

**UNBOUND
UNBOUND
UNBOUND
UNBOUND
UNBOUND
UNBOUND
UNBOUND
JOURNAL**

VOL XI ISSUE III | SPRING 2020

Instagram: @unboundjournal
Contact: unboundjournal@uoregon.edu

Unbound Journal is run exclusively by undergraduate students and biannually publishes the prose, poetry, and visual art of students at the University of Oregon. Submissions are selected for publication by editorial board members through a double-blind review process.

We receive funding from the Associated Students of the University of Oregon and the English Department.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

There is a “new normal” these days and it’s been a struggle for many college students. The switch to online learning, some of us moving back home to live with our families, the constant fear of virus spread. But also, the inability to meet with our friends, peers, campus groups in person. At Unbound, we have had to resort to a barrage of group messages, scheduled Zoom calls, and countless emails. The digital nature makes everything feel a little more difficult to schedule. Additionally, our Spring publication comes during a time of civil crisis. In the wake of the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police officers, rightful protests have been sweeping across the country and the world. Everything is changing around us, hopefully for the better.

The pandemic and protests make it feel very weird to be proceeding with publications as normal. It feels strange to say “here’s some cool writing to read” when there has been social unrest for months. But at the same time, it feels so important to connect with our community these days. To feel some semblance of closeness with others, when social orders are so different now. We especially need to take time to connect our school community and appreciate the unique talents of those people. We need to celebrate the voices of young authors around us. They are inspiring, insightful, and the voices of our future. Hopefully, you will read this issue and understand how important it is to value the work of your peers, friends, classmates.

It has been an honor to work on Unbound as the Editor in Chief this year. I have read so many incredible pieces by students at UO and had the joy of working with a dedicated staff. I would also like to thank everyone who submits to Unbound and those who read it, we would not be anything without you. I hope everyone stays healthy, safe, and connected to their community. It is more important now than ever before.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Olivia Atmore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Olivia Atmore
Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
OLIVIA ATMORE

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
BILLY VON RAVEN

PUBLICITY COORDINATORS
GABE CALKINS
ELLE COLEMAN

SENIOR PROSE EDITORS
DYLAN MARTINS
RORY ALLEN

SENIOR POETRY EDITOR
RYDER MOSBY

COPY EDITOR
KOBY DICKERSON

PROSE EDITORS

GABE CALKINS
LIDA FORD
DANNY LATONI
IAN MILLER
NALLELY RAMIREZ
LUCAS ROSEN
KOBY DICKERSON

POETRY EDITORS

PAIGE BAUTISTA
ELLE COLEMAN
BILLY VON RAVEN

FACULTY ADVISOR
CORBETT UPTON

CONTENTS

AUBADE	9
Katherine Wilson	
HIDDEN BY SUMMER VEGETATION	10
Nichole Gould	
FABLE	11
Tom Fischer	
TWO FUNERALS	12
Kaity Olsen	
IT WENT ON LIKE THAT	22
Nichole Gould	
SAILING	25
Anna Pearl Johnson	
MOLASSES	26
Ilse Stacklie-Vogt	
PIT STAIN	28
Ivy Long	
MIRAGE	32
Nichole Gould	
WOMEN AND MAN ON A BED	34
Ilse Stacklie-Vogt	
ALL SINNERS DIE A SAINT IN APACHE JUNCTION	36
Delaney Thompson	

AUBADE

Katherine Wilson

At dawn, Buckwheat woke me without alarm
Paws pouncing on the Screen door of an Indian summer
Arriving me on time to the Chemawa Indian School gym
Fringe whirling and singing in high harmony
The Nez Perce Washat 7 drum Ceremony

I spoke into the Circle breathless
Of the hundreds of Geese I just saw flying
Spelling “Blanket of the Sun” in the sky, a Hieroglyphic and
Then just as suddenly as I tried to decipher them
Became Arrows pointing North and East

