

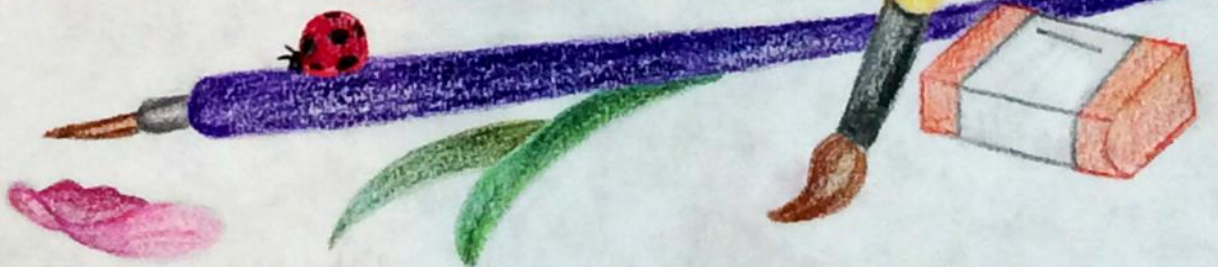
INK



Literature & Art Magazine



2015 ~ 2016





- Lynn Ding

A Letter From the Editors

The pieces in this magazine were created by some truly talented and amazing people. We are very excited to share these works with the entire Friends' Central community and we hope you enjoy them.

We also want to say thank you to all the people who made this magazine possible:

Ms. Novo, our wonderful faculty advisor. We couldn't have done this without you.

Our Inklings (the staff of INK), who have dedicated so much of their time to create this magazine. We're going to miss all of you next year but we know we are leaving the magazine in very capable and caring hands.

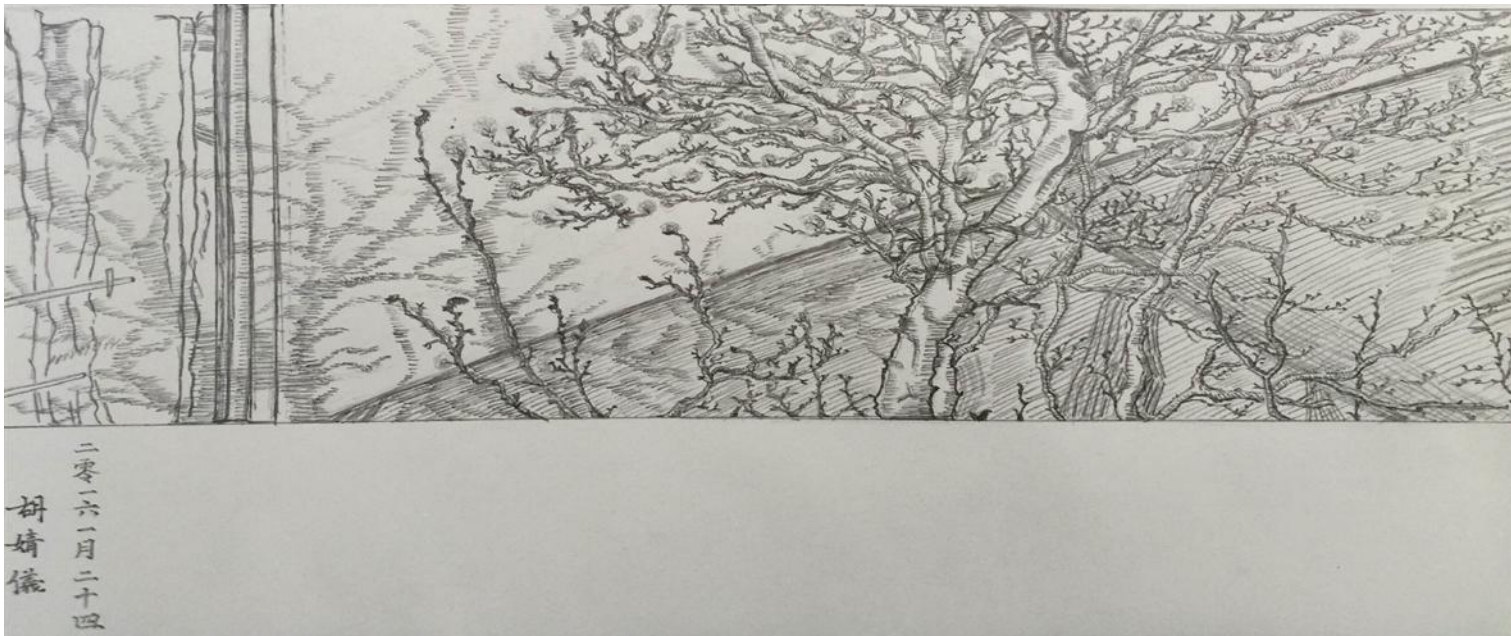
The Writers, Poets, Playwrights, and Artists. We literally could not have created this magazine without you. Thank you for all of your contributions.

