically like the more attention that they gave to the pain, the bigger the pain grew.

I felt the soles of my feet, swaddled by socks that were too tight, resting against my insoles. The flexion of my ankle as I pressed the gas. The palms of my hands curled around the smooth pleather steering wheel, of perfectly engineered ergonomic circumference. The dryness of my mouth. The thick air rustling my hair through my skylight. The palms of my hands tightening around the pleather steering wheel.

The dryness of my mouth.

The hot, *hot* air rustling my hair through my skylight.

Hot, *hot*, syrupy air—

Fuck.

And here's the thing about attention that most of us don't fully appreciate. Attention is not a neutral force. It invariably changes the thing that it purports to observe. Often, it makes that thing bigger.

Looking down at the wheel, I remember from driving school that the “ten-and-two” position is actually wrong, and eight-and-four is the correct hand placement. Ten-and-two, in fact, will cause your hands to swing up towards the ceiling like a loose pendulum, ripping your humerus from its socket and leaving your arms limp and dangling from your shoulders as you slump into the deployed airbag. Yet, despite the lubrication of the steering wheel from my hand lotion and a sudden sheen of clammy sweat, I can't seem



to shift my grip down to eight-and-four in order to hypothetically preserve use of my arms.

Oh no, I think to myself. I'm going to have a panic attack on the 405.

The clock on my dashboard says 4:52. Suddenly, I can feel my heart throwing itself against my ribcage, like it's trying to force its way out of my body through my chest.

THUMP.

THUMP.

THUMPTHUMP.

THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.

Pull over. Draw elbow down, hand follows.

Wheel turns, car follows.

Lane divider, lane divider, lane divider. So many lanes.

Lane divider, shoulder.

I yank the parking brake up and jerk the gear shift. I know that idling on the shoulder like this will only contribute to the particulate matter making the air so oppressively, suffocatingly thick. But I also know that if I turn off the air conditioning, I will melt down into a puddle of salt water and cortisol.

It really was unfortunate, I thought as I strained to force air down my throat and into my lungs, that this was The One. Of course I thought it every time, but I was definitely, definitely dying this time. What a lame way to go: to an NPR podcast, idling on the shoulder of the 405 on a Tuesday evening.

... pain is not — at least, usually — an indication that there is something immediate and life-threatening happening.

It was too dark to see my face in the rearview mirror, but I could feel its ruddiness as my inner panic stoked what felt like a wildfire behind my skin.

— at least, usually —

THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.

THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.

I couldn't tell if this ringing was from the podcast still blaring through my speakers or another effect of the panic fire raging inside my body. Was the podcast still blaring through my speakers? And why is the freeway so empty? Isn't it rush hour?

THUMPTHUMPTHUMPTHUMPTHUMPTHUMP



He deeply believes that the way that we now ask about pain —

I hear the distant voices through my speakers, and it hits me: I am going to die. I am going to die. I am going to die.

And treat it like an emergency instead of like a normal, predictable part of life —

I wonder if Alix Spiegel knows that her voice was the last thing heard by the 20 year old student who died on the side of the 405 of no apparent cause at 5:03 PM.

That's led to more pain in our society.

I fumble for my phone, a perfectly accessible means of communication with the outside world, the world I can see through my windshield in the distance, illuminated by clusters of tiny twinkling lights through the smog. I am going to die — passcode — I am going to die — homescreen — I am going to die — phone app —

When you're unable to name and think about your emotions and don't have the tools to diffuse them, whatever stress you experience is directed at and absorbed by the body.

It occurs to me (much later than it probably should have) that I am, in a way, having a similar experience to Devyn. This certainly doesn't feel like an emotion. This is *pain*. This is a threat. This is an emergency. But in a way even more concrete than Devyn's amplified pain, this was all coming from my brain.

That's why she was feeling pain, even though no test saw any problem. Her brain was stuck on the wrong setting and couldn't stop paying attention.

Suddenly, I am conscious of the calming, deliberate voice that surrounds me rather than heartbeat in my ears. I will humor you, Alix. *Invisibilia* is going to talk me through my inevitable demise, and I am going to let it. *Name and think about my emotions.*

Physically — hot and tight and slippery. I feel weak and pliable, like if you tried to grasp my shoulders your fingers would simply sink into my skin like proofed dough.

Emotion one: *Panic.*

Physically — large and dull and heavy. I feel swollen and trapped, like if I tried to lift my arm my muscles would give out and release it slackened by my side.

Emotion two: *Fear.*

Physically — sharp and stabbing and acrid. I feel conspicuous and exposed and



perceived, like the heat from within is matched by that of a giant spotlight from above.

Emotion three: *Shame*.

And they all feel endless.

So I named my emotions. I am still going to die. Out loud, to the empty freeway and the disembodied podcasters, I heave, “Ooooh God.”

THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.

THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.THUMPTHUMPTHUMP.

What’ve you got for me now, Alix? Devyn?

Am I going to have to live with this the rest of my life? And if I do, then how am I going to cope with it?

You’re not, Devyn. You’re not going to cope with it. And neither will I, because I am going to die here, on the shoulder of the 405, at 5:05 PM. I am hot and slippery and heavy and dull and large and acrid and sharp and stabbing, I am panic and fear and shame and I am still going to die, I am going to die right here on the shoulder of the 405 at 5:05 PM. And there is absolutely nothing that Alix Spiegel or your stupid pain program can do to stop it. *Invisibilia*, I am going to die of *all the invisible forces that shape human behavior, our thoughts, our emotions, our expectations*. And I won’t even get to hear the rest of your fifth season. Alix is unfazed by my imminent death. She is instead narrating one of Devyn’s last tasks at the program, an easy 15 minute run. Devyn has done much, much harder things throughout her life and throughout this program, but for some reason she begins hyperventilating.

I can’t understand why she would be struggling until suddenly I realize she’s breathing this way because of what she’s feeling. There are tears in her eyes. She’s running, and there’s tears. And she’s still running.

Alix’s tone shifts from detached commentary to genuine wonder.

Eventually, Devyn is done running. Her trainer asks if the run was easy, medium, or hard. Devyn spins around and vomits into a trash can.

It occurs to me . . . that this whole treadmill episode is how they want Devyn to be



she’s back in the real world. They want her to be able to feel her feelings about the things that trouble her. Then they want her to just push on.

