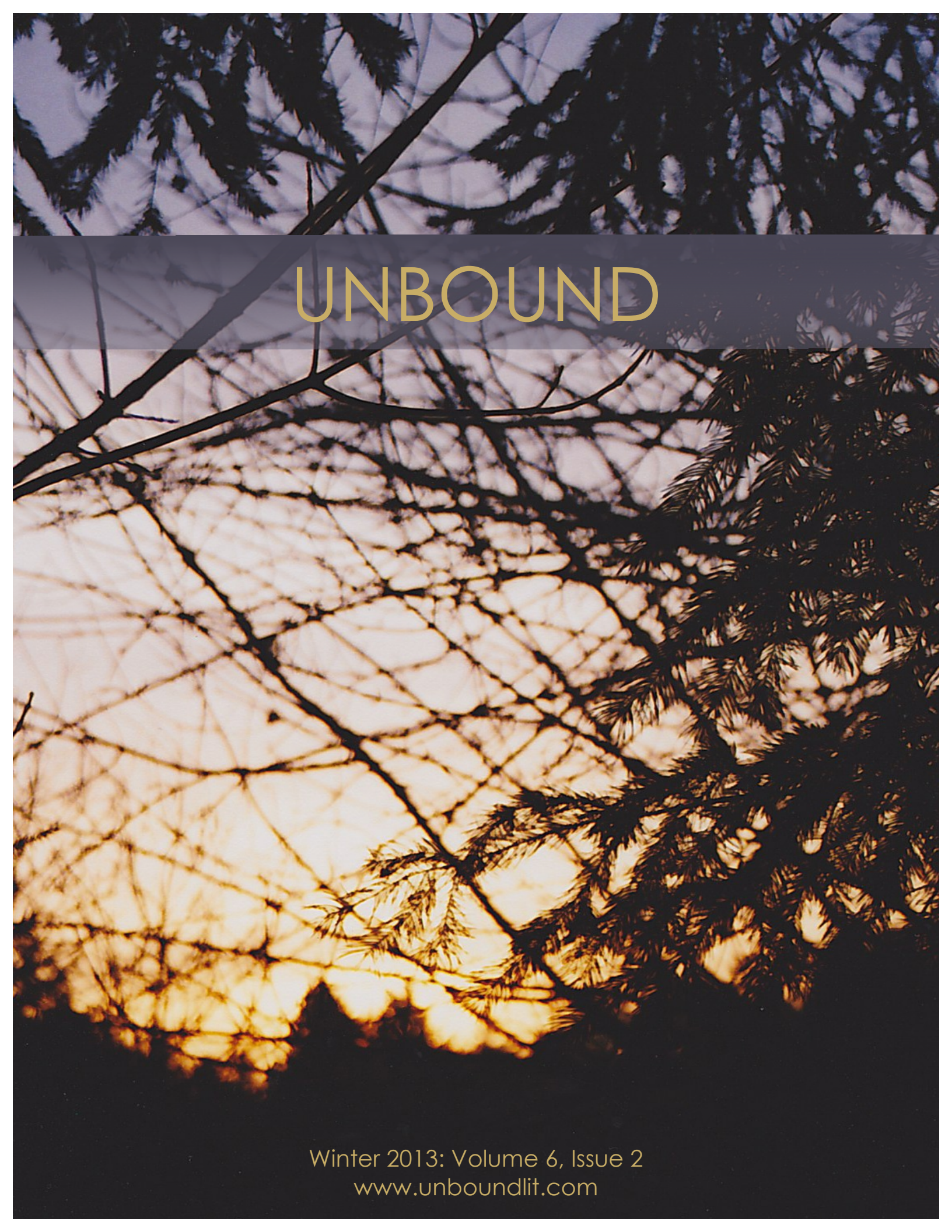




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Megan Bruun's 35mm photograph, "Vitamin D," is featured on the cover page. Her other 35mm photograph, "Thanatos' Dwelling," is featured on these facing pages.

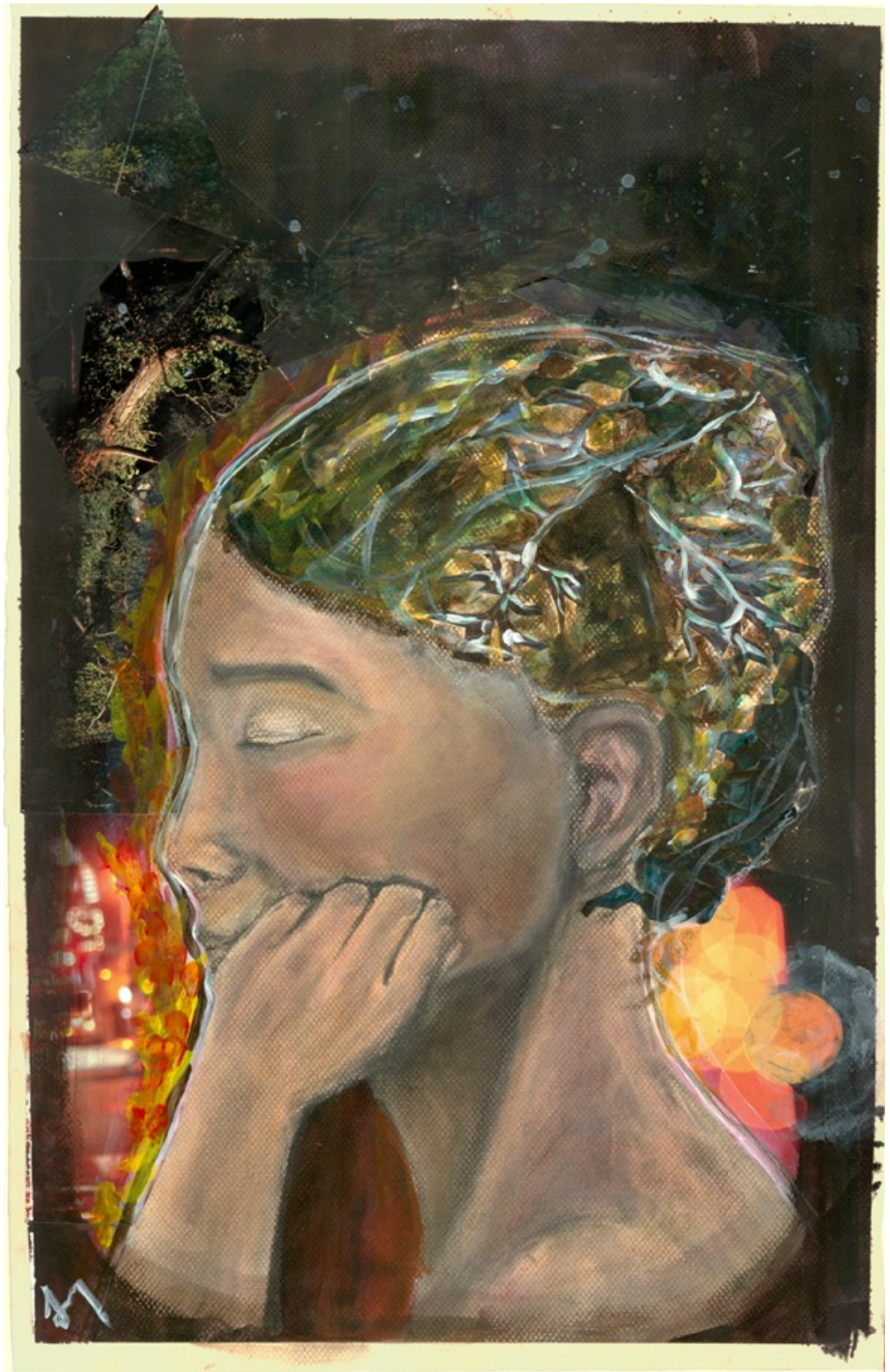
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More Between Heaven and Earth

Collage, acrylics, pastels, and charcoal



Sandy Ng

*Sandy is a senior majoring in Italian.
This is her first publication.*

How I Became a Moth

Colby Schnackenberg

When I was kid my mom took me downtown to watch musicals: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Chicago*, *Oklahoma!*, you name it. So when the policeman asked if he could see my driver's license, I sang the words, "When the sun rises in the morning, does it ask for the clouds' permission to shine?" in a high falsetto. He then proceeded to search the car. Not suprisingly, his hunt was fruitless since I had already ingested the shrooms and swallowed the last of the mescaline. Sitting in the grass as he explored the glove compartment, I had just begun to fall in love with the scaley snake-like belt wrapped around the officer's waist, which was slowly asphyxsiating his lungs.