Lynn Ding, thank you for the beautiful cover!

And, of course, we must say thank you to the community. Thank you for supporting us by purchasing items at our bake sales, by sharing in our enthusiasm for prose, poetry, and the visual arts, and of course by simply opening this magazine.

Thank you,

Sara Thal and Grace Kauffman-Rosengarten



- Jingyi Hu

Cherry Blossom Kind of Love

It was one of those late spring nights, very nearly summer. Where spring was embracing summer like a long lost lover but the final kiss of winter still lingered in the air. She looked over at him. And in turning her head let grass blades caress their delicately pointed edges on her cheeks and eyelids. This was it. Her cherry blossom love. Beautiful in bloom and when falling apart, the wind making a silken pink rain. Even a sad kind of gorgeous when on the ground and trampled on, dark pink bruises and cuts on the thin skin of the petals. And then there was only a brown and rotting kind of mush, piled and pushed to the side and waiting for decay to finish the process already.

This was never meant to last. But she would enjoy it for now. Because G-d, in this moment, it was the most beautiful thing imaginable. Everything seemed very far away, everything but him. The cherry trees. The moon and stars and indigo sky. That was all very close. So close it was suffocating. Imprisoning. A cell made from a perfect moment. She loved it. And hated it. Hated that it would not last, and she knew that, and so could not enjoy the moment in its entirety because she knew the end. The ending was spoiled and she could not erase it from her memory. And so she would suffer through this moment. And all the other ones that would slowly follow, until she reached the end. Until all the pink silky blossoms turned to brown pulp on the ground and summer was in full swing, everything damp and smelling of earthy rot.

"Look at the stars." He smiled at her. It was so nearly perfect.

"Can you see them?" She wanted to say 'No'. Because she was too busy looking at him, that the sky was filled with clouds and light pollution and the stars were barely visible crumbs of light.

"Sure. They're beautiful." She knew he would be happy with that. That the stars, no matter how dim, retained their magical and romantic beauty. Their aura of wonder and perfection. Lending light that tinted every moment into something memorable and peaceful.

"We should come back in the afternoon. Are you free then? I want to see the blossoms. It's too dark to see them now. Will you do that? See the cherry blossoms with me?" He sounded a little desperate. A little dreamy.

"Of course." She wanted to see them too. Witness them blowing off the branches in a storm of pink. Letting them get caught in her hair. Crushing them when the two of them eventually tumbled to the ground and lay for a while looking at the picture book blue sky. Finding fish and dogs in the clouds.

"Good. It's a date."

- Sara Thal



-Jingyi Hu



-Lynn Ding



- Yutian Feng

Bonus

Bruce Carson, sporting pressed suit and tie, drove down a metropolitan lane ardently eyeing the curb in front of him for parking as his cell phone rang. It was his wife Melissa; he sighed involuntarily, and even unexpectedly, and flipped the old phone open.

"Hello," they said simultaneously. He apologized; she sighed in irritation because he felt the need to. "Yeah, okay Bruce. Um, it's fine, it's not a big deal. Can we talk?"

"Sure," he said. "We can talk," he said with trepidation.

