

# superfruit

A group of people on skateboards are pushing a red Jeep Wrangler on a city street. The scene is captured in a slightly blurred, vintage-style photograph. The Jeep is in the center, moving towards the left. Several people are on skateboards, some pushing the Jeep from behind and others from the side. The background shows trees and a grassy area, suggesting an urban park or street setting. The overall mood is nostalgic and energetic.

**NOSTALGIA**

FALL/WINTER 2021



# ISSUE 02.

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Cover by Darcey Davis.



photo by tee ferguson





dear readers,

happy 2022!

on december 21, we celebrated superfruit's first birthday. what a year it's been! since the release of our first issue and mini issue, we've received more love and support than we ever imagined when we decided to start this project. while we've had a few bumps in the road—including the release of this issue—we couldn't be more happy with what we've done in such a short amount of time. we want to thank you for making this possible and sticking with us every step of the way. thank you thank you thank you!

now, as we enter another year of these wild times, open up our second issue to reflect, reminisce, and experience the wistfulness of our pasts. you'll find over 90 contributors and pages full of warmth and humanity that we may have been missing during these bleak months.

enjoy our biggest and best issue yet, ISSUE 02: NOSTALGIA.

love,  
Superfruit





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photo by simran kaur

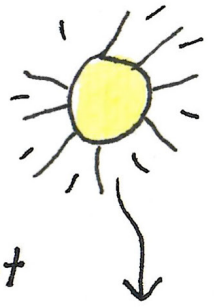
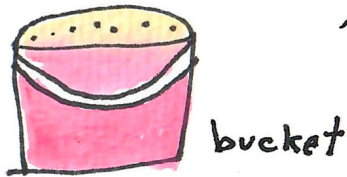






My mom's Buick station wagon smelled like spearmint and cigarettes. The VINYL seats bit our thigh skin. The 150°F buckles burned our hope.

On the way to CALDOR  
On the way to BRADLEYS  
On the way to Carsick



mom's cigarette case

my teeth pierced the headrest. I bit in protest.

sunshine headache

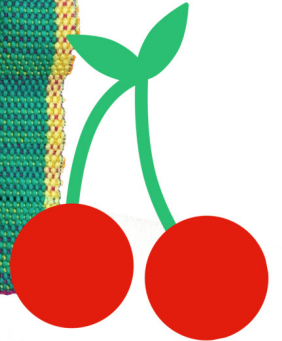
photo by maya renzetti



art by lael salaets



art by marina constantine



art by sélina farzaei



art by melanie hobbs



*Savannah, GA*

*Raquel Luciano*

Everything is still moving  
and everything is still OK, but March  
was much prettier. I could have lived  
in that baby blue glamper with you  
forever. Spooky ghost tours. Frozen  
hangover drinks. Hidden  
bookstores with every volume of Nancy Drew.  
I could have taken an outdoor  
bath with you every night. Chilly air playing  
with our hot shoulders. Looking into  
one another's past, digging up graves. Promising  
to never be small. Almost finished wine  
bottles. Almost finished leftovers. There is more fear  
engulfing us than ever before, but we are still two  
plastic yard flamingos. When we kiss,  
we create shapes of love even when  
we are only standing on one leg.



photo by dmitrivich





photos by charlie durso









art by emily johnson



# ELEGY FOR A SWEET-TOOTH

Astrid Bridgwood

Forgiveness is a sticky thing. The sky breaks open  
We're waiting in line to get ice cream. New Year's Eve  
Marking world's end. Seven minutes to midnight  
I slept on your bedroom floor / bent to the ceiling  
Aching to be touched in a way that mattered / *to feel*  
*Anything at all.* Time rotting my teeth / abscessed.

New Year's Day opens syrupy: woke up, cleaned up  
Half-smearing makeup in your bathroom mirror  
Puked in the mall / missed you by inches. Cotton-candy  
Cloying stench filling your car, we watch lightning  
Shatter clouds, wring bright out between them  
Another hollow thing made whole / made holy.

Forks of silver-tongued flame licking hungry  
Early summer torrent gathering ozone. My palms sugared  
With sweat / heat-slick and nervous. *People are staring.*  
Trash caught in stormy exhale / hot-blue wind  
Honey beading down the nape of my neck / wiped clean  
By the first drop defiantly cloud-spit from above.

We rush six-foot spacers / girlish stampede, duck under  
Ice-cream awnings. Someone's surgical mask yellow-bright  
Caught in the door / I order a strawberry two-scoop cone  
Your milkshake comes without a straw. Everything's ending  
Ever since the ball dropped / *we're all out of Rocky Road.*  
Thunder smashes the cash register over your head.

I pay / for both of us. Candy-aching / smelling like bleach  
*This waffle cone is sour.* Water pooling on a damp bench  
Kicking our legs. Rain takes a heaving breath / pauses.  
Air / intubated and saccharine / I throw my ice cream out  
For the flood to swallow whole. Us, night-lit / stalked  
By childhood / a sign on the slides says *Park Closed.*



JULY: a bag of mangoes  
appears in the corridor  
behind my front door.

They have ugly brown spots  
and carry the sweetest  
strongest fragrance i've  
ever smelled.



The smell travels  
to every part of  
the house and  
lingers for days,  
staining every  
room with a sharp  
mango tang.



On the first day, I bite  
into the sweet, honeyed  
flesh, juices running  
down my arms.



I grin up at my mom  
as she hands me  
another slice.



art by lorena horng



On the second day, I watch my dad eat his slices with a pair of chopsticks in one hand, complaining about the mess in between each bite.



art by lorena horng

SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA



On the third day, the taste finally catches up to the appearance.

The syrupy flavor is overpowered by the new, unexpected bitterness of ferment.



I grimace, and my mom sighs and shakes her head.

Those last slices lay untouched in the trash.







photos by

LEMONADE



kait ralón







## poem for mae-mae, found tucked in an old ballet shoe

my snowsuit was the color of violets,  
yours, the color of goldenrod.

we were both afraid to sled down the biggest hills.  
both believed in our dads' power to shape  
the snow, because we deserved the world.

only-daughter dreams, notes to the tooth fairy  
tucked under our pillows. the woods behind  
our houses held gnomes and tomtens.

we got red roses on the first day of first grade,  
each in a class of one. learning  
how to mold beeswax in our sweaty palms,  
how to make blueberry muffins,  
how to perfect second position in ballet class in the city,

how to coddle our shyness, above all.

when me and Butterscotch-kitty moved states away,  
i took you into the cedar forest and said,

*don't forget me.*

i ached for you, wrote letters every week,  
kept all the replies written in your mama's careful  
colored pencil print, signed with

*pretend i am hugging you.*

when me and Butterscotch-kitty moved home,  
you and i ran circles around the lighthouse,  
giddy to be on the shore, together again.

we played restaurateurs, you in orange crocs,  
me in floral leggings. wooden peas and carrots,  
velcro-ed pizza slices, an empty granola box.

but you didn't believe in the Emerald City,  
didn't want to hold my hand down  
the Yellow Brick Road as our ages took on two digits.

but you still gave me gifts, chamomile-lavender perfume,  
raspberry jam, a journal the color of periwinkles.  
Tulip the rabbit in your arms, your wide eyes bluebell,  
you whispered secrets to me on the tightrope,  
on the trampoline, under the table in my basement.

*spell your crush's name with bananagram letters.*

## Andrea Grabowski

*sleeping over without mom scares me.*

you took your fears to pointe shoes,  
pastel pink silence, rigor of delicate, bleeding sport.  
cornsilk hair slicked into a bun, hairpin grace,  
that which i abandoned for a different stage.

we came to each other's performances. we forgot  
the wooden peas and carrots. re-gifted roses  
instead of confessions, chocolate bars instead  
of goodbye hugs. then your final show, the great surprise —  
military industrial complex disappearance into tundra,  
did anyone ever really know you? but i — i once slept  
three nights in your room of expensive dolls. saltwater laughter  
turned to hundred-acre-wood honey, and we devoured  
cucumber sandwiches and algae water with the trolls.

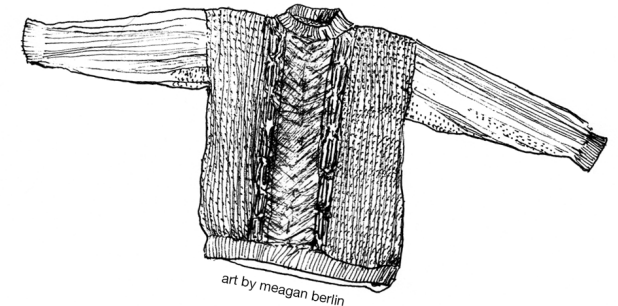






photo by cheyenne morschl-villa



SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA



photos by megan leonard





photo by claire natale



# The Tree in my Tummy

The sour tang of an otherwise sweet cherry hitting the back of my throat. The plate full of seeds, and the bowl full of more of these red marbles. It is my mother's favourite fruit. So, it's mine now too. Legs folded, sitting on top of my grandparents' bed. I reach for some watermelon; it looks just like the one I saw in my storybook this morning. Put it in my mouth as the juice drips down my hand. I accidentally swallowed a seed, but honestly who can blame me, they're so tiny. Apprehensively look at my grandpa, the wisest man I know, and ask, *is it harmful*. Oh yes, he responds, in a tone laced with amusement, *soon, a watermelon plant will grow in your tummy*. My alarmed expression as I choked on my next cherry, my grandma's lilting laughter as she reaches forward to shove grandpa, who smiles, ruffles my hair, and calls me his *buddhu ladki*.

I sit on the same bed now, my grandma in her usual chair, that bowl of cherries, red as the rim of my eyes a year back, and a plate of watermelon exactly where it was that summer, now so many moons ago. This summer is a bit different. There's an empty spot on the bed. A new one's filled in. My brother puts the first piece of watermelon in his mouth. I watch him accidentally swallow that first, traitorous seed and tell him about the plant in his tummy. Watch his expression morph into something panic-stricken, as I look back at the empty spot and smile. His *buddhu ladki* had grown up, and I hope he was proud.

Translation:  
*Buddhu ladki* (Hindi)-silly girl

## Navya Bahl



photo by sanjé james



art by s.a. mukherji





*photo by dmitrivich*

### *The Creation Story*

the night is quiet, the air still—  
how we drift along the road like a breath escaping lungs,  
music pouring from each speaker as you shout every word, as every beat shakes  
the car's frame, as if to say this joy cannot be contained to the moment  
we are living because i am looking at you—  
your hands that follow every note,  
your lips that quiver with feelings too tender for this time—  
and i wish to give name to this journey, but how can i define love  
when i have never known its embrace, one that wounds the flesh i have carried for so long,  
that breaks every rib until i am nothing but blood and bone, that grips  
my heart but does not cast it away like i have so often feared.

you are a prayer answered every morning,  
my love, one that grows truer with age,  
how every minute with you is a miracle in and of itself.

i hope these songs will stay with the sunrise,  
that i will still be here, singing  
with you.

*Daren Colbert*





# d i s t a n c e

by Adrienne Marie Barrios

Cold rolls in off the front.

She sees him—for the first time in twenty years, but you wouldn't know it. A warmth pools within her. She would know that face anywhere—even buried beneath a beard. Even under all those layers.

They do not embrace; they stand at arms' length. They nod. He shifts the weight of his duffle bag from one down-padded shoulder to the other.

She drives him, silent, down the wooded roads, through snow-packed hills that blur into one another. Flakes fall around the car like so many words they could have shared along the ride, along the years. They melt as they hit the warm pavement, the chance to catch a breeze into the light long since gone.

She tries not to look at him, as if to give him privacy. She pictures car rides they used to take—in moving trucks, in old or borrowed cars—blaring '90s rap and reminiscing about their childhood. Commiserating. Childhood became distant, and they never formed deeper bonds. Even now, the only words between them could be from those years.

She chews the inside of her cheek, where her bottom lip ends, and the wide expanse of flesh begins. She's created something of a ledge over the years. A safe spot to grip when bouldering these dangerous fronts. She listens to the constant sound of his stress from deep within his throat, like the start of someone choking.

She chews, he swallows. The way it has always been.

She sees in her peripheral vision as he takes his beanie from his head and twists it in his hands. He ruffles his own hair, pressed down for so many hours beneath thick wool.

Without turning to her, he asks, "Why didn't you call me sooner?" She hears the clip in his voice, the effort to speak over the giant rock forming in the back of his throat.

"I did," she says.

"What?" This time, he looks at her.

"I called you two weeks ago. You were out, so Drew answered. She—"

"—THEY." He breathes out an exasperated puff.

"—sorry, they said you wouldn't want to speak to me and that I was 'too toxic.' I didn't get the chance to tell them why I called." Maybe I really am too toxic, she thinks. Maybe that's what got us here.

He holds his mouth open, working his tongue against his teeth. He blinks back tears, now more from anger than sadness.



“I’m sorry,” she says. He slams his head back into the seat; she jumps. He falls sideways against the window and closes his eyes, signaling their drift back into silence.

She steals glances as he sleeps. She still sees a teenager, red and crying with anger he doesn’t yet know how to express. She sees a little boy, though the memories aren’t real. She pieces things together from stories and pictures—from what she’s been told she’s supposed to remember.

Breath catches in her throat; the warmth recedes. How could she know so little about someone with whom she’d shared a womb? When did this distance begin? She feels raw and exposed, the guilt almost unbearable.

She focuses on his fitful breaths. Gratitude for his brief rest comes in small waves over her nerves. He will need the strength. She will need him to have strength. She cannot bear it for him.

Standing there, over their father, she watches him. This time, she swallows. He chews. His face narrows, the rapid blinking of eyes that fail to fight back tears, the jaw muscles twitching with the effort.

It’s not enough.

It’s not enough for her, either.

He reaches a hand to her arm and grasps her shoulder. They fall against each other, heads stacked like tenuous stones, arms and hands intertwined.

They stand and say their silent goodbyes, but, in that moment, say hello to one another.

**“ She pieces things together from stories and pictures—from what she’s been told she’s supposed to remember. ”**



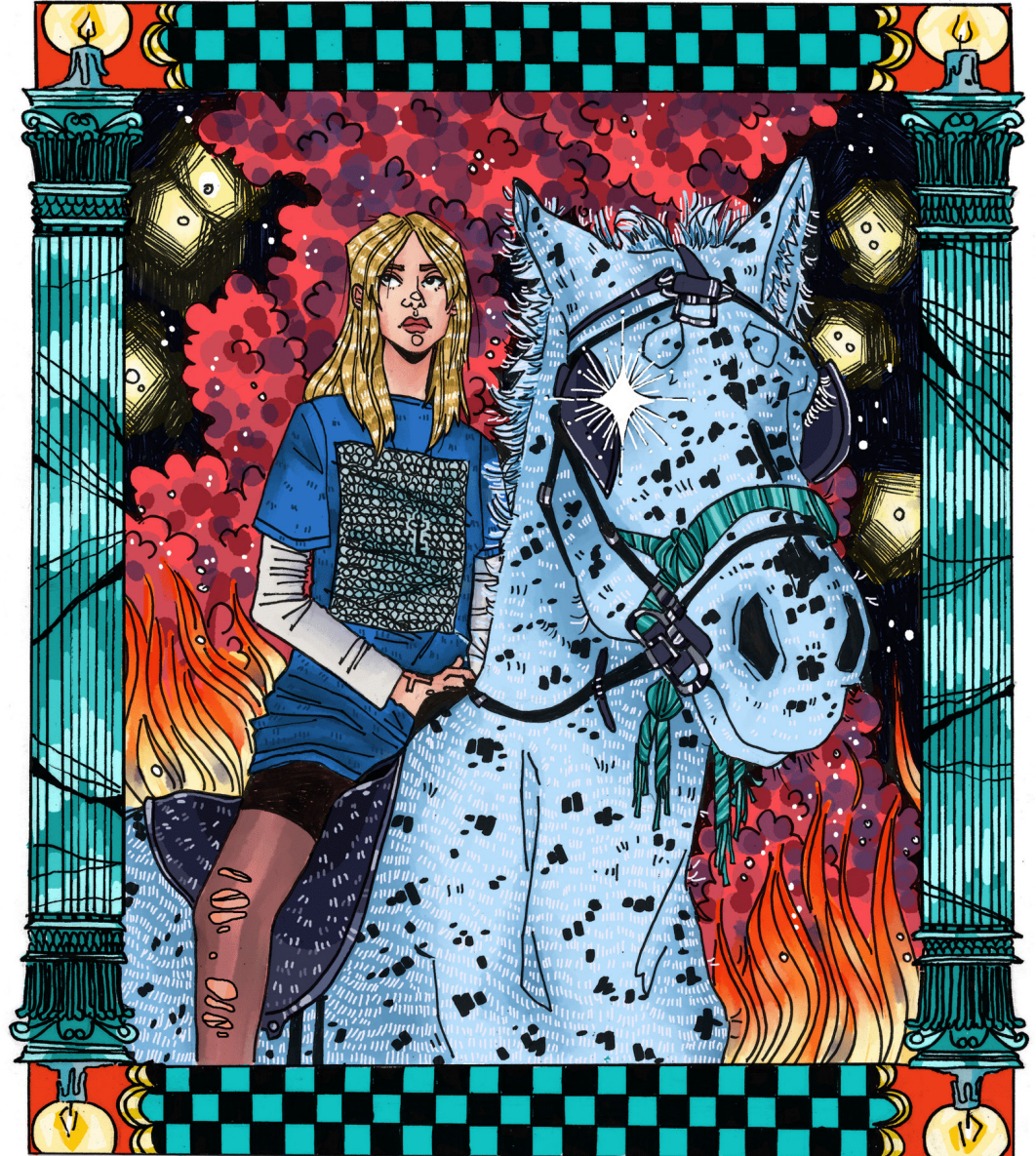


# DRINK TO THE PULP OF YOUTH

photos by edward zavala



photos by kelli lage



art by kayleigh efird





photos by jaina cipriano



photo by june feury



# Before things got bad

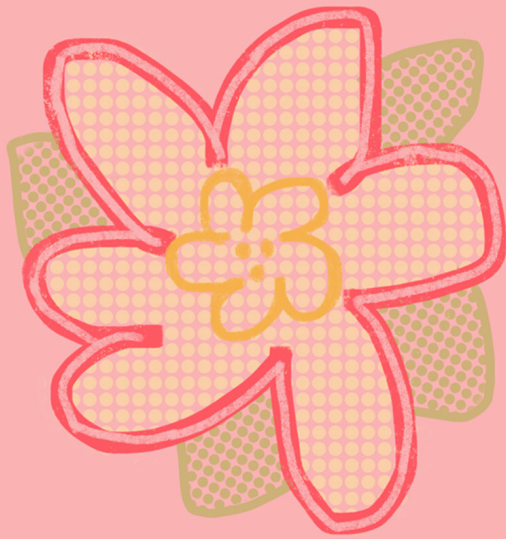
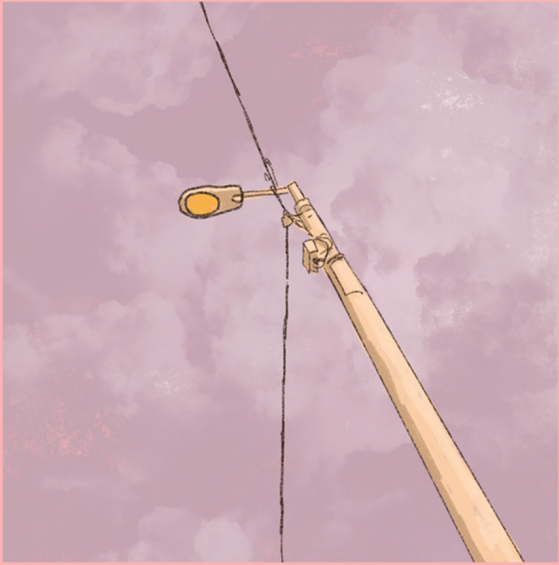
**jaiden dokken**