The truth was I didn't have my license. In fact I hadn't brought my wallet, any money, or any type of identification. No school ID; nothing. The only things I had brought were my '91 Toyota Corolla, a tent, a sleeping bag, enough food to last a night in the woods, and enough shrooms and mescaline to find Empyrean.

Unfortunately, I hadn't made it very far. Only five minutes outside the unincorporated community of Zigzag, I found myself on the side of the road staring deeply at an enormous illuminated Dairy Queen sign. Not exactly the untamed, Mt. Hood wilderness I had imagined. Beneath the interrogative street lamp, which burned my retinas, I continued to gaze at the Dairy Queen sign. It hovered above me and the policeman (who had begun to rummage through my camping supplies) like an omniscient flying saucer. It gained altitude above the forest of Zigzag, Oregon, peering down at the colossal evergreens huddled together like emperor penguins seeking refuge from a blizzard.

The highway slashed through the sleeping forest. In the starless night, the traffic from the road gleamed. Through the alpine landscape, the street slithered like a spectral serpent of insidious intent. Climbing higher in the sky, the DQFO was now far above the restless city. From that height, I was just another grain of sand upon the shore, an insignificant life form.

"Alright pal." The officer's voice jolted me back into reality. "No drugs or any other paraphenelia were located, but because you don't have a license, or any other identification, for that matter—"

"Maybe I'm just an alien awaiting my flying saucer." I was half joking, but at this point I wasn't completely sure who I was. My mind was slipping away, like sand between my fingers.

The police officer released the lock from the handcuffs. "Well, whatever you are, I'm going to have to take you down to the station house." He clutched my wrist and snapped the cuffs into place. "Maybe we can get an ID on you there."

As I sat in the backseat of the squad car, the drugs really kicked into effect. We zoomed past trees and other vehicles on the road. Time dilated, light bent, and sounds swelled. In a strange synesthesia, light and sound blended together into a massive cacophony that swam inside my ears. It was freezing inside the car. Earlier that day my dealer had reminded me that all my emotions would be magnified, so I tried to calm myself down. No matter what I told myself, the fear and paranoia was uncontrollable. This was not the perfect trip I had in mind. Thoughts were cascading over my frontal lobe and flooding my cognition. *Is it possible to drown*

from the inside? Will my mom find out about this? Could I be slowly dying? Am I the Universe?

Speeding down the highway, siren blaring, I was lost deep within the labyrinth. My heart pounded like heart failure awaited me around the next corner. I started to wonder where I was. Turning towards the passenger window, I was frightened to find myself staring back at me. A translucent semblance of myself cast upon the trunks of trees rushing by. He glared at me with such curiosity, examining every pore on my face. Counting them as a child counts stars. Peering into his eyes, I wondered if they had seen what I have seen. *Could this man have dreamed what I have dreamed?* He resembled my father, his curly hair thinning on the top, and his thin lips tightly pursed.

It was two years ago, when my father died of leukemia, that I decided to go to school to become a doctor. Now, three years out of high school, I was a college dropout working swing shift for a fruit packaging company. I had lost my ambition, lost confidence, and was losing my future.

My reflection stared back at me in disgust. Thinking about my future, I watched my reflection grow old. His hair fell out as his teeth rotted out of his mouth. I watched as his skin wrinkled and sagged. In the reflection I saw myself as an old man. I watched as his life slipped away. His eyes were lifeless stones, still

at me. Waiting at a stoplight, time diminished his body to dust. I knew I was dead.

Being dead, myself and Charon (surely the officer must have been ferryman to the dead) arrived at what I could only assume was purgatory. I entered an immense beehive. Bugs were crawling and buzzing all throughout the building, which was divided up into honeycomb-like cells. God must have made a mistake. *I'm a person; I don't belong in insect hell!* Throughout the hallway, larvae hummed and chattered, talking of an elusive dreamcatcher. Against the doorway, catapillars whispered and sighed, speaking of gang violence nearby. Behind a desk a praying mantis with one thousand hexagon eyes told me that my car had been impounded, and that I'd be expected to pay a fine. Unable to locate my voice, I simply nodded. Fear was consuming me like locusts.

Luckily, Charon remembered to grab my sleeping bag from the car. I cocooned myself inside it. Enveloped in my sleeping bag, I could feel a colony of fire ants marching through my veins. Their venom pierced my chromosomes. The minutes passed like eons.

I walked home the next morning, under a sanguine sky, feeling like a moth. Reborn, emerging from an concrete chrysalis. Gazing up at the clouds, white and creamy, I wondered about their mysterious migration. *Where were they going, and where had they been?* These questions floated through my brain as I stared at the roots of the sun.

Colby is a sophomore majoring in Journalism. This is his first publication.

Four Pi R Squared

Rebekah Dorsey

Remember finding that picture of the earth
Taken by some man in a space suit on the moon?
I stared in silence struck
By the idea, *I'll never leave*
Until you struck

Me over the head with
An embroidered throw pillow.
Annoyed, I ran out through the back
While you just screamed "Where ya gonna go?!"

I went elsewhere
Only to find you somehow beat me
To the back lot of the general store
Where we almost on purpose found the ladder
And climbed towards town's big wooden cross.

We spied like birds while
Two janitors and the tallest alter boy
Put a long black box in a long black car.

You said they were just going to drive around in circles
Until the earth ate them
And *Laughed like mad* when we looked up
To see a cloud shaped like a door.

*Rebekah is a senior majoring in Cinema
Studies. This is her first publication.*

Sunset Silhouette



Spice Walker

Digital Photograph

*Spice is a sophomore studying
Journalism. This is her first publication.*

The Understanding of a Bird

Raphael Hidalgo

Sing soft, sing low, sing sweet,
Don't go, Nene, upon the harbor. While
Charcoal smoke chokes the lapis sky
The Nene sings by and by

Upon the ambushed harbor.
Red flames fly from kamikaze crash
And dive. The Arizona sinks this night while
Nene sings, she coos, she cries,

Upon the burning harbor.
Blood-washed water, oil-stained water,
Sunken-grey steel water. Water-of-the-dead-and-dying
Nene bobs upon the tide—she sings tonight

Upon the dying harbor.
Creaks, and moans from sinking ships
And weighty bones of men pulled low
As Nene sings her empathetic sigh

Upon the sinking harbor.
Nene cries. Nene wails. Nene sings
But she tells no tales...of those sinking under the swell
As by and bye, her song drifts high

Upon the harbor.

*Raphael is a junior double majoring in Psychology
and Spanish. This is his first publication.*

Night Light

35mm long night exposure photograph



Megan Bruun

Warmth of Youth

35mm Photograph



Abandoned Beliefs



Digital Photograph

Megan is a sophomore studying Psychology. This is her first publication.