Later around the table of after-church-food-franchise
Chief Joseph’s Great Grandson Dream Keeper Roy Hayes
joined my hands with the 7 drums and sang a song LOUD
Honored me with Blessings of the Nez Perce Bell
And the Shari’s Restaurant after-church-clatter went absolutely still

HIDDEN BY SUMMER VEGETATION

Nichole Gould

off the trafficked
potholed road
I saw the sofa chair

vomiting mustard
foam an insect
pine needle
throne

harbinger
of lulled anamnesis
pulmonary smog

last winter thrown
released from deadened
fingers into snow

as if it was not a hearth
but shorn wallpaper
soaked paper mache

chain-linked outcast
with coke-fizzing musk
driven by

seen again through torch-
black window glass

FABLE

Tom Fischer

寓言

从前有个矿工
担着石头去海岸，
当了麻雀。

四海被填，
但麻雀看不到
石下的黄花。

Fable

Once there was a miner
Who carried stone to the sea
And became a sparrow.

The four seas were filled,
But the sparrow could no longer
See the yellow flowers below.

TWO FUNERALS

Kaity Olsen

When she is six, she watches from across the garden as the cat snatches a pretty blue bird from the sky. She is too slow, running on thin, short legs, to stop its claws sinking into the creature's tiny, fluttering heart. For a long time she stares at its broken body, a mess of blood and feathers, at the broken wing that hangs limp and awkward across its breast. The cat watches from beneath a bush, its tail flicking languidly as she cradles the crushed mass of feathers between her palms. It deserves a proper burial, she thinks, as all things do. Although her mother helps, finding a shoe box and lining it with soft tissue, gently lowering the creature into the white folds, her father scolds them for bringing a dead animal inside. He does not come to the funeral. Her brother clutches her hand tightly with thick, stubby fingers, palm sticky with the remnants of a cherry popsicle. She cries so hard she can't read the poem she'd written for the service, breath shaking and stuttering in her chest, hiccuping in her throat, as loss, for the first time in her short life, settles in under her skin.

When the call from the hospital comes she does not cry. She stands, alone, in the dark of an Applebee's parking lot and watches through the wide windows as her friends swallow brightly colored drinks. The woman on the other end of the line keeps talking but her voice is muffled (muffled, like her brother's voice as he sat along the concrete rim of the pool, calling to her through the cool clear water. She would sink like a stone to the bottom, tip her head back and watch the light catch on the ripples of the surface). She asks the woman to repeat herself, again, and she must make these calls often because she does so without complaint. On the Uber ride to the hospital she sees a text from one of

her friends asking where she is and realizes she left without saying goodbye, without paying, without taking her wallet or coat. None of this seems important.

It is as they are leading her to a bright white room that she thinks to ask how they got her number. One of the doctors (she assumes this woman is a doctor) looks up at her and says she was the emergency contact in his phone. She thinks this is strange. The fluorescent lights make the doctor's skin appear sickly blue, like the blood has been drained from her face. In a tiny room without windows they pull back a thin sheet from over her father's head and shoulders. They ask if it is him and she says no, then yes, then sorry, then yes, it is him. They nod, like this is normal, like any of this is normal. Like they do this all the time. She supposes they probably do.

Looking down at her father's face she is frightened by how unfamiliar it is. Something about death, she decides, changes the face, transforming the first man she ever knew into a stranger, a mannequin, a poor imitation. Or maybe it has more to do with the way one of his cheeks has swollen like a balloon, his nose crooked and bulging, the deep purples and yellows that bloom along the left side of his face. Maybe it's the thick gash, curved like a fish hook, splitting the skin at his forehead and curling beneath his right eye.