*Do any of us remember the first time we turned each other tender? Sun-warmed mud flats, bare feet pressing into the muck like wet, mushy kisses, one after another. Smears dried into nape hair, crusting over shins, bits spit from our smiling mouths. Do any of us remember believing we could feel this way forever? The cut of a clam shell not so bad, not with a gush of saltwater to clean it and beers to cheers and friends to bury you alive in this mire, this endless spill of golden-hour, this Temple of That Time. Do any of us remember how in love we all were, our hearts stuffed and sure? Little welts from whips of bull kelp, worn proudly like friendship bracelets, bodies sore from the sprinting and the spinning, the tackling and the deep-gut laughing. Melting into one another, filthy and bright and exquisite. Do any of us remember why we ever left that place?*

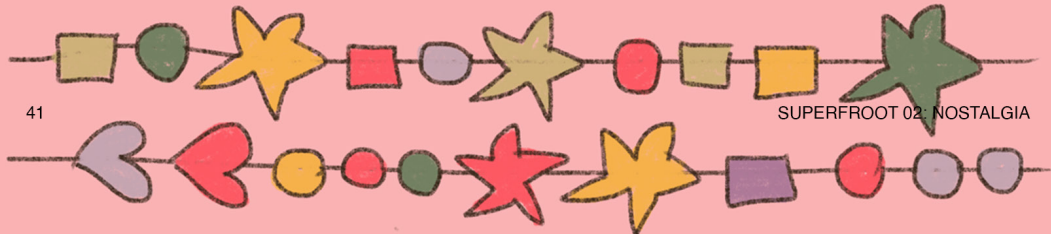
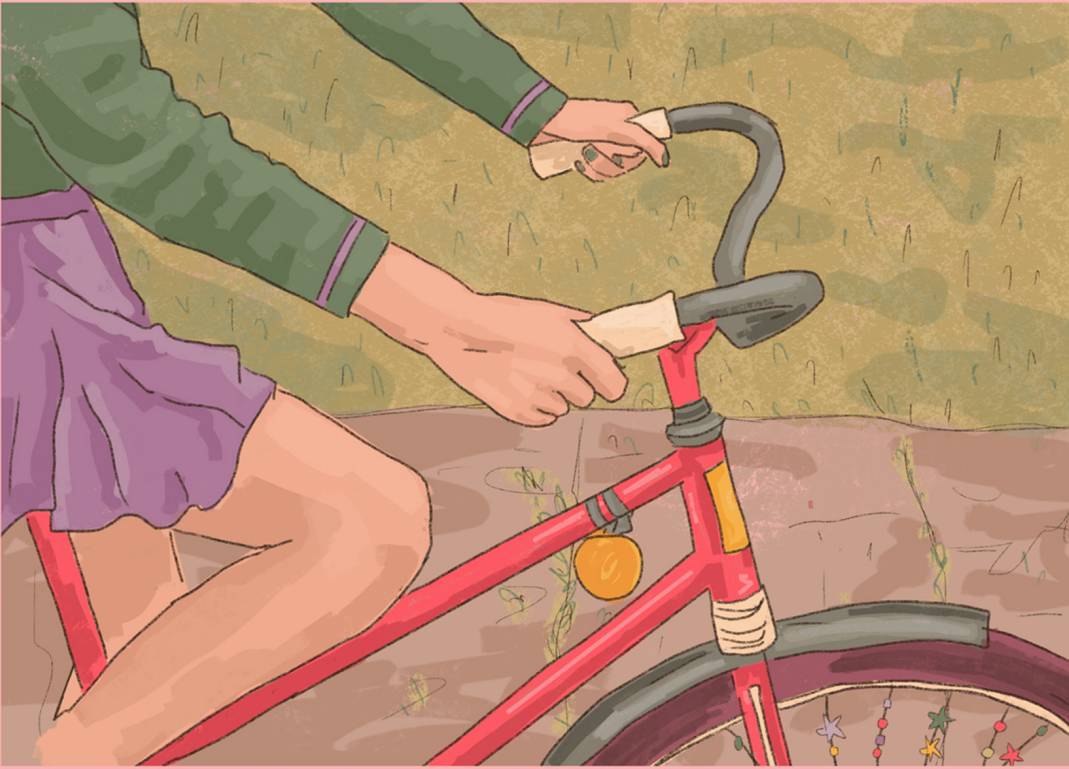
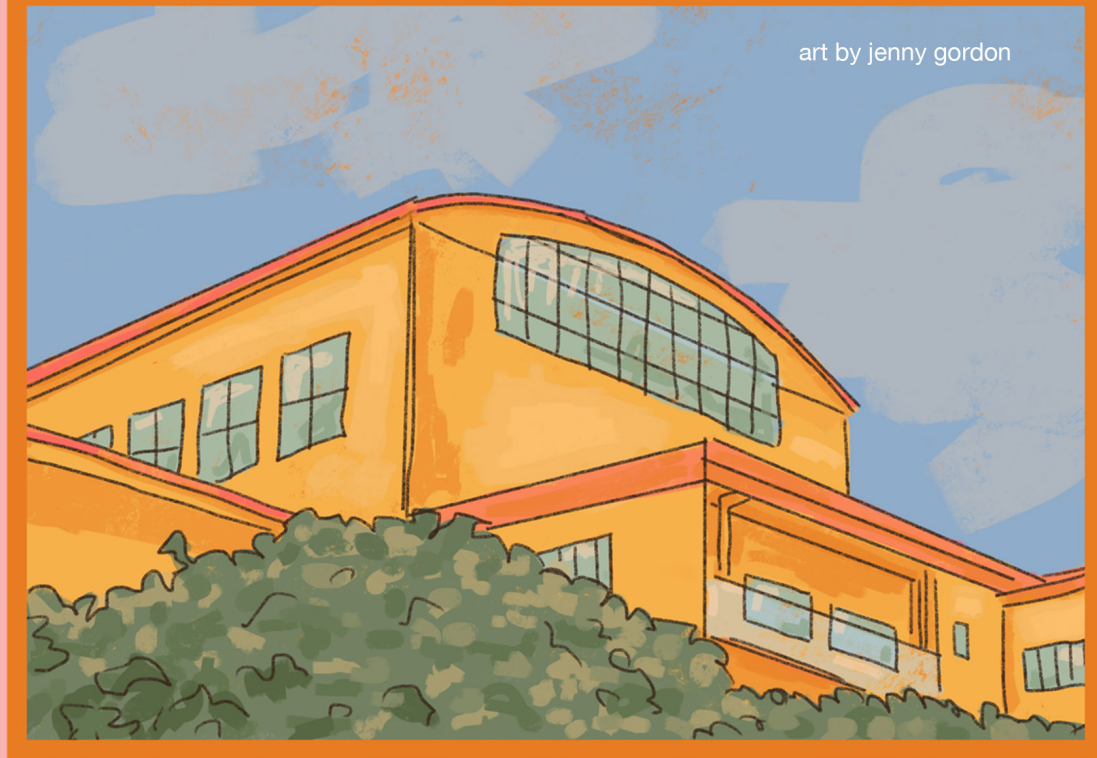


**art by mikey vibal**

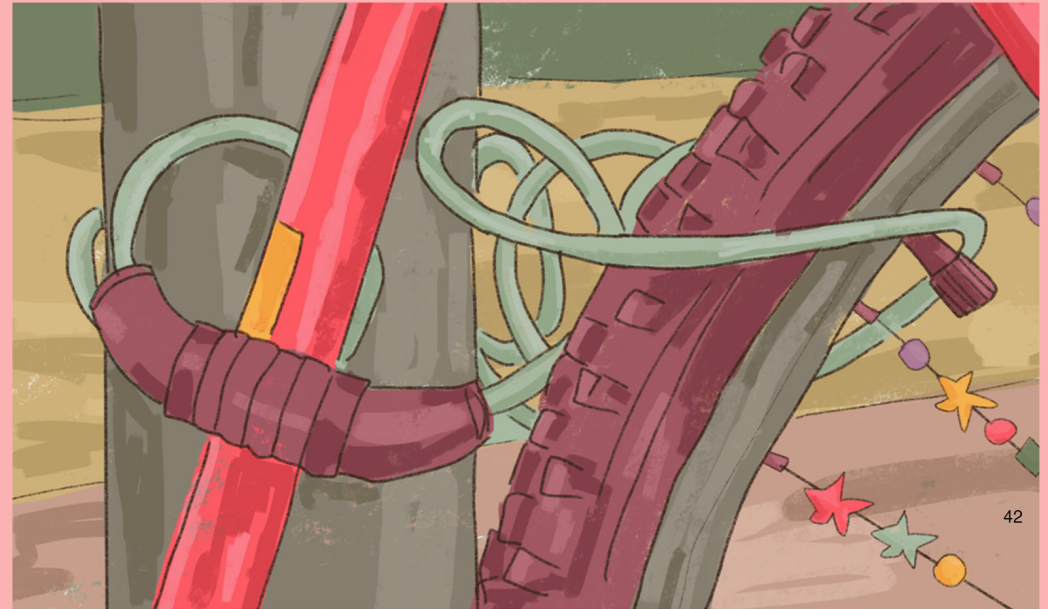




art by jenny gordon



SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA





art by pauline aksay

# Love



art by riyam al-niaini



art by amelia mellberg



# BODY ART ASTRONAUT

On a rose patina planet, in the cherried, glossy gel galaxy, my memories are sweet and scattered. And the world smells like cucumber melons, so fresh and cold. Full of fluorescent seeds, translucent beads, surrounded by Saturn rings, which are also just pieces and parts of blasted comets and mixtape moons. Everything is everything, polychromatic cosmos swimming inside a glitter galaxy. An aesthetic atmosphere of lip gloss swirls, body art astronaut. Here to embody everything, everything, and only want tiny things. Our obsession with tiny things, records on a key ring, and pets we can play. The world is iridescent, with my initial on it. A smiley face stamped on my left hand, a mole or beauty mark. And everything clicks, sticks, rolls. A constellation inside a butterfly compact.

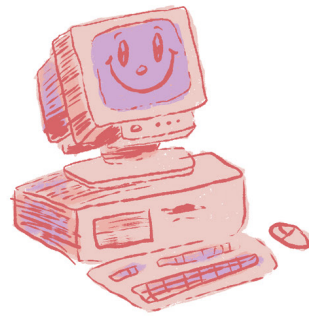
Jessica Willingham



art by meagan williams

HELLO

OPEN



PLAY



SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA



THANK YOU  
CAME  
AGAIN

IDK



i fake stomach aches  
when i'm in school  
to wait there for you



photo by michelle dashevsky



skinned knees  
face down in the autumn street  
a concrete rash



photo by jaina cipriano

#### UNDERAGE DRIVING, ENDING IN STYROFOAM AND TWISTED METAL

one day, i told my father, we will laugh about this. the foresight does not help. it's 6 am and he has pulled me out of bed by the hair on my scalp, or so i remember it. memory has a funny way of making things into sport. in the driveway, a prius smiles with crooked teeth, the bumper smashed above the wheel like a cleft. staring back, our garage door has a less optimistic face: concave and gnarled, the fists of a thousand teen boys drawn into its thin ribs. it was true, i admit: i was 14 and bored, as most good stories begin. i say this now, a distance from my mother's deft hand, decade of summers richer, laughing in tune, speaking over brown liquid. as my parents tell it: the meaning of restitution, a whole season of perfect lawncare. in hindsight, we speak of shitheads, responsibility, a new generation not unlike the last. my grown cousins tell me of retrospect, disobedience, their own children's wild outings. me, balding, my father, blushed, as we remember.

LUCAS PEEL

#### FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

i could carry a gun into space but i wouldn't know how to shoot it, could sit here with the steering wheel in my hands and forget how to hit the gas: i've had my license for almost a year, permission to pavement in pieces of plastic, but i still can't get from driveway to freeway. from here, my driver's seat, my suburban streets, i know where i am going, although usually it is nowhere at all. library. bank. forest trail 1, 2, and 3. sometimes i imagine you are still sitting in the passenger seat, checking my blind spot even when i've already changed lanes, and i am still watching you try to love me even though it's too late. in the back, my brothers make weapons out of their names; the maxe, the halbert. we have been collecting stones to smash skulls with, to balance on wooden sticks and call spears. i think i could carry a spear into space and not know how to hold it. so many things to carry, no ways to do it right. these days, the stones fall to pieces before we get a chance to test them. in the back, Max holds the rock up to the light and says *Why can't I stop splitting things apart?* as if the crack can tell him how to put it back together again. the blinker tsks at me as i merge into another lane, and i make the shoulder check twice, after i've moved, as if i can still see the lane i just left, points of motion lost in the past, things we can't put together again.

JOYCE LIU





photo by jaina cipriano



photo by julie flores



photo by julie flores

### Independent Detonations

a ghost plays kick the can over on first street  
and a song you sent me years ago  
crackles behind the explosions

I prep a bottle for a rocket  
biting a sparkler between my teeth

I'm not naïve enough to think  
we could have had forever but  
a little longer would have been nice

people come into your life then they leave  
and they don't take enough with them

what we had was fun and neither of us  
broke it—this is just the way things work out  
sometimes

call it good  
call it passing by  
call it a magic trick because magic only lasts for as long as  
you are willing to not look too closely

I will try not to let you into the lineup  
of everyone who might come next  
but I've gotten into a terrible habit  
of breaking my intentions

I put the sparkler out on my skin  
as the wind dusts my hair with ashes

**Katie Holtmeyer**



*In Which Your Poetry Unlearns How to Swim*  
a burning haibun

When you're older, you think you'll write about men holding trout by the mouth. You don't swim in waters warmed by salt and yellow splotches—not since your basement flooded in 2004, lamp light glossed in the reflecting pool, and you drowned in night terrors that sloshed in your throat until you lost your voice; in the morning, you rewind your VHS copy of *The Little Mermaid* for Blockbuster, and you never watched it again—you don't swim in waters raw and cold and young—not since you sung online, bad comments flooding your page made you want to cut out your tongue until someone spoke of how pretty your lips were at 13 years old, until they were your boyfriend you knew as Bill Kaulitz, until you found out on the day oozing to a balmy summer, your hands clammy and shockcold and shaking, that they were a catfish who baited you with the kindness of strangers—you don't swim in waters holy and clean and sanitized—not since you were separated by gender in youth group to read psalms in a circle, palm-to-palm, and you thought of her hands; how her touch soothed you and that scared you to confess, but she told you she'd only kiss you since no one wanted to, and when she said no one she meant guys, and when she said she'd kiss you, she was joking; then you remembered in 2005, your childhood friend told you her dad died, waving his obituary in your face to force you to play Truth or Dare, and you prayed she wouldn't, but she dared you to kiss her metallic wet lips and when you tried to turn away, you slipped on the waterbed and she held your head up and—

//

When you're older, you [redacted] don't swim in waters warmed by [redacted] night terrors [redacted] raw and [redacted] young [redacted] flooding [redacted] your lips [redacted] clammy and shockcold and shaking [redacted] with [redacted] kindness; [redacted] you swim [redacted] in her [redacted] she dared you [redacted] when you tried to turn away [redacted] and [redacted] held your head up [redacted]

//

You swim in waters  
clammy and flooding with her—  
you held your head up.

*rachael crosbie*







tell me how  
tell me how  
tell me how



Tell me again about the day the ice cream truck broke down  
and we ran to the corner to collect  
the melting rivers of sugar in our palms

Tell me again about the day I learned that robin's egg blue  
does not last the summer  
and the sky collapses in on itself eventually  
Tell me again how you always thought I'd grow  
with scars on my knees,  
from scrapes running  
raw and hot

Tell me again  
how this is what girlhood does to us:  
that we tip forward with a keen sense of loss  
running ravaged in the puckering heat,  
cotton dresses sticking between our thighs

And tell me how it will end, when everything  
is soft snow and silence, our breaths slowing  
in the sulphuric glow of streetlamps,  
flakes falling like ash to our low and tired shoulders

**mariel fechik**



## Just the Once

My grandmother's tree grew  
the tiniest apples  
covered the driveway  
and part of the front walk  
with diminutive fruit  
perfectly sized  
for my groping fingers

and I would ask my mother  
to let me eat one  
every time we went to visit.

"You won't like it,"  
my mother would say

which only made me want  
to try them even more.

The day came  
when I found myself  
in the soft grass  
of my grandmother's yard  
with no mother to deny me.

I plucked an apple  
so petite, red skin flecked  
with patches of green  
brought it to expectant lips  
took that first savory bite

and spit it into the grass  
chucking the rest of the apple  
across the driveway  
for the birds to eat.

My grandmother chuckled  
when I said her apples  
were gross—she agreed  
told me she didn't care  
for crabapples either.

