



SPIRITUS MUNDI

A COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Spring 2019



COLORADO STATE
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Overlooked
Ryann Daly
Acrylic

Laconic

Anna Varosy

I like few
when my eyes are thirsty
and my ears
unfed.

But my tongue is a beast.

She is an artist addicted to every color.

Or perhaps a musician who cannot listen to a single song in its entirety because there is too much good music and not enough time to waste.

She will fill every space with her light if you open the door for her.

She will cover your wall with drawings if it is bare and you give her a pen.

She will cook more food than can fit on your table if your stomach growls.

She will fill your garden with seeds so that you cannot help but stop thinking and thank.

Or perhaps she is unsure and can't decide what she is articulating, drowning in strings that tie her up and sink her heavy meaning to the floor of an ocean with a single not-yet-mentioned Sailor.

But she is sure of what she means.

She is infatuated with explaining why Beethoven 6 makes her dance,

and describing why God is alive,

how it feels to fly,

why she is proud of a string of hardware she wears around her neck on sad days.

Perhaps these are the things that make her feel alive, and perhaps she wants to share them.

Perhaps words are her medium, her paint brushes, her ammunition, her bullets,

her origami paper that was folded into your pocket to ask something of you.

Unfold it

and maybe,

perhaps,

she is just lonely.

Wondering if words are powerful enough to make us understood.

Use more of them, and perhaps we won't feel so alone.

to all my almost-soulmates

Natalia Sperry

i know this much:

*#1: your laugh is a
sound shaped the
same as mine,*

resonance bouncing

back in ever-

growing

list

of inside

jokes

—you're all

brightness

in everything,

said God could

love me too,

unrequited.

*#2: you love poetry like
nobody's business,*

used

to sway

between

trees for hours,

reading out

into the wind

as it kissed

each blade of

grass,

talked about

Walt

on a first-name

sort of basis.

didn't

remember

we could love

something with

our

all without

making

it our every-

thing.

#3: you love everyone more

than yourself, it seems.

spent so long building

up walls claimed

to be for shielding

others, didn't see

how tall they'd

gotten, until you

couldn't breathe

underneath all that

mental mortar, until

you saw my own

walls, in the

distance. we can

both be heroes

and side — kicks,

simultaneously. but it

takes some bricks

breaking,

first.

#4: our heartbeats sync

and

i knew

before

this that

cracks

in who i am

could

fit

together with

pieces

of others;

didn't

know

holding the

slivers into

place

with

each embrace

could feel like

whole - ness,

sound like

one big cosmic

elevator

song that

goes

like:

love.



Reflections in Rosé
Olivia Good
Colored Pencil

Childhood Murmurs

Holly Ryan

Broken through time
are the fragments that float endlessly
upon summer rain.
Disillusioned warmth hides
an icy chill—
stinging the flesh of the unloved.
Broken art thou who heeds the harshness of thought,
and forgets the battles of yesterday while
scorching the ground that harbors the foundations of tomorrow.
Broken wings, flightless dreams.
The astronauts of our yesteryears become the rigid lines of the present,
while the royalty inside humanity withers away—
bending to the will of reality.
What are we if not broken?
We are silent.
Unimaginative.
Bound by creeds that speak to darkness,
broken wings upon endless time.
Old age looms, rapidity speaks.
Yet we are silent.
Dreaming away the moments of bliss.
Resigned.
Pathetic.
Broken.

Intimacy

Abigail Thomas

I resist Death's advances

I am cold to Life

but Anxiety

oh, I'm intimate with Anxiety

It holds me, pins me,

chokes me

and it's familiar

and it's unwanted

and it's always warranted

(and I always take it)

I've given up fighting.

It takes what it wants

(I let it)

and I am left empty

wishing it wasn't the

reason

I had been

full.

(It is never finished)

(It is always hungry)

(I am always complicit)

Laughing

Lexi Orgill

My dad was not the stereotypical alcoholic dad. He wasn't mean, he didn't yell, and he certainly didn't beat me—well, except at Guitar Hero. Nope—my dad was always laughing. He laughed hard and stumbled around even harder, which never failed to entertain three-year-old me. Or eight-year-old me. Honestly, even thirteen-year-old me would giggle. My dad was always laughing. His back was always ready for piggy-ing, his head always awaited its fuzzy pink princess crown. My dad was always laughing. He would do just about anything on a dare—even let a beetle the size of a quarter sit in his mouth for a whole minute. Yeah, my dad was always laughing. And that's what made him scary.