Sitting on the curb of the hospital, waiting for her ride, she wonders if she should feel afraid considering what she has just seen. But, when the car pulls up in front of her the fear does not come, so she climbs in and slides the seatbelt into the clip with a dull click. She watches as cars zip past and thinks of a red

Audi, her father's, flipped on its back like some bizarre tortoise, the sheets of metal that used to act as the left-side doors crushed, crumpled in on themselves like an empty coke can. She wonders if he'd been awake and for how long. If he'd tried to call for help as he lay there, drowning as his blood filled his lungs. If he'd been drinking. If it mattered.

It isn't until the next morning that it occurs to her that she is supposed to make the calls. For some reason that hadn't come to mind the night before, and she wonders if she should feel guilty for hoarding the information. How long is she supposed to wait? Who do you call first?

Her brother is in his car when he picks up the phone, the sound of his voice distant and distorted. He can barely hear her, makes her say it twice. He's dead, she says, Dad's dead. She listens to the static of her brother's breathing over the line, picking at a bit of chipped polish on her nails. He is quiet so long she plants her forehead against the cool surface of the kitchen counter and listens, waiting.

Finally, a shaky exhale, then... you're serious? She says yes, and he asks how, then when, then why didn't you call last night, and she says I don't know, and he asks serious? You're really being serious? And then nothing for a while more. He asks if she wants him to make the other calls and she feels adoration swell almost painfully within her. She wishes for him to be with her now. For him to hold her hand.

When she hangs up she is by herself, in her apartment. In the quiet. She turns on the tv and turns up the volume.

Perhaps their family has been blessed with long life, or perhaps her parents couldn't be bothered to take them, but she can't think of another funeral she's been to. Surely some of them have died, her Grandpa Jack, for one, but if there had been a service she hadn't been there.

As such, the only black dress she can dig out is skimpily low-cut, a size and a half too small now, that she has refused to throw out for sentimental reasons. That, and the hope that one day she can fit into it again, although it's been some time since she went out in dresses like that.

The mall is close but expensive, so she drives to the tiny thrift store downtown instead. She wonders if it is disrespectful to go for the cheap option in buying a funeral dress, but isn't sure who would care enough to say so. Her father isn't there to complain.

Her hopes weren't high, given the size of the selection available, but as she runs her fingers between sequined miniskirts and a cancer awareness shirt dated to 2011, she finds something black with lace. She tries it on.

The dressing room is cramped and she knocks her elbow into the wall pulling the fabric over her head. The delicate lace sleeves scratch uncomfortably at her wrists, raising an irritated patch of red skin. It's not comfortable, not particularly flattering, but those things seem inconsequential. Maybe you're supposed to be uncomfortable.

At the funeral, as distant family who haven't spoken to her father in years press around her, wrap her in tight embraces, insist how very sorry they are, she does not cry. Her brother, who has flown in all the way from Chicago,

stands at the podium. His droopy eyes are wet as he tells a story about a time they had gone fishing together. He tells how he had started to reel in the most beautiful catfish (she thinks of dead eyes and gaping mouths and a mottled gray body and wonders how such a thing could be beautiful) but it had been too large, too heavy, and he'd almost been pulled over the side before their father grabbed him, letting the rod and fish disappear into the murky water. He tells them how tightly their father had held him, then. How when he asked why he let it go, their father insisted that nothing was as important as he was. Beside her, a cousin whose name she doesn't know hiccups a sob into her tissue.

After, she pulls him aside, asks why he lied. She'd been there that day, miserable as she waited along the marshy bank with their mother. He tried to save the fish, she insisted, you fell in the water, you cried for weeks. The look he gives her is strange, and she thinks maybe he really believes this version he has spun for himself, of a father who hugged his son close, and she thinks how nice that must be.

Her grandmother clasps her hands. Her fingers are gnarled, twisted by years of arthritis, thick and veiny. People knock into her shoulder as they pass, trying to squeeze between them and a table draped in a plastic white tablecloth, laden with a soggy fruit platter and two boxes of cheap, store-bought cookies. She pulls a hand away to scratch at her wrist.