I could easily imagine — and, I felt at the time, though I now say it sheepishly, empathize with — this sixteen year old asthmatic sufferer of amplified chronic pain, in the 14th minute and 55th second of a 15 minute dead sprint, lungs on fire and tears, mingled with snot and sweat, streaming down both cheeks. At least, I was also on fire, breathing hard, feeling sharp and dull stabbing and aching and heaviness and agony. And I was also very, very sweaty. But the belt on Devyn’s treadmill was still going, and here I was idling on the shoulder, contributing to climate change and slowly spiraling into my own pit of emotional and physical despair. Perhaps my pain was not an emergency. Perhaps I could push through long enough to be sufficiently okay to puke into a trashcan. So I released the parking brake, leaving a glistening palm-shaped imprint of sweat. Shifted the car back to drive. And, breaths still shallow and skin still hot to the touch, heart leaping out of my chest, peeled back onto the freeway.

... The ability to explore and manage the thoughts and emotions that you need to struggle with, paired with the capacity to ignore the thoughts and feelings that will make the bad things in your life grow.

In the same brain that is telling me I am going to die, I could make out the faint acknowledgement that, like every other time, I was not going to die. I was going to return home exhausted, sheepish and disquieted. But I would be alive.

Like Devyn, I would be in pain, and I would be alive.

I am breathing this way because of what I’m feeling.

There are tears in my eyes.

I’m driving, and there’s tears. And I’m still driving.

Devyn’s finally allowing herself to feel and show the emotion that she needs to feel and show. But at the same time, she doesn’t stop. Her feet continue their pounding.



THỊT KHO TRỨNG

Kyle Khánh Nguyễn

styrofoam
ravaged mail and war-torn papers
braised pork hard boiled eggs
raggedy cloth on top of
a cloudy glass table

I trudge over the threshold, take off my shoes, and head upstairs to shower. Hot, calcified water washes over my body while steam enters my nostrils, baptizing me from inside out. I head downstairs to another meal of slightly-too-salty meat that was prepared in the morning and kept warm for the whole day. Is it good because it's tasty, or because it's familiar? Dad sits across from me, click-clacking away on his keyboard, spooning in mouthfuls of rice without looking. I wonder when everything changed... when metal against ceramic replaced laughs and "*How was your day*" meant "*Answer with 'good,' so we can start eating already.*" I'm taken out of my false reverie by the sound of Dad rinsing his bowl in the sink, and he reminds me to wash my own. Now I understand how silence can be deafening.

three scratches and broken skin a lime green Ikea dresser that finds its home
on a carpeted staircase a siren to drown their voices
sanguine white and blue

"No, my parents don't hit me. No, they don't touch me either. They just get a little angry is all." The social worker finishes her investigation on Sunday. I go to school the next day and arrive three hours late. When I enter homeroom, the class is moving desks and exchanging seats. Ms. Phan glares at me and asks for an explanation that I didn't have enough time to make up in the car. Her "*Well?*" sets me off, and I throw a tantrum, knocking over a couple desks in the process. The class is excused, and naturally, she asks me to stay behind. Shame. I really wanted to get my revenge for the tetherball match I lost the other day. Have my friends teach me how to do an Underdog. Count to sixty and hoist myself up on the swing. Instead, I'm pulling up handfuls of grass while she listens to me cry about my fucked-up life. Recess ends, and unfortunately, I'm not saved by the bell. I won't ever be saved. With Ms. Phan quiet behind me, I walk back to class and act like nothing happened. Shame. I really wanted to be a kid today.

Kyle Khánh Nguyễn



locked doors hours at a time
plastic Nokia skeletons
chipping frames knobs knocked out of place linoleum that's been
lifted up
and superglued to death

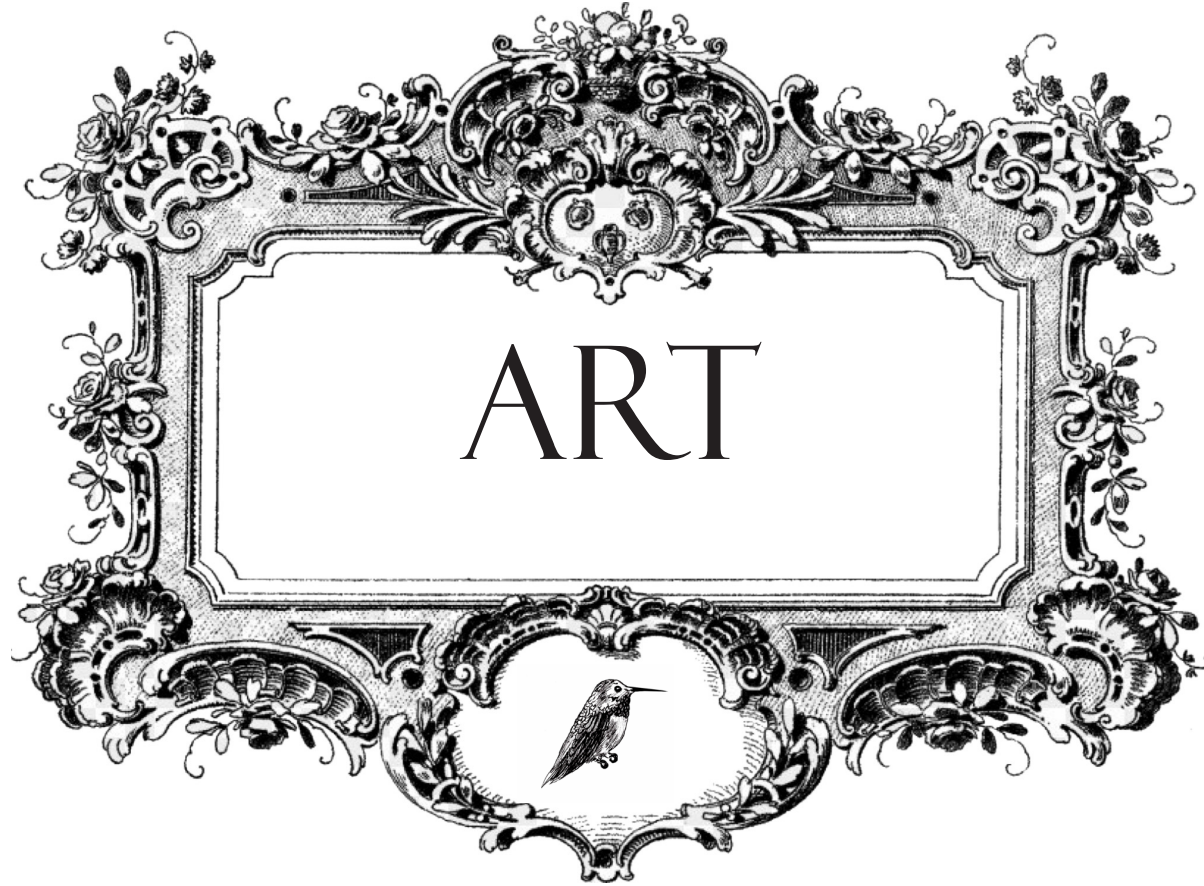
I once had a friend tell me I don't have a house. It was around Christmas time, and on the school bus, we saw a kid holding a pinecone that looked like a reindeer, decorated with antlers, googly eyes and a red fuzz ball for the nose. Innocently, I went, "*Wow, that would look cute in my house*" to which she replied, "*You don't have a house.*" I didn't know the word for it back then, but damn, that was elitist. Perhaps I should thank her for reminding me that there's a distinction between an apartment and a house that your parents actually own. I would've forgotten otherwise. Looking back, I should've stood up for myself, but living with a cynical father and an ill-tempered mother doesn't really grant you the best confrontational skills. All I could think to myself in that moment was, do I have a home at least? I think I do. My home smells like It's a 10, Raid, and whatever is in those styrofoam containers that day. If I can describe its smell, I can call it home. It may not have intact tiles or sturdy door frames, but at least it has a smell and a broken family.