They talked: of love and passion, of their love for one another but a loss of passion. They wanted the same thing, a vibrant and successful marriage, they wanted to feel what they had felt when they were young. They talked of facing the crowd at their anniversary party that night, June 30, as a couple, of a vow renewal ceremony soon after on some faraway island with faraway birds heaving their call in the distance. As Bruce hung up, he thought about how much he loved his wife and wanted passion in his life again, and how a vow renewal sounded like just the thing for it all, but he also thought about how much all this reinvigorating would cost. So the last of Bruce's thoughts as he parked the car to pick up an anniversary gift and reached into his pocket to pay for the gift but found only a slip from work and no money in that pocket was, "How can we manage a vow renewal ceremony?" His next thought, however, was a revelation.

After he had found money in his other pocket and paid with that, he examined the paper slip he'd forgotten he had with him, the official record of his billable hours for that fiscal year. In bold black print, with various confirmation codes, technical information, and a small space to add any hours billed after the slip was printed, the card read 1,749. Bruce looked at the slip, studying it, its implications. Bruce, a lawyer, had billed 1,749 hours that fiscal year. Bruce had a meeting with a client later that day, scheduled to last an hour, which he could bill. 1,750 billed hours in one year at Bruce's law firm qualified the biller for a (substantial) bonus. Bruce, standing alone in a downtown Macy's on his anniversary, June 30th, the last day of the fiscal year, had all he needed and more to renew his vows with his wife: to start again.

The meeting was in forty-five minutes, six blocks away. He wandered out of the Macy's in a haze, in awe of his discovery but ever more debilitated by one of his chronic headaches. He made his way over to the pharmacy for his headache meds, delighted to see a short line in front of him—just one old woman, who stood shaking by the register. After an eternity, an ancient pharmacist appeared, pill bottle in hand. "Okay Mrs. Jennings, that'll be \$22.49." The old woman dug through her oversized purse with trembling arms; finally, she put the purse on the counter to get a better angle. As she sifted, Bruce, in agony from impatience and head pain alike, peered over her shoulder into a purse filled with loose items ranging from lip balm and a packaged turkey breast to loose dollar bills and coins. Finally, she let out a slow monotone "mmmmm" and retrieved a twenty from her bag. Next came two ones, and it became clear, as she began rooting again, that she intended to pay in exact change. Four minutes later, the woman had managed to gingerly place the appropriate combination of quarters, dimes, pennies, and nickels, one of which turned out to be a Sacagawea that had to be replaced with more purse shuffling, on the counter. After all this, the pharmacist let out a fittingly geriatric "Oh dear." He had misread the pill bottle; the correct prescription, painstakingly retrieved from the back and ultimately costing \$30.99, was also paid for in exact change.

At long last, it was Bruce's turn. He asked the pharmacist for any prescriptions for B. Carson. As the sluggish man inspected his stock, Bruce readied the money and a free hand with which to take the paper bag: his headache had worsened, and he was becoming desperate. When the pharmacist returned, Bruce paid for the pills, which were more expensive than he remembered, and popped a dose, hoping he might get some relief before the meeting.

Bruce waited in the air conditioned building for his meds to have some effect, looking idly out the window where a car was being towed from a perfectly legal spot. He remembered all the chatter around the office about Ben Carson's three-day visit to the city in advance of the primaries. Now that he thought about it, Bruce realized he knew all the details: Ben was staying at the Sheraton Hotel just down the street, his motorcade would pass the office around 4:30 p.m., and anyone parked along the motorcade's route would be towed. In fact, Bruce heard the sirens from the motorcade coming up the street. That shouldn't be for a little bit now though, right? I mean the motorcade is going to pass the office at—Bruce looked down at his watch and back up to the car being towed and realized that in his stupor of head pain he had lost track of time, and now had only ten minutes to travel six blocks—on foot, as he now noticed that the car being towed was his.

Bruce ran frantically out of the pharmacy, crossing the street at great peril just before the motorcade arrived. He pleaded with the truck driver to unhitch his car, but the profoundly pale, gaunt man with chapped lips and dreadlocks who reeked of marijuana, mumbled and slurred that "habahababah... already hitched... habadabadabada... bro..."

"Well, where do I go to prevent its being impounded?" asked Bruce.

"Ibed jusslike, go towarad eh impah sigh efht tha edgada sitiey, bro," responded Mr. Helpful.