I don't think I even knew how to pronounce the word “alcoholic” as a kid, let alone what it meant. All I knew was my dad loved beer, and if Mom wasn't looking, he'd let me steal a sip or two. It never struck me as weird—but then, there was no one to really tell me it was weird back then. Growing up as the only non-religious kid in the sea of Mormons that was Utah, you learned not to talk about your home life real quick. Even hearing about our fancy new coffee machine would send my classmates into a tizzy—I can't even imagine what they'd do if I told them how many beers it took my dad to pay me twenty bucks for a temporary My Little Pony tattoo. They'd probably have heart attacks and die, sent to hell by pure association with riffraff such as myself. So I never really thought of my dad drinking as anything but normal, as anything but fun—even when he was driving.

I barely remember anything about the night my dad got a DUI with his two kids in the backseat—just bits and pieces. And a lot of laughing. We laughed when my four-year-old brother threw a fit about sitting in his car seat, and we laughed again as my dad set his six-pack of beer in the car seat instead and let my brother sit in the middle next to me. My dad laughed off his friend who asked if we would make it home alright, and I laughed off my fleeting concern that maybe we should call Mom. I think I finally stopped laughing when he made the silly mistake of hitting a tree, as he laughed that off too and Zac giggled nervously beside me. The louder my dad laughed, the lower my stomach sank. When the sirens started blaring, I was honestly more relieved that anything. The rest of the night was a blur, and you'd think the drinking got better after that—but my dad somehow laughed his way out of this one, too, and eventually life moved on as normal.

It got worse before it got better, although I didn't know it at the time. There's a lot about my parents' lives that I didn't know back then, actually. Their cute love story? Began in a juvenile detention facility. The smelly day-care I sometimes played at while Mom was in the other room? Strip club. Dad's mini-vacations? Jail time. Our spontaneous move to “try something new?” Running from the incriminating newspaper. I didn't learn all

of this until later, of course. Looking at my parents in the last five years, you'd never have known they're a recovering alcoholic and a former stripper. They look every part the white-picket fence middle-aged couple, who cheer embarrassingly loudly at every concert, every contest, every graduation. My dad says we're the lucky ones, that we got out before it was too late. I don't think it had anything to do with luck—just a whole lot of strength. And laughing. Turns out, my dad is perfectly capable of laughing without any alcohol involved. No one really thinks about the past too much anymore—at least I know I don't. But every once in a while, I hear about a car crash caused by a drunk driver, and I can't help but wonder.

I wonder what that driver was thinking, seconds before the crash.

I wonder if they felt fleeting regret, or guilt, or shame—or if there was only room for the alcohol.

I wonder if they knew how many lives they were about to ruin.

I wonder if they were laughing.

...

I wonder if the other car was.





Dreamscape
Lacy Lichtenhan
Acrylic

Earth's Children

Jessica Roberts

She gave them life and love,
she gave them sustenance and shelter.

And they,
in return,
scribbled on the walls of her home
in permanent marker.

They
in return,
discarded their toys in every room,
never to be remembered.

They
in return,
spilled red paint on the white carpeting,
only to say oops.

So she hurried to rescue the home,
the home that had been so peaceful before they could walk.

She painted the walls,
she picked up the toys,
she scrubbed the floors.

But then the toddlers did it again,
and again,
and again.

The mother finally collapsed into a chair,
exhausted and dismayed.

If only they would learn, she thought,
that they were not the only ones who lived in this home.



New Horizon
Kelly Peterson
Photography

We Need the Symbols

Aidan Lewis

Where does a word go when you erase it?

When you scroll justice on the page, does it ebb through the heart of man upon conception?
What is it about the swirl of J and the defiance of T
That makes the arbitrary lines, the geometric sickles, cutting like pathetic fire in the arctic desert.

Or when pain is etched into melanocytic canvas.
Where there was a purpose to withhold, rampant ink acquiesces to fill the void.
Simple pigment flowing into deprived jugs,
Juxtaposed against the true archive of life.

Perhaps when control is chiseled into granite.
Definite.
Some blemishes on the mountain.
A prayer to the stone god.
Smooth rock.to straight edges.to smooth rock.