Vivien Adamian

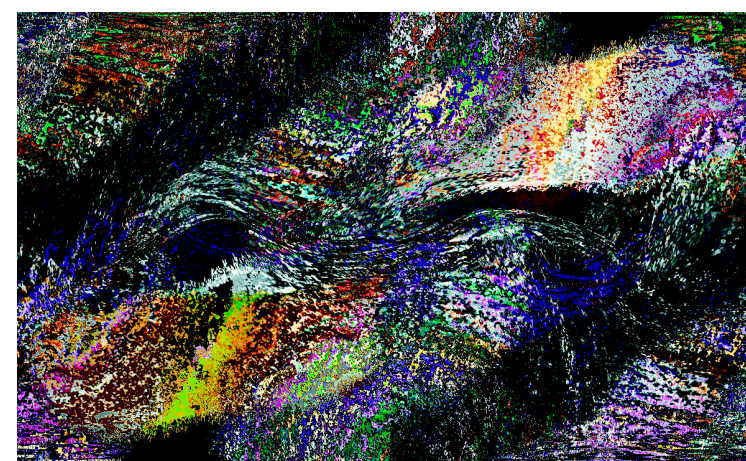
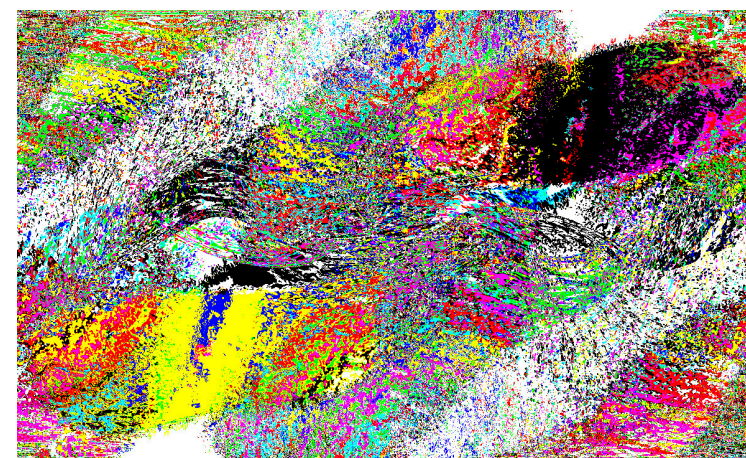
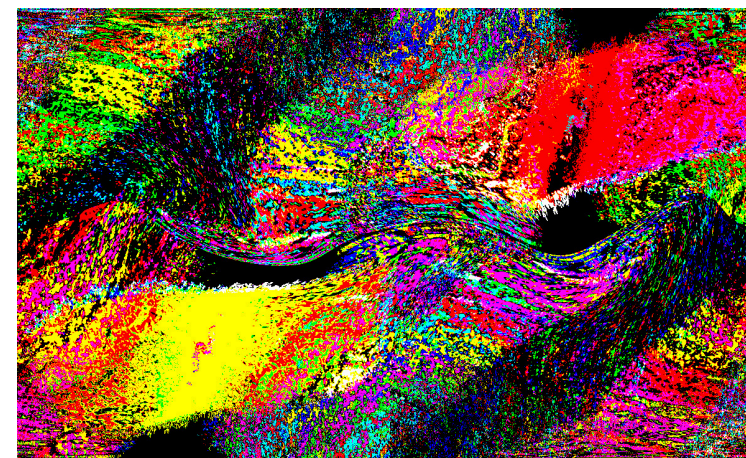
Arts

The art we received this winter was so wonderfully original. From multimedia ekphrasis poetry to a full blown comic to a short violin concerto, this journal's art section encompasses the talent and creative experimentation that Westwind loves to see. Thank you to all the artists, who come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds and breathe so much life to our journal. I truly hope that it will inspire other artists to experiment in their own work as it has inspired me.