Her grandmother tells her I'm so sorry, and I know you two had a difficult relationship, and I always told him to reach out to you, and it really ate him up inside, did you know that? She pulls the other hand away, tries to smile,

thinks about how some things run in families. Wonders if her grandfather ever drank, if he ever hit, if her grandmother had said anything, if she'd stopped him. Wonders what they had done to her father for him to turn out like that. She knows this isn't very fair. She doesn't really care. Excuses herself to the bathroom.

Another relative stops her, a cousin this time, in front of the enormous black and white photo of her father. It was taken on a trip with her mother a few years before her birth, a romantic getaway, maybe. His grin is stretched, huge, across the canvas. Her cousin says your dad was such a great guy, says that summer I came to help paint your house was one of my favorites, says he made us lemonade with real lemons and extra sugar. She doesn't care, doesn't care about the lemons or the heat or the garage sale they ran. She wants to tell her cousin that they didn't know him, really, that she felt like she was going crazy because, apparently, she is the only one who knew him at all.

Instead she politely worms her way out of her grip and runs to the bathroom, shuts herself in a stall, locks the door and pulls her knees up to her chest on the toilet bowl so maybe no one will see her, and then maybe she won't exist anymore, and maybe, maybe things might make sense again.

Later, sandwiched between her aunt with a nose like a beak and a beer-bellied uncle, she listens to her father's many siblings share stories. Her brother keeps glancing her way, clearly hoping she'll contribute, but she can't seem to grasp onto a memory clear enough to share. Their childhood seems to flick through her mind in a fog; no, not a fog, but maybe a silent film on double

time; the image is there for a second and whisked away. A Scooby-Doo band-aid pasted over a skinned knee, their mother draping a sheet, warm from the dryer, over their giggling forms, mosquitos lining her arms and legs along the banks of the pond, a shattered bottle, bourbon, probably, Sunday cartoons, the way the light danced from the bottom of the pool, a split lip, promising he'd never do it again, gleefully jumping on the cracks of the sidewalk, the smell of sunscreen, her mother's bags at the door, their cat, Charlie, pulling a bird from the sky. A funeral.

The few concrete memories she can conjure up don't seem right to share here, now. She watches as one of her uncles breaks into tears recalling how her father, after he flew halfway across the country for college, would call him most nights. Stay on the phone with him for hours. Talk him down from the ledge when the codeine in their mother's medicine cabinet looked a little too inviting. She wonders if it is easier to give comfort to people far away than to the ones close to you.

Hearing them talk about her father makes her feel uneasy, nauseous. These two men, the one living in her mind and this new, unfamiliar one being conjured in front of her cannot be the same. She thinks of her brother's shaking, dripping form as he dragged himself onto the shore.

Sitting in her car, weeks later, she wonders if, perhaps, in a final great act, her father has taken her ability to cry with him. He would be pleased, she decides, and the part of her that is still desperate for his approval aches for him. In the next second second she thinks of the door slamming behind her mother

and dead birds and her brother's face in the funeral home and tries desperately to conjure up a tear, something to prove that he does not still have this hold over her even in death, that she is finally free. She pinches her arm into pretty blues, blossoms of purple that sting between the tips of her fingers. The fact that she cannot cry makes her want to cry more and she sits, dry-eyed, welcoming the throb of a headache between her eyes.

From the liquor store across the street from her apartment, discreetly shoved between a PetSmart and a Thai-Mexican fusion restaurant, she buys a bottle of bourbon. She can't remember the exact kind he liked, can only conjure up a vague mental image of a black label, so she settles for Jim Beam. It seems as good a choice as any. At home, it occurs to her that she doesn't have the right kind of glass for bourbon and briefly wonders if she should go out and buy one. She pours amber liquid into a mug with a cartoony image of Winnie the Pooh on the side, clad in his red shirt, saying "Oh bother".