Fifteen Minutes Before the Final Bomb

Chasmodai Cassidy

11 pm, Tennant Creek, Northern Australia—
Levi dreams about his father.

They are walking beside the Mary Ann Dam just after sunrise, drinking bottles of Victoria Bitter wrapped up in pale butcher paper. It's already hot. Their feet make no sound on the loose sand as they circle the water, feasting on the shade of huge granite pillars.

"Do you know why you are here?" asks his father, whose voice is the same gravel it had been in life. "I come to tell you."

"You came to tell me what?" Levi kicks at a rock and watches it skip four times over the water before sinking, abruptly, beneath the iron depths. And then: "You're dead."

"'Dead' is an illusion. We're all dead."

Levi touches his arms, his shoulders. He looks past the water, past the red-gold mountains, into a ferocious sky that pulses with flame and heat. "I'm not dead," he is saying, with some conviction.

His father had been a drunk who smelled like sand. He believed in folktales when the right prayer made his dice lucky. He disappeared into the outback for days, claiming to have crossed incredible distances, but if he knew the ancient song lines of their people, he chose never to share them with Levi.

"Here, this is where you're wrong."
Levi's father tosses his paper-wrapped bottle into the reservoir. The water begins to seethe immediately, and Levi watches his father strip off his miner's jacket and take a few steps towards the roiling surface. The older man,

growing older by the moment, puts first one foot and then the other into the ocean of fire. The billows of steam move to accommodate him. "I come to tell you," he says again.

"Tell me what?" Levi takes a few halting steps after his father, but finds the pain unbearable. His voice breaks: "Come to tell me what, Dad?"

"About the end of the world."

Sun-like, his father dissolves as light, and Levi wakes in his own dark bed. He lies there for a long time with the taste of Victoria Bitter in his mouth. He hasn't had one since his father died, but the pungent, crisp flavor remains with him until he puts his feet on the floor.

Outside, nightjars call out in the night.

Levi puts on his shoes and gets his bicycle from the closet beside the door. Lamps illuminate the vacant streets, and only the whirl of all-night drivers along the highway keeps the silence from devouring the town. He has spent his whole life in Tennant Creek, and sometimes he dreams about leaving the place where his grandfather was brought as little more than an animal and his father became the sort of man who would give up nothing, not even his very last second. Maybe he could look for work in Darwin, installing air conditioners or something.

He rides past rows of public housing, so fast they become blurs. The wind murmurs long-forgotten poetry, reciting its verses in the leaves of the ghost gum trees. His bicycle picks up more speed, and the slope of the road

pulls him into the desert until the land flattens out. Summer washes through him, leaving the taste of salt in his mouth.

Levi looks up to find the sky in flames.

7 am, Manitoba, Canada—

Helen just barely catches the six-forty bus on Saskatchewan Avenue. November has turned the air snappish and dry, but the snow is still holding out. Miranda says, every morning, "I hope there's a snow day soon," and Helen murmurs a counter prayer—may the roads stay dry, may the passage stay clear, may the school stay open so she has somewhere to leave her daughters. Today, she didn't even have time to turn on the news before shuffling both girls out the door and running for her own almost-missed connection.

She watches the prairie roll by, sparse as it has been for a thousand years. Settlers found this ground, stole this ground, this same ground she is now crossing. The town rises up around her, still purple with early morning. The shops are either long open or still cold, and as she passes them by, she cranes her head to see who is working, who is waking. She hopes the bakery will be busy today.

"You're almost early," Bruce, the owner, says, when she walks in with the wind at her back. Bruce has never been late a day in his life. "Brandon's in today. Reckon you've got to watch the timer, else he'll burn the place down."

"Maybe you should relieve him?" Helen asks, looping her apron over her head. "He's not so bad with making change, you know."

Bruce laughs. "Boy wanted to learn a trade. Running a register is no kind of trade, and you can learn that just about anywhere." He makes change for an elderly woman who pays for three scones with a fifty, then counts it back to her bill by bill. "You learn what you live."

Helen goes into the back. Bruce's nephew, Brandon, stands before the table of sliced dough, his hands idle. "Good morning,"

Helen says pleasantly. No response. "What are you working on?"

Startled, Brandon looks up. He is wearing sunglasses. "Croissants," he drawls. "I can tell you, these bitches mad tough."

Helen smiles blandly. Her customer smile, her tourist smile, her just-passing-through smile. "Here, I'll show you."

"It's all right," says Brandon, snatching his hands out of her reach. He folds another misshapen crescent and sets it on the floured counter. "It's not like you haven't shown me fifty times."

Helen has folded thousands of croissants in her ten years at Bruce's Bakery. She used to come in at four-thirty to help Bruce bake his first round of the day, before her husband, Aaron, left for timber work on Victoria Island. The long days take their toll on her skin, her lungs, her temper. Her daughters, Miranda and Callie, bear her impatience with stoicism, but a lingering guilt walks with her each time she raises her voice, slams a door, locks one.

Tonight, she'll take them to Montana Steakhouse and the Cineplex, and they'll forget she has ever been angry.

The bell above the door jangles several times in rapid succession, and Bruce calls her from the front. Helen brushes her hands off on her navy apron and sprints to the front of the store. "Present," she chirps. She feels bland underneath. Half-cooked. Her eyes focus on the grey-haired man standing in front of the register. "Can I help you?"

He holds up his cache of day-old bread. He comes in every day, bringing the cold in on his hair, in his bones, and pays with coins collected from the city fountain. He counts silently, deliberately. Behind him, the commuters, fresh from their prairie towns, become restless. They have made no time for urban decay.

"Don't worry about it," says Helen quickly, when the man goes back into his pockets for more quarters. She reaches into her apron for loose change, feels the chilly clink of it against her fingers.

"Have a good day."

But the man shakes his head. His mouth flaps wordlessly, and his trembling fingers pluck out exact change from his gloved palm. He presses the coins into Helen's hand, his sticky skin brushing up against hers. She doesn't flinch—he smiles at her.

"Have a good day," she repeats.

He leaves, and a rush of hungry, impatient others replace him. They swarm over her, mouths open, reaching for her with imploring hands. The heat of the bakery has become suffocating. Helen takes the credit cards and crisp bills, fingers flying to make change, to send them on to the rest of their lives, but it seems impossible to keep up. Somewhere, bread is baking, maybe burning.

She can feel the fountain coins in her palm, cool as the sea, right up until the end.

2 pm, Helsinki, Finland—

When the news breaks, Yellow Lion Drum Machine is halfway through one of their experimental sonnets. Taavi, the bassist, keeps a steady pulse for Raakel's incomprehensible English and tries to remember why they became musicians in the first place. The men in the lounge have started going glassy-eyed from drinking salmari at two in the afternoon, and the girls who wander in off the street, looking for excitement, keep requesting another round of Nightwish. Finland is losing to the British on television, until the match is interrupted by a state broadcast.

"Reports of swiftly moving radiation have been pouring in from our correspondents in North America and Oceania," explains the woman filling the screen. Her eyes are ringed with red. She explains the imminence of death: "Meteorologists are expecting atmospheric failure in no more than fifteen minutes." A silence follows.

"Another round of drinks!" shouts the bearded man at center, thrusting his empty

tankard into the air. Voices swell behind him, a mixture of disbelief and panic. "Put them on my tab."

Raakel unstraps her guitar and lets it fall to the stage with a thud. The A string snaps. "I guess that's my last set," she says. She climbs off the stage and slouches to the bar. "Do we know who done it?"

"My bet is on the Russians."

"Really? I thought the French were due for something atomic."

"I suppose we'll never know for sure."