PATH
KJ HANNAH GREENBERG

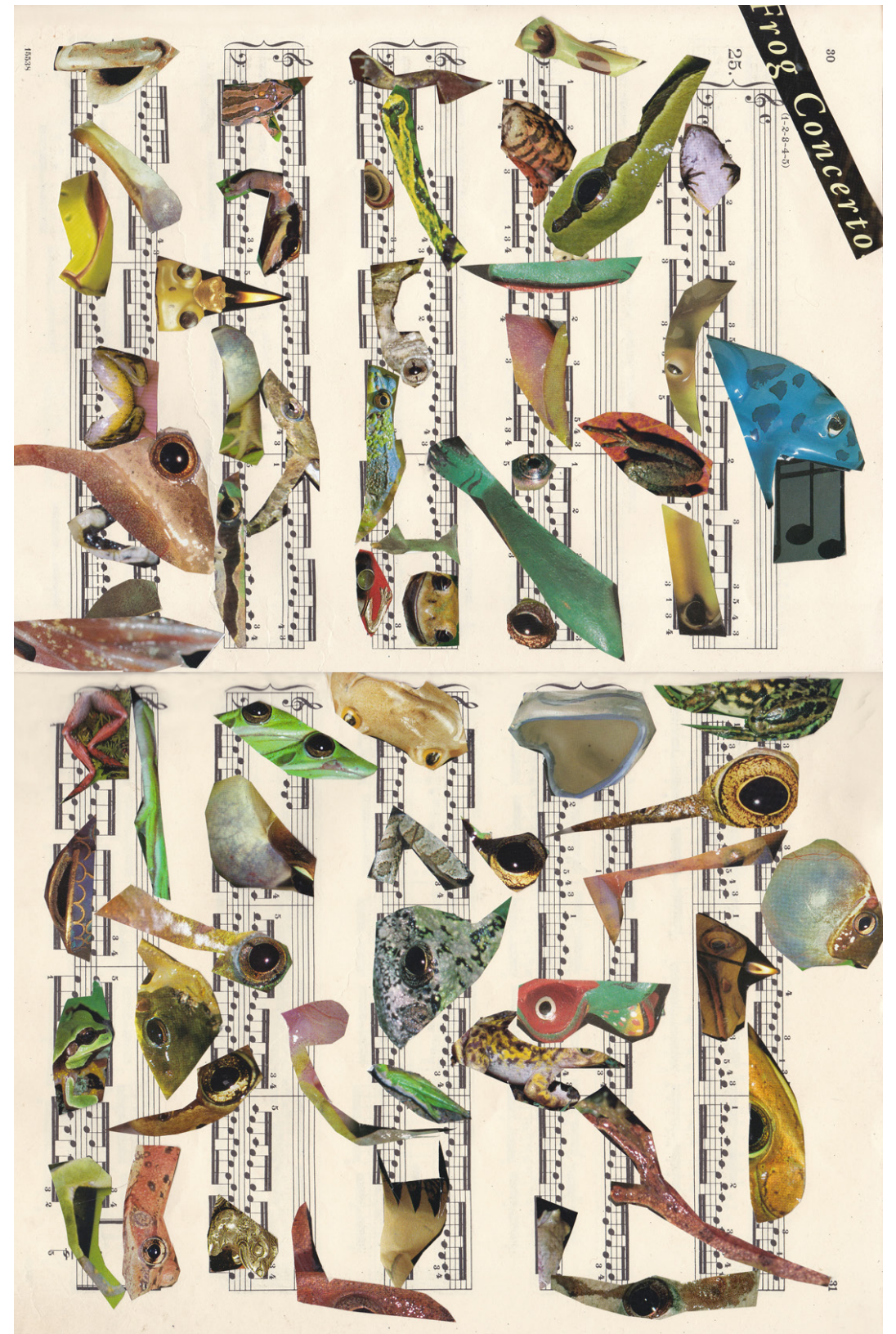


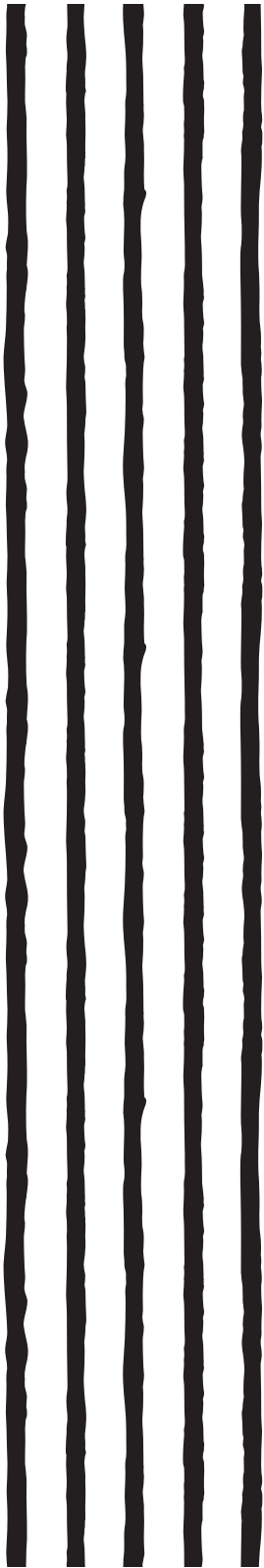
ON A WINTER DAY -I, II, & III (TOP DOWN)
EDAWRD SUPRANOWICZ

LEAP OF FAITH ACCOMPANIED BY “A FROG CONCERTO”

ART & POETRY BY
MARK BLICKLEY

I'm a dead frog and I don't say this with any pity or understanding or shame, it's just an observation that people seem to like us, like us a bit too much because they like to push hooks through our jaws and cast us out to sea, as well as amputate us for fine dining and draw us as a cartoon shuffling cigar smoking smart ass, and they like to blame us when they choke on the phlegm in their throats, and they swear that some of us give them hideous skin infections while the evil ones enjoy tossing us into their steamy potions as the younger ones imitate us with a game of leaps and crashes, perhaps because we abandon our young and we larger ones like to eat the smaller ones, and some of us are poisonous and have arrows dipped in our blood for killing others, and snakes like to slide along with our swallowed bulges straining inside their bellies, and we are stunned and frozen and sliced alive by school children with sharp tools, yet we still swim and splash and smile because the sun warms our cold blood and reflects our moist green that gives summer its most vibrant color, and the Chinese believe there is a toad in the moon not a man, and the Japanese consider us good luck, and that luck includes the growing of long legs to hop away from dinosaurs which is why we are the best leapers on earth and millions of years ago became the first animal with any backbone to live on land, and Shakespeare wrote that we wear a precious jewel in our head, and, best of all, beneath the summer stars, the sky is filled with our clucks and clicks and croaks of romance and camaraderie, sprinkled within a flying feast of buzzing wings and microscopic swimmers, and so this is what dead frogs will do just given the chance, a chance that will always destroy us.