But.
Expose the maxims to fire, water, age, and pink rubber.
And see,
 The tangibility,
 Physical bodies withering to

Fragments on the floor: broken conscious following the life of those who wrote it.
Borne unto the void.
Spending enough time in the super-saturated white to crystalize black from oblivion.
 Only to dissipate back into the nebulous mother.

What Are Sonnets to What We Have

Abigail Thomas

I don't want to write you a love poem

I want to write a *you* poem

a poem of how you steal all of my air with your words

only to replenish it with your touch

how you overwhelm me with emotions

that demand to be spoken yet have

no language

no alphabet

just heartbeats and the gut-wrenching stomach-dropping sensation

of a free fall¹

into nothing

into everything

into you

into us

I've been stranded in the desert for so long

but now you bloom on cacti

and erase the hurt

you are healing

you are life

you are the dew of the dawn² we experience together

and I quench my years' worth of thirst with you

I find my way home³

guided by your light, by the very stars that brought

us together

every constellation now complete⁴

1 love

2 the stream that washes me clean the waves that break my walls the well I willingly dive headfirst into

3 to you

4 you are every star in my sky



Rippled Reflection
Bethany Cominsky
Mukilteo, Washington
Photography

Poem for a Physiologist

Luke Whitcomb

“You” are a careful latticework
Of 10 trillion cells
Inhabited, often peacefully enough,
By 100 trillion foreigners.

Your bones, they must be strong,
To resist the pull of planets.
Your skin, it must be tough,
To thwart the blitz of tiny juggernauts.

Guarded by 24 pale blades,
There lies a muscle which does not know fatigue,
Driving subcutaneous crimson rivers
A distance twice our planet’s circumference.

You’ll invite the atmosphere into your chest
20,000 times today,
Thieving an invisible necessity,
Replacing it with organic ash.

And buried beneath a quarter inch of bone,
There floats a gelatinous mass
Housing, however mysteriously,
The reason we write poetry.

To be human at all,
Is to exist subtly,
Inescapably,
As strange and wonderful art.

To be human at all,
Is to be a living miracle,

A biological masterpiece.

Obscure Sorrows*

Keelan Kenny

Lachesism (n) the desire to be struck by disaster—to survive a plane crash or to lose everything in a fire.

In the mornings I imagine my spine as a stratum of fibrous seeds—
sunflower, almond, teff, wild rice, goosefoot.

In a book recounting the restless nights of sin and chrysanthemum,
I search for the space that gives breadth to the curves of my body.

In the afternoons, apocalypse becomes fantasy, and I ask the Gods
to split me into thirds, cracked from sternum to sacrum.

Once split, sunflower and almond find home in folds of sun-creased
skin—horizontal fracture.

Teff, when burned, ashes into wild rice and rests at the base
of my body—vertical fissure.

Goosefoot walks down each vertebra, mistaking grey and white
matter for blue—stratified splinter.

In the evenings, I pray for rain and thunder, hoping that lightning
will strike and wash me into my most visceral, ethereal form.

But mostly I pray for disaster, analogue to self discovery.

*Inspired by John Koenig's Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows

1/29/19

Aidan Lewis

I scream in the night.
 A thick, feral roar.
 Eyes hang, gaping. Pupil leaking into the darkness.
 The throaty shriek dissolves listlessly into the eve
 Along with the emotions that grumbled
 And roiled
 And gnashed
 And raked
 And barreled!
 With bitter black licorice gripping the tip of the tongue.
 Self-apoplectic claws reaching from the bowels and up the esophagus.
 Spewing acid cement into the mouth.
 Coming from an unknown place, a place once known.
 Ancient ghosts haunting the larynx.
 Only awoken from disrupted grounds.
 Erupting into the pulverized homogeny of tenebrous bile that dissipated into the mother liquor.

I stare at the night.
 Depressed eyes and a cold sweat.
 Nostrils in short spasms plead for air.
 For opening my mouth would be to say the unspeakable.
 So,
 I sit with the night.
 Feeling the scalding cavern created from
 Collateral damage by the torrent of passion.
 Reimbursement for imprisonment.

Night in the night.
 Why do I fight?
 If not for the love of the plight?
 Perhaps that's why I howl
 Night in the night.





Kaleidoscope
Kelly Peterson
O'Hare Airport
Photography

The Chain

Emeshe Amade

My grandmother quietly passed from the hands of her father Bad Eddie, who everyone whispered about at family reunions, to the hands of her husband Jim, the traveling oilman, whom she would sit sweetly by as they drove all over the American West looking for treasure.