Taavi glances out the window at a dusky, snow-studded Helsinki. People are pouring out of every doorway, filling the roads with their bodies, open-mouthed in shout or song. Taavi thinks about his parents up in Inari, wonders if they know. He wishes he could call them, but they haven't spoken in years—what would he say to them now?

A skinny punk, shaved head and rabbit eyes, heaves open the door and stumbles into the lounge. "Have you heard? We have only fifteen minutes to live!"

But it's less than that, already. They are losing ground to atomicity. Their lives are about to be halved toward an infinite limit.

"Drink with us, Taavi."

But instead, he finds himself slinging his bass across his broad back and walking out of the neon-lit lounge, away from the speculations of who is at fault, who is to blame. He pushes through the throngs of strangers. Elbows jab into the soft parts of his body. He doesn't know where he is going, not until he reaches Market Square, which is alive with riot, with shouting men and their praying wives, with frightened children wrapped around the columns of legs, reeking with the strong tang of fear.

As a child, Taavi aspired to leave his home and become famous in some other part of the world. America, maybe. He dreamed that his parents would buy a television set so they could tell people, "That's our son! That's our Taavi!" And that he would fall in love with a beautiful woman, probably Raakel, and that

they would have children whose parents were rock stars. He dreamed he would never be forgotten.

At least he won't have to worry about that, he tells himself. He will not be forgotten; he simply will not be.

Taking a deep breath, Taavi climbs the shallow steps to the edge of the *Havis Amanda*, the mermaid which arcs above the crowd, nude and clad in winter ice. A thousand eyes fall on him. He pulls his gloves off. The cold is almost unbearable. Even the adrenaline cannot seem to still his fingers, which shiver of their own accord, divorced from his body, as they slide down and up the neck of his unamplified bass, seeking the pattern of strings to justify all that has been.

5 pm, Kirachi, Pakistan—

Latif makes his way through the thicket of bodies, sliding through the gaps between them and down the narrow corridor of the street. His left hand clasps his son's right, tight enough to become sweaty, even in the evening chill. Breath washes over his skin in place of wind. A part of him is afraid. Somewhere distant, ghosts crackle on electric wires—tonight, in the belly of the sea, they test the bomb his brother built.

"Soon, we'll get a subway built," says Latif, although the words sound strangely hollow. "And then we won't have to walk."

He sends his son to the third-best private school in Kirachi, an hour from the settlement where they have been living since his wife's death. Ibrahim is a bright boy, talented at sports and mathematics, and his legs are strong enough. Latif had imagined he might grow up to be a civil engineer like himself, or a cartographer like his mother, rest her soul. Ibrahim insists he will play cricket on the national team and will wear only green to show his support.

"Have you ever been on a subway, papa?"

As they continue north, the buildings lose shape and become tightly packed along

the wide, unlined streets. The official boundaries of the city come and go. The Khalsa hills rise up from the cold part of the sky.

"Once, with your mother, when we were young. In the city of New York."

Even years later, Latif can still recall the smell of oil and cement, the sensation of moving beneath the ground like a viper through another's tunnels. A triumph of man, his wife had said, examining the maps pasted to the smash-tiled walls. The subway will outlive all of us.

The walk-space narrows. Food carts line the street, frying strips of meats and lumps of dough. A girl whirls past them, shrieking with laughter, a flurry of marigold linen and dark hair and wild-eyed hunger—she carries a stolen pomegranate in each hand. As Latif passes the fruit vendor, he stops to examine the produce, then slips the man a few rupees without taking anything.

"Why did you do that?" Ibrahim asks, pulling hard on his father's sleeve. "We didn't buy anything, did we?"

Latif shakes his head. "That man has no time to go chasing a girl like that." They take a turn down a narrow alley, cutting across three blocks of jammed carts and tired feet. Crippled hands reach out to implore, but Latif does not hesitate in steering his son around them. "Remember you can't take anything with you. Remember you meet Allah naked."

At home, they stave off the new darkness with tallow candles and wash their faces. The sunset prayer begins high in the air above the city, swirling down to fill their tent. In the place between night and day, the holy replaces the light of candles, casting long shadows against the insubstantial walls. Curled on their rugs, north by northwest, father and son return to their maker.

9 pm, Busan, South Korea—

"Isn't it at least a little exciting?" asks Kyung-Hi, perching herself on the edge of Su-Eun's bed. She chews a last cigarette, blazing, tucked at the corner of her mouth. "Don't you

wonder what's going to come after this?"

Su-Eun looks out the window to the south, toward the distant glow of Busan and the seemingly infinite life it contains.

"No," she says.

It's nighttime. The girls in the dormitory across the hall play the latest hits from America and shout over them, drunk. The end of the world is streaming toward them from Christmas Island: In just a few minutes, there will be no admissions letters, no honorifics, no adzuki beans, no ill-begotten liquor, no soft bodies or searching hands. There will be nothing.

"You're not supposed to smoke in here," says Su-Eun, to fill the silence she has made. Her hands, clasped over her bare belly, tremble against each other. Her eyes flick back and forth beneath their paper-thin lids. She does not resemble herself.

Kyung-Hi shifts in her nest of blankets, one eye open and looking into the other girl. "You're not going to get your deposit back, you know," she says. She takes the cigarette from her mouth and blows four consecutive, lopsided smoke rings.

They would have gone their separate ways, cataclysm or no. Kyung-Hi had been accepted into Korea Maritime University, Su-Eun into Dongseo. The same city, Kyung-Hi had insisted, as if that would matter. Clandestine affairs never last. The weight of it would have crushed them, eventually. Their differences would have driven them apart.

"I think I had a pretty good time."

Kyung-Hi exhales in a billow of bluish smoke. "Don't look so glum, love, whatever's bothering you will be over in a few minutes."

"How can you be so calm? Everything is wasted!" Su-Eun shouts, her hands tangling up in her long, dark hair. Tears spring up behind her eyes, stinging them to blindness.

"The cram school and the nights at the

libraries and keeping this—us—keeping this secret—it was for *nothing*."

Kyung-Hi puts out her cigarette on the metal end table and pushes her cheek against Su-Eun's ribs. "Couldn't be for nothing." She sounds, suddenly, as if she is on the verge of sleep. Her face is smooth, moist, and the feel of it draws the last of the fight from Su-Eun. Maybe she's crying? But Kyung-Hi never cries. "You're still alive. To the last moment. I'm marked for death."

Kyung-Hi pulls away, and Su-Eun is startled by the way she misses the warmth. "Then let's do it right," she says, a hard edge in her voice that Su-Eun recognizes only belatedly as fear. Kyung-Hi climbs to her feet, and the curves of her body, outlined in neon lights, look like a landscape of their own. She turns to the window with a view of Gwangan Bridge and wrenches it open all the way. "What are you waiting for?"

Su-Eun looks down at the insubstantial body she has cultivated all her life.

"I thought about this before," Kyung-Hi continues. Her hands are white on the ledge. "Lover's suicide. I never thought it would be us, though. You're too pragmatic for that kind of thing."