KIAN RAVAEI

**A LITTLE
CONSORT
MUSIC**

for three cellos

AEI edition

duration ca. 3'

A LITTLE CONSORT MUSIC

Kian Ravaei
(2020)

Cantabile con rubato ♩ = 60

Cello 1
pp semplice, sempre legato *mf* *pp*

Cello 2
pp semplice, sempre legato *mf* *pp sub.*

Cello 3
pp semplice, sempre legato *mf* *pp*

A

Cello 1
fp pp *mf* *pp*

Cello 2
fp pp *mf* *pp*

Cello 3
fp pp *mf pp sub.*

B

Cello 1
fp *pp* *p* *mf* *pp*

Cello 2
fp *pp* *p* *mf* *pp*

Cello 3
fp pp *< mf* *pp sub.*

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2

20

Cello 1
p *p sub.* *pp* *molto*

Cello 2
p *p sub.* *pp* *molto*

Cello 3
< p sub. *pp* *molto*

C Appassionato (l'istesso tempo)

25

Cello 1
fp *ff* *fp* *ff* *p sub.*

Cello 2
f *ff* *f* *ff* *p sub.*

Cello 3
f *ff* *f* *ff* *p sub.*

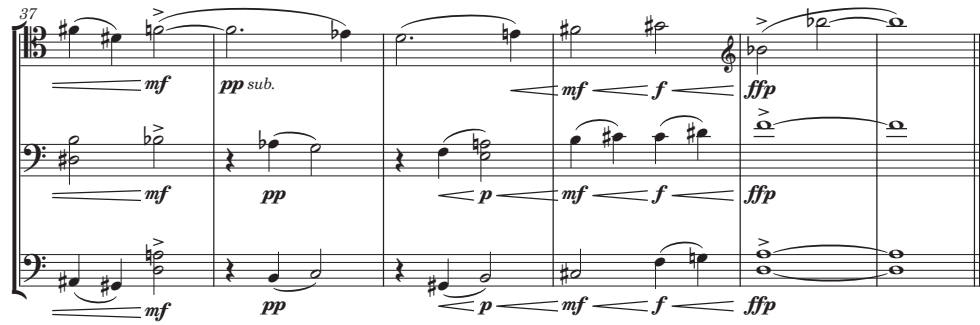
D Cantabile (l'istesso tempo)

31

Cello 1
p *p* *pp* *ff sub.* *pp sub., semplice*

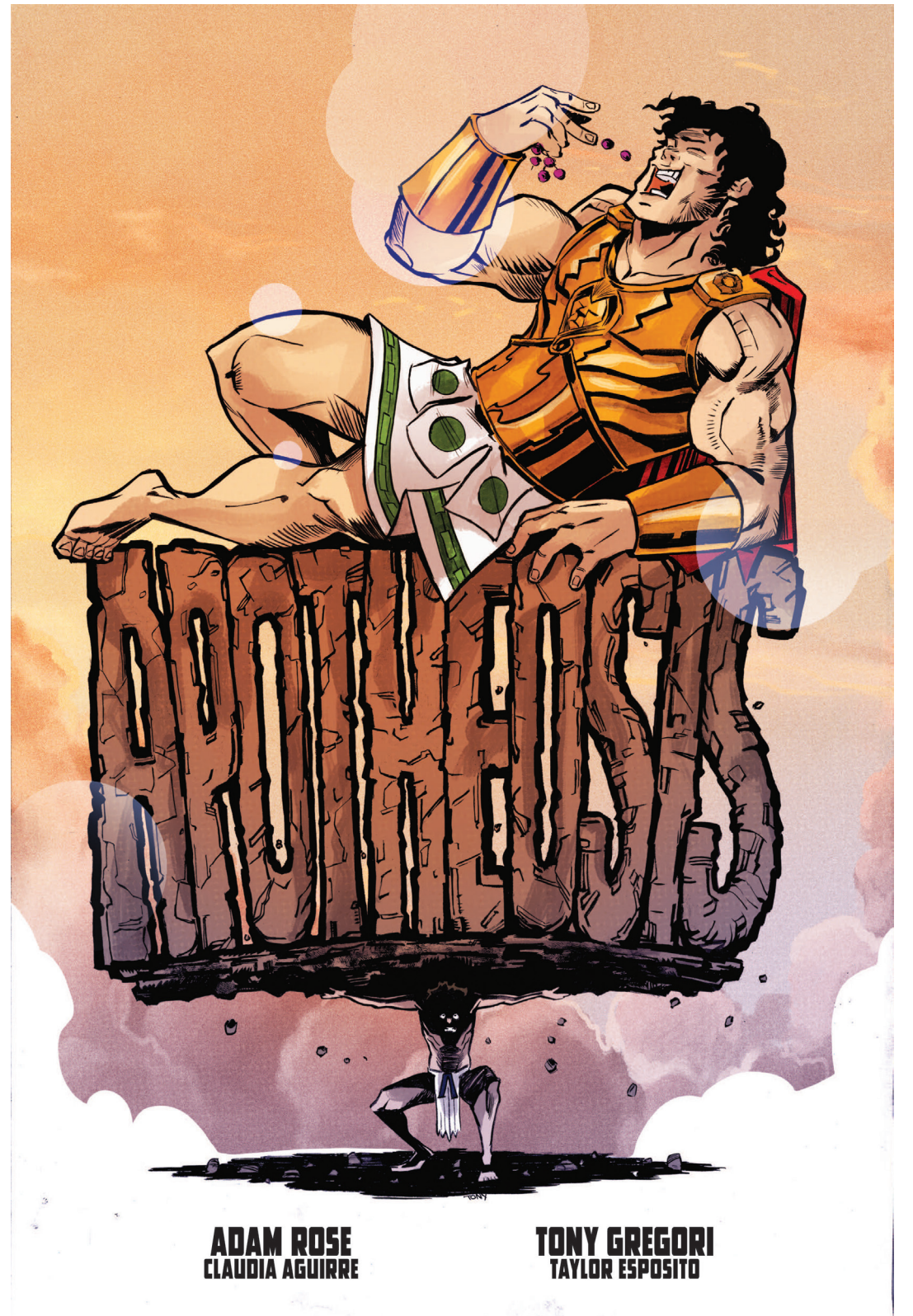
Cello 2
p *p* *pp* *ff sub.* *pp semplice*