## Gabby Gilliam

photo by eilidh mahoney







Creek

photo by sélina farzaei

# Sisters



In the house in Kentucky with the overgrown grass, we were sisters—small and ratty haired.  
Eating strawberry frosting from plastic containers, pink hands and mouths lit  
by the open refrigerator, the faucet dripping into stacks of dishes, crumbs coating our feet.  
You said, *This must be how sand feels by the ocean.*

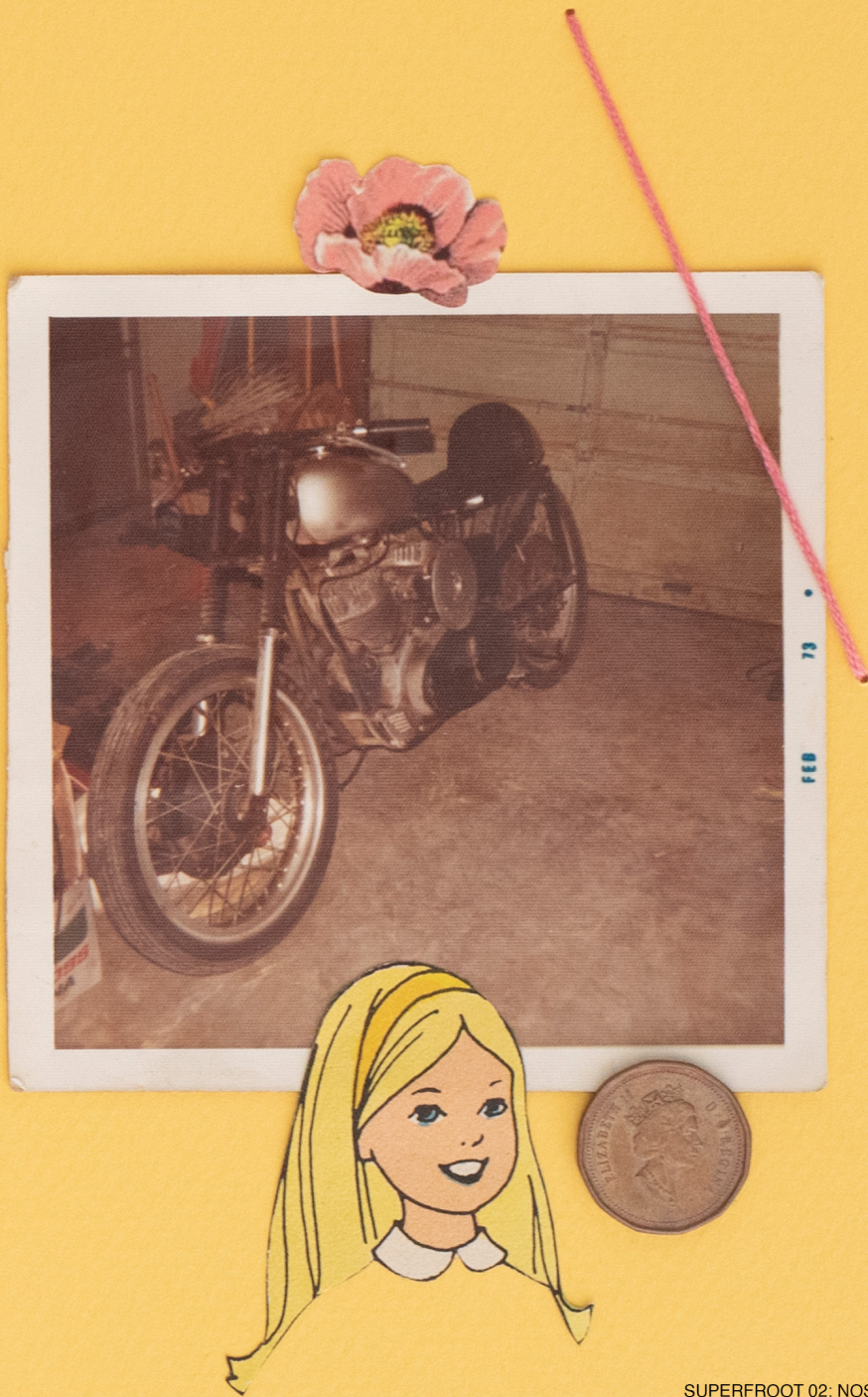
I thought of the creek, soft and grimey, how it stained our shirts and muddied our toes.  
How we swam in the murky water and caught shiners in the palms of our hands,  
lifted each rock to marvel at the mossy bellies streaming with pillbugs and salamanders.  
We'd stay in the woods until dusk.

After, I'd fill the tub with lukewarm water in Dad's pink tiled bathroom, watch you gather soap suds,  
grinning through gapped teeth. I scrubbed the dirt from your fingernails, combed through  
honeyed tangles, while you thumbed each polyester shell painted on the shower curtain.  
You whispered, *Do you think we'll ever get out of here?*

So, I told you about beach peas and juniper,  
orange poppies and salty air. We didn't know then  
how people drift like pondweeds, even sisters.

Reese Menefee





art by emily hoerdmann







SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA

photos by sania necoechea







photos by sania necoechea

**WARNING**  
Keep this bag away from babies and children.  
Do not use in cribs, beds, carriages,  
strollers, or cribs.  
The thin film may cling to nose and mouth and

**ATTENTION**  
Garder ce sac hors de portée des bébés et enfants.  
Ne pas utiliser dans les berceaux, lits, poussettes,  
poussettes, ou lits.  
Le film protecteur, étant fin, pourrait par inadvertance  
l'étouffement en bloquant les narines.

**ADVERTENCIA**  
Mantenga esta bolsa fuera del alcance de bebés y niños.  
No use en cunas, camas, carritos y corrales.  
La película delgada puede adherirse a nariz y boca e impedir la respiración.



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## TROUBLE

In this barren garden your touch is a chronoscopy.  
No need for fading photographs, for half-forgotten melodies  
the past sits beside me, strangling me with jealousy  
dark green vines grazing my neck, warm fingers  
a row of rusted sickles in the sun.  
Sweat coats my hair beneath the sky-blue scarf  
drips down my old young face. Hand on my cheekbone  
a warning. I never knew I could raise my own.  
Show me how it was. From the distance  
all of it is meaningless. Days with their backs against the stove  
dowries of broken lace, songs I sang without my voice.  
I am walking through the trees, humming loudly, a song of no name.  
I am threading a needle with golden strands,  
making a dress fit for an empress.  
When my love flows freely it finds many paths  
through barren lands. I make a new spring.

## KAISA SAARINEN



photos by sania necoechea





# GLORY DAYS

SHER TING

I dipped my quarter into the old jukebox sitting in the middle of the mall, dipping my thoughts into the past as you so often do when you are fifty-five and chasing the tail-lights of a setting sun. In a jukebox starkly juxtaposed between a Versace and a Fendi, I watched the record swing out and rest on a rising turntable, spooling the opening threads of Bruce Springsteen's Glory Days. Young Bruce Springsteen with a head full of dark curls and a punched-out smile, singing about neon-lit bars and high school dreams.

Suddenly, it was 1985, the light spilling into my room onto the records on the floor. A year where the music was twenty decibels too high and the heat was thirty degrees too loud, the sticky thumbprint of summer fresh against my back. I was a teenager lying on the bed with my cheek pressed up against the radio, straining to catch the opening riff of We Built This City. Starship had built this city on Rock'N'Roll, but that year, I had built mine on cheap Doritos and willful ignorance, drowning out the umbrage of my parents' dying marriage with guitar chords and radio static. That year, I had caught the summer wind in my hair as I cruised along the desert highway in a beat-up '64 Cadillac, belting my lungs to Billy Ocean till the stars brushed through my fingertips. That year, I took the boat out to the lake, guzzling beer and watching the sun fizzle into the last chorus of Pink Houses.

Many years later, I'd speak of '85 at a dinner party of stemless wine glasses and classical jazz. The year of fireflies and scorched earth. The summer Wham! rose to the top. Before the CGI, the smartphones, and the Wii. Before the supersized meals, Tamagotchis and reality TV. Many years later, I'd learn to love, even if I had forgotten the melody. Even as I arrived in the present forty years too late, the only heat cradling my body emanating from the radiated warmth of a worn-out jukebox, the lights on the back of my lids fading like the neon of the Vegas strip at dawn.

Sometimes, living was a privilege –a promised land and a poignant memory– other times, leaving was the only option so that I might stay.

In the distance, I heard my husband's voice rise to a fever pitch, as he struggled in vain to placate the cries of our middle-schooler. Gathering my bags, I rushed towards them and the life I've come to live, leaving Springsteen to sing the final bars of melting clocks and expired dreams, before the turntable finally came to a stop.

photo by char habben







art by eunji kim

I dream of you in various shades of green and pink as your fingers turn the sky an incandescent red in your fiery wake. It was on a warm August night like this one, where the wind shaped these remarkably luminous clouds into eerie formations and stacked the moon high above the burning treeline. Far above our heads, the stars unfastened themselves from the sky and began to fall as soldiers did in battle; whether it was one by one or in violent clumps, they burned up the ground wherever they fell and left mortals in their ashen holes.

Yes, it was on a night like this where I fell in and out of love as quickly as a ladybug darts in and out of a soft apple, leaving it to rot under the warmth of a thousand suns. It was this summer where my memories decided to vacate my sock drawer and seek the touch of another, spiraling into the humid air and curling its fingers around the sweaty throats of the nearest girls they could find, forming necklaces and nooses and everything rusted golden and garnet in the quiet buzz of the cicadas.

I remember in my youth when I played with the girl down the street and there was something unhinged behind her eyes, her filigreed soul dangling between her mouth like a loose tooth; the blood already flowed from her gums and sprinkled itself onto the rocks like a heavenly offering, leaving stains on mica and granite below us. When our parents softly chatted in the distance, wine glasses in hand and heads hollowed out by the harmony of an August aria, we asked them why we cannot go inside and feast ourselves on mint chocolate chip ice cream but they waved us off with the contents of their wine glasses spilling over onto my mother's white lace dress but she does not mind.

The girl from down the street was not quite right because when she went into the fields to play, she didn't kiss the sky or pick the flowers or even try to chase the squirrels. No, instead she plucked ants like dandelions from their colonies and crushed them between her childish white thighs, delighting when she pulled them apart and they were covered in insect innards; when her mother asked her what happened, she told them that she was just plucking blackberries from the heavy bush at the apex of my thighs but you can guess that her mother was not happy to hear this.

Later, I found out that this girl is clinically insane and I think I already knew this because once when it was just us, she picked up a rock and tossed it up and down. Once, twice, like a pendulum, to make sure that it was real.

Then, she called my name once, and when I swiveled around, her arm swung forward and so the rock collided with my nose, turning the world upside down and turbulent. I bit my tongue down and tried my hardest not to cry while she was laughing and on top of me and smashing the rock into my teeth, seeking for the most exquisitely pearly dust that they have to offer.

She only climbed off of me when my older sister saw us and started screaming, marring the peace of the magpies and making them shriek away into the night and I tried to count them before they leave: there is one for sorrow, then there are six for hell and suddenly I felt nothing but beak and wings stabbing at my ribs and I succumbed to the girl, her face a flat Ferris wheel rising higher and higher against the vast backdrop of the sky.

It is now some time later, somewhere between three and thirteen years later and I have practiced kissing on all types of girls, in the angular space of their shoulder bones, between the vertebrae, on stomachs as soft as a spring zephyr, but more importantly, in the place that my thoughts still stutter to come out and reveal themselves in the fitful moonlight.

I have learned that some girls like to kiss with their mouths closed, like they're holding a butterfly behind their lips and they're scared to let it go even when I tell them that loving something means you let it go; I have learned that other girls like to kiss with their mouths sensually open, and I know now that these are the types of girls who no longer give any fucks at all, so I let myself fall into the satin and the silk of girls like them.

I find myself sitting in the driver's seat of a beat-up truck that only works in the dead of night. Next to me is the most beautiful girl I've ever seen, her hair colored a lighter brown in the fluorescent warmth of a streetlight and from the cheap drugstore box dye we purchased two weeks ago. I pull over in the parking lot of an H-Mart, Chinese and Korean and Japanese families trickling out of the store. I smile to myself, remembering when I was one of those children tugging along on the rusty handle of the shopping cart, clutching a cup of bubble tea and chasing my older sister around the parking lot while our parents yelled at us to get back there right this instant.

Soon enough, the cars all pull out, leaving me and her nearly alone in silence. She twists her hair deftly and clips it up. I think to myself that she looks like a femme fatale from a film noir, with the way that she flourishes the lighter between her ridiculously delicate fingertips and lifts it to the cigarette that rises and falls between her lips. I tell her that she cannot smoke inside H-Mart but she waves me off and flicks the ash onto the seat. I say nothing because I do not want to anger her, even though I can feel the ash burning through my forehead.

She stares up at the moon through the windshield and angrily puffs smoke at it, as if that could make it go away, leaving her to be the most brilliant being in such proximity to the Earth. I look down and idly fiddle with my keys, pressing my fingers to the jagged edges, only pulling away when my skin threatens to break.

After she finishes, she tosses the cigarette onto the floor beside my truck. I wince. We go inside, but not necessarily to buy anything. The smell of smoke still clings to her figure and suddenly, she is a ghost that drifts through this H-Mart. The fishmonger looks at me with uncertainty because he is not totally convinced that I am not insane, not just talking to myself. I pull her back into this world and her eyes wobble, deranged and manic before the look fades.



She drags me into the ice cream aisle, and we leave behind the old fishmonger who has worked here for the past fifteen years and will continue to work until the fish begin to nibble at his flesh. He will disappear here in the walk-in freezer as a nobody but he does not mind in the slightest.

She poses next to the avaricious glow of the wall chillers and asks me to take pictures of her. How could I not? Her left foot, clad in a black Doc Marten boot, flips up girlishly beneath her pleated skirt; her hands, decorated with dainty gold rings, brush each other delicately in front of her chest. I look through the lens of her iPhone and see the lurid, hollow outline of a girl I thought I loved.

I suddenly cannot stand to look at her pursed lips for another second, and with a tight smile and a rigid back, I give her back her phone. Her makeup seems awful, too bright and too much, and she looks like an impudent child who has gotten into her mother's vanity. Her mouth is too pink and her cheeks are too red and her eyes are too shadowed. The grocery store lights shine harshly on her face and I turn away from her.

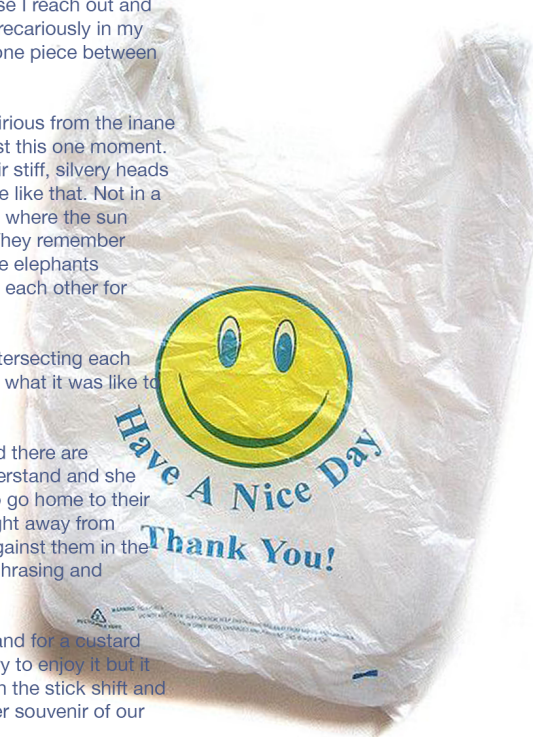
We wander through the aisles for some more time, and I am struck by just how little everything has changed from when I was a child. I still see my favorite seaweed from a brand called HAIO, and on impulse I reach out and grab a container, ripping it open. The seaweed wobbles precariously in my hands, and she reaches out with her mouth and crushes one piece between her teeth.

We laugh at how ridiculous she looks, both of us delirious from the inane drone of the overhead fluorescent lights, both happy in just this one moment. If any nainai or halmeoni walked by, they would shake their stiff, silvery heads in disdain before they would remember that they, too, were like that. Not in a grocery store, but along mountainsides and through fields where the sun burnt just about all the hairs clean off their tanned arms. They remember nestling into the recesses between the hills that looked like elephants although none of them had ever seen an elephant, kissing each other for practice.

So they all wear a tiny smile, infinitesimal wrinkles intersecting each other across the flat planes of their faces. They remember what it was like to be young and girlish.

Eventually, the workers begin to shift impatiently, and there are announcements made in Korean, which only she can understand and she laughs, telling me that they are impatient and they want to go home to their crying children and their houses that are one sleepless night away from burning up and their husbands and wives that press up against them in the heat of an August night. Needless to say that she is paraphrasing and embellishing.

We quickly buy something, paying for the seaweed and for a custard cream bun that we share over the console of my truck. I try to enjoy it but it melts too quickly and drips beneath my fingers, landing on the stick shift and forever encasing the metal and the leather in this lackluster souvenir of our love.



I look again, at the most beautiful girl next to me, her silhouette the color of summer hydrangeas sheathed in a faintly perilous gleam. The walls of the truck feel awfully close, and when I reach over to fumble through her lacy tank top, I feel her mouth twist.

I feel my throat close up. It has been a long time since I have been so awfully close to another human. The way that my fingers curve around her breast and the way that her hand caresses the sweaty hollows of my throat feels, at once, dirty and pure.

It did not matter that she had become a near nobody, or that she would be off to college in one month and I would still be in high school. When you are young, there is nothing in the world that can hurt you. What did it matter that she was nearly a stranger? What would be left of my feverish soul, left to slowly rot in the haunted forests of my mother's shadows?

I think to myself that love is a ballad that moves through city lights like a butterfly in the night, seeking refuge in the coldest corners of an unforgiving metropolis. She tastes like whiskey but I have never touched a drop of alcohol in my life. This is my first red flag.

I pull away from her for a second, and her eyes are lidded over and I can see the faint strawberry smattering of eyeshadow across her dreamy brown eyes. I can no longer explain it, but in that instant, she smelled like my old ballet studio, a hole in the wall in a deserted strip mall in the darkest corner of New Jersey. It is sweat but it is something more: the desperation of a young girl yearning to please someone.

She feels like the stretch of my feet in Capezio's and her skin is as smooth as pale pink tights. She gives me the same bluish haze of that liminal space, and my head feels like it's stuffed full of cotton because I can no longer remember my own name.

Who could understand how broken my heart was when the most beautiful girl pulled away from me, opened the passenger door of my truck, and walked out of my life forever? I do not particularly care if she made it back home that night, because I vowed to never let the most beautiful girls break my heart ever again.



# August Evenings with Sherice H-Mart Kong Girls



PHOTO BY JULIE FLORES



YOU  
DON'T  
SCARE  
ME

the way perfusion does; in the way of loam  
and insects prying at my eyelids. I know  
better than to run with shears but this  
can't wait- the pruning of the wild  
thing within me. we agree that there  
were moments.

that there were only moments. when I wake  
with dirt beneath my nails I think it must mean  
hands reaching from the earth and you buried  
before I had the chance to tell you  
the truth in it- that love doesn't move  
like that. that you can't bury the living.  
believe me, I have tried.

McCAELA  
PRENTICE



**NOTEBOOK**  
property of: SUPERFRUIT MAG  
made with love  
50 sheets • 100 pages  
210 mm x 297 mm





## maple and brown sugar

By four, I knew how to mimic my sister's actions as well as set her up in a lie. I believed we were telepathic and in unison in everything we did. One afternoon, I caught her slipping her arm into her coat. So I asked her, Sanna, do you hold your sleeves? And felt betrayed that no, she did not. My notion of her lying was developed by my assumption that we were in fact one brain. I did not see or understand that, or the fact that she had actually answered me honestly. I developed a plan to catch her inconsistencies. I placed a sticker on the back of a small music box--inherited from our brother--and marched into the bathroom.

"Did you put thisth sticker on he-ear?" I said, lisp flaring spits in the air.

"Yea," she said, not looking up from her bubbles. Sanna, at seven, knew how to tune anyone out, answering vaguely. But I saw it as spiteful deceit. I could not find a reason for her dishonesty and it enraged me even more than the lie itself.

Having two hothead siblings, one older and one younger than her, she was used to being silenced or ignored. Sanna was forced into being the docile one, but also because she knew someone had to be the glue and the mediator. She took after our father with that one, whereas my brother and I consistently have the Italian meat sweats and hands that fling when we talk.

Twenty-two years later, I would not say Sanna is a liar. One could say she has always had the ability to manipulate situations to her benefit, but I've always viewed it as a way for her to control and gear the irrationalities of our family into a more suitable situation, at least for her. For instance, she would not give options to an indecisive person, nor would she reveal anything about herself that could be misconstrued or twisted. She knew when she would be questioned and had the answers prepared--knowing what our mother would say no to--or critique--and forming an image of what she would approve of instead. Figuring out what would be allowed, was an Olympic Sport in itself.