My grandmother spoke little, but when she spoke, she spoke in jewelry. Silver studded rings from the reservations, costume pearls, dangling earrings found in pawn shops—these were her treasures. The other women in town wouldn't know her. She would blow in and blow out of Somewhereville without a word, but they'd know her beauty, the jingle of her bracelets clinking together.

One necklace, with three bulbous hunks of New Mexico turquoise strung precariously together by dwarf planet beads, was what she gave to my mother. The polished stones shone. They were worthy of a Diné princess yelling at the top of her lungs. They made my grandmother sad. Her daughter could wear the necklace better.

Jim the oilman told my mother not to come back home on her eighteenth birthday. Her interstate highways of blond hair and dusty bare feet made his diaphragm clench. She laid her guitar tenderly in the back of her deadbeat boyfriend's car and didn't call home again.

My mother speaks little, but when she speaks, she sings. She drifted up to Colorado and proceeded to sing all over it. She flowed into dusty coffee shops and bars where her feet stuck to the beer-spattered floors. Blushing, she crooned out her songs. After she sang, she would turn quiet; her deadbeat boyfriend was long gone and the big turquoise beads could get heavy hitting against her breast bone.

When my mother had a daughter, she did call home. When my grandmother heard she had a granddaughter, she left Jim in bed and drove all night to see for herself.

My grandmother gave my mother a necklace of stones which were the green of an ocean no human ever saw, so my mother decided to give my Grandmother to me.



Golden Retriever at Golden Hour
Emily Canigiula
Templeton, California
Photography

Inevitable

Holly Ryan

Fear cannot govern the inevitable
while meaning is without existence;
and, reconciliation brings no penance
to the suffering stars that become victims
of that haunted cruelty.

Broken fragments bind destruction
to the image in which they create;
there is no end to turmoil, no end to violence.

Idealization drugs actuality in the face of unknown perils.
Joyous is the day that oblivion reigns,
and bitterness consumes us all—
for like that, the legacy became a reality.

Inevitable is the dark wrath that sweeps the world above,
begging for release from the hellish winds of tomorrow.
Summer pass, winter on—seasons end upon end.
Death to life and back again...
Or is it the other way around?

Inevitable. Every last breath.



Redemption
Lacy Lichtenhan
Acrylic and Oil

Éphémère

Kaitlynn Husovsky

**Comme petites fleurs dans l'univers,
C'est la dernière fois
De vingt-cinq ou vingt trois.
Avec secondes et minutes
Des heures
Mais des jours,
Nous avons peurs.**

Like small flowers in the universe,
Of the last time,
Carved seconds only take minutes of hours
Of days
That we seem to be afraid of.

The strikes of stars make patterns
In the sky of life
Of time that brings
Death to the doorsteps of the path
We call beautiful.

It melts hearts and expands meaning,
Like something so short-lived
Would,
In a world that puts no brains to
Limits
But still counts the clocks in the corner
As truth always does.