Cello 3
p *p* *pp* *ff sub.* *pp semplice*



A LITTLE CONSORT MUSIC
KIAN RAVAEI

LISTEN AT



ADAM ROSE
CLAUDIA AGUIRRE

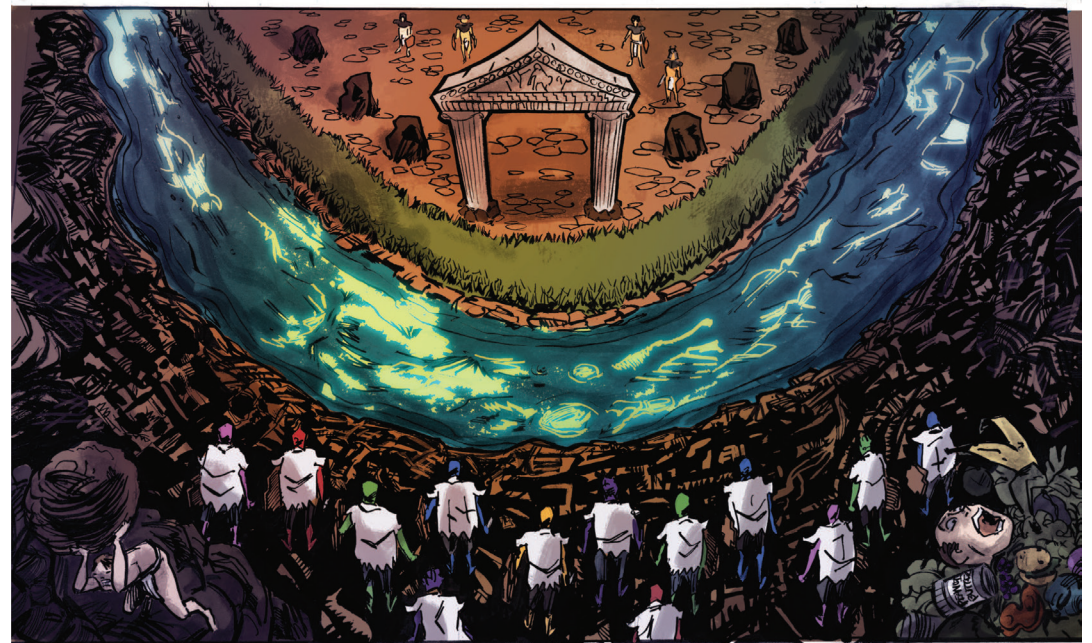
TONY GREGORI
TAYLOR ESPOSITO

Definition: Apotheosis -- Exaltation to divine rank or stature; deification. Elevation of a person to status of a full god.



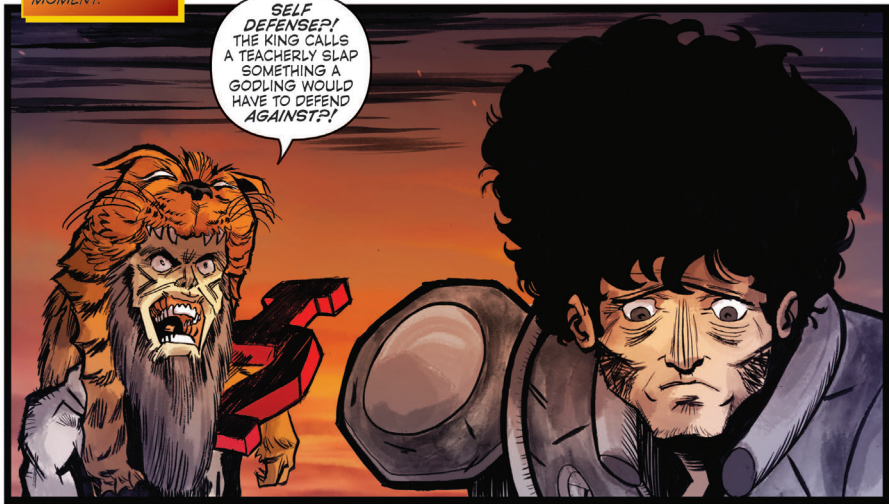
HADES, PRESENT, WHATEVER THAT MEANS--I AM SURROUNDED BY LESSER MEN-HALF MEN-LIKE ME, WARRIORS, HEROES, CHAMPIONS FROM ALL OVER TIME AND ME STRIPPED OF MY GOD SOUL. EVERY DAY I FIGHT THE BLOODIEST OF CAMPAIGNS AGAINST HADES' VINDICTIVE HORDES AND JUST WHEN IT SEEMS MY COMRADES AND I HAVE WON THE DAY ON THE BRINK OF HALLUCINATORY EXHAUSTION, THE DEMONS DISSIPATE. NOW, THANKS TO THE MORTAL BLOOD OF MY MOTHER, ALCMENE, HOME IS THE UNDERWORLD.

HADES HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR AND EVERY DAY GIVES US SIX MINUTES TO ALMOST CATCH OUR BREATH AND CRY OUT IN VICTORY. I KNOW WHEN THESE SIX MINUTES END THE HORDES REAPPEAR ACROSS THE RIVER STYX, REFRESHED AND READY FOR ANOTHER TWENTY-THREE HOURS AND FIFTY-FOUR MINUTES OF BLOODLUST.



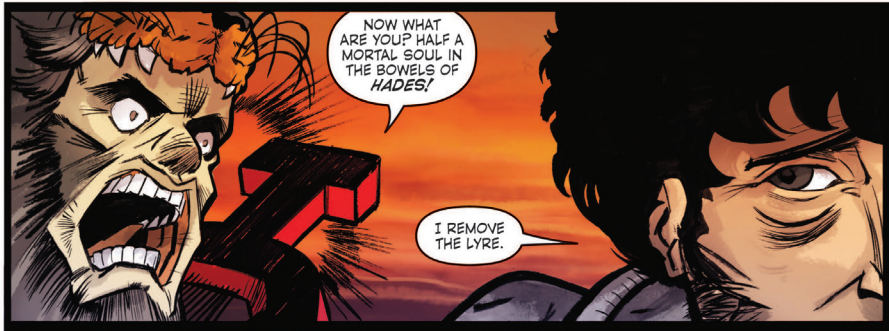
DURING THIS BRIEF REPRIEVE, LINUS MAKES CERTAIN I DO NOT ENJOY A MOMENT.

SELF DEFENSE! THE KING CALLS A TEACHERLY SLAP SOMETHING A GODLING WOULD HAVE TO DEFEND AGAINST?!