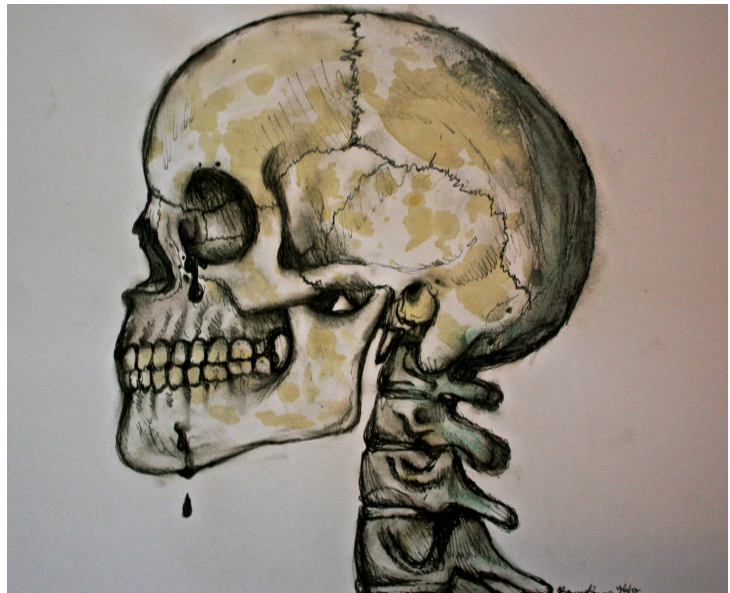
In the southeast, a green-yellow glow rises over the horizon.

"It's not the same," says Su-Eun. The time for pragmatism has gone. The time for planning, preserving, predicting has gone. She will choose between now and nearly-now, but she will choose. She crosses the room to where the cold air comes in and for a moment, hesitates, looking out the window at the nine-story drop. Then she extends her hand, tentatively, and feels a wash of relief when Kyung-Hi takes it.

The final bomb sizzles over them, erasing the moment of their fall.

Chasmodai is a fourth year student majoring in Russian Studies and is a student of the Kidd Tutorial Program.

Anatomical Inspiration



Black pen and chalk

*Kaylee
Kotkins*

Black pen, blue oil pastel, and coffee



Title Soon
to Come

*Kaylee is a junior majoring
in Human Physiology. This
is her first publication.*

The Crossing of the Grand Canyon

Colby Schnackenberg

The sun had just begun to stretch its luminous limbs across the desert sands when we arrived at the eastern rim. We marched over the already scorching highways, whose lanes were congested with expensive gas-guzzling RVs and weekend ramblers. We marched past the hordes of tourists with their newly acquired digital cameras and their white noses blanketed with sunscreen. We knew we were close when our naked toes felt the asphalt turn to sand, and in the sand we found ourselves walking over cigarette butts, bottle caps, and abandoned pennies. Just beyond the barricade of policeman and park rangers we gazed—for the very first time in our lives—into the great chasm of the Grand Canyon.

For three months, our pilgrimage had advanced slowly across the Northern Arizona desert beneath a cloud of condors, who were never far behind the young Navajo prophet, Tsintah Capparack. She was the most beautiful of the villagers; a young woman of seventeen years of age who radiated an imperial aura. She began walking the day of her birth (some say that before she was born, Tsintah would leave the womb as her mother slept and walk around in the night, always returning before morning), and the village had followed her ever since.

The Navajo people had agreed to follow her out of the reservation when she claimed a great filth-winged eagle emerged from a rusty garbage dumpster. Its paper feathers produced such a gale of wind upon its conjuration that even standing atop the long parched fountain,

Tsintah's contact lenses were peeled off her corneas. "A great Eagle whispered in my ear!" she proclaimed scrambling back to the town in the center of town she recited the words of her trash-born prophet. "We will walk two hundred and twenty-nine miles to the Grand Canyon, the land of our ancestors, and when we get to the cliff's edge we will step off. Our feet will be as the dust, and we will tread upon clouds; our people will reign over this holy land once again. The air will support us."

The caravan's movement was slow. Four hours walking in the morning, when the sun was still low in the sky, and four hours in the evening when our shadows grew long and weary like the cactus. During the day, we rested in whatever shade we could find, which was often none. We advanced at the pace of the slowest of the pilgrims and were subject to infinite delays, sickness of the elderly, insubordination of children, and the constant harassment of local authorities. If we walked nine miles a day, it was a blessing.

The first death happened on the thirty-seventh day. It was the fifth week of our pilgrimage, and it was clear that the people's vigor was flagging. Corn rations were running low, and what little water we had (which was highly acidic) was harvested from hollowed out cacti. Even our tear ducts had run dry. The boy never woke up from his afternoon nap. When the pilgrims found him, his skin was as cracked and fissured as the dry lakebed they slept on. Vultures were never far behind.

After a funeral was held for Ashkii, the dead boy, an atmosphere of mutiny fell upon our caravan. The ground was much too arid for a burial, so the boy was covered with a blanket. "We are not a primitive tribe, we are a modern people!" shouted Yanisin, the eldest of the tribe. "We know that people die in the desert, that gods do not talk to teenaged girls, and that people cannot walk upon the sky." He spoke with the calmness of a lake. "We must stop this absurdity." Tsintah remained silent as she glared at the shrouded corpse.

"Your mind is rotten old man," yelled a pregnant woman from the congregation. "It's rotten; eaten away by jealousy of a prophet much greater than yourself."

"This pilgrimage is suicide for our people!" The steadiness in Yanisin's voice was wavering.

Tsintah finally spoke up. "If you do not have faith in the gods," she clenched sand tightly in her fist and watched the grains fall between her turquoise nail polish and into infinity, "then the gods will have no faith in you. And you will fall."

We continued walking. After passing through small towns and blocking traffic on state highways, the story of the Navajo village that planned on walking over the Grand Canyon reached the entire country. By our tenth week of travel, we were being stopped by journalists, local businessmen who wanted us to march with sandwich-board advertisements, and politicians fishing for votes. Foreign tourists found the romanticism of the West in our dusty wake. The people of the world watched us as children watch car races: just waiting for an inevitable crash. They were hypnotized by our exodus, the swarm of condors that followed overhead, and the beautiful young Tsintah who led our parade of misery. She was famous now. Her portrait—taken in an air-conditioned studio—could be seen on the cover of *Time Magazine*, the *New York Times*, and even advertisements on the sides of buses.

And here we were at the eastern rim of the great rip in the earth, surprised that even

after all the media publicity our expedition had received, the crowd was no bigger than a normal day at the nation's grandest national park. However, the authorities had taken precautions. Traffic was diverted, people were corralled, and cameras were aimed. It looked as though nearly a hundred people had appeared to watch us defy gravity.

From the back of our herd, I could see Yanisin using two village men as a crutch; he was no longer strong enough to support himself. All of the travelers had grown weak; they had been harvested and husked by Tsintah. Yanisin was angry that he had let the mysticism of the girl infect his people, as well as himself. Approaching the edge of the cliff, our group hesitated with each step and our doubt sapped our strength. With all the cameras focused on us we became insects under a magnifying glass: burning. It now felt obvious that we were simply walking behind Tsintah rather than following her in the true sense of the word. I wondered how many would actually make those final steps to the brink of our enterprise.

"What now, our goddess Tsintah?" Yanisin shouted, gathering just enough strength to conjure up his voice. "You have taken us, and here we are at the threshold of existence and extinction, but there is still one giant gaping question mark: The abyss that lies before us. Where are your gods now?"

Just then, the throng of condors formed a large dark cloud of feathers that hovered just beyond the edge on which Tsintah was standing. Flying in a chaotic pattern, they became a silhouette of a seraphic being. A thousand and one black flapping wings filled the sky concealing the sun, and we stood in the darkness. "Take a moment everyone, to look within you," Tsintah announced, "This abyss is our souls. When we are open, we can transcend the darkness. In openness, we can receive infinity."

But I don't think any of the cameras or the reporters heard her, because at that moment the condors diffused and dived into the Grand Canyon. All at once, we followed and took our first steps.