Her experience drinking is limited and as the alcohol hits the back of her throat she decides she does not like the taste. Something like rage bubbles under her skin as she stares at the bottle, wincing at the lingering burn that sits heavily in her mouth. That was it? All those years at Jim Beam's beck and call for that? She pours the remains from the mug into the sink then the rest of the bottle after. They both smell like whiskey now, the stench permeating the kitchen and making her gag. There is only a small amount of lavender scented dish soap left in the bottle and she pours a bit of it into the mug and the rest directly into the sink. She scrubs until her hands glow red from the hot water but she

still smell it. She opens the window over the counter and dangles her head and shoulders through, taking in deep gulps of the frigid night air. The faucet digs uncomfortably into her hip bone but she can't get enough air. The taste of Bourbon still lingers on her tongue and from a sudden swoop in her stomach she knows she is going to be sick just in time to pull back inside and get it in the sink.

For a few minutes she leans her forehead against the cold surface of the counter and breathes, slow and even. Then she rises, throws the empty bottle in the trash, brushes her teeth, and goes to bed.

It's in a Starbucks when it finally happens. She isn't much of a coffee drinker, the taste too bitter, even when masked behind all the sugar and milk the baristas put in. At that point it's barely coffee anyway. She doesn't understand the smile her friend is giving her, something crooked and flirty, the glint in her eye suggesting at some secret thing between them, but she doesn't know what. It's as she's taking a sip from her drink (tea, green, with honey) that her friend finally asks if she's been seeing someone. She asks why she thinks that. Apparently she smells like a man.

It is only now that she notices that beneath the overwhelming smell of coffee grounds that hangs in the air there is also pine and something undeniably male. It is without a doubt the smell of her father, and for a wild moment she is convinced that he is standing over her shoulder and her chest seizes up in something like fear before it loosens completely, draining down her limbs through her fingertips.

It's the sweater she's wearing, a horrid mottled green thing with holes around the thumbs and lint gathered under the armpits. She'd grabbed it without thinking, without notice, and it's his, was his, stolen years and years ago from his closet, back when they bothered to spend Christmases together, before they'd lost contact despite living only twenty minutes apart.

She doesn't realize she's crying until her friend points it out, alarmed, afraid, and then she's laughing, and people are starting to press in, to ask if she's okay, but all she can do is laugh and weep and let relief wash over her as the tight thing in her chest, after all this time, releases.

IT WENT ON LIKE THAT

Nichole Gould

My mother said it had to end because of the parties. Maybe I remember some details. My dad behind the bar. The couch covered in men and women. Voices telling a frizzy-haired ten year old how big she's gotten. Cigarette ash on the carpet. Cigarette smoke in the air. Playing cards sprawled over the table. My toys— Littlest Pet Shops and an Easy Bake Oven and Lincoln Logs— piled in a corner. It was so loud there was no noise at all.

I can imagine her clenched teeth when she found out: These weekends are for you to spend time with your daughter.

I used to remember names like that, but now it is pouring honey out of a jar. But I remember Debbie's name like that, a woman I met in my father's hospital room. Her head next to my father's on his pillow, her fingers tracing the flowers that have bloomed around his temples. It's the cancer coming through, she said.

I had a boyfriend who shoveled my dad's driveway once. Snow fell as he shoveled, the sky was black. My father stood on his little concrete porch with a cane in his left hand. I don't need it, he said to my mother, and she said yes, yes you do. The fluorescent lights hummed like bugs, and the shovel made a cracking noise every time it hit the blacktop under the snow.

I have ridden on a motorcycle in a K-Mart parking lot. I hugged my dad's waist as we drove in circles, blades of glass swirling around the eye. I watched rocks get crushed. Slow down, my mother's voice said over the burping engine. Faster! I said. Slow down! she said. It went on like that, until it stopped.