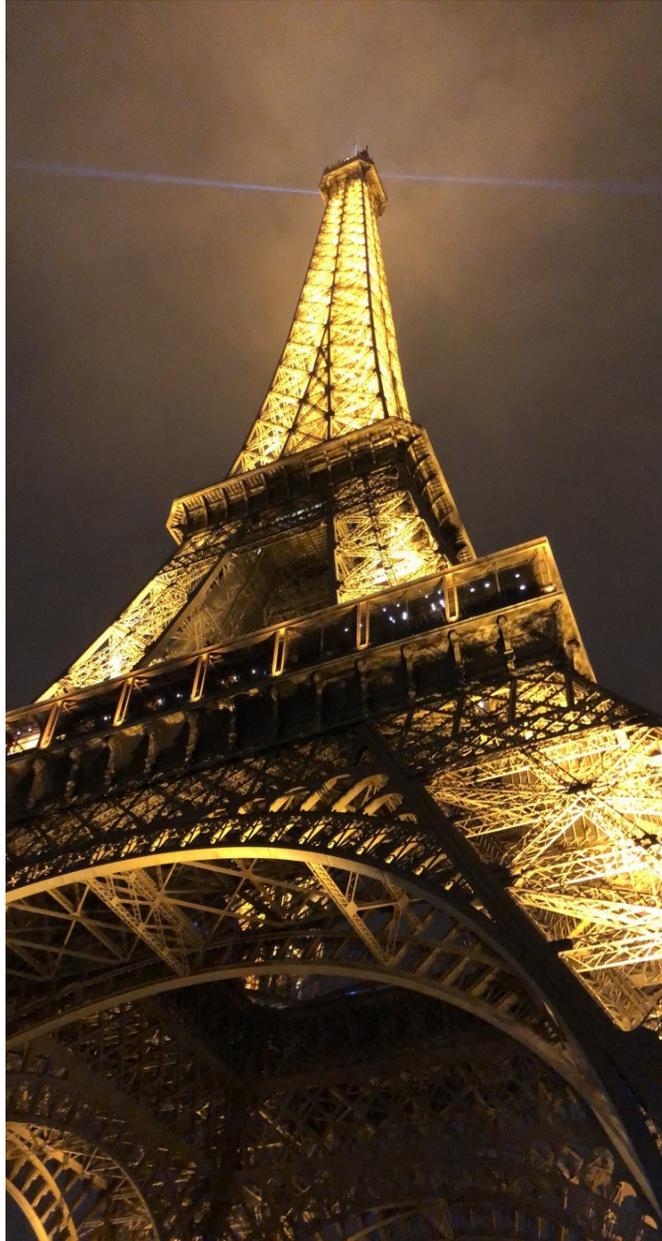
Comme petites fleurs...

Footed universes crush bones
But make constellations of souls
That when we look up,
We see the past and the future,
Du dernière fois.

So it's true then...

Nous avons peurs...

Of that which we call "éphémère."



A Shining Beacon in the City of Lights
Zach Simon
Photography

From the Perspective of a Fly: A Nightmare

Julia Daricek

Everything is violet and lavender—the flowers, the fog, the light.
The ground is cushioned with lilac blooms and mauve wisteria;
Wine tinted fog sits heavily, curling in the air like a drowsy smile,
And threads of pale moonlight illuminate the grey willow trees,
Weeping thick trails of amber syrup.

Between two wilting branches sits an artist's masterpiece,
A spider's parlor.
Small globes of dew cling to fine strands,
And a black spider, with rouged spots as red as poppies,
Languidly drifts around the silk holding his prey—
I flutter one of my wings feebly, but I know that I am powerless,
And he does too.

My eyes begin to droop, the webs surrounding me becoming a blurred sheet of gossamer;
His gentle weaving sounding like the susurrus of a stream,
And the gauzy strands sway like dancers above me.
Leisurely, amethyst fog begins to weave around them,
Thickening, solidifying into clawed hands,
Curling, and reaching.

The spider's laughter sounds like the creaking of branches,
And through the sheer gauze above me,
The grey limbs of the tree seem to sharpen into teeth,
Scraps of dried leaves clinging to them like shriveled wings.
The field of lavender flowers stretches along the forest floor—rustling and undulating,
Their indigo mouths lazily snapping in the air like gaping jaws.

The purple haze of teeth and fangs and claws
Can do nothing to distract me from the spider's sedate approach,
As slow as the sap leaking from the grey boughs around me.
As he nears, a black cloud creeps over the moon,
A dark eyelid covering a milky eye,

As if it can no longer bear to watch.
Only a thin mist of starlight is left
To illuminate the spider's glistening mouth,
Stretching open like a great yawn;
Saliva stretches across his furry mouth,
As those fangs descend down, down—

My eyes snap open to the buzz of other flies around me.
Waves of sunlight burnish the green leaf I perch on,
Flooding the bustling forest around me with light;
Chirps and croaks bounce between tree limbs,
And the haze of violet and spider silk is ripped away
Into the brown richness of the soil,
And the clarity of the sunlight.



Astronautilus
Allie Benz
Colored Pencil

An adult human experiences between 50 billion and
70 billion cell divisions a day. I have every right to feel
torn apart.

Emeshe Amade

Wholly uniform, unified epidermal
platform fortified for
war.

Then the wrenching feeling hits
my bent biology, snipping bits
as if they don't fit together.

Cells, my ephemeral everythings
are elders dwelling in pastel clothes.
Nestled in their wedding beds, trembling
when the ambulance rips out the throat
of their ambient rug-coated homes.
Stuffed ugly beloved with elegies
to their pink y ouths entombed
in lace. Frames tracing delicately
saved photos doo med to be forgotten.