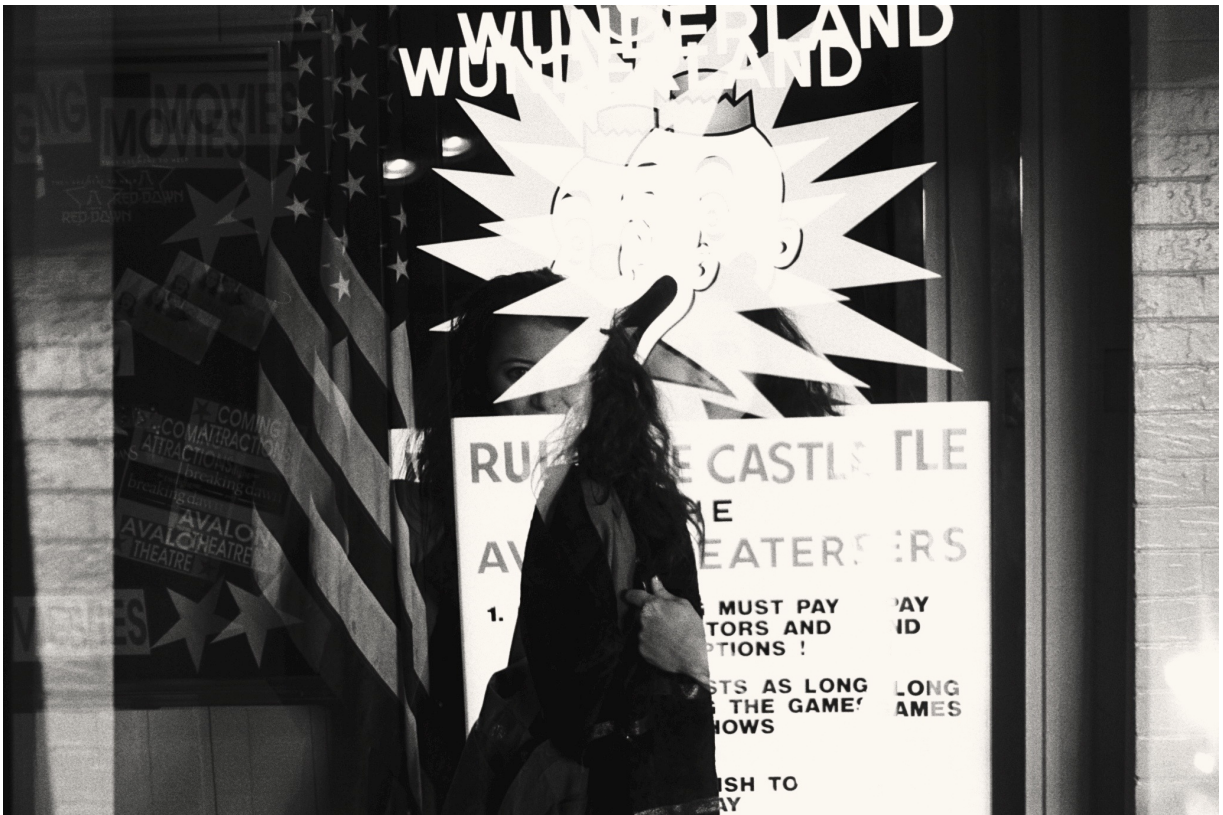
Halle Chapman-Taylor



Collage Medical

Mixed Media Collage

35mm
Canon
AE-1
Double Exposed self



Consignment
Store, Bend

35mm
Canon AE-1

*Halle is a junior studying
Spanish and Political Science.*

Reeder Road

Anna Tomlinson

It opened up
to wheat fields, light gold
in every direction, stretching
to the cottonwoods on the bank
of the river, and up to the mountains,
still snow-capped and shining
against the pure azure sky.

Every day I ran out this road,
past my old elementary school,
the blueberry stand where I worked three summers,
the dock where I sculpted birds from river clay.
I meant to stop at the last house on the corner,
but every day the wide open fields
drew me in.

I knew if I ran long enough
chasing the rhythmic crush of gravel
I would reach the granite sands
of Willow Bar, Walton Beach.

I remembered 80-degree afternoons
when my family would pack up and drive
until froth and pool greeted us,
until we clambered down the shifting slope,
sand claiming our flip-flops,
sudden wind lifting our hair.

Long, basalt beach. Twisted driftwood.
Tinted water lapped the smooth shore,
stirring gold specks into light

like the grain lazying in the wind.
I felt I could move outward forever—
gold sand, gold grain, gold hair—
but each time I had to turn back
though my mind remained
straining
toward that vast open light.

*Anna is a senior majoring in English. She has
been previously published in Unbound.*

Hatched

(Memories,
Years Later)

Anna Tomlinson

Returning home, the woman's feet remember
the orchard's rough grass and cushioned moss.

*The little girl gripped an apple in each hand—
warm from sunshine, pink with sweetness—
and, grinning, took a bite. Apple froth
and saliva wetted the fruit's crisp surface.*

In abundance, the apples rot under the tree—
honeyed pyres, fermenting,
crawling with yellow jackets.
Summer is in its final heat, heaving and sighing
with labor, delivering the burden of the sun's seed
to the abandoned fields.
Amidst the vinegar, the woman gathers
the firmest apples. A butterfly hovers near.

*Carrying a net made of potato sack and pole,
the little girl chased through the tall field grass,
eyes fixed on a monarch butterfly.
The creature rose out of reach,
regal in burnt saffron and black.*

The butterfly perches to suck the swollen nectar
from the mouth of a velvet snapdragon,
clinging to the pollen-covered stamen.
Her wings open and close
like the beat of a slow heart,
taking in the flower, milking it, patiently.
Her soft body quivers in new pleasure

and the woman feels where her wings should be—
angled scapula under newly softened skin—

*The light was waning and above the moon rose.
The forest suddenly grew impenetrable,
each shape hiding its true self,
and the little girl shut her eyes, hugging
her arms to her thin shoulder blades.*

The woman lies down to the rough grass,
wingless,
embracing the brutal, beautiful Earth,
feeling the tug of Summer on her womb.

Sarah Richards



Natasha

Watercolor

Point Pleasant



Watercolor and pen

Gender

*Ink, coffee, ground
flowers, various plants*

*Sarah is a senior
majoring in Art. She
has been previously
published in the
January and
February issues of
Muse Zine
Magazine and on
the site Hello
Poetry. More of her
art and poetry can
be found at
[www.sarahrichards
art.webs.com](http://www.sarahrichardsart.webs.com).*



Smile

Ryan Mills

when she arrived
he was not there

and the sirens of red and blue
spun fables of freedom
as bags were zipped
over faces of limp bodies—

corrupted only by
cavities from Halloween
and bedtime stories
with happy endings

she stood at the edge of her world
and watched herself fall off

and the napkin
she packed in his lunch
read
“Smile”

and she hoped he did.

*Ryan is a sophomore majoring in Philosophy. He
has been previously published in the New York
literary magazine, The Theory of Everything.*

A Letter to the Editor

Ryan Mills

Dear *Maxim*,
you have attained
goat-stretched plastic perfection;
like toy dolls staring
from windows of Walmart.
packaged and sealed,
ready to deliver
to the pack-a-day, six-pack-an hour
beer-gut busted loner.

they might not ever feel
the warmth of a woman's breath
on their cheek,
or the clutching heat
that a kiss leaves behind

but for \$2.50
they can spend
a curtain-drawn night
in the complete comfort
of the fully colored
printed pages
of prostituted lies.

so long as they pay
the subscription on time,
continue to tether beauty
to bathroom walls
and dirty napkins
with breasts of in-authenticity.

we will be waiting in line,
the winter catalogue
won't disappoint.
-R

The Red Lady

Sarah Piper

I've come to an impasse. I think I may be the kind of person who comes upon them easily. I'm not bold enough to be forward or inventive, but I'm far too honest to ignore the problem. So here I sit, looking at the man whom I have tried to love. With the entire dinner table between us, I let my thoughts fill the space that seems to get larger every night and with every glass of wine. My mind wanders, but not too far. Straying from the path is dangerous. My finger plays with the rim of the wine glass and a shiver runs down my spine as it squeaks. John raises his eyes just far enough above his evening newspaper to convey his annoyance, but my interruption is not enough to stop his incessant foot tapping.