Bruce asked if he might get the information written down, though he feared what this gentleman's handwriting might look like. The driver uttered something Bruce hoped meant "sure" and walked back to the truck. As the driver fiddled with things in his cab and Bruce recovered from the angry surprise of seeing his car being hitched to a tow truck, he noticed that his headache had worsened considerably. He now felt dizzy, delirious, and queasy. He wondered if these were symptoms of a migraine, though he had never been afflicted with one before.

He felt an overwhelming need to throw up, and his head pounded more painfully than ever. At length, the driver returned, with, as Bruce was ecstatic to see, a laminated, pre-printed card, rather than a scrap of paper covered with drug-addled penmanship. Bruce reached to take it and thank the driver, but before he could snag the card, he found himself expressing his thanks in a less-than-conventional way: he vomited all over the driver's boots. The driver, now irate and certainly no more understandable, began shouting and gesticulating angrily. Before he spat on Bruce and drove away with Bruce's sedan, he tossed the impound address card into the air in indignation, and it fluttered away, carried by the updraft from a nearby steam grate.

By the time Bruce recovered from his gastro-esophageal evacuation, the driver was gone, the card was floating away. If he did not act quickly, his car would be gone. His pants and shoes covered thoroughly in vomit, Bruce ran after the card. It was, luckily, drifting in the general direction of his office, but his situation was nonetheless unfortunate. He chased it, bowling over those who stood in his way out of clumsiness more than a lack of courtesy: he was growing more delirious by the minute. Finally, he caught up to the card, which was fluttering back to the ground, and snatched at it, colliding with two coffee drinkers walking along the sidewalk. As he fell, he knocked about \$50 worth of untouched Starbucks lattes, complete with caramel and whipped cream, onto his shirt and jacket. Frantically, he looked at his watch: four minutes to spare.

Apologizing profusely, Bruce began to run toward his office. He felt inordinately dizzy and confused as he ran, and there was no question now that his headache had gotten worse and that his medicine had not worked. What the hell is wrong with me? Bruce thought. Am I getting a contact high from that stoner tow truck driver? And what's up with these defective meds? What did that half-dead pharmacist give me? Bruce stopped running to catch his breath and examine the pill bottle. It was for B. Carson, but he realized it was not for him. He was holding Presidential Candidate Ben Carson's astronomically high dose of Ambien. It all made sense: Ben Carson was staying in the city for a few days, he needed his Ambien, and that pharmacist should have retired before Ben Carson was even born. The way Bruce felt after just one pill even explained why Ben Carson appeared the way he did all the time.

So, drugged, covered in vomit, coffee, caramel and whipped cream, and panting, carrying a barely legal prescription for Ambien that was not his, Bruce arrived at his office, only fifteen seconds late for his meeting. Well done, he congratulated himself on the elevator. Trying to clean himself up outside the conference room door, however, the seeds of doubt started to grow. Is this really a good idea? I mean, Mrs. Samson isn't exactly an understanding boss... and these clients are awfully picky... and this is my first time meeting their chairperson face-to-face... and this is the meeting we're supposed to tell them I'll be the one heading their suit... Bruce lapped up the last of the caramel on his shirt and thought some more. But is a little flak at work worth risking this kind of opportunity to save my marriage? I love my wife... and I want her to be happy... I just can't imagine a life where we're not together, where we're not a team, where it's not us versus the world... I can't imagine going on without her, and this is the way to win her back. One way or another, Bruce was going in.

Slowly, carefully, even tenuously, Bruce opened the door. Inside were Mrs. Samson, looking just as stern as ever, a few colleagues trying to match the mood, and the clients, all wearing faces of commensurate sternness, all visibly appalled by Bruce's appearance. The silence could've killed. "Shall I, um..." Bruce was having trouble thinking in a straight line. "Should I do the... the um... the... I.. I know this... should I protectorate?"

"Excuse me, Bruce?" said Mrs Samson.

"The premature? Should I commence with it?" Bruce asked.

"What are you talking about, Carson?"

"I prepared a presidential, for the meeting, ma'am. Don't you remember?"