When the med ics croon, "It will

Always tear Always end."

Cells scre am until

the buildings guard ing my white matter

.sha

tter.

Postulate 117: Nobody remembers to thank the math teacher.

Natalia Sperry

Ms. J taught geometry to eighth graders
in a windowless room on the third floor,
tried to make dead Greeks real to teenagers
who don't remember her name anymore.

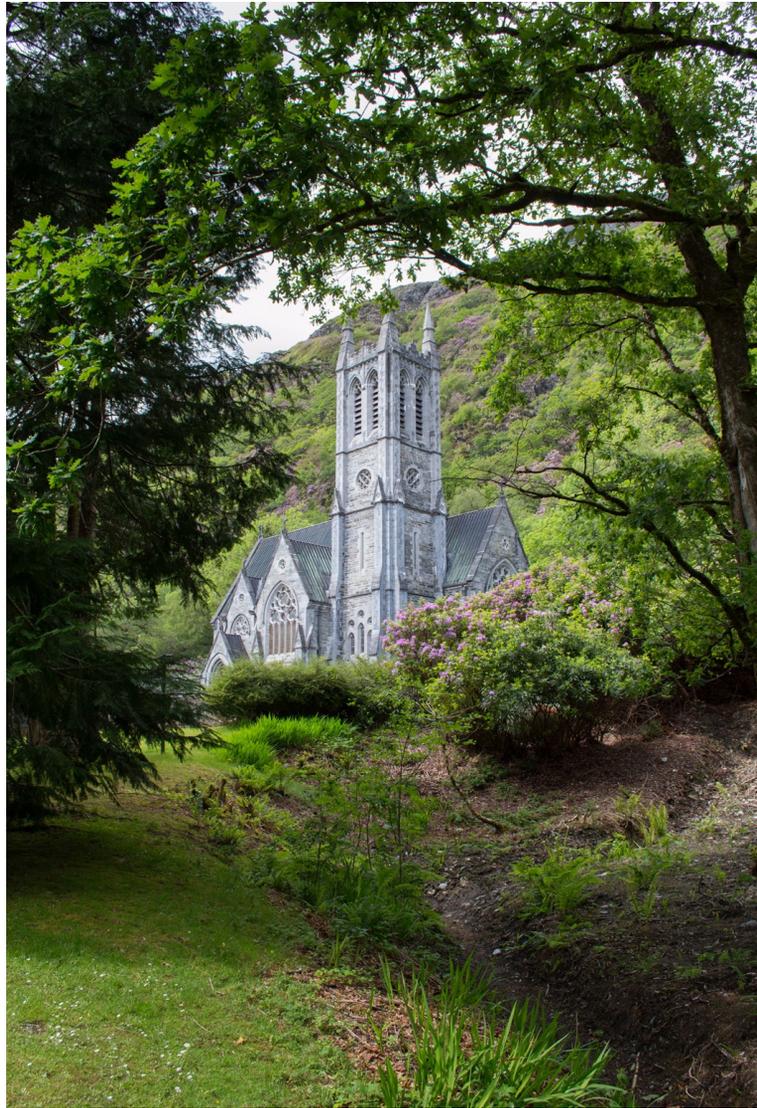
She drew a line from point A to B to
C, told you it was infinite; it all
circles back to Pythagoras, to you—
See? The Universe sounds beautiful.

Proofs could be a language of love, she said,
stood at the whiteboard, textbook spread out
like arms, split into two columns; instead
of "Statements" and "Reasons," "Give a" and "Damn."

If $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$,
Then they got an 'A.' And still no one cared.



Stealth
Kelly Peterson
Kauai, Hawaii
Photography



Cathedral in Miniature
Kaitie Wood
Connemara, Co. Galway, Ireland
Photography

Rose Quartz Fledgeling

Luisanna Hernandez Jeppesen

No one had ever been the rehabilitating forest after the conflagrant wildfire, the intricacies of starlight reflected off rose quartz and amethyst, or the valiant breath of a fledgeling before its first flight—

Until I recognized the grains of sand on your hair as baby's breath freckling a meadow amidst towering castles of stone, your veins as the crystalline spiderweb filtering dawn-light, and your breath the cumulonimbus birthing lightning-like currents along my spine.