"Nearly as bad as nails on a chalkboard," he says.

"Yes, I was thinking exactly the same thing," I say.

Long ago, I would walk down the streets in our village just to watch the eyes follow me longingly. I had plump rosy cheeks from the cold; my hair was always down so everyone could see it sway as I walked. I wore rich dark furs and smiled sweetly at the men who passed. Men would come to our house to call, but I was still too young for a formal proposal. After my father left, the money was gone and we moved. No one longed for my life anymore and the suitors disappeared as quickly as the furs.

He is a frail, fidgety sort of person, the kind of person who seems to fidget with great purpose. His timing is impeccable and a distinct

rustle of our cheap low-pile carpet beautifully orchestrates each small move I make. I try to focus on my chewing amidst the obnoxious noise, but the second he stops to read something of great interest in the paper — he lets out a big sigh and starts up again with renewed energy.

He always waits far too long to eat his food and I can see the displeasure cross his face as he bites into the cold meatloaf. I know he blames me and that gives me an odd sort of pleasure. He looks at me, but I pretend to be enamored by my own slow and meticulous consumption of every last pea on my plate. Slowly and noisily, he edges his chair backwards along the carpet. As he makes his way to the microwave, my eyes follow his thin figure and I can't help but think of my life with someone else.

He was good man—I know exactly what I was thinking when I agreed to marry him, because I wrote it down for future reference. The note said something about security and our mothers being happy. The spot where I had erased the words "You married him because you love him and you always will" made me laugh every time I saw it, but after a few years of marriage, the humor was gone and I threw the note away.

"So, if your life is so unbearable, why did you agree to marry him so quickly?" my sister once asked. "I remember that evening you said yes to him, but I was too young to realize that you should have been smiling."

“Because I thought that this was the most bearable option of all,” I said. “Who knows, maybe it was. Maybe I’m the luckiest girl in the world and I just don’t know it yet.”

“Oh, come now. No need to be so dark about it,” she said.

I noticed how haggard he looked as I was walking down the aisle of my mother’s favorite cold, gray church in East Kent. He looked like a child in their older siblings’ hand-me-downs that did not fit quite right. I wanted to be mad at him for not shaving the morning of the ceremony and for being a little hungover at the reception, but it wasn’t worth it. I remember wondering if he had put more effort into his first wedding. Of course he had, judging by the photos of her he still cherishes in what I’m sure he fondly imagines is his secret desk drawer. His salt-and-pepper hair was bright as the light fought its way through the stained glass windows. His eyes darted, never meeting my gaze. I wanted him to challenge me; I wanted him to give me a reason to walk out the door. I was yearning for resistance and change and excitement, but it all faded away as the pastor started talking.

I dream of him holding me and telling me that I am exactly what he needs. I want to feel what it’s like when someone longs to hold my hand and watch my long brown hair flutter as the wind wisps around it. I have been cared and longed for, but I have never had someone cherish me.

I always try to pretend that this person in my dreams has no face and no name and no personality, but I can picture him perfectly.

In my head, I see someone who looks strikingly like my husband, but his body moves with rhythmic liquidity and his smile is contagious. This man is also married, but that is trivial. I know he looks at me the same way I look at him; he always has. This is the point where my mind starts to wander, and I hate myself for considering the truth.

Suddenly, I am back at the long table as John shuffles into the room, proudly holding the steaming plate of leftovers. I can’t help but roll my eyes at his sense of accomplishment. He hates it when I roll them; my large hazel eyes are the perfect weapon and I use them regularly to remind him of my indifference.

Sarah is a junior majoring in Women's Studies. This is her first publication.

Dating Pantoum

We chase the gods inside us,
because at unknown games we play.
No rules of fire to guide us;
we burn our bodies as we pray.

Because at unknown games we play,
with reckless eyes, we grasp a hold.
We burn our bodies as we pray
to watch the ritual unfold.

With reckless eyes, we grasp a hold
those maps of wounded flesh,
to watch the ritual unfold,
that gods within us bless.

Those maps of wounded flesh
are signs that we lie by,
that gods within us bless,
but we choose to deny.

Are signs that we lay by
seen spread out in the dark?
While we choose to deny,
and mutilate the heart?

Lorra Jones

Seen spread out in the dark
scars gently fade away,
yet mutilate the heart
while demons run astray.

Scars gently fade away
to watch the ritual unfold
While demons run astray
with reckless eyes, we grasp a hold.

To watch the ritual unfold,
we burn our bodies as we pray.
With reckless eyes, we grasp a hold
because at unknown games we play.

We burn our bodies as we pray
no rules of fire to guide us
Because at unknown games we play
we chase the gods inside us.

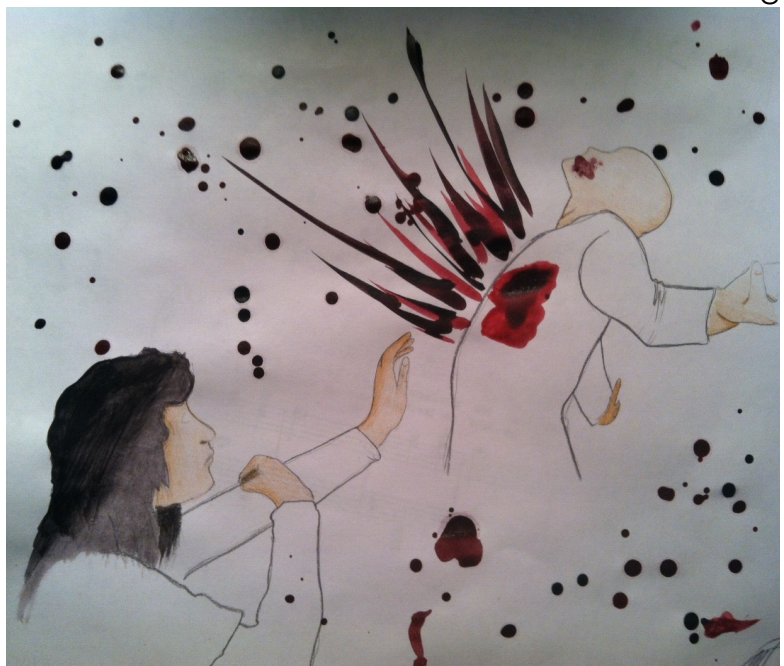
Lorra is a junior majoring in English. This is her first publication. This was the winning poem in Unbound's My Bloody Valentine themed contest.

Cupid's Fire

Megan Prehm

Megan is an undeclared freshman. This is her first publication. This was the winning art piece in Unbound's My Bloody Valentine themed contest.

Painting



My Bloody Valentine

Neil Davidson

She often felt as though her voice had been taken from her, as though some force had snuck into the deep of her and taken the sound of herself from her, and it was on such a day that she saw the strangest of sights in the January frost which glittered across her open-windowed room—the result of his passive aggressive sabotage from their fight. She shivered.

“Asshole,” she muttered. She was reaching to close the window when a small bird, startlingly blue against the grey and white of the snow and ice world outside, landed on her windowsill in the heart of winter. The bird was singing spring and chirping with a light-hearted diligence to the season, and, as she gazed on him, the young woman marveled at the strangeness of his appearance, until he once more flitted away into the grey-splotched luminescent reds and purples just outside her reach. And the day reached a close.