The boyfriend who shoveled my dad's driveway once pinned my wrists to my living room floor and told me how to get out of it. I had to turn my hands a certain way which would release his. We did it enough times so that my wrists were red. They felt as delicate as a bird's neck that would snap if he pressed any harder.

In the grocery store, my mother would slip her arm under my father's to help him walk. He would shake her off every time. He is a stubborn man, she told me after we left him. When people ask about him, I say, stubborn, but I sometimes add, tough.

I am bad at calling people back. My dad called me two weeks before he ended up in the hospital. He left a voicemail. In his hospital room, I looked out the window and saw the snow melting.

It tastes like candy, doesn't it, my dad says on Thanksgiving at the old house while holding a can of jellied cranberry sauce. I try to make cranberry sauce every Thanksgiving now.

Soon after he moved out, I told my dad that I was on my way to Florida with my mother, and when we got back home the next week, her dresser drawers were open and cleared out, photos of her and my dad knocked over on the shelves and nightstand. I remember my mother squeezing the phone with red fingers to her ear.

On the way to Yellowstone last summer, we stopped at a brewery in South Dakota. I told my mother where we landed. She told me that's where she went with my dad for a few years, every year, for the motorcycle

rally. She drove the whole 17 and a half hours on the back of a Harley. While walking in the downtown area, I tried to imagine his boots stepping in the same place my feet did.

When the doctor told us the news, after Debbie had stepped out, my mother said, he had to've known. She shook her head when she said it.

Stubborn, I said.

SAILING

Anna Pearl Johnson

There's a sunken ship in my chest that never goes away anymore. Maybe I'm homesick for myself.

Once upon a time, I was a headstrong, funny kid who fell in love easily. Things weren't always kind to me but life was still sweet-

like a piece of candy stowed away in a pocket, warmed and softened by the friction but not melted, yet.

This picture takes me back to Sister's old house in Montana. I loved pumping the air between my dirty bare toes

and then leaning,

far far upside down

on the swings:

seeing the mountains suddenly jag from the sky, glittery sparks of hay falling from my feet

and dancing across my gaze.

I loved tasting the breath in each breeze, noticing the things it sustained. It fed all the prairie flowers and all the prairie people,

and it fed me.

I processed everything so quickly and purely then, unrestrained I guess by the weight of age.

I had trigger-circuited joy.

Why is it that now, with each bright new day, I feel farther and farther from those swings? Only closer and closer to becoming a sunken ship.

Just resting,

leaning,

still hoping, to one day sail away.

MOLASSES

Ilse Stacklie-Vogt

I used to grind pepper until my muscles burned
Throw my whole weight at cinnamon dough until my wrists ached
Drizzle drops of molasses designs into its intimate crevices
And my mother would say oh honey that smells so good.
I was a toddler of tomato-earth
Used to wrap my chubby pink fingers around rosy plump tubes of water
To keep the tomatoes warm. I would gobble fervently
The cinnamon made its way into my eyes and turned them gold in some places
A fierce reminder that I grew up taller than those tomato plants
Oh honey.
I am desperate for milk but not milk-- molasses
Because without sweet sweet struggle I would be nothing
I am my footsteps and my tired fingers and my unwanted avalanches
of words from the tongue that tasted cloves at every holiday and the mountains
build and
my armor of sticky sweat and fatigued muscles
If I am not that....
Oh honey.
Left behind raspberry kisses on my tummy
Left behind real raspberries flush with summer fuschia on my lips
Who have forgotten and now know only sloppy tongues, slimy lips
The kind of kisses that keep me on defense, playing clean-up-the-wetness
Honey I don't know what you're doing but it doesn't smell sweet.
Not at all like running outside in the street at the first sound of a rainstorm
To spin your own body, race foil boats in the gutter
Chasing alongside little vessels with wild abandon...