The normality of comfort and company had never been extraordinary, until I cradled the constellations each night and the tinkling rivulets beneath your fingernails drew patterns on my arms; until you hummed below your breath as we walked down unexplored, uncertain paths and ignited the cobwebbed life within me.

I do not love but the world,
and it is a good thing she loves me back.

Jazz

Aidan Lewis

Beat
beat

a
beat

Galvanizing your heart with an eye of coffee liqueur.

Entranced in a captivation that transcends your iris, prickling down your spine to the soul.

Landing with the Grace of Eros.

Simultaneously, your ears weep the same name note as the minor 7th
drizzling a cascade of tears upon the nape of your neck.

Each droplet being that auburn silk pulling the sides of your veins
by the pulsating passion that is music.

A type of deep crimson that coolly backdrops

the meandering throb of golden cream sliding through your sulcus.

Enveloping your conscious in warm radiance from an amber fire on a frosty night.

An embrace of magnificent magenta intertwined with emanating evergreen

all being conveyed and played with her light hand pressed gently against your back.

Conducting notes of succulent acid that seem to know how to ever-so gently corrode
your vertebrae so the juicy marrow within can send a mist of eruption to the peripheries.

Such translucent ripples end with a light blue tingling in the fingertips,
which is graciously received on the other end.



Breath of Life
Corrina Farho
Slow Shutter Speed
Photography

I Am From

Julia Daricek

A petite, brick home saturated with cigarettes and love. I'm from the smell of green tea, sticking to my skin after every loving hug from my grandmother.

I'm from ancient fossils and lung diagrams and tornado documentaries—for every small, free museum my grandmother took me to in the summer of 2007,

I learned a new fact (hey grandma, grandma, did you know that lungs have tiny sacs called al-vee-owli?) and bought cheap, shining coins to add to my collection (I have two, grandma, you can have the other one).

I am from a needle and thread, scraps of fabric pulled together to make decadent dresses for my part-time doll, full-time model, my grandmother assuring me the ugly, haphazard stitches were beautiful.

I am from oil paint slapped onto a canvas by ungraceful, angry fingers, my grandmother assuring me my work was not beautiful, but interesting, and isn't that so much better?

I am from failed attempts at archery, arrow-shaped holes bulleted through expensive wooden fences, with my patiently observing grandmother declaring that I was Robin Hood come again.

I am from a loving grandma and I am from books, but most of all I am from the loving grandma who taught me to *love* books.

I'm from a not quite green not quite blue SUV on its way to the bookstore, carefully managed by Brian the bookstore owner— "Judy, Julia, so lovely to see you again!"

I'm from a ragged couch torn to shreds (horrible for sitting but perfect for reading),

I'm from books littered with cat-shaped claw marks,

books splattered with green tea stains,

and books dampened by teardrops.

I am from a woman who was cut open sternum to stomach by doctors given the most important job in the world—

fix my grandma, I don't know why she's here, but fix her—

what do you mean her heart, what's wrong with her heart?

I am from blue Jell-O and white walls and a pale, tired, smiling face.