Sanna always knew of a simpler, easier route, like pouring Pine-Sol into the cap of the bottle and leaving it in the middle of the floor for hours to trick our mother into thinking we cleaned. When Sanna was in middle school, I accompanied her to the library to make a Xerox of her progress report. On the copy, she would wite-out her lesser grade(s) and scan it again. One the next copy, she would print a perfect imitation of her teacher's handwriting, giving herself a B+ or an A-. It would be copied a few more times, to make the layers seem as one--and to make it more difficult to read so that my mom would blame the school's toner instead of my sister's grades.

Sanna enrolled herself in every after-school activity from Cheerleading to Debate Team to ensure she would be out of the house since schoolwork was regularly intercepted by chores anyway. Cleaning comes first! Yet at the end of the year, our mother would say, You're smart, but you're lazy. She always knew where to poke the bear, and Sanna would choose to leave instead of arguing. Michael and I on the other hand, would send objects and curse words flying in the air, a symphony of oddly-paired insults, broken TV remotes, cell phones, towel racks and occasionally glass.

Sanna knew how to outsmart anyone, and if my memory is correct, she only became sloppy and subsequently caught, once. We were not allowed to stay home from school unless there was vomit. A few times a year--not consecutively, not enough for a doctor's visit--my sister would bring me into the bathroom as proof of her regurgitation. I don't know if she knew that I was aware of what it really was, but it was her way to ensure I'd sell the lie, agreeing that I indeed saw something in the toilet. She'd flush, and mom would take our word, until she found the instant oatmeal packets in a dresser drawer.

## brandi spring

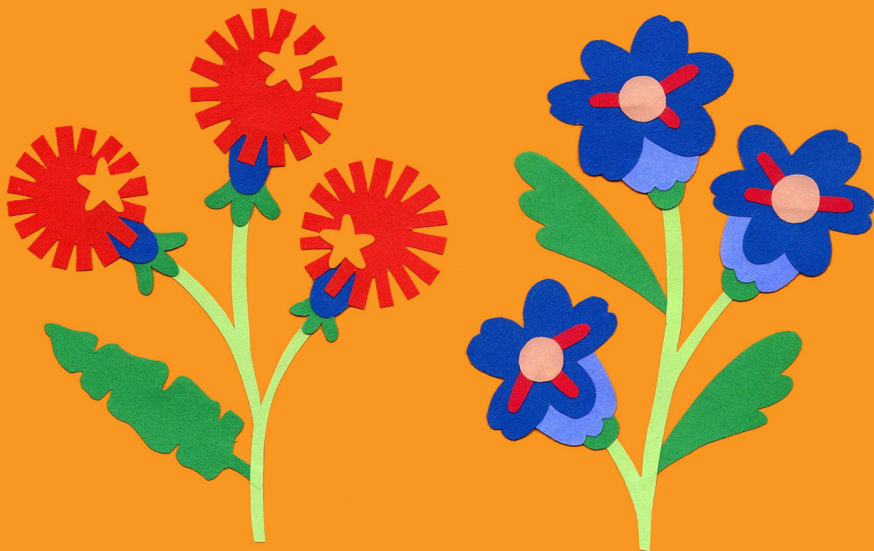


photo by sofia eskola



art by emma niggley

**YOU ARE**



**SAFE HERE**

**HANDLE**



**WITH CARE**





art by hermela gebretsion

art by sierra marshall





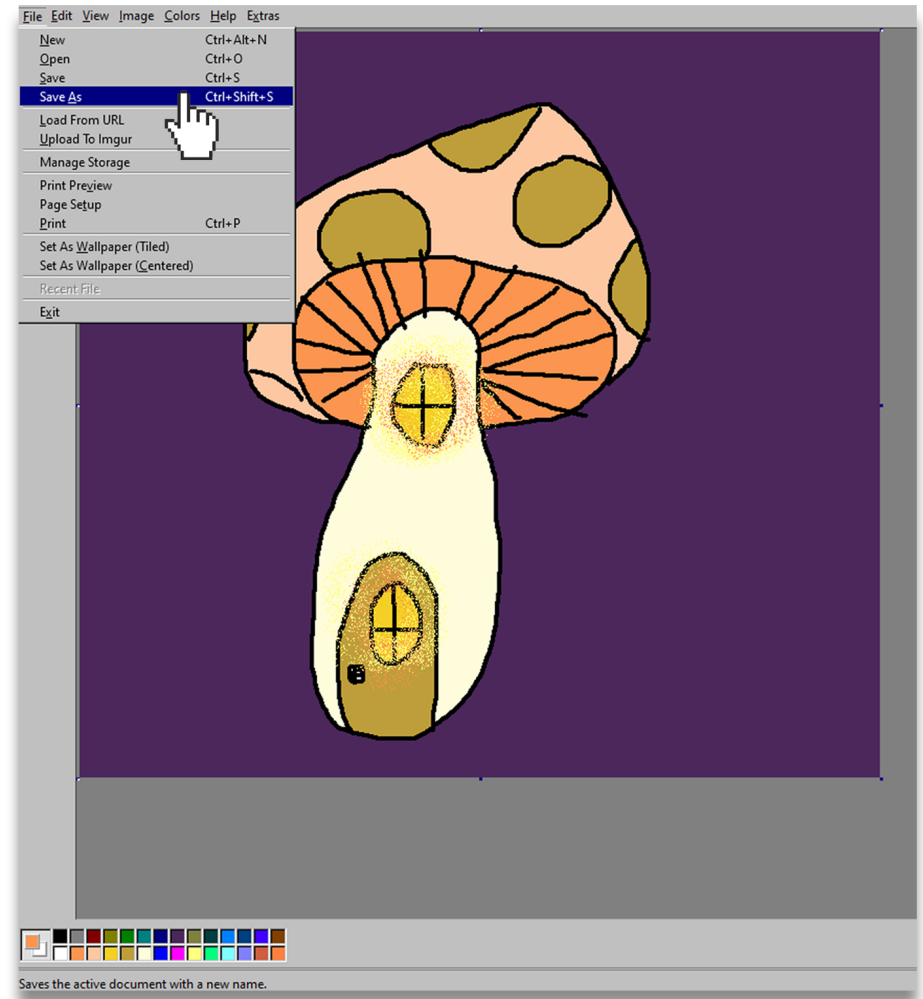
# toadstool house

rachel jung



If I were five and you were three  
and we could live at the bottom of the garden again –  
in a house hollowed out from a toadstool  
where I'd wipe your cheeks with a tissue  
every time you cried –  
tears like blue raindrops on storybook windowpanes,

we'd draw pictures on the egg-white  
walls of our toadstool house –  
green handprints of dew-wet grass at the door,  
a door that creaks at night so  
you'd curl into bed with me, when  
trees tap at the windows and beg to be let in.  
Your legs, only little in their blue wellies,  
would swing under the table,  
I'd watch you run curious fingers through  
circles of milk-spills in the moonlight, the  
sticky mug-prints of midnight cocoa.  
When it thunders and the house melts away,  
I'll hold your head, twenty and seventeen,  
And we'll watch TV until it makes our minds  
watery.





OOO

TO

EXIST

FENCE

zoe baber

We're all waiting in our own little ways:

Shrugging on our clothes -  
Clutching the subway pole tightly -

I didn't realize until now that I don't want to die.  
I didn't understand the ways life was trying  
to hand itself to me like a fruit sliced open.

At night I become the prayer.  
I submerge myself in the water. Scrub away  
the sun, the sour taste of unholiness.  
I have no religion, no anthem to sleep on,  
still I have become the questions spoken in the dark.  
With a Hunger. Like we can never run out of wanting.

I too have pretended that god is everywhere.  
I too have pretended that it is within me.  
That I have pretended to know anything at all  
frightens me. That I acted as though the world  
was not a question unfolding always

like the palms of a toddler. This here is submission.  
While he sings upstairs, while she watches the stars.  
I am not a fool. I know the world is full and wide.  
I know that somewhere, love breaks sweet between teeth.  
I held that subway pole so tightly. My knuckles were white.

I do not know the rest. I closed my eyes. I gave into it.



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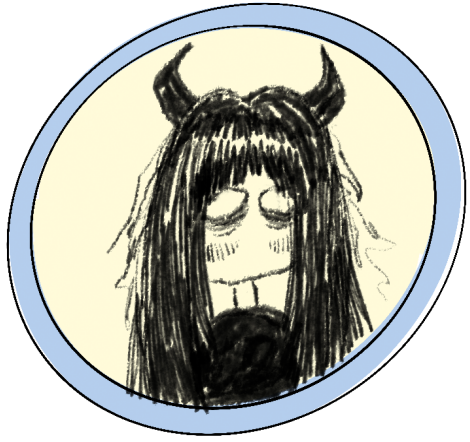
explore

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games

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wishlist



neomail



neofriend

# neopet self-portrait

- Attributes -

Age: 10,508 days old (252,192 hours)

Birthdays: Somewhere between the lemonade and lawnmower days of summer. Long enough ago that her first computer's only feature was hangman. She learned from the slow trickle of limbs down the blue screen that her wrong guesses could condemn someone, so she must never be wrong.

Level: Married Filing Jointly. Salaried With Benefits. Registered Voter. First Saturn Return. That iron-cored, many-mooned sense that you're on a collision course with something massive and swirling with storms.

Gender: A wave with a whitecap of swimming unicorns.

Height: Rita was today years old when she learned that some people can see the top of the fridge.

Weight: When Rita's two-week pneumonia fever broke, her mom traced her cadaverous waist and cooed you're so sexy.

Fishing Skill: On a first-grade field trip to Bandolier National Monument, Rita waded upstream until she made eye contact with two Rio Grande cutthroat trout. She screamed and ran, but she still feels like something cold and primordial is watching her.

Jobs Completed: Blending vanilla bean frappuccinos for babies in MAGA hats. Flailing through an emailed response to a student who calls your class her "nightmare all over again."

Reporting your co-worker for verbal abuse, then staring at your green Dansko clogs when your boss says to come back to him when it's sexual harassment.

Jobs Failed: Laughs. Cries. Gestures at everything.

- Battledome Stats -

Hit Points: Immune to rejection. Autoimmune to her own stupid intestine.

Strength: Rita's second favorite tarot card. A woman with her hands around a lion's jaws. Either sealing them shut, or opening them that he may speak.

Defense: All Rita learned from her self-defense class is how breakable she is.

Movement: Rita feels every sickening rotation of the earth as she lies on the cold kitchen tiles, recovering from her wedding dance tutorial.

Intelligence: Exhibit A—a former gifted/talented child sobbing in the corner because she doesn't understand estimated quarterly taxes, which she doesn't have to pay this year.

Challenge Rita in the BATTLEDOME! She is waiting for you.



rita  
feinstein

- Description -

Rita is a bubbly ambivert who loves fairy lights and garden parties and her dog's dewclaws. Every night she dreams of escaping a hospital or research institution. Sometimes, hallucinating with period pain, she looks at the serrated blades in the knife block and thinks with cool, stainless-steel relief of cutting herself open.

Rita likes exploring the land. Just the other day she found a leg bone by the police precinct. The day before that, she found a bus stop that made her feel like everything will be okay.

When meeting others, Rita would approach with caution. She's placed her heart in too many wrong hands. Like the barista who said she was cute, then told her he'd killed two people.







# WE DRANK SUMMER SUN

photo by tee ferguson

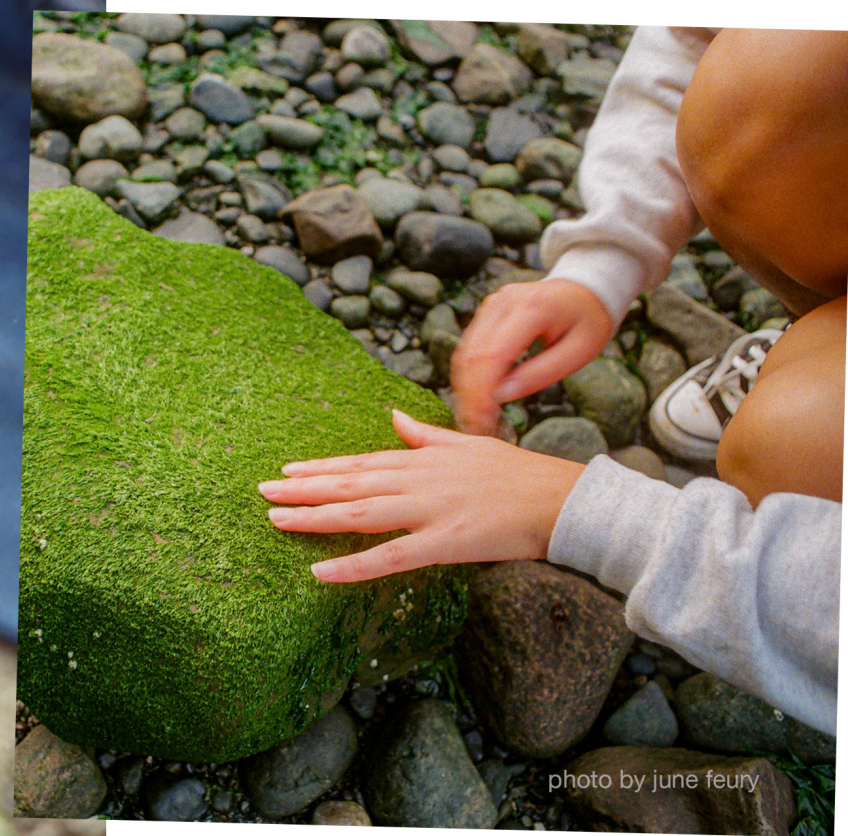


photo by june feury

Friends I sailed through lifetimes with:  
One girl made of coral reefs pierced by the sun's bellows  
and the other of May Day baskets and chiming doorbells.  
Sprawled out across the neck of the beach,  
we lured the sun to kiss our skin.  
At the outro of each tune, rising from my phone,  
I'd lick my lips for loitering sap.  
Soon, her blonde hair would blend into the sand.  
Tresses bursting with life, muted to match the shoreline's  
complexion.  
Her toes carried away by mossy waters that mirrored her eyes.  
The sea carried her to sugared days  
and horizons the color of heaven's gates.  
The next girl's freckles climbed the seawall,  
and the wind snatched them up.  
They say the glory marks landed among dandelion seeds.  
Growing into wildflowers,  
guiding those brave enough to dive into the back alley  
sandcastles.  
As warmth dances on top of noon,  
I dive into days when we drank summer sun like honey.  
Aches and howls fed by saltwater memories.

**Kelli Lage**



## **IN AN ALTERNATE REALITY I DO NOT ACHE AND WE ARE SPENDING OUR SUNDAYS**

sprawling like sunbathing weeds  
in bleach stained cotton underwear;  
your big toe poking from a hole in your sock –  
slicing pineapple with the chef's knife, and  
feeding our frenzied mouths while hanging our heads  
out from the bay window; the fiery glimmer of a smolder  
blinking and ashing between our forefingers;  
our hair unkempt and wild like brambles,  
and we don't count the rolls and folds of our stomachs,  
and I write all of my poems on a typewriter  
over the backs and fronts of our bills;  
you tack them to the fridge, to the walls –  
like some would photographs, and  
I write about how you whisper worship over my breasts,  
or how the peeling skin on the bridge of your nose  
ripped like tissue paper in the breeze,  
in case we get too far out too remember home;  
the carpenters are swooning on the record player,  
and I close my eyes to superstar, softly singing,  
baby, baby, baby, baby, oh baby  
until the track ends.

**LAURA JEAN HENEBRY**



photos: darcey davis

photos by darcey davis





photo by eilidh mahoney

*The peace of you*



when summer dawns and the sultry heat rains upon new york  
and people rush to the blissful coolness of their air conditioner  
my father steps outside to feel the embrace of the sun  
as he did as a child back in guruvayoor.  
and while i yawn in the back of our car during a road trip  
as we pass by loads upon loads of the same highway shrubs  
my father sees from his driver's seat small viridescent shades of old thrissur mulberry trees  
with roots that could tell tales of the beginning of time itself.  
as i stroll around hmart pushing a cart of udon and gochujang  
i keep an eye out for my favorite shrimp chips and soda  
my father makes sure to stop by the seafood section,  
inspecting the slabs of fish as he did with his own father in the chavakkad beach fish market  
he shakes his head as he turns away. not fresh  
they all look the same to me.  
as i venture through this world i realize that i can never quite capture  
the universe as my father's eyes do, kerala-colored lenses that sharpen his worldview  
i only watch and learn as my father guides me along his journey in this galaxy.

**aieshah ashfer**

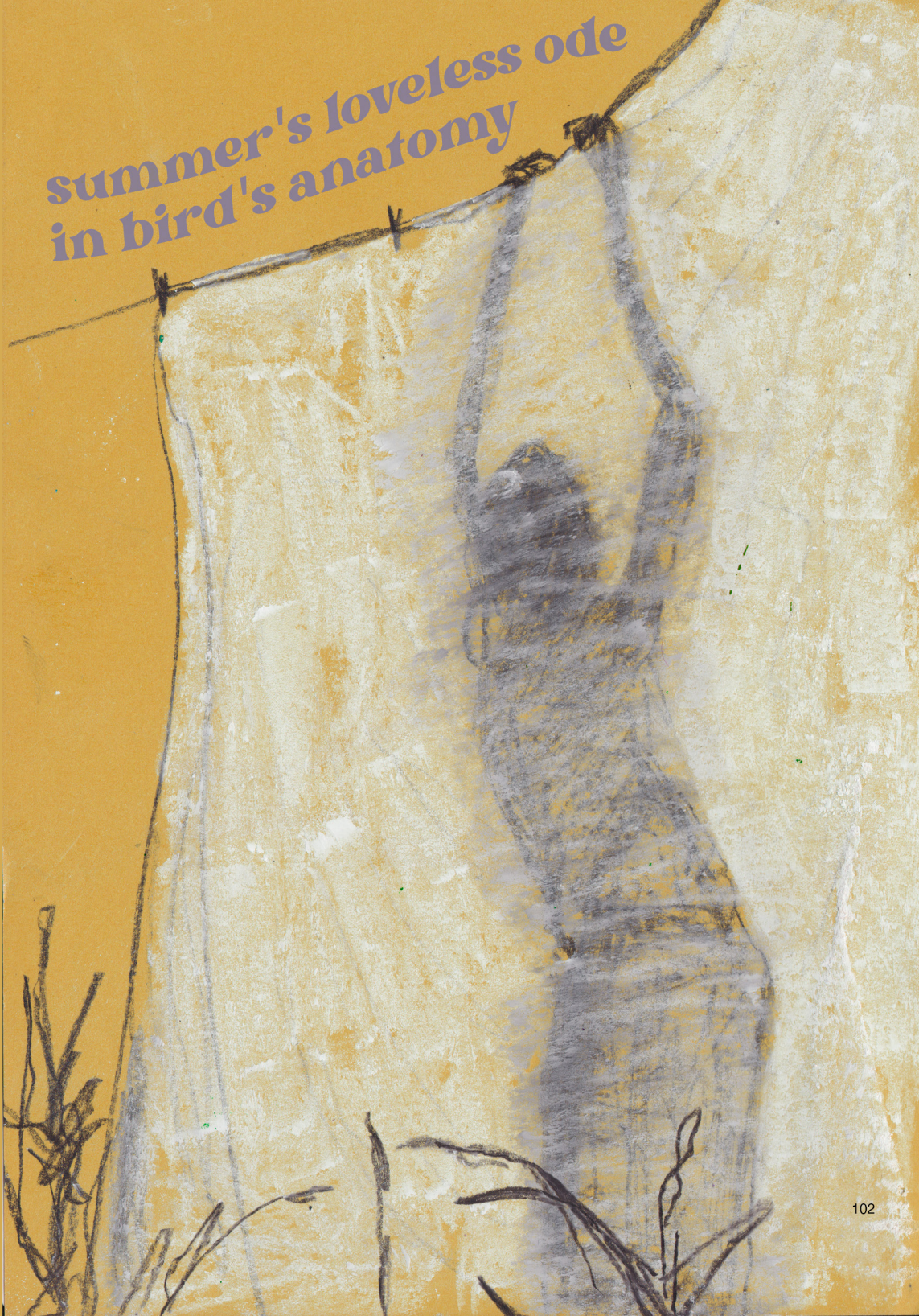
# MY FATHER FINDS HINTS OF GOD'S OWN COUNTRY ON THE



spring's decay clears my throat.  
in adolescence, every bird is dove-  
-like, but kildeers and plovers play  
trick-mirror with my expectations.  
youth mistakes me clean. summer  
is rancid. which means only time  
is winged with soft brown bangles.  
some birds are flightless, toothless.  
july makes me sweat and teenager.  
every cancer i have ever known is  
a poet-stomach. yes, with my love  
i want to bird-watch in the warmth  
june suggests but doesn't guarantee.  
my summer love is molting, woman  
half-drunk, pink-braless, afterfeather.  
we do shudder our bastard wings. we  
watch what we learn to be ourselves.  
i think i'm a sanguinivore, you say.  
oh, you must be an oxpecker... no,  
you say. i am the month becoming.  
the wind turns still, cold. i consider  
my own two hands. flesh and blood.