Watch me now
Mellow like the coming down of a woman,
Run my tongue over the sharp edges of truth, cold man not at all
Like warm tomatoes,
They have made me bleed, not sweet, salt to make me retch
Now when I pummel questions about my mother into cinnamon dough
My woman's arms ache deep up into my heart
I leave my handprint, on dough, dirt, story
Let the little aromatic scraps thaw
Say I am molasses not honey,
Stronger than you call me.
You did not teach me all the other flavors I would taste in womanhood
But you taught me the earth.

PIT STAIN

Ivy Long

INT. ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY HALLWAY - NIGHT

ELLA (17) and QUINN (17) leisurely meander down the hallway.

Ella is diffident, and carries herself uncertainly. A roll of gaff tape dangles from her belt, and a Leatherman sticks out of her front pocket.

Quinn is a bubbly, maternal, and androgynous nerd.

Both girls wear black sneakers and black jeans. Ella wears a LIGHT GRAY

T-SHIRT, and Quinn wears an oversized BLACK T-SHIRT.

ELLA

You're going to Comic-Con, right?

QUINN

Yeah! Did I tell you I got this amazing cape for my Frodo cosplay?

Ella smiles at Quinn's excitement.

QUINN (CONT'D)

It's very twirly. And my dad's letting me borrow his vest.

ELLA

Cool!

QUINN

Hey--why aren't you wearing black?

Ella looks down at her shirt, and sighs.

ELLA

It was dark this morning. I thought it was black when I grabbed it!

QUINN

You thought light gray was black?

ELLA

It's been a long week!

QUINN

I'm judging you, Ella.

ELLA

Whatever. Do you think I can--

They pass an ACTRESS with stage makeup on and wearing sweatpants over a leotard.

ACTRESS

Hey! Ella! What time are warmups?

ELLA

(glancing at her watch)

Six-forty. So twelve minutes.

ACTRESS

(dashing for the stairwell)

Thank you twelve!

ELLA

So, could we trade shirts tonight or something?

(apologetically)

I can't find anyone with a spare.

Quinn groans.

ELLA (CONT'D)

C'mon, you're just in the catwalks! I'm doing scene changes!

QUINN

Fine.

Quinn stomps away exaggeratedly.

INT. GIRLS' BATHROOM

Ella follows Quinn into the restroom. Ella avoids looking at Quinn as they each remove their shirts.

Quinn nails Ella in the side of the head with her shirt. Ella grins and pointedly tosses her own shirt gently and underhand.

Ella faces the wall as she quickly pulls on Quinn's shirt.

Ella frowns, puzzled, and flaps her arms up and down a couple times. She raises her arm, and notices sweat stains. She smiles softly.

Ella turns around to face Quinn, who gives her a quizzical look.

ELLA

(hesitantly)

Um, the armpits--I can feel your sweat.

(laughing)

It's kind of cold.

Quinn grins and rolls her eyes.

QUINN

Sorry?

Quinn starts to head for the door.

ELLA

Oh, Quinn--

Quinn turns around.

QUINN

Yeah?

ELLA

Just wanted to tell you, um...

Ella pauses. She makes eye contact with Quinn, and steels herself.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Break a leg.

Ella looks defeated.

ELLA (CONT'D)

You're doing a great job.

QUINN

Thanks, capt'n! So are you.

Quinn starts to open the door. Ella urgently searches for something more to say.

ELLA

Are you doing anything tomorrow? Maybe we can hang out before the show or something.

QUINN

Er, I don't know if I can do this weekend. Beth and I are seeing Kingsman!

Quinn exits the bathroom.

ELLA

Again? Oh wow.

Ella follows Quinn out the door, and tries to hide her disappointment.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

QUINN

See you on headset!

Ella waves, and watches Quinn walk down the hall.

Ella looks down at the t-shirt, and fingers the fabric. Her expression is bittersweet.

She walks down the hall in the opposite direction.