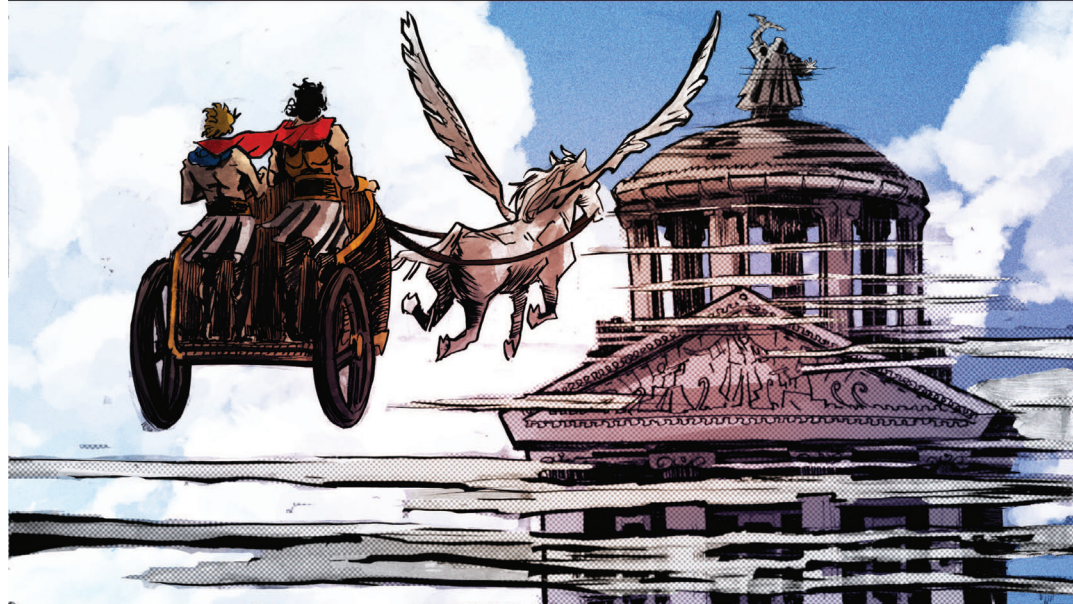
NOW WHAT ARE YOU? HALF A MORTAL SOUL IN THE BOWELS OF HADES?

I REMOVE THE LYRE.



Mt. Olympus-home of the Greek Gods-- an immortal's utopia.





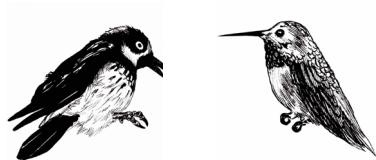
APOTHEOSIS

WRITTEN BY:
ADAM ROSE

ARTIST:
TONY GREGORI

COLORIST:
CLAUDIA AGUIRRE

LETTERIST:
TAYLOR ESPOSITO



WINTER 2021 CONTRIBUTORS

POETRY

HANDLE ME LIKE SAND

Author: Matt Dube

Editor: Catherine Taghizadeh

Matt Dube's poems have appeared in Interstice, Rattle, Minute Poetry, and elsewhere. He teaches creative writing and American lit at a small mid-Missouri university and reads submissions for the online lit mag Craft.

NIGHTSHADE

Author: Mishal Imaan Syed

Editor: Austin Nguyen

Mishal Imaan Syed is a freshman at UCLA studying English literature and cognitive science. She likes daydreaming, playing Chopin on the piano, and drowning in existential despair.

ALL AMERICAN PAINT

WOMAN WHO RUNS WITH WOLVES

Author: Skyler "Charlie" Stetson

Editors: Sophie Ferreira, Francisco Reyes Betancourt

Skyler "Charlie" Stetson is a poet and author from Oakland, California and is currently pursuing a degree in English and Gender Studies at UCLA with a concentration in film. She has been publishing poetry since high school and is passionate about writing poetry through the lens of her life experience as a woman and a butch lesbian.

POETRY

COUNT CUMULUS

Author: Catherine Taghizadeh

Editor: Jade Lacy

Catherine Taghizadeh is a third-year psychobiology major and English minor who finds happiness in writing poetry and petting her dog. She has been an editor in Westwind for the past four quarters now.

EMPTY BED

Author: Eric Ureña

Editor: Francisco Reyes Betancourt

Eric Ureña is a UCLA Art and English major ('21). He is a multidisciplinary artist interested in personal and subjective narratives as well as fruit. Peaches are his favorite but the other fruits have not been made aware of this.

RATTLESNAKES MAY BE FOUND IN THIS AREA (GIVE THEM DISTANCE AND RESPECT)

Author: Katherine King

Editor: Sam Caldwell

Katherine is a second-year English major and history/professional writing double minor from Houston, TX. She preserves her sanity with YouTube yoga, late night baking, helicopter plant parenting, and plenty of writing.

POETRY

COUSIN

Author: Amy Van Duzer

Editor: David Naar

Amy Van Duzer is a lifelong writer and MFA candidate at Mt. Saint Mary's College in Los Angeles. Her work has been featured in publications such as *Wild Things*, *Mediterranean Poetry*, *The Drabble*, *Cold Moon Journal*, and *Cephalo Press*. She is most inspired by other poets and lyricists.

DOUBLE-DOUBLE ABECEDARIAN: DELIRIUM TREMENS

Author: Grant Quackenbush

Editor: Jade Lacy

Grant Quackenbush is from San Diego. He received his MFA from Boston University and his BA from UC Santa Cruz. His full-length debut poetry collection, *Off Topic*, was published by Pinyon Publishing in May 2021.

MEMORY

TIME

REYNISFJARA

Author: Anna Aaryn Khen

Editor: Mishal Imaan Syed

Anna Aaryn Khen is a psychiatrist by day, writer all the time. She graduated from UCLA with a double major in Psychobiology, B.S. and English Literature, B.A. She has given poetry readings from her local hometown in Los Angeles to as far as northern England in Newcastle and Durham.

POETRY

THE RITUAL

Author: TLZ

Editor: Samantha Gowin

TLZ is a freshman at UCLA studying global studies and political science. Besides writing poetry, she loves to read, bake, listen to the Beatles, and jog in her free time.

BUBBLEBATH ORNAMENT

Author: Kylee Kropf

Editor: Chandler Kyle

Kylee is a freshman at UCLA double-majoring in English and Political Science. She is a working actress and published poet, with poetry appearing in publications such as *Train River Poetry: Winter 2020* and *The Mandarin* magazine.

I'M SURE I'VE TOLD YOU THIS BEFORE

Author: Jasmine Reddy

Editor: Chandler Kyle

Jasmine is a third-year at UCLA, majoring in Human Biology and Society and minoring in Education Studies. She can often be found soaking in the ocean, sitting under a guava tree, rolling around on a nice grassy field, and goofing around with loved ones.

FICTION

ACROSS CAMELLIA BOULEVARD

Author: Anayib Figueroa

Editor: Yvette Barrera

Anayib Figueroa is a Mexican American writer from Southern California. A 2019 UCLA alumna, her love of storytelling led her to major in English and double minor in Film and Classical Civilization. In her spare time, she can be found making wax seals, writing letters to her pen pals, and crossing things off her bucket list.