**autumn koors foltz**

art by sophie sinnott



**summer's loveless ode  
in bird's anatomy**



# I THINK THAT I LOVED A GIRL ONCE

*Sarah Morris Shux*

In the grass in Dolores Park,  
For once in such a long time  
San Francisco was warm and the sky,  
A cloudless painting  
We smoked, like we always did  
And tied fat dandelions together with blurry fingers  
And the corners of our mouths had no other choice  
But to stay turned upwards towards the crescent moon  
String-dangled already in the sky  
And I thought that even if it fell down  
While our fingers turned sticky and white with sap  
And stuck to our clothes and in our hair as we tucked stray pieces behind  
Our ears, red from the sun or from smiling  
Or the drug, which was the day and each other's eyes  
Glossed over ever so slightly  
As you coronated me with petaled fingers  
Even if it fell down, then and there,  
That I would still know what love felt like  
Even if I wasn't sure what kind of love it was  
It was immense and smelled of fresh grass and warm skin



photo by sophie sinnott



# W MOTHER L U N D

In my memory my mother wears yellow. She wears tortoiseshell glasses and sits at the pottery wheel in our garage and spins clay between her hands. I watch and touch and get the thick muck on my fingers and let it harden until she has to gently pry it off my skin. She carves her initials into the bottom of every piece, the swing of the *J* curving into the stem of the *P*, and I wonder if she branded me the same, on the bottom of my foot or behind the shell of my ear. When I look at my reflection, if I look long enough, I see her. Right there, just behind my irises.

When I get to the park, she's already waiting, sitting on a bench beneath a magnolia tree. If we hadn't agreed on a specific meeting spot beforehand, I wouldn't have known it was her. Nothing about her is familiar, and yet once she comes into focus I feel a pull of recognition in my gut. This must be what a baby animal feels when it sees its mother and understands, on an innate level, that they are one and the same.

She says my name, just once, the same way she always has. The sunlight reflecting off of her glasses makes the lens shine white, her eyes invisible. "Is that you?"

She is thinner than she is in my memory, and she looks much older. "Yes."

I make no move to sit, and she doesn't tell me to. I realize I must look much older, too, no longer prepubescent and gangly and bursting at the seams of my skin. We might as well be strangers meeting for the first time, if not for the warped scars of memory.

"I'm glad you reached out to me," she says, "and finally returned my calls after all these years."

"Well, you didn't seem to be getting the hint." We're already falling back into our routine from a decade ago—hit, punch, slap.

No defense, just offense. "Maybe hearing it in person will help you get it through your head. I don't want anything to do with you."

"But I'm your mother."

She tells me that there are men beneath the streets that control traffic lights, that the lights double as periscopes so that there is always someone keeping watch. She tells me that the beach is my inheritance and that the ocean will love me as surely as it loved her when she was a girl. (She speaks of her girlhood like that—like it is something in the past, something that is completed, something that is not with her anymore.) When I am scared and tucked next to her in my parents' bed, she tells me there's nothing to be afraid of because she will never let anything bad happen to me.

"I don't care."

If it hurts her to hear this, I can't tell. I shift from foot to foot, underdressed for the chill in the air. My mother, on the other hand, is bundled in a coat and boots. Beneath the layers she must be skin and bone. Her scarf is yellow.

"If you didn't care you wouldn't have come." She pulls a cigarette and lighter from the folds of her coat, and I see her hands, white and wrinkled. For a moment, I'm stunned at how much her hands look like my grandmother's, and her grandmother's, and *her* grandmother's, and—

If I cut the tie that binds, how much am I losing? Not just a woman who hurt me, but my mother, and her mother, and all the family in between. All that history, all that trauma—will I have no claim to it anymore?

"Are we going to do this or not?"

"Do what?"

She exhales. "What we always did." The smoke hangs in the air between us, stark and billowy in the cold. "Hash it out."

I feel the most like my mother when I am angry. Sometimes I find her in my voice, and the words that come out of my mouth are not my own but they are hers—but then doesn't every part of me belong to her and not myself? What is the daughter if not an extension of the mother, a limb carrying out the will of the brain? I've never belonged wholly to myself. I have always been hers. The umbilical cord connecting us is taut with tension, but it holds true. Even now, when she calls and I don't answer, she tells me: *You are mine. My daughter, my flesh. Mine.*



“What is there to say, Mom?” She jumps at the sound of her old name. The word feels jumbled and bumpy in my mouth, but it rolls out anyway, opening up like an old wound. I used to have fantasies about calling her by her first name instead of Mom. This was the greatest revenge I could think of: stripping her of her motherhood, cutting the ties between us, shoving her into the dark abyss of irrelevance. I told people I didn’t have a mother. It felt better than the truth. If I pretended I didn’t miss her then surely it must be true.

In my heart I’m still nine years old, locked in the closet with the vacuum cleaner and all the winter coats, only a door separating the two of us. The first time she locked me in, I thought she was never going to let me out. But it happened again and again and again, and she *always* let me out.

My mother lifts her glasses to peer at me. I have her eyes. Every other feature on my face I got from my father, but my eyes are hers.

“Everything you’ve been told is a lie,” she says. “I never hit you. I never hurt you. I was never sick and there was never anything wrong with the way I was. You were lied to, and you believed it.”

You can be gaslit for over a decade and know it by name and call it what it is, but it still works. When the lies come from the mouth of someone you love, it feels like second nature to fall for it, like exercising an old talent you’d forgotten you had. Especially when they believe every word they say.

“You’re still sticking to your story, aren’t you?” As if I had never been scared and bruised on the bathroom floor, the shock of white tile cooling against my cheek. As if I had never felt sinking terror in my gut at the realization that it was just her and I at home, and the sun was starting to go down, and her words were starting to slur.

“Your family’s worried about you,” she says from her spot on the bench, looking up at me with a frown. “They ask about you all the time. What should I tell them? That my daughter’s been brainwashed into thinking I’m some sort of monster?”

“You can tell them whatever you want.” I’ll be a lost cause, I’ll be a spoiled brat, I’ll be a runaway daughter. The narrative has never mattered to me. I was never the one writing it.

The night before, I hadn’t slept, instead lying wide-eyed in my grown up bed, miles away from my mother, playing out thousands of scenarios in which I could come out with the upper hand for once. What she wanted was a fight, and it felt as natural as anything—if I had to guess, I’d say I had fought her even from her womb, kicking and twisting. But standing atop dead leaves, seeing her face that is mine and not mine and familiar and alien, I don’t have it in me.

I roll my shoulders back, closing my eyes. “Look, I just came here so you could see my face, see that I’m alive, and then leave me the fuck alone.”

She puts out her cigarette before answering. “Is that any way to speak to your mother?”

I taste soap in my mouth from a decade ago, feel her hand in my hair as she forces my head into the sink. The soap had been honeysuckle scented, but in my mouth it had tasted like vomit.



The faucet had scraped against my scalp but she had held my head still while I gagged and spluttered and spit out whatever word I had said that had angered her so.

The memory leaves me exhausted, in the past and in the present, and I feel the fight drain out of my body. It was useless then, when I pounded my fists on the closet door, and it is useless now. I could tell her I hate her, but it wouldn’t be true, no matter how badly I sometimes want it to be. I could tell her about how great my life is now that I’ve pried her fingers off of my throat, but that wouldn’t be true, either.

“You know what? I don’t want to do this,” I say, tasting soap bubbles on my tongue. “I’m going to leave.”

Finally she shifts, leaning forward, ready to stand up. “You can’t leave. We haven’t talked yet.”

I shrug. “And we’re not going to.” I turn to leave, letting myself exhale one unsteady breath. When I get to my car I know I’m going to sit down and be shaking all over.

My mother touches me for the first time in years—a hand on my arm, a demand to turn around. I feel shocklashed, pulling away from the burn of her fingers. “What?”

“We’re not done here,” my mother says. She’s shorter than me, now that I’ve finished growing and maybe her spine has started to curve a bit. Up close I can see how badly the cigarettes and the drinking has aged her. Up close I can see that she is the same woman she has always been. “I want to talk to my daughter.”

I keep my voice steady. “You don’t get to.” Maybe this is the upper hand, after all: leaving, letting the dead things lie. A hand clutching a knife can cause no harm if it’s amputated at the wrist.

This time when I turn, she lets me go. The last time I left her it had felt like ripping myself out by the roots, leaving us both with gaping wounds. Today it doesn’t feel like anything at all.

In my memory my mother wears big dangling earrings and lets me paint her toenails and helps me do my hair. Every Sunday she bakes bread and the whole kitchen smells warm, even when it’s cold outside and the windows are frosty enough for me to press window clings to the glass. When I go to bed, I tell her I love her and she says *I love you too. Forever and for always.*



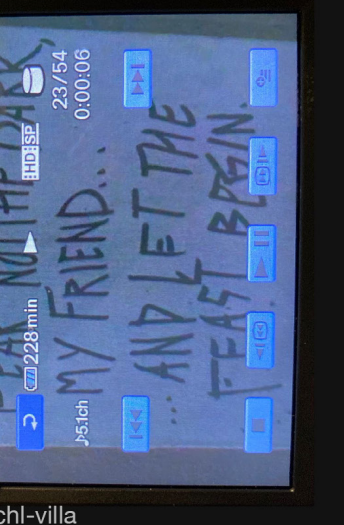
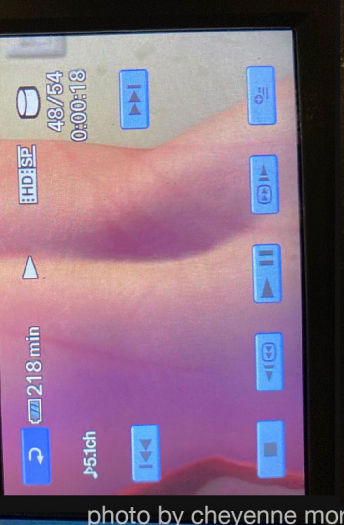
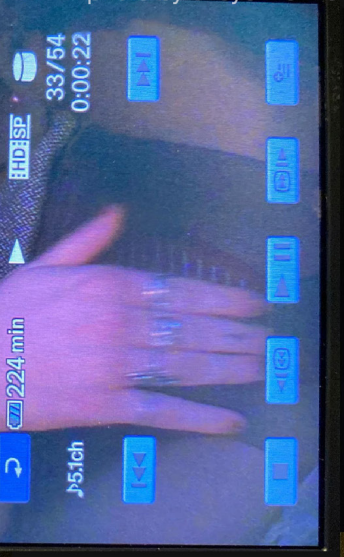
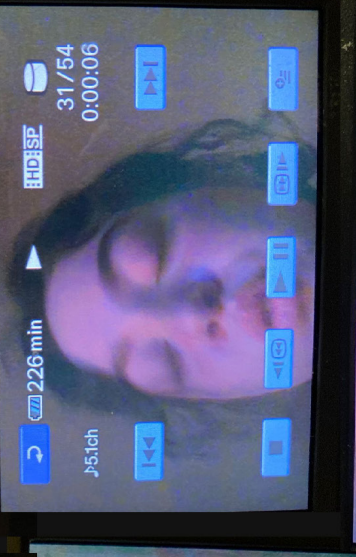
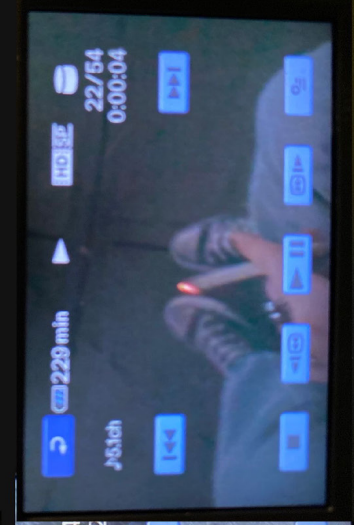
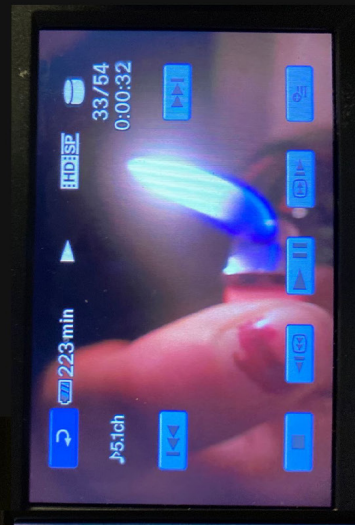
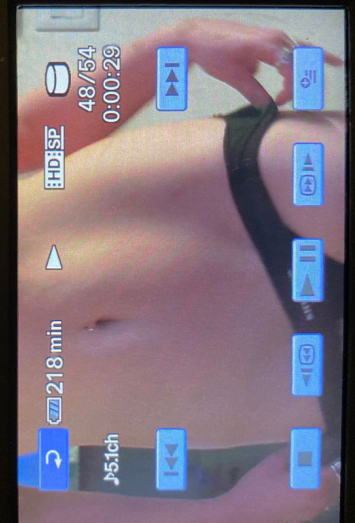
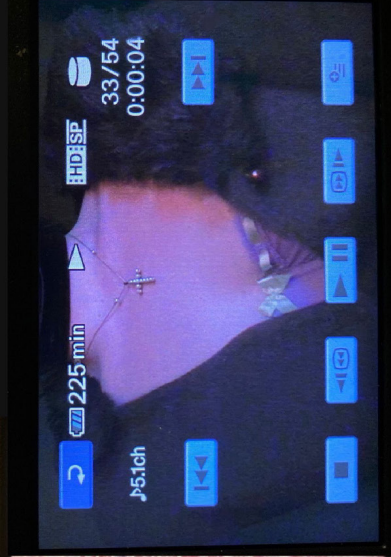


photo by cheyenne morschl-villa



# When the Sun Comes Before Morning

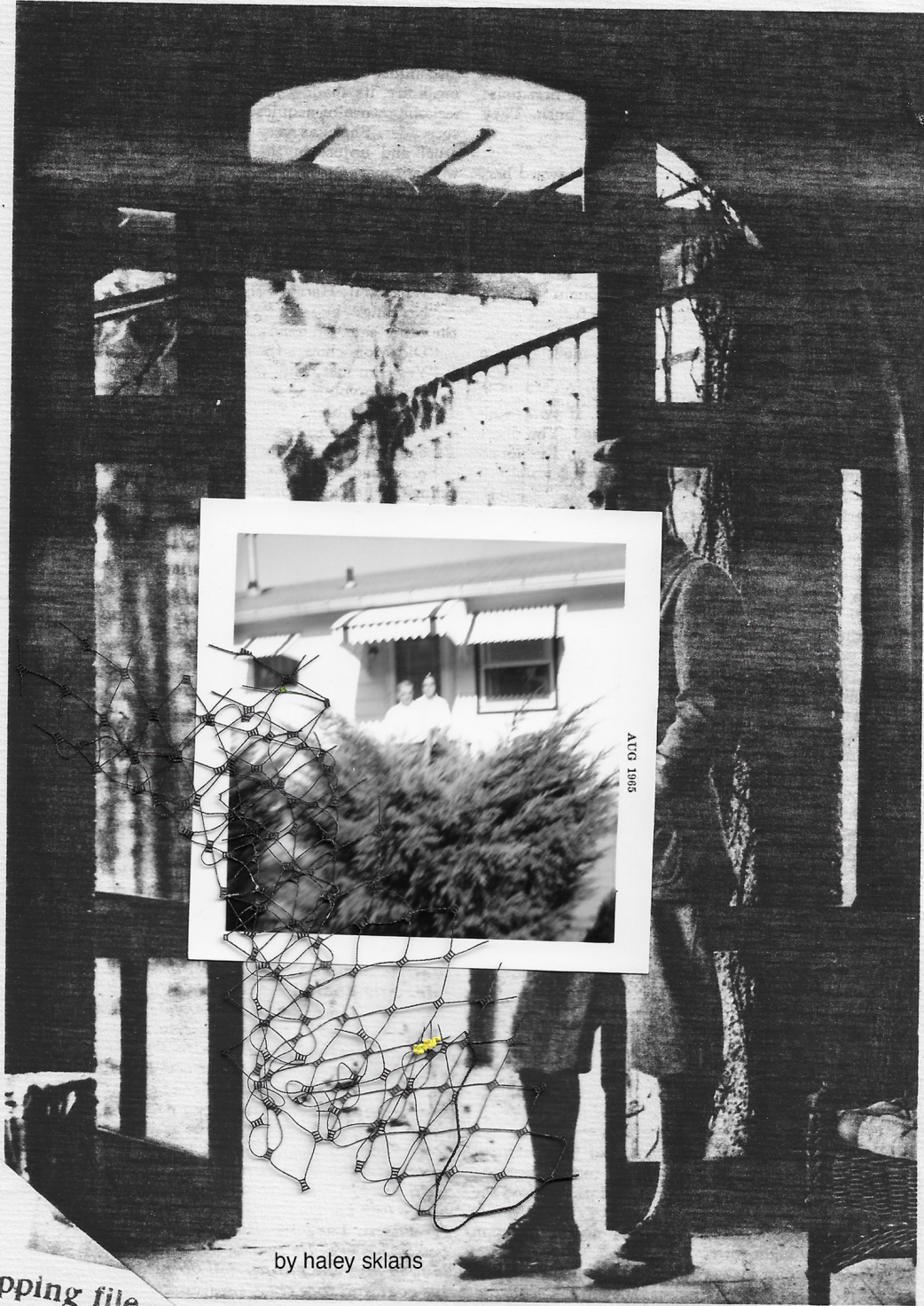
Not a drop in the house:  
cut loose from the communal kitchen  
like an umbilical cord,  
let night saturate  
and breathe in the dust you've let collect  
while we've been dancing knee-deep through  
the years not knowing if we are getting any  
older after all, what it means for the party  
to end with us still restless and on our feet.