MIRAGE

Nichole Gould

I swam during the sour heat of day at an old
friend's new pool. There was a group of us
who hadn't talked since we last said goodbye
On Sunset Boulevard, a few months after high
school graduation. The sun reflected
Off the pool's man-made waves--
An oceanic mirror. Sour
Cocktails lined the pool in glasses,
In the concrete cracks. They talked of city
jobs. Recipes.

I put my head underwater.
My hair a splayed tarp around my skull--
I closed my eyes, opened them again.
The sterile smell dissipated. Push pins
became shiny black beetle shells and bulbous
flowers jittered as if under a microscope--
ready to pulse and swim. I left
the pool, water dripping down
the backs of my calves. What was patio

umbrellas and flamingo koozies
was now pastel-perfect landscapes,
tiny painted boats, plowed yellow
fields owned by caricature
kings and all the other usual suspects.
But I still saw the victims: the shattered
glass fish in the water, skeletons with curled
hair. They danced with cellophane sheets
and helicopters fell from the mountains

like deranged rain. Asteroids bloomed from soil,
words were wrapping paper
around boxes. It was all sketched in blue.
I wandered too far. My feet were water-soft
on sharp stones. I found the pools where dragons bathe,
where they are birthed from the leaves of trees.
They made the tigers standing on slate

stone quiver. I couldn't get any closer.
I realized this is where all my
blown eyelashes went, and go, stuck
together over the water's surface,
floating like shed butterfly wings.

Still, it's easy to forget
punctuality and no bread.
I blinked
Stunned water collapsing down my temples
my old friends laying out
beneath the isolated sun.
All I could remember was mountains
with cloud-arched eyebrows.

WOMAN AND MAN ON A BED

Ilse Stacklie-Vogt

“Woman and Man on a Bed”

Archival pigment ink print by Richard Tuschman

She is tired
They are old in this image
But I am young. And I know them.

I want her to quit that austere bed and that nothing-man
And nest herself within the wide windowsill, fully in sunlight.

She kept her clothes on last night (his shirtless back is turned away
from her)
Robed in rose silk and chiffon gown
Her anguished feet insist on holding onto heels (he wears dirty socks)
That themselves hold memories of last night’s whimsical darkness

Lit by city lights in a way that is less accusing than sunlight
But also less faithful in a future

A diamond necklace weighs like heavy pride around her neck (he is
burdenless)
The color on the wall makes me sob
So warm and soft, aglow, a piece of her silken rose night suspended
On the bare, raw wall on a bare, raw morning.

I feel her opening and closing her eyes
Alternating amongst osmosizing diluted gold
Tasting on skin the promise of aurora concentrate,
And challenging the rooftops to host her as they do the sparrows.

Her night was a whirlwind of dancing champagne glasses
Hanging lights above the bar that reminded her of stars
Helped her imagine that maybe she really was alone and free

Probably the cocktail in her blood made her willing to believe in moment

She will look in the mirror and not at the man this morning, raise her chin up high

Glad to be still painted in such royal fabric

What glimmers in her prideful eyes?

Dear woman in the image,

How could a man ever have created, captured you?

I would rename your surrounding medium

“Woman Aflame/The Morning of Generations/Heavy Wonder”

ALL SINNERS DIE A SAINT IN APACHE JUNCTION

Delaney Thompson

Desert sun
Cascading into a
'97 tan Buick

Wrinkled hands
And purple acrylics
Clutch at a red leather
Steering wheel

While
Hot pink lips

Speak of God's wrath

And how her sister
Mary Sue,
Is allergic to perfume,
Paint, and the number 3
Because it was willed so

After her baby died
50 years ago.

Yellow and white
Asphalt swerving and bumping
Below worn tires

Her fault you know,
God would never do that
To someone like me

Bright blue eyes
Crinkled under thick glass
Pressed like butterflies

Not to someone like me-
I made it this far
After all

With God chasing me.

The desert sun desperately shines
Through the tinted windows
Of a '97 Buick

Onto crooked, smiling teeth

He doesn't drive fast enough.