DON'T LIE TO ME

Author: Jinho Myung

Editor: Selena Perez

Jinho Myung is a nineteen-year-old writer and filmmaker from Los Angeles, CA. Myung currently studies at Reed College in Portland, OR, and resides with a cousin living in New York during the summer. Recently, Myung has taken time away from screenwriting to explore fiction prose.

NADYENKA

Author: David Egan

Editor: Garrett Ewald

David Egan is a writer from Altadena, California and a freshman at UCLA. The alternative title for the work featured here is "Spun by the Shackle."

FICTION

OF THESE SEA STUFF, SHE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT

Author: Icaro Carvalho

Editor: Katherine King

Icaro Carvalho is a first-year PhD student at the department of Portuguese. He still lives in Brazil and spends his time reading and listening to music. He loves to discover new authors or musicians and is very proud of being part of Westwind.

WALLS

Author: Catherine Yang

Editor: Louise Kim

Catherine Yang graduated from UCLA as a MIMG major in 2020. In her spare time, she feeds bugs to her Venus fly trap.

CREATIVE NON-FICTION

A NEUTRAL FORCE

Author: Emma Lehman

Editor: Katherine King

Emma Lehman is a third year English and Global Studies double major with a minor in Professional Writing. When she's not regretting picking so many majors and minors, you can find her embroidering, taking photos, rollerskating, or listening to podcasts. She is the founder and president of Embroidery, UCLA's first and only embroidery club, and she edits, designs, and writes for FEM Newsmagazine. Emma lives in Los Angeles with her cat Garlic and a lot of scented candles. Recently, she's been working on quarantine projects like giving herself tiny, poorly done tattoos and shaving off her waist-length hair.

THỊT KHO TRÚNG

Author: Kyle Khánh Nguyễn

Editor: Katherine King

Kyle Khánh Nguyễn is a third year sociology major with a minor in Asian American Studies. He is Vietnamese American and originally from Orange County, CA.

ART

PATH

Artist: KJ Hannah Greenberg

KJ Hannah Greenberg tilts at social ills and encourages personal evolutions via poetry, prose, and visual art. Her images have appeared in various places, including in: *Bewildering Stories*, *Les Femmes Folles*, *Mused*, *Tuck*, *vox poetica*, and *Yellow Mama*. She uses her trusty point-and-shoot camera to capture the order of G-d's universe, and Paint 3D to capture the chaos of her universe.

ON A WINTER DAY: I, II, & III

Artist: Edward Supranowitz

Edward Michael Supranowicz grew up on a small farm in Appalachia. He has had artwork and poems appear in journals in the US and other countries.

LEAP OF FAITH

Artist: Mark Blickley

Mark Blickley is a widely published author of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. He is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild and PEN American Center. His most recent book is his text-based art collaboration with fine arts photographer Amy Bassin, *Dream Streams*. *Clare Songbirds Publishing House - Amy Bassin & Mark Blickley* (edited)

ART

LITTLE CONSORT MUSIC

Artist: Kian Ravaei

Kian Ravaei (b. 1999) writes music that evokes the fantastic and the quotidian, engages with dreams and politics, and leverages music's power over the emotions. Kian's works have been inspired by advertisements in early American periodicals, books of etiquette in polite society, Persian poetry, lunar cycles, and a thirteenth century cosmographical treatise. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree at UCLA, where he studies with Richard Danielpour.

APOTHEOSIS

Author: Adam Rose

Adam Rose is a writer living in Los Angeles. He's had numerous short stories published and scripts in development. Markosia Entertainment recently published his all ages graphic novel: *Playground: Attack of the Gurgle Bots!* He has a new comic book series set to be released by Source Point Press in the late fall.

Artist: Tony Gregori

Tony Gregori is a comic book artist whose work has been published by Vault Comics, Image Comics, IDW, and more. He has contributed illustrations to many RPG manuals, creates a weekly web-comic Porkchop Robot Killer on Patreon. Also has illustrated and crowdfunded/self-published several indie books (Ancient Noise, Taft Sturgeon, etc). He teaches art locally in Western Montana, worked as courtroom sketch artist for tv, storyboarded films and commercials in Burbank.

ART

APOTHEOSIS (CONT.)

Colorist: Claudia Aguirre

Claudia Aguirre is a queer comic book artist and writer, GLAAD Award Nominee and Will Eisner Award nominee, and Co-founder of Boudika Comics; where she self-publishes comics. She is currently working for Black Mask, OniPress, Legendary, Limerence Press and Boom!Studios.

Letterist: Taylor Esposito

Taylor Esposito is a comic book lettering professional and owner of Ghost Glyph Studios. As a staff letterer at DC, he lettered titles such as Red Hood and The Outlaws, Constantine, Bodies, CMYK, and New Suicide Squad. Prior to this, Taylor was credited on numerous titles for Marvel as a production artist. He is currently working on a new batch of creator-owned titles, such as Interceptor: Reactor and Cult Classic: Return to Whisper (Vault Comics), Atomahawk, Dark Fang (Image), and Babyteeth (Aftershock).

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SUBMIT TO WESTWIND

JOURNAL OF THE ARTS

Westwind accepts submissions of original, unpublished literary and visual artwork in any genre. We publish one digital journal in Fall, Winter, and Spring, with print copies available on demand.

If your submission falls outside the submission period, it will roll over into the following reading period.

General questions may be sent to westwinducla@gmail.com

FICTION

Please send up to 5 individual works (up to 3500 words collectively). Excerpts from longer prose pieces are acceptable if self-contained. Send submissions and/or questions to: westwindfiction@gmail.com.

CREATIVE NONFICTION

Please send up to 5 individual works (up to 3500 words collectively). Excerpts from longer prose pieces are acceptable if self-contained. Prose works from all genres or non-genres are acceptable. Send submissions and/or questions to: westwindcnf@gmail.com.

POETRY

Please send up to 3 individual poems (up to 750 words collectively). All forms and styles, including experimental genres, are acceptable! Send submissions and/or questions to westwindpoetry@gmail.com.

ART

Please send up to 5 digital images of artwork of any kind, in any medium. Alternative, non-traditional, and mixed-media artwork is acceptable and encouraged. Musical compositions and recordings may be sent as a soundcloud or mp3 link. Send submissions and/or questions to westwindarts@gmail.com.

WEBSITE

<https://www.westwinducla.com/>

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