*photo by sophie sinnott*

*Rosella Birgy*

*photo by darcey davis*





by haley sklans

SUPERFROOT 02: NOSTALGIA

Writers - F. Scott Fitzgerald

clipping file

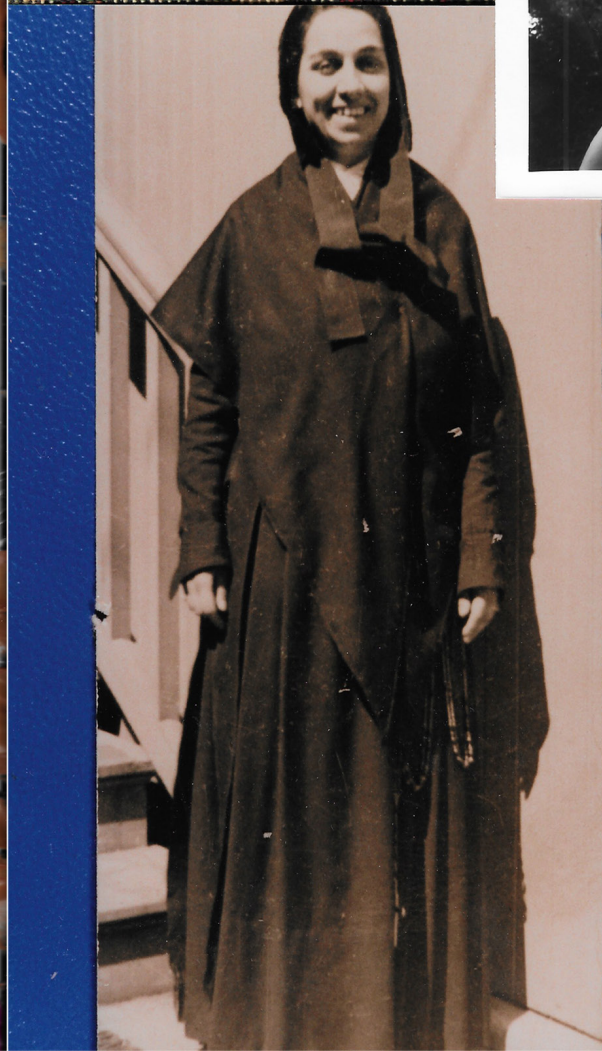
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by haley sklans



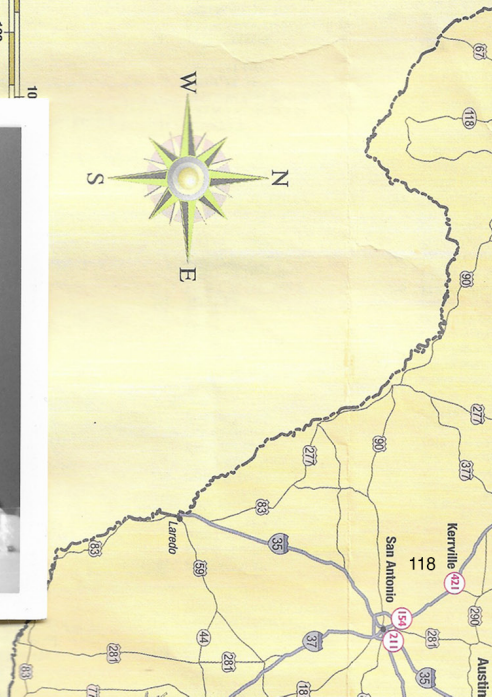
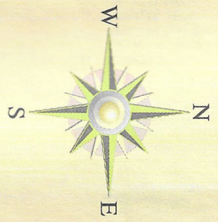
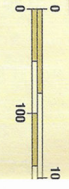


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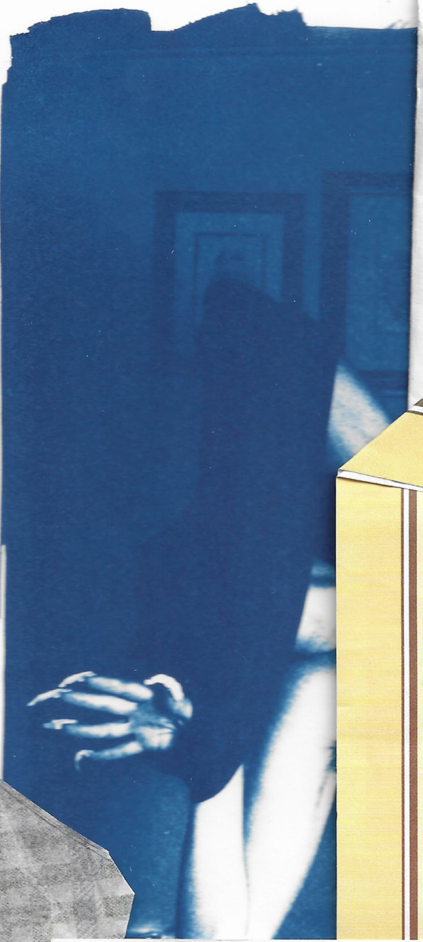
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by haley sklans



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by haley sklans





i PICTURE

IT SOFT

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ACHE



photos by aj wilane



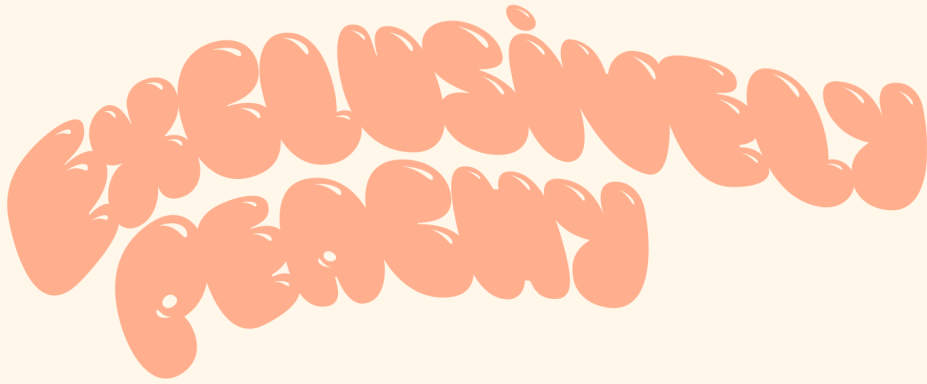
we grew delirious, but slowly.  
i learned your hands  
by feel. you touched my face  
like you were checking  
to make sure i was really there.  
i kept cutting my hair  
but it grew and grew.  
you licked my face like a dog;  
i cut your hair instead of mine  
and it didn't grow back.  
when i broke a bone you couldn't quite set it right.  
you called me bird and we flew.  
i said less and less, mostly tracing letters  
into the palm of your hand.  
you wore very little and were never cold.  
you grew and grew. your hands were so big  
that i could stand on them and  
look up at you, rest my chin on the ridge  
of your nose and finally look you in the eye.  
our reflection spilled out  
over the edge of our cloud.  
"we look so beautiful," you whispered.  
i settled into your chest and you hummed like a mountain.  
when i woke up we were the same size again  
and i couldn't figured out where you'd gone.  
"bird," you said, "don't you know by now  
that i'm not going anywhere?"

*Jessica Anne Robinson*



*outrunning  
the sun*





## HARPER GARRETT

The expected developments gurgle in some whale's inky belly out west: the Starbucks, the UGGs, the authentic Directioner mania, the fourth generation iPod Touch. My double digits came and went without convention. Suburban staples met turbulence and sank between coasts.

I got Pinocchio on VHS instead, and a modem fighting for the landline's downtime. Denim skirts over leggings and "Uptown Girl" by Westlife and Baby Lips lip balm and European summer campervans. Us running until recession was a graffiti tag smeared across the roads into town, little hands counting the seconds between every strike and crash, bodies rolling away from open curtains.

I know now that each day's alarm was there to tear the house down—that somebody took those vibrations through the chest to hand me an extra hour's sleep. I was not unlucky. I know this now.

\*

Yesterday we drove two hours inland for a village of efflorescent cathedrals, street stalls and stone houses. The grass on our campsite plot had been bleached by the bloom of July. We spent the evening settling: filling water, emptying waste, hammering plastic pegs into plastic awning walls to erect the portable living room. We ate Intermarché burgers with store brand ketchup from the disposable barbecue. We burned a vanilla candle through midnight and played a board game where the dice never landed on six when you needed it.

Morning came like a parent throwing off the covers. Like the sun with knuckles to the door. The leaves went taut and the gravel steeled itself for wheels and rushing feet. I wore what I never did at home—dresses, necklaces, bare legs—and collected a fresh baguette from reception with Dad and a tough, foreign tongue. *Bawn-jorr*.

We split the bread into warm, soft slices. There was Mom with her porridge and a mixed berry compote. Owen's PSP on the table left to load *Ratchet & Clank*. Dad with a tourist's guide to regional war museums. Flo Rida on the radio. A day that was nothing but blue.

For a month, we spoke of our country like a balloon let fly from an infant's hand. *There it goes. All that money for nothing. What a fun five minutes!* We switched channels when the European forecast erred toward the Atlantic. We ate brioche and complimented the wooden window shutters on main street. We pretended we were not who we were until we forgot.

But to talk about forgetting is to talk about the boys with their skateboards and cigarettes and smooth, sliding French. There were always so many of them, all shirtless in squads, and always fighting—real fighting, with cracking hands and faces. They met on pavements and down the slacks of sand dunes and in front of the campsite grocer's dairy aisle. Dad would shake his head and blame the heat. I would watch Owen's midday composure and wonder about the differences.

A magenta evening was all they needed to meet me like a pup and a car at speed.

I didn't leave when the boys stormed the playground, piling their boards by the age safety sign. They were bottles of sun with smoke between their fingers, sweaty everywhere. They were tall enough to spot me without craning their necks. I was trapped on the top platform, and all the other children had gone in for the evening.

By the stairs, they spat gravel. By the slide, every kick and claw echoed into my face like the wet burn of an oven's exhale. I wondered if the sliders knew there was a child up here, a quiet one who wouldn't snitch, late home for dinner.

I sat in the mouth of the slide and saw their shadows halfway down, backs fusing to the cylinders, wisps of fog flying. I put my trust in sympathy.

I had my first nosebleed.

But to talk about bleeding is to talk about responses: desperation and delicacy, painkillers, tissue tufts.

Yesterday we turned back to the coast for an on-site bar and an outdoor sauna. Once a week the town hosted a disco so kids could dance the Macarena while their parents drank next door. I felt too tall for it and stayed away. Owen drank Orangina from a bell-bottomed bottle. I ordered iced tea, exclusively peachy. I chalked the tips of the pool cues for strangers instead of dancing then sat around when they left, doing the same to my digits.

Musty wood and neon walls. Moths swarming by the doorway light. Vending machines at a child's height. The peeling angel on my shoulder blade. Babies led to cars in mindful arms. A sky plainly painted—no signs of the thunder we'd bargained for.



Mom's vodka tonic, Dad's lager, a receptive barman. They talked for hours.

"Did you learn French on the job?"

"Was it very different?"

"You poor thing."

"Would you go back to construction, ever?"

They watched the collar of a Guinness settle.

"They're saying another fifty thousand will go this year."

Dad turned in his seat. Owen looked down and swung his heels against the pool table.

"They'd be in the same boat as you if they were a few years older."

Mom fished a lemon slice from her glass to suck on. "It'll get better. Hopefully, by the time ..."

I met Dad's eyes, felt the distance and the frenzy.

Maybe he was sketching. Maybe, this July, he'd been painting something close and safe—something together, only ever gone for leisure, and always quickly home. Maybe we were never trying to forget about places.

I walked over to Dad in my Crocs. I held up my can and heard the sigh when I crushed it. "Can I get one more?"

Then the adults laughed.

Dad slid his fingers through my hair and knocked my plait loose. The barman turned to a thin, glowing fridge. Mom said, "What do we say?" and I whispered, "Please." They would smile at each other then at me, like I'd just stumbled out of bed with my shirt on backwards.

I was passed a new, sweaty can. Dad searched his pockets for the Euro-something but the barman waved his hands, so he tipped it into a jar on the counter instead. They bickered about this, and grinned while they did.

The barman lifted a portion of the counter and slid out. He approached the child-height vending machines, which had a coin slot and a spinning cog for little hands.

"Nobody uses these like they used to," he said. He looked at me and at Owen and curled a finger. "Goitse." *Come here.*

With a key from his ring he lifted the lid and pulled out two balls, firetruck red, taped shut. We were given one each. He knelt down and split the tape with the cuts on the key before we could gnaw at it with our teeth. His palm fell to Owen's head as he stood, and Owen beamed. We popped the balls around the middle.

Mom had her chin on Dad's shoulder, looking over. "What do we say?"

It was Pikachu. A Pikachu on a string. My phone had a corner cut out for this, to sling charms through. The adults saw that I was happy and this seemed to make them happy too. Now I had an angel tattoo and a new can and a dangling toy. A long, warm night. Two more weeks.

I looked up, chin sticky with peaches, and said thank you.



art by pauline aksay



photo by jaina cipriano

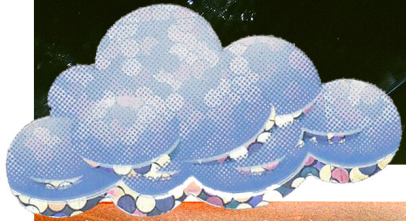


photo by elise wojtowicz



photo by mia makes it

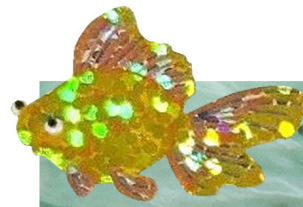
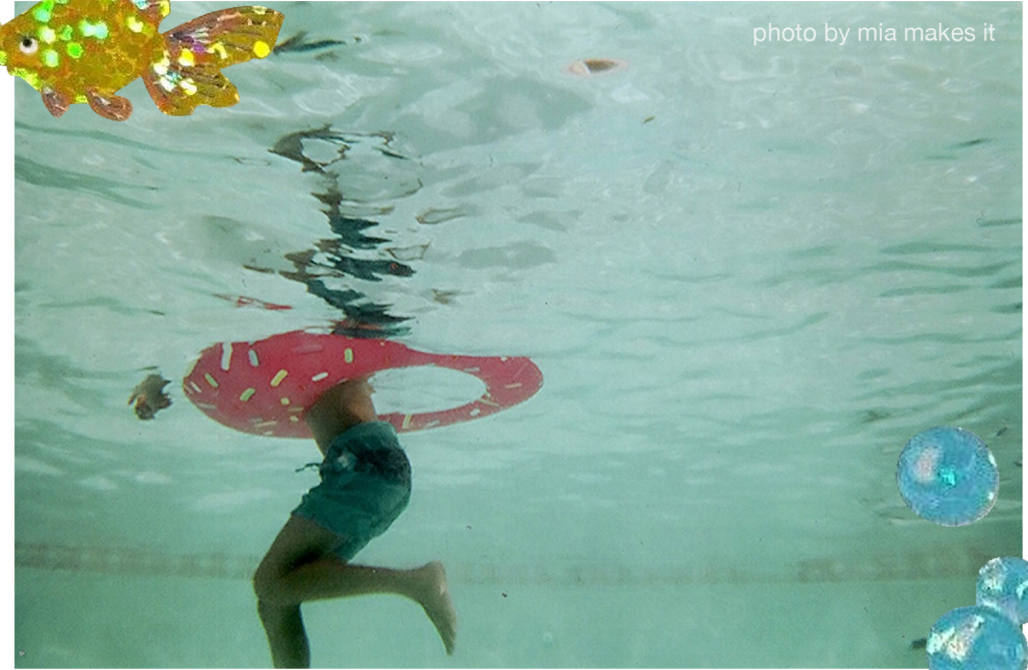


photo by farida rady





## HAND-ME-DOWNS

I had a baby doll, before you, named Julia, with an emerald blanket now ratty as pirate rope. Once, you suckled my fingertip & bit. White froth festered at your lip. We were reared by floors that talked back, walls slack-jawed. How many nights could you hear a cry caught in the threads of a dirty rag? We never ate the crabapples out front for fear they tasted sweet. Once, I let a mountain eat me—scraps of my body sundered across its tip. Once, in the creek, I painted you with mud & hid you among sticks, 'til far-off hollers hushed. I think women in this family are cursed. I've heard hisses in the sway of our hair. The strands you've grown I've braided, pigtailed-- a straw waterfall. My ends have split, have tapered. Parting: the easiest part. Are we nothing more than our leaving? A river to tumble into, a wound begging to be struck. I'm no outlaw, no Jezebel, I'm trapped in the snowstorm of our blood: the one that blocks the state lines, the one so cold you burn. Often I wonder how tepid you've become, which version of the world you've suffered.

Julia Watson







Give up your secrets



and let down your hair...







photo by gabbie henn



photo by elise wojtowicz



# TRUST TOTO TO REPLACE ME WITH A WHITE GIRL

SANJANA RAGHAVAN

Fall is my favorite season just like purple is my favorite color. Someone once asked me to choose a favorite so I did. I think I like summer better now that I'm an adult and it doesn't mean being chained to my parents' house, without school as an escape. I miss soaking in so much sun it would leave me sweaty and breathless. I miss being sun dazed and sun drunk. I miss the feeling of freedom, of endless days and sweetly cool nights. I miss the hopefulness, the hedonism.

I like the idea of fall, the way you get to play in winter by bundling up and sipping on hot drinks and wearing a jacket you don't really need because summer's sun is still there to hold you. I hate the reality of fall, the pain of the days getting shorter and colder, even though it happens every year. When I first moved to New York, everyone took way too much pleasure in telling me this wasn't even real cold, that I should've seen the blizzard the winter of '08, or '04, or '95.

There were tornadoes in Kansas, I tried to tell them. Go back to Toto, Dorothy, just close your eyes and click your heels. I tried once, but it didn't take. Poor Toto would have to find his own way home.

I'm supposed to be rewiring my neural pathways so I'll be happier. And so I don't short circuit my brain by being forever stuck in a hyper-adrenalized state. Which only adds to my anxiety, naturally. My routine is: stay up until 4 or 5 am, pass out. Wake up around 2 PM, so it feels like there's less hours in the day.

Right now, I'm living for the approval of one of my professors. So I've been researching more, so she'll like me more, and I'll be okay. Or rather, she'll like my work, which is the closest I get to someone liking me. I wonder why else I got so good at school, why I decided to run headlong into a grad program for a major I don't even really like. I spend my days researching legal responsibilities for biomedical waste management, and running up my credit cards. I quit my job and internship a few weeks ago, and I've been dodging my therapist's overly polite check in emails. She always signs everything, "Kindly, Jamie."

Once she asked me how I felt and I told her the truth. I was scared she was disappointed in me.

She looked at me and said, so, so kindly, "Of course I'm not. We don't have that type of relationship."