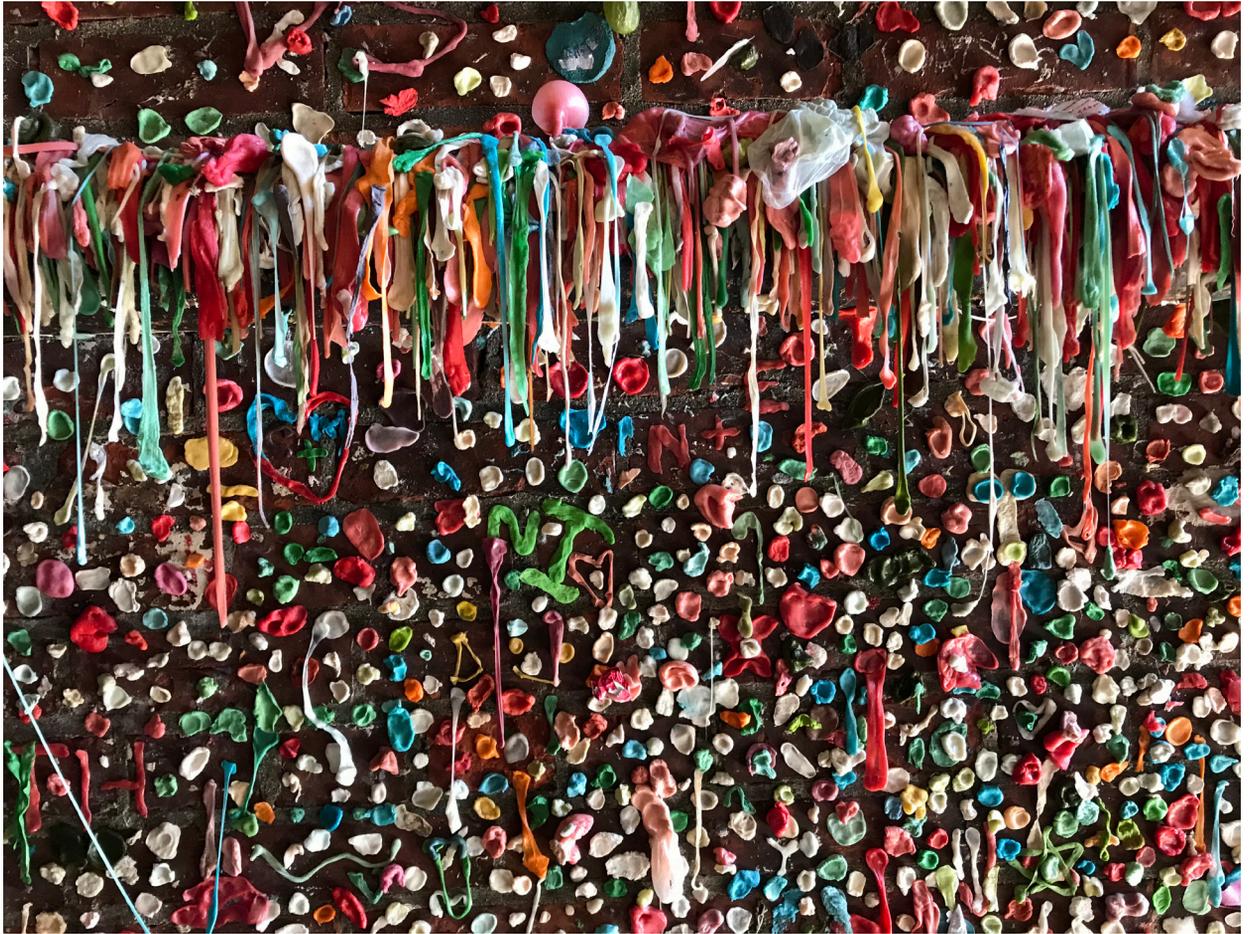
"Your heart attacked you?"

"Yes, it did. It wasn't getting enough oxygen."

"I read about heart attacks at the museum. You need new cor-naries. Are you sure you're okay now?"

A short, pained laugh. A warm smile in a cold room.

"I'm okay now."



Cover image
Sticky
Nicole Towne
Seattle, Washington
Photography

A Tandem Bicycle

Herman Chavez

I mustn't apologize.
I have already been released
with the goodbye I softly stuttered,

to myself, my love,
not yet for you.

Quietly, in the back of my mind,
like a wave from a passive acquaintance.
~~I always meant to say it.~~
I never wanted to believe anything
other than the farmland I painted for myself—
acres and acres of yawnings and apple trees,
so sweet and high,
alongside the crystal lakes
and you, in the sunlight.

Rays,
 falling,
 always leave shadows.



Transcendent Peace
Lacy Lichtenhan
Acrylic and Oil

Shedding Season

Keelan Kenny

In the midst of my October birthday
life snuck in the back door and carved out a person.

There's something soothing about brushing
a shedding animal, comb tines pull
on lavender-thick fur.

Fall leaves and winter winds etch away at the open
space that defines my body, until I resemble
the East side of the Matterhorn.

In the midst of my October birthday
life snuck in the back door and carved out a person.

Starved for reality, I dig my hands into the grass,
attempting to reach into the underbelly of the earth,
but she returns only a microcosm of roots.

Sometimes I soak in the bathtub too long
and sapwood warps into rosewood,
a stratified spine loses shape.

In the midst of my October birthday,
life snuck in the back door and carved out a person.

Sun-bleached bangs fade to black
on the Winter Solstice (my body stands still).

I am twenty years old, the peace dove tattooed
on my back is five years old, and in the midst
of my October birthday, life snuck in the back door

and carved out a person.

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