Her name was Susan, and she was in love with a man named Jason. It had not always been like this frostbitten room between the two of them. They had known better days, but all that was left of those days was quivering wordlessness and voices chirping in empty rooms.

“Jason?” Susan’s voice called out low and not-quite gravelly into the morning, but he wasn’t home. The white walls seemed to expand outwards despite the varied frames and mirrors attempting to splash color into her eye and narrow her world into a focused sort of love once more.

She had met Jason in rural Nebraska

one summer. In the evening, she had loved to watch the prostration of the green corn stalks beneath the weight of the yellow ears sheathed in green and transparent hair—an obedience demanded by maturation as far as she could see, and from the height of her vantage point on an empty wooden patio he had seen her. Stopping on the beaten dirt path, he had gazed up at her, but she looked on unseeing.

That man, with his short dark hair, was obscured by his nearness to her as she gazed so far off, but the next day he saw her in town walking into a grocery store. He stopped her from entering, and convinced her to let him buy her a coffee. For the next four hours, they had been enshrouded in blissful speech, and her groceries lay forgotten.

But this was not that day anymore, and the apartment lay empty. She roused herself from the warm blankets and looked at the bed, half distraught by the unconscious flailing of limbs and half immaculately cold to the touch. Susan quickly made up her side of the bed, straightening the wrinkled frenzy of cloth.

“Where are you, Jason?” Susan asks no one.

A soft tapping at the window answers her, and she looks again upon the small blue bird in astonishment. He sits on the outer sill, patiently flaps his cerulean wings, and rhythmically taps his answer.

Tap-tap-tap-pause. Tap-tap-tap pause.

She stared, amazed, at the reappearance of the small creature. His head bobbed forward, autonomous toward the glass as if separate from the winged body.

Tap-tap-tap-pause.

The noise seemed almost to echo within the empty apartment. She stood frozen, though the room was well-heated, until a quavering, hesitant chirp wrested itself from the bird. Susan’s voice was still caught in her throat, but her hand was freed from paralysis and reached slowly, as if remembering how to move, toward the lock of the window. The hand unlocked and opened the way for the bird, who jumped with a charming politeness of spirit into the warmth. He sang, and she sat listening to his voice, enraptured.

When Jason was younger, he had been a musician, and he held himself with the certain solemn repose of those who believe themselves to be true artists. There was a sense of greatness and destiny that he found himself indebted to by his very posture. Susan liked this idea; it struck her as romantic. Soon after they returned from Nebraska together, he would stay up at night, often far later than anticipated by either of them, and would strum quietly on the guitar and hum half-known melodies while she lay against his shoulder, tucked behind the neck of the guitar. It looked almost as if the instrument was guarding her.

She woke on that February morning, and the guitar lay propped against the white wall. The case, like an opened mausoleum, was on the ground next to the instrument—both silently sitting. Jason had come home last night, but hadn't woken her. There was something that clutched at the inside of her chest having pieced all of this together. They weren't her songs anymore that Jason sang. Susan wondered what inspired him now that she was no longer his muse. Halfhearted flurries of snow outside continued to fall, unnoticed by Susan.

It was a morning—any morning, and Susan sat on the couch, hapless and distracted. She was still in her pajamas, but nothing could be done. A hollow had formed in her sternum, and she sat captivated by the sense of unfeeling somehow contained in her. There was nothing to be done for it. She kept expecting a younger Jason to jump through the door.

"Come on!" he would say, that smile that used to beam from somewhere deep inside of him, bursting with unbridled energy on his face.

"I don't know..." Susan would say, delaying, but Jason would grab her wrist and gently, insistently, pull her to her feet. The corners of her mouth would twitch upward and she would run off into nothing, carried by his spontaneous energy.

Jason is older now. His smile, when it

surfaces at all from cloudy obscurity, is like a home that had the power turned off after not paying the bill for too many months.

What did I do wrong? Susan wonders. *That bird from the other day. I wish that it would come back. I wish that there was someone here with me.*

The little bird came to her often after that morning, as if he had heard her wish. Her home rang with coos and chirps and daily song over the passing weeks, and Susan found her heart leaping at the sound of that rhythmic tapping. A small sack of birdseed lay beneath the kitchen sink, which she would pour into a small dish and set beside the bird. Slowly, Jason was becoming a forgotten artifact of a different time, and Susan was happy once more. She found herself humming a little tune as she brushed her teeth or put away dishes or made her cold bed. The sky was clear and blue, but with the biting cold to it, and she rarely left her home. On such occasions, she returned quickly so she could sing once more.

Susan fumbled with her keys against the lock, one leg raised up as a prop for the brown bag of assorted breads and meats, until finally with a barely perceived click the door was opened to her. He was waiting for her.

Tap-tap-tap-pause.

She quickly placed the bag of groceries on a table, and sprang to the window to open it for her beloved guest. He hopped in and extended his head forward to her caress. He began to sing as she poured the dish of seed for him, and murmured a thank you, which only she would have been able to discern in the midst of the song. The bird paused his expression long enough to eat a couple of seeds. Susan, seeing him comfortable and relaxed, walked to the kitchen to put away the groceries, humming softly. The bluebird, hearing her tune, caught it, and threw it back to her. She stopped her humming and listened, a smile on her face.

A sudden slamming of the door shocks Susan out of her reverie and she hears his voice:

"Why the fuck is there a bird in here?"

Jason steps in, and immediately the song ceases, and the bluebird flees, camouflaged in the sky. Jason closes the window. "What the hell are you thinking, Susan? Letting a bird in to shit all over the place."

She says nothing, but only looks up at his rough silhouette. The evening continues on in empty silence. Jason says nothing else, but leaves the room and plays a song about something that is not Susan while she sits on their bed quietly crying.

Jason is gone again in the morning, and the bluebird doesn't return to his usual spot upon the sill. It's Valentine's Day, and a heaviness settles on Susan in the pervasive silence. She tries to hum a melody, but it is stifled inside of her, and the noise never finds the strength to reach beyond her own ear. The white spaces of the walls seem stifling to her, and she flees from their oppressive absence of color. She flies down the three stories of stairs, her feet barely scraping over the rough edges of wood in her flurry to leave the narrowing hallways.

Susan bursts out of the door, and her lungs expand gratefully in the open air. A spark of color catches her eye as a car passes. A small bird, startling in the vivaciousness of his

blueness, attempts to dart across the street but is clipped by the blur of the passing vehicle.

She sees the tumbling blue mixed with red fall to the cruelly painted asphalt. His right wing twitches again and again, mimicking the rhythm of flight, while his unsightly body continues to bleed from his slightly parted beak.

Close your mouth, she thinks. *You can't die with your mouth open.*

Looking back and forth, and seeing no one, she runs to the helpless form. She cradles him gently to avoid causing him further pain. The small, beady eyes look up at her, but she doesn't know whether they see her. She wonders if he believes his weakly beating wing is truly in flight.

"Close your mouth, little Valentine," she says.

He looks up at her, pleading, and she understands what it is that he wants.

"I can't," she says apologetically. "It's just too hard."

A tear dripped from her eye onto the bird, but it failed to wash the blood off of him or off of her hand. She lay her bloody little Valentine that day into a gutter to die slowly, his neck unbroken.

No one spoke again for Susan after the day the bluebird died.

Neil is a junior majoring in English. This is his first publication. This was the winning fiction piece in Unbound's My Bloody Valentine themed contest.



The background of the page is a photograph of a misty, foggy landscape. In the foreground, there is a dark, silhouetted line of what appears to be wooden posts or stumps. Behind them, a dense forest of evergreen trees is visible, their details softened by the thick fog. The sky is a pale, uniform grey, blending into the mist. The overall mood is quiet and atmospheric.

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