When I was a kid, I used to grab rocks and shiny pieces of trash and reverently pile them into my pockets, until they were so heavy my pants started to sag. My mom would run my clothes through the washer and dryer and come up with fistfuls of sodden wrappers and sharp, flinty pebbles. I wasn't mad when I saw my treasures had been destroyed. Even though I loved glinting metal and uselessly pretty things, they weren't the point. It was being weighed down, held steadfast to the earth so I couldn't fly away at my most weightless, back when I still had nubby wings threatening to poke free from my shoulder bones.

They would itch at my tight clothes, until I took my shirt off and screamed and cried. I could scream for hours. I was also a biter. My childhood pictures show a shirtless chubby kid grinning at the camera, all pink gums and sticky drool. I look like someone's uncle at a pool party, with my potbelly and backwards cap Appa liked to plunk on my bald head.

I miss the kid I used to be. These days I wear shirts, long sleeved and too tight, hoping I can keep everything densely contained. Nights, I don't wear anything, no shirts, no pants, not even a pair of socks in the New York winters. I stretch my time with myself for as long as I can. I become both rock and wing.





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THANK YOU FOR PLEASE



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!





photo by ava williams



## FIRST SIGHT

The room smells of blood  
orange peels, sweat, and you—

the scent of your chest curling  
toward the mildewed window panes.

I can't bear to change  
the sheets, not when I still see

your bare thighs knotting with the sheets,  
how your knees knocked and formed

a drawbridge over the mote of my hair.  
Can you still smell my skin

on your skin? Or see the details  
of my face where your fingers traced—

the circular scars, the overgrown brows,  
the curve of lowerlip. Can you still feel

my bite on your inner thigh? Did my mouth  
on your neck (and yours on mine) jolt

you alive, heart bursting like a bomb,  
like that first time we met?

Meeting your gaze, a welcomed intrusion,  
how I felt the world shift

from doomsday to dawn,  
your slow breath fogging the space

between us, sweetening the upending air.

## DESPY BOUTRIS



photo by darcey davis



photo by gabbie henn





photos by eilidh mahoney





photo by simran kaur

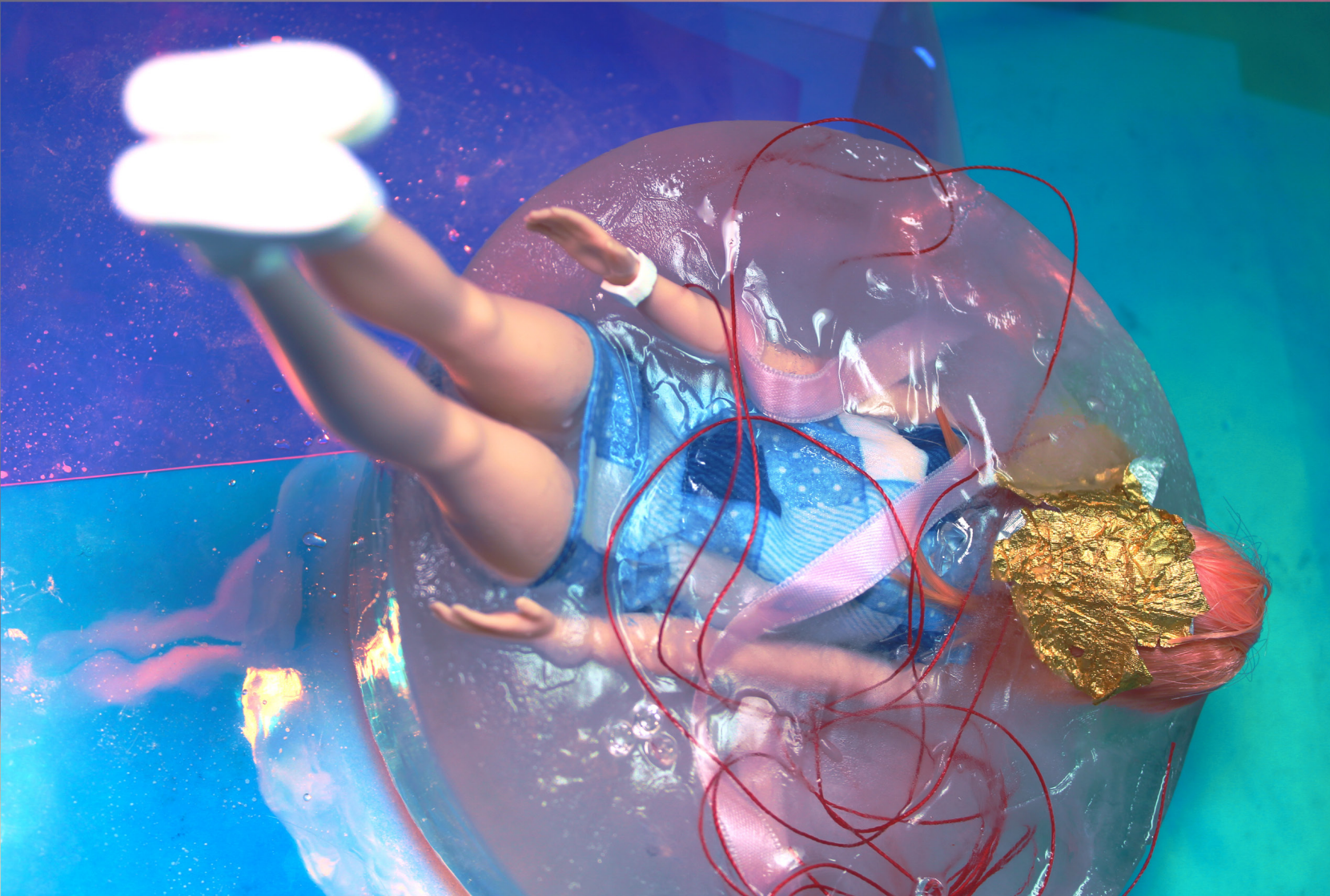




photo by simran kaur







photo by simran kaur





photo by simran kaur



# CONTRIBUTORS

## POETRY

### **Aieshah Ashfer**

*Aieshah Ashfer is a poet strung by experiences in her motherland, India, and her homeland America along with eyes that see the world through lenses with awe and passion. She is a sophomore at Herricks High School. She has been nationally recognized by Scholastic twice and has been published in the OPUS magazine. You'll find her spitting the images, colors, and shapes that collect in her mind into paintings, drawings, sketches, and arranging the ideas and thoughts in her head into poems, prose, and stories.*

### **Andrea Lianne Grabowski**

*Andrea Lianne Grabowski is a queer writer living on Anishinaabe land who can often be found peering into the windows of abandoned farmhouses. She's been on the literary staff of NMC Magazine and is querying her first novel. Her work appears and is forthcoming in Giving Room Mag, Catchwater Magazine, Cicada Creative Magazine, Catatonic Daughters, Hell is Real Anthology, and more. Twitter: @pingouinwrites.*

### **Astrid Bridgwood**

*Astrid Bridgwood is a nineteen year old poet from North Carolina whose work has been called 'visceral and frightening.' You can find her featured in All Guts No Glory Mag, Not Deer Mag, and Olney Magazine, among others. Most recently, she was a semifinalist for the 2021 James Applewhite Poetry Prize. Find her upcoming work on Twitter @astridsbridg*

### **Autumn Koors Foltz**

*Autumn Koors Foltz (she/her) is a poet based outside Baltimore, Maryland currently studying at the University of Maine at Farmington. She is the Fall 2021 Alice James Books Director's Chair Fellow. Her work can be found in mutiny! mag and the lickety-split, among others. Her moon is most certainly in Capricorn.*

### **Daren Colbert**

*Daren Colbert is a writer and filmmaker from Missouri, who's just trying to do his best. When he's not writing or making films, you can find him watching a movie. Or napping. Or craving a mango. Sometimes both. Rarely all three. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in Moon City Review, Puerto del Sol, Unvaeled, and elsewhere.*

### **Despy Boutris**

*Despy Boutris's writing has been published or is forthcoming in Copper Nickel, Ploughshares, Crazyhorse, AGNI, American Poetry Review, The Gettysburg Review, Colorado Review, and elsewhere. Currently, she serves as Editor-in-Chief of The West Review.*



photo by elise wojtowicz





### Gabby Gilliam

Gabby Gilliam lives in the DC metro area. Her poetry has appeared in Tofu Ink Arts Press, Tempered Runes Press, Cauldron Anthology, and Mythos Poets Society. You can find her online at [gabbygilliam.squarespace.com](http://gabbygilliam.squarespace.com)

### Jaiden Dokken

Jaiden is a writer, reader, stamp-carver, ceramicist, and highly persistent penpal. She carries a BA in Human Ecology from Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies. As co-owner of Two Hooligans Cider Company in Sequim, WA, she can often be found apple-picking and cider-sipping. Jaiden has work published in Fiction International: Vol. 53 Algorithm, Muses & Vices no. 1, and SpeakEasy 19.



### Jessica Anne Robinson

Jessica Anne Robinson is a Toronto writer and, more tellingly, a Libra. Her poetry is featured or forthcoming in filling station, Minola Review, untethered magazine and Room magazine, among others. Her first chapbook, OTHER MOTHERS' FUNERALS (2021) was recently published with Frog Hollow Press. You can find her anywhere @hey\_jeska.

### Joyce Liu

Joyce Liu is a young poet from Canada. She got her driver's license last fall but is still scared of the highway. More of her work can be found in released and upcoming issues of perhappened mag, Gone Lawn, and Vagabond City. Joyce tweets sometimes at @joyceliuwrites.

### Julia Watson

Julia Watson earned her MFA in Poetry from North Carolina State University. She was a finalist for the 2021 NC State Poetry Contest, the 2021 Joy Bale Boone Poetry Prize, and won the Sassaman Award for Outstanding Creative Writing from Florida State University. Her works have been published in Panoply: a literary zine, The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature, Hysterical Rag, and other journals. She lives in Asheville, North Carolina where she plays bass guitar in the band Cardinal Lake. You can read more of her work at [juliawatsonwrites.com](http://juliawatsonwrites.com).



### Kaisa Saarinen

Kaisa Saarinen grew up in the Finnish countryside and escaped as quickly as possible. She studied environmental politics and now works as a research analyst in London. Her writing is published or forthcoming in Anti-Heroic Chic, Miniskirt, Sledgehammer, All Guts No Glory, and elsewhere. @kuuhulluutta



### Katie Holtmeyer

Katie Holtmeyer lives and writes in Missouri. Her work has been featured or is forthcoming in Stanchion, Pocketfire's Kindling, 3 Moon Magazine, Words & Whispers, Rejection Letters, The Shore, Superfruit Magazine, Mycelium Magazine, and Jupiter Review. She can be found on Twitter at @HoltmeyerKatie.



### Laura Henebry

Laura Jean Henebry is an emerging poet and author hailing from the mountains of Upstate NY. She is a late at night baker, and when not making a mess out of her kitchen, can be found slumped over her laptop writing at all hours of day and night. She believes in dancing immediately upon waking up, and working on her Eddie Vedder impression during her work commute.



### Lucas Peel

Lucas Peel is a Florida Man by trade, shithead by starsign, and runaway by choice. His poems have been featured in Hominum, Olney, HAD, GASHER, Barren, and elsewhere, enjoying a steady feature on a handful of shelves on his mother's dresser. Lucas was born in the year of the banana and currently lives in Honolulu, HI. He sometimes believes in love and also himself.

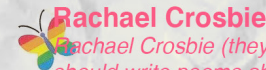


### Mariel Fechik

Mariel Fechik is a musician and writer who lives in Chicago, IL and works in a library. She sings for the bands Fay Ray and Moon Mouth and is a junior editor at Atwood Magazine. Her work has been nominated for Best of the Net and Bettering American Poetry, and has appeared in Hobart, Tinderbox Poetry Journal, Cream City Review, Glass, and others. She is the author of Millicent (Ghost City Press, 2019) and prone to separation with Taylor Yocom (Ghost City Press, 2021).

### McCaela Prentice

McCaela Prentice (she/her) is currently living + writing in Astoria, NY. She is feverishly re-watching the X-Files. Her poetry has previously been featured in Hobart and Ghost City Review. Her first chapbook, "Junk Drawer Heart", was published with Invisible Hand Press.



### Rachael Crosbie

Rachael Crosbie (they/them) has a grumpy cat named Peanut who they should write poems about. They have two chapbooks, swerve and MIXTAPES, and a third forthcoming: self-portrait as poetry about bad poems. Some of their poems can be found in Pink Plastic House, Wrongdoing Magazine, Spilled Ink, and others. None of this work is about Peanut, but they hope to remedy this soon.

### Rachel Jung

Rachel is a 21-year old student from England. In her free time, she likes to rescue snails from the pavement. Her poetry can be found in Clandestine Lit and Horse Egg Literary, as well as at [linktr.ee/racheljung](http://linktr.ee/racheljung).



### Raquel Luciano

Raquel Luciano is a future educator and a student at the University of Central Florida. Her poems can be found in Anti-Heroic Chic and horse egg literary. She lives in Orlando with her girlfriend and their five crazy cats. She loves singing bad karaoke. Find her on Instagram @raq.poet.





## Reese Menefee

Reese Menefee is an MFA poetry candidate at McNeese State University. They are from Kentucky. Their work is forthcoming in *All Guts No Glory*.

## Rita Feinstein

Rita Feinstein is the author of the poetry chapbook *LIFE ON DODGE* (Brain Mill Press, 2018). Her stories and poems have appeared in *Permafrost*, *Grist*, and *Willow Springs*, among other publications, and have been nominated for Best of the Net and Best New Poets. She is a graduate of Oregon State University's MFA program.

## Rosella Birgy

Rosella Birgy is a junior at Coe College. Her creative work can be found or is forthcoming in *Overheard Lit*, *X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine*, *Lucky Jefferson*, *Juke Joint Magazine*, and *The Claremont Review*, among others. She is happy to call Minnesota her home.

## Sarah Morris Shux

Sarah Morris Shux (she/her) is a poet, screenwriter and short story writer currently living in Los Angeles with her very loud Siamese cat, King Tut. She enjoys obsessing over ghost stories, roller skating, stress baking and spending too much money on vinyl records and plants. Find her words published in *Sledgehammer Lit*, *Not Deer Magazine* and on Medium.

## Zoe Baber

Zoe Baber is a queer seventeen-year old poet from Southern California who hopes to keep optimism and authenticity alive in her writing.



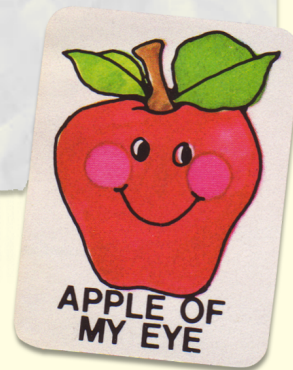
# PROSE

## Adrienne Marie Barrios

Adrienne Marie Barrios has work forthcoming in *trampset*, *Rejection Letters*, *Scrawl Place*, *The Bureau Dispatch*, and *Identity Theory*. She is editor-in-chief of *Reservoir Road Literary Review* and edits short stories and award-winning novels. Her full-length collection, *TOO MUCH TONGUE*, written in collaboration with Leigh Chadwick, is forthcoming in winter of 2022 from *Autofocus Lit*. Find her online at [adriennemariebarrios.com](http://adriennemariebarrios.com).

## Brandi Spering

Brandi Spering is the author of poetic narrative, *This I Can Tell You* (Perennial Press, 2021). Other works can be found in *super / natural: art and fiction for the future*, *Schuykill Valley Journal*, *Forum Magazine*, *Artblog & more*. Spering resides in Philadelphia, where she writes, sews, and paints.



SUPERFRUIT 02: NOSTALGIA



## Elsa Pair

Elsa Pair received her bachelors degree in English and psychology from the University of Houston, where she served as poetry editor of *Glass Mountain* magazine. Her work has appeared in *Glass Mountain*, *Defunkt Magazine*, and *Adelaide Magazine*.

## Harper Garrett

Harper Garrett (she/her) is a writer from Wicklow, Ireland. She is a student of English with Creative Writing at University College Dublin and can be found on Twitter @harpgar.

## Jessica Willingham

Jessica Willingham is a graduate of Lighthouse Writers Workshop and an editor at *Five South* magazine. She lives and writes in Oklahoma, where she calls home. You can find her @jesswcreative.

## Navya Bahl

Navya Bahl (she/her) is a 17-year-old senior from New Delhi, India. An incorrigible dreamer, when she isn't weaving stories from myths and lores, that may, or may not, be infused with magic, she can be found reading yet another book, baking something disastrous or crying over her schoolwork. Her writing has been recognized and published by the Scholastic Quill Club, and her recent works are featured or forthcoming in *Love Letters Mag* and *Scenecerityzine*, among others.

## Sanjana Raghavan

Sanjana Raghavan is a queer Indian American writer who lives in Fairfax, VA. Sanjana holds a BA in English from George Mason University. Their work appears in *Fiction Southeast*, *Lunch Ticket*, *New Flash Fiction Review*, and elsewhere. Find Sanjana on Twitter @brownbookboi.

## Sher Ting

Originally from a sunny island in Southeast Asia, Sher Ting is a Singaporean-Chinese currently residing in Australia. She is a 2021 Writeability Fellow with *Writers Victoria* and a 2021 Pushcart and Best of The Net nominee with work published/forthcoming in *Rust and Moth*, *Eunoia Review*, *The Citron Review*, *Heavy Feather Review* and *Kissing Dynamite*. She tweets at @sherttt and writes at [sherting.carrd.co](http://sherting.carrd.co).

## Sherice Kong

Sherice Kong is a 16-year-old writer from New Jersey. Her work is published in *GASHER Journal*, *Peach Magazine*, *Hobart*, and other lovely places.



# PHOTOGRAPHY

## **AJ Wilane**

*AJ Wilane, 17 year old portrait photographer is based in Kansas and has been doing photography for almost a year.*

## **Ava Williams**

*Ava Williams is a New York City based freelance photographer and retoucher. She graduated from FIT in 2019 and is currently producing a book from her project The Twins.*

## **Char Habben**

*Char Habben is a fine artist, working in film photography, paint and sculpture, from London, England. Char creates a range of different work through both conceptual themes and portraits. Creating work which is engaging through emotion and meaning, but also fun and challenging to make. You can find Char on instagram @charhabben, and also through her website Charhabben.com*

## **Charlie Durso**

*Charlie Durso (they/he) is a creative focusing in colourful portrait photography who has been active in Jacksonville FL for the last two years. They also have some experience working in show and event photography. Their work can be found on instagram @slugsushi.*

## **Cheyenne Morschl-Villa**

## **Claire Natale**

*Claire Natale is a writer, photographer and filmmaker trying to go professional. She's made forays into this effort, being accepted into two juried exhibitions at the Banana Factory and the William Way Center, as well as published by the Abstract Elephant Magazine and The Wingless Dreamer. Between the variety of both individual and collaborative writing and photo projects, she enjoys spending time with her family, friend and cat in her oft grey but home state of Pennsylvania.*

## **Darcey Davis**

*"My name is Darcey Davis and I am a 23 year old photographer located in the Bay Area. I specialize in film photography and love taking portraits along with lifestyle/candid photos and concert photography."*

## **Dmitrivich**

*Nestled somewhere in Hollywood is Dmitrivich; a visual artist who lives in bright technicolor. Photography, Videography and art installations are some of his go-tos. His inspiration comes from flowers, indie pop music, and neon/laser lights. In his work, he tries to balance the dark with the light.*

## **Edward Zavala**

*Edward or Eddie for short has been taken photos for almost two years and portraits for about a year. Eddie found his love of photography while at a flea market in university where he found an old point and shoot film. Ever since then Eddie has been hooked. His main influences are his fashion sense, Stanley Kubrick, Peter Lindbergh and western films. He hopes to become a fashion photographer in the near future*

## **Eilidh Mahoney**

*Eilidh is a photographer, graphic designer, and overall creative located in Vancouver, Canada. She focuses on projects that inspire her, which leads to a multitude of passions, including tattooing, graphic design, sketching, digital art, and many more. @eilidhheather @eilidhheatherphotos.*

## **Elise Wojtowicz**

*What makes us human? How is memory malleable? How much truth is in our own perception? These are questions that Elise Wojtowicz explores through her work. Centered around experimental photography, she seeks to collaborate with the physical materials of her work- as a photographer, that always includes light and time.*

## **Farida Rady**

*Based between Cairo, Toronto, and Abu Dhabi, Farida Rady is a researcher, writer, and artist. Rady's interests include cities, the politics of space, memory and identity, documentation, and archiving. She explores these interests across the spectrum of scholarly and creative processes. Find her online at @farida.archives on Instagram, or on a long walk in real life.*

## **Gabbie Henn**

*Gabbie Henn is an artist located in the Midwest and primarily focuses on fine art photography. Henn's work circles around various topics of growth, connection, and humanitarianism. They enjoy incorporating textures from various materials such as fabrics, foods, plants, etc. Which can coincide with how Henn enjoys experimenting and trying many new art mediums such as scanning items on photos for different effects, graphic design work, double exposure, and working with other varieties of resin and glue to bring the idea to life through the photograph. Henn's inspiration comes from anything, friends, water, nature, life events, and even a piece of furniture that can resonate to something of the human body. Henn is currently working on creating larger fine art prints to showcase and sell, but she is still experimenting and collabing with my many friends on a variety of projects. To stay updated on Henn's work check her Instagram out, @gabbiehenn. She's always down to collab and talk so feel free to message.~)*

## **Haley Sklans**

*Haley Sklans is a 22 yr old multimedia artist from New Jersey. This is an excerpt of spreads from her ongoing photo book project exploring the archive. She reinvigorated life into discarded pieces from the past as she defines her present aesthetic using a cheap computer scanner, a collection of scrap clippings, family photos, and rejects from her photographic archive. Her nostalgic aesthetic goes beyond the pantyhose filters, rose-tinted glasses, lolita-like imagery that dominates depictions of young womanhood and explores having a complex sense of self that is yearning to be understood in all its darkness, joy, wisdom, and naivety. Her Instagram handle is @halebot3000 and her website is <https://haleysklans.myportfolio.com/> You can find her video work at <https://vimeo.com/user122429757>*

## **Jaina Cipriano**

*Jaina Cipriano is a Boston based artist working with photography, film and installation. Her work explores the emotional toll of religious and romantic entrapment through immersive sets and emotional performances that mirror the subconscious. Jaina's work was recently published in GRLSQUASH, Gastronomica and The Boston Herald. In October 2020 she debuted her first short film, "You Don't Have to Take Orders from The Moon," a magical realism story about darkness inside and outside us. She is working on her next film, "Trauma Bond" set to film early 2021.*



### **Julie Flores**

B. 1988, Long Island, NY she earned B.A. in filmmaking with an emphasis in editing from Columbia College Hollywood in 2010. She is a photographer and artist based in Long Island, NY. She starts working photography in high school after taking a beginning class. Where she first starts to learn with analog, developing, and prints as while. Truly enjoy the whole process of it. There is something truly magical watching your photography come to life. Continue her study into collage, She growing into her confidence with her works. She later moves onto digital for while. Now she shooting all different forms, digital, Polaroid film, and Analog. But Analog will always be her favorite and her first love. Her style is hard to describe because I just capture moments in time, whatever that is. It can be a stranger, friends, or family. She enjoys capture a town, builds, and nature. Photography is air to her and it makes a scene for her. Bring her to enjoy, she feels most comfortable and confident with a camera in her hand.

### **June Feury**

"I'm June Feury, I'm a photographer based in Seattle. Most of my work tries to capture every day life from a first person view, so people can feel what I felt in these moments. You can find more of my work on Instagram @ porklets."

### **Kait Ralón**

Kait Ralón (They/He/She) is a Latinx film photographer based out of the Chicago suburbs. Their photos focus on and mix color, femininity, and blending the fantasy world with reality. Instagram - @cakefacekait.

### **Kelli Lage**

Kelli Lage lives in the Midwest countryside. Lage is currently earning her degree in Secondary English Education and works as a substitute teacher. Awards: Special Award for First-time Entrant, Lyrical Iowa, 2020.

### **Maya Renzetti**

Follow her on Instagram @Maya\_\_the\_\_bug.

### **Megan Leonard**

Megan Leonard is a fashion and portrait photographer based in New York. Website - [www.meganleonard.com](http://www.meganleonard.com)  
Instagram - @megan.g.leonard

### **Mia Makes It**

Mia Makes It is a multimedia artist and illustrator born and raised in sunny Florida. Their work is focused primarily on aesthetics, but they also explore subjects involving Florida lore and anarchist propaganda. Mia also teaches donation-based independent workshops in order to forge a more accessible space for art-making. You can find them on Instagram @miamakes\_it.

### **Michelle Dashevsky**

Michelle Dashevsky is a poet and photographer based in Rochester, New York. She is a 2021 graduate of the University of Rochester, and as of September 2021, the Director of Production at small press BOA Editions. Her poetry can be found in the Liminal Transit Review and in Our Shared Memory's Young Memory Anthology. Michelle is also currently working on a documentary poetry and photography project about intergenerational Soviet-Jewish identities passed down through lineages of women. She loves photographing her friends on film, sunset swimming, and reading next to open windows in the rain. You can find more of her work online at [michelledashevsky.com](http://michelledashevsky.com) or on Instagram @themishkaarchive.

### **Sania Necoechea**

Sania Necoechea is a Mexican photographer and visual creator.

### **Sanjé James**

Sanjé James is a twenty-three-year-old multimedia artist with a focus on photography. She received her BFA in Photography at Lesley Art + Design in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her work is fueled by the topics of race, class, and self-exploration. She weaves through pop culture's influences on her generation and the complexity of being raised in a predominantly white suburb by working with collage and video. James challenges her viewers to often reflect on the past and how society constantly changes the world's view.

### **Séline Farzaei**

Séline is an emerging artist from the suburbs of Montréal Island who finds inspiration in dried flowers, torn fabrics, shattered glass and light; reflections & shadows. Her work is mostly, if not exclusively, made of recycled and thrifted materials as she believes in creating without breaking the bank (or the earth). Her current interests include making recycled paper, stickers, stamps and pins, as well as casual photography.

### **Simran Kaur**

Simran Kaur is a surrealist still life, creative portrait, fashion photographer and artist currently based in London. She is Punjabi and she was born and raised in Italy

Simran's main objective is to make the viewer's dreams come true by creating intriguing setups, but she does also create mental health and environmental awareness with her experimental photography. At the same time, she also creates dreamlike abstract visuals to make the viewer explore another reality.

Simran Kaur gets inspired by people's dreams and visions, but her childhood memories also inspire her to create various projects. To keep her childhood memories alive she started doodling digital and traditional illustrations which helps her to understand how she feels about those foggy memories of her childhood.

### **Sofia Eskola**

Sofia Eskola works in the field of photography. Her work stems from the innate need to disturb our default perception of the world. Visually Eskola wants to challenge our sense of reality and thereafter our thoughts and actions. Eskola finds inspiration from her subconsciousness and merges the different levels of awareness into her work.

### **Tee Ferguson**

Tee's favourite thing is to create double exposures using 35mm film. From not knowing what the outcome will turn out like, every picture is a surprise, two memories combined into one. It's hit-and-miss progress, but that's what keeps her inspired to create more analog pieces. You can find more of her art on Instagram @tee.ferguson





#### **Amelia Mellberg**

*Amelia Mellberg is a multi-media illustrator & designer, primarily working w/ watercolor & color pencil. She is based in Lancaster, PA. She graduated with a BFA in illustration from Pennsylvania College of Art & Design in 2021. Her work is colorful & whimsical, evoking a sense of childhood wonder. If she is not creating she is hanging with her dog, Sebastian!*

#### **S.A. Mukherji**

*S.A. Mukherji reads, writes, creates images, and gardens. His current herbs, berries, and peppers include sage, lemongrass, bronze fennel, Vietnamese coriander, blueberries, gooseberries, fish peppers, and jalapeños. His favorite flower is the marigold; all types are welcome.*

#### **Anthony Deitz**

*Anthony Deitz is an illustrator and designer based in Southwestern Ohio, where he lives with his wife, Jaime, and dog, Sigmund. His art is inspired by fantasy, science fiction, horror, and psychedelia. More of his work can be found on Instagram @AwfulWafflePress. He can be reached by email at AnthonyDeitzArt@gmail.com for custom artwork or other business inquiries.*

#### **Aurora Abzug**

*Aurora Abzug is an emerging figurative realist painter making work that highlights the relevance of traditional modes of painting in expressing contemporary issues. Her work seeks new uses and contexts for classic genres and academic techniques, and applies similar thematic and formal devices to address contemporary and personal issues, such as eating disorder and mental illness, ubiquitous computing and consumer capitalism, and personal identity as a marketable commodity.*

#### **Christy Pang**

*Christy Pang, a.k.a. risy, is a 19 year old singer, songwriter and artist that indulges in romanticising everyday life (though she's trying not to). As a lover of art, risy first discovered her passion for creating paintings back in primary when she did arts and crafts. This piece is an introductory visual to her newly released single 'Colours'. Her single is written as a tribute to her love for visual arts, in which risy introduces the self realisation of how even unconsciously, her world revolves around it.*

#### **Elaina Battista-Parsons**

*Elaina Battista-Parsons is a writer across genres. She also works as a reading coach for students with disabilities. Elaina loves ice cream, antiques, pop culture, and snow. Elaina's poems and essays have been published by Backlash Press, Burnt Pine Magazine, Vine Leaves Press, Spring City, 3Moon Magazine, and Read Furiously. She also has an upcoming YA with Inked in Gray Press in Fall 2022 and a vignette collection with Vine Leaves Press scheduled for 2/22 release.*

#### **Emily Hoerdemann**

*Emily Hoerdemann (b. 1985) is a California-based artist who explores language and color through collage, illustration, and photography. She received her BFA in painting and photography from Bradley University (Peoria, IL), and a Masters in Contemporary Art from Sotheby's Institute of Art (New York, NY). Her works challenge feminist themes with humor and grace, utilizing analog collage with tangible materials to capture the sensory experience of time, nostalgia, and memory. As a result, each work is a delicate placing of aesthetics and color. Emily's works are in numerous private collections, have been featured in the LA Times and Forbes, are included on The Frame art tv by Samsung, and have been exhibited in New York, Chicago, London, and Los Angeles.*

#### **Emily Johnson**

*Emily Johnson is currently an animation major at Massachusetts College of Art and Design entering her senior year. Emily loves all things animation, from traditional hand drawn frame by frame to using all the cool new digital tools and programs she can get her hands on! Emily also loves making puppets, illustrating her own original stories and hopes to write and illustrate her own children's book one day.*

#### **Eunji Kim**

*Eunji Kim, 25 years old, Born and Raised in Korea, Moved to NYC to attend School of Visual Arts, Class of 2021, In progress of Freelance Illustrator, Love Film, Architecture, City-Traveling (If you have a better word for this please feel free to edit it), Museums  
Portfolio website: [www.eunjikimart.com](http://www.eunjikimart.com)  
Instagram: @silvermeaning*

#### **Hermela Gebretsion**

*Hermela Gebretsion is a 17 year old Ethiopian Canadian artist. Hermela's art journey started during quarantine and hasn't stopped since. She loves getting inspiration from everyday things around her. Hermela's work reflects the sources of joy from our childhood and how we eventually have to say goodbye to some parts of our lives.  
IG: @quakdraws*

#### **Jenny Gordon**

*Jenny is a Scottish design student working with illustration and graphics, she's currently working on a short coming of age graphic novel 'Rio' which explores themes of friendships, sexuality and nostalgia.  
Insta: @jennygordondesign*

#### **Kayleigh Efird**

*Kayleigh Efird is a multidisciplinary artist with a special sensitivity towards color and performance. Her work is no stranger to the absurd and otherworldly, as she is inspired by the lovable cast of the Muppets and baroque painting. Her favorite pastimes include knitting, roller skating and watching ghost hunting shows with her English Sheepdog, Neville. Growing up in North Carolina, Kayleigh began her artistic pursuits as a high school student at University of North Carolina School of the Arts. She furthered her studies at the Maryland Institute College of Art and received her BFA as a fibers artist and illustrator in 2020. She continues to illustrate and make garments from her home in Baltimore, Maryland.*

#### **Lorena Horng**

*Lorena is a student from Houston, TX currently attending college in Boston, MA. She loves all things visual arts and spends most of her free time either painting or staring at paintings. When she's not creating art & ruining her posture, she can often be found wandering around grocery stores or reading endless poems about food. She can be found on ig @ljuh.jpg & on twitter @proletarian!*

#### **Marina Constantine**

*Originally from Bel Air, Maryland, Marina Constantine is a Baltimore-based, first generation Greek American artist. Her Yiayia (grandmother) and Pappou (grandfather) opened a shoemaking and seamstress shop in Maryland upon arrival to the United States in 1967. As a child Marina was constantly surrounded by craft and fiber work and learned how to sew hand in hand with learning how to write. Her nostalgia based practice specializes in material play, sculpture, woven cloth and book arts. She is an alumna of the Maryland Institute College of Art with a BFA in Fiber.*



**Meagan Williams**

*Meagan Williams (American, b. 1999) investigates the ways in which humans cope with transitional times, specifically the process of growing up, both out of childhood and eventually, into adulthood. She explores the use of childhood nostalgia as a conclusive alternative to the unknown future. Nostalgia is a key area of research, and her work is in conversation with the role that it plays in society and pop culture. A main theme of her work is friendship, especially between those with shared experience. The scenes and relationships depicted in her work draw from idealized portrayals of adolescence from media as well as from her own lived experience. Williams creates oil paintings that utilize colorful, childlike imagery done in an illustration-adjacent style. She considers herself both a painter and an illustrator, and her work attempts to combine the two disciplines. Her figurative works playfully challenge perspective and attempt to include the viewer in the narrative. She views her glowing, stylized figures as ghosts, phantom embodiments of one's ties to the past. Williams is currently pursuing a BFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Her work will be on view in the upcoming BFA Thesis Show at the Institute for Contemporary Art at UTC.*

**Meagan Berlin**

*Meagan Berlin is a queer artist, illustrator, and tattoo artist currently working on the territories of the Lakota people. Their work has been published in Poetry is Dead, GUTS magazine, TRAINS magazine, and Salt Hill Journal, among select zines. instagram: @meaganberlin / website: www.berlinillustration.com*

**Melanie Hobbs**

*Melanie Hobbs is an artist, writer and teacher of Malaysian-Indian descent. She lives with her husband, two kids and golden retriever cross mystery dog in the hills of Perth in Western Australia.*

**Mikey Vibal**

*Mikey Vibal is a Queer multidisciplinary artist, writer and art historian working in Los Angeles. Her work critiques how Queer artists have been presented throughout history. She makes drawings that are images of trauma, and healing that rebuild and define her own Queer narrative. Carving away the black surface of her drawings to expose the color beneath, Vibal reveals the concept of Queer time - defined as a non linear experience as opposed to the more linear experience of heterosexual and cis gender people among life milestones. The rainbow palette reveals celebration, trauma, and identity as a Queer woman of color. Through the use of ballpoint pen, she also illustrates the natural beauty that capitalism has deprived her and many other Queer/BIPOC of nature, rest, and leisure. Vibal is a member of the CSU Dominguez Hills's Queer Resource Center and DH Arts Collective. She is a teaching artist at the Cordial Eye Gallery in Massachusetts and the Get Loud Movement based in California. Vibal has lead workshops for their art collective and is a regular in CSU Dominguez Hills's Queer Resource Center's annual Zine for Queer artists. Vibal has completed her B.A. in Studio Art and Art History at California State University Dominguez Hills.*

**Pauline Aksay**

*Pauline Aksay is an interdisciplinary artist and storyteller based in Toronto, Canada. She has experience in writing poetry, digital animation, and in illustrating children's books, and has previously received two artist's grants to write, illustrate and self-publish two children's stories. Aksay's work explores mental health, perception, imagination, and the limits of memory, offering an evocative glimpse into the human experience from the eyes of an outsider. She aspires to promote the emotional intelligence, compassion, and understanding in the people who experience her work.*

**Riyam Al-Niaimi**

*Riyam Al-Niaimi is an Iraqi-Canadian self-taught multidisciplinary artist who loves learning and experimenting with different mediums and bright colours. When she's not drawing or painting, she's probably creating another list of ideas she wants to turn into art! You can find her at @riyam.jpg on Instagram.*

**Salma Abumeeiz**

*Salma (she/her) is a librarian and aspiring illustrator. Utilizing traditional and digital approaches within her work, she enjoys exploring themes related to place, community, and nostalgia. She has a deep appreciation for anime, comics, and video games, and is probably enjoying any one of those mediums right now.*

**Sierra Marshall**

*Sierra Marshall is an Illustrator currently enrolled in CSUN and will graduate with a BA in illustration 2022. She uses a variety of mediums, but abundantly pen with a sketchy art style that adds to her whimsical subject matter. Her art is inspired by vintage media and weird cartoons she grew up watching, all mixed together to convey something either very meaningful or sometimes ridiculous. She expresses herself and her experiences throughout her life through her art, and often creates things that she needs to see for herself at that time. Sometimes, this can be pink ducks ruling a dynasty; or a blue cowboy in the desert. It also can deal with depicting her anxiety and struggles in a relatable way that she hopes others can understand. Sierra's art is about connecting to herself and others in a way that evokes a feeling. It doesn't have to be the same feeling she had when making it, in fact she loves to hear the variety of different feelings people get from her pieces. She loves to create an experience, as life is about having genuine experiences. Her pieces she chose for the theme "nostalgia" deal with the memories of past relationships, and the feelings of love.*

**Sophie Sinnott**

*Sophie is a practising imagemaker, writer and designer from London. Emotions, anecdotal truths and the individual human experience are paramount in what, why, and how she creates. Her visual and written works are influenced by literature, music, photography and conundrums of personal life.*

**Tara Robinson**

*While being intimate and unique, nostalgia is also a universal emotion felt by every human. As with any 90's kid, Tara Robinson's perspective on childhood nostalgia is mingled with the waddling technology of the time. In her colorful acrylic paintings, Tara explores her personal attachment to these nostalgic notions and relics, while connecting to others through a shared experience.*

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