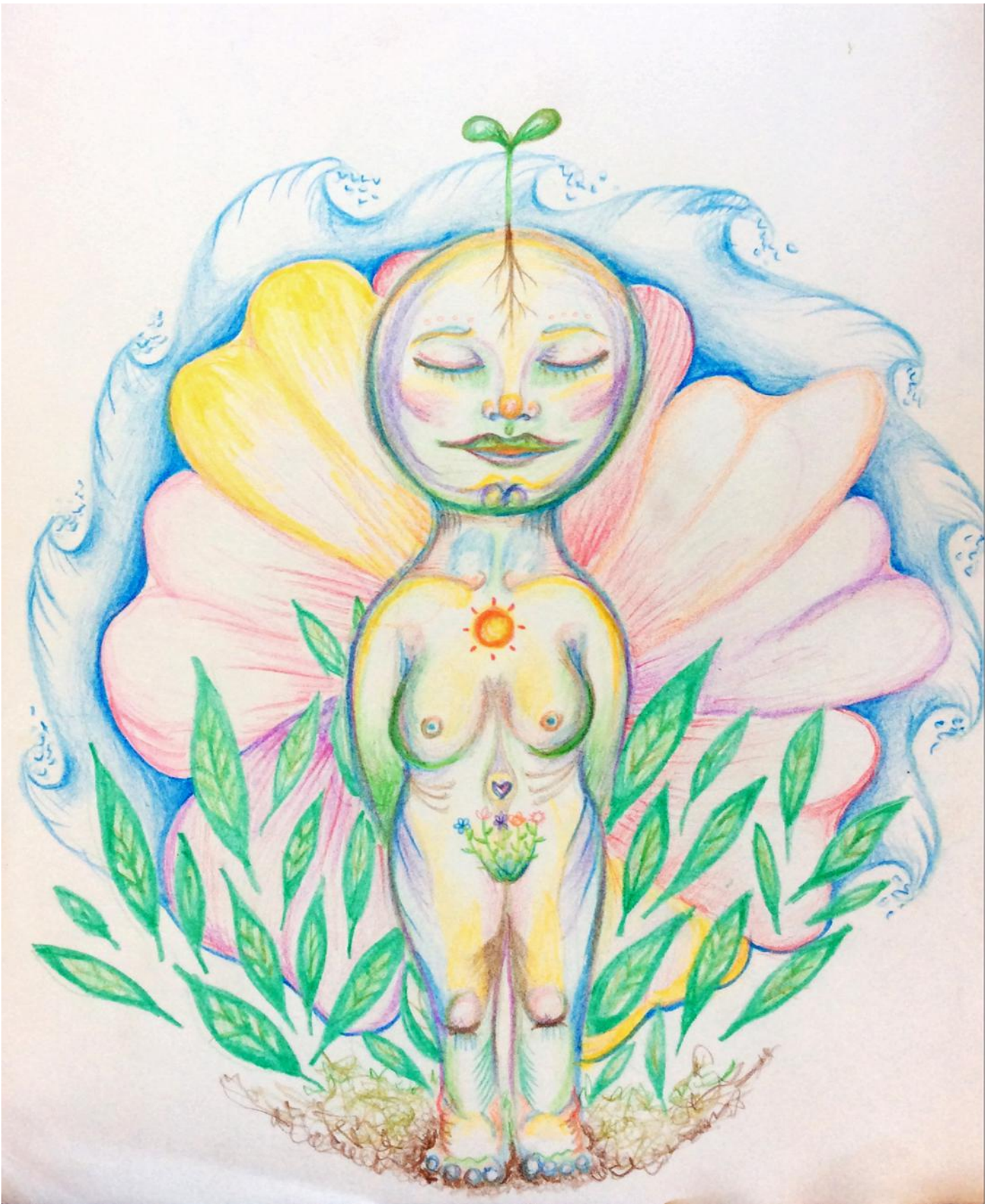
"You mean a presentation? You're ready to present the presentation I asked you to create? Bruce, can I see you in the hall for a minute?" Her tone suggested the chiding that was to follow.

Bruce shuffled past the client, inadvertently hitting him in the head with the prescription bag he was still carrying. Mrs. Samson followed, apologizing for the unprofessional appearance. They walked a good distance away from the conference room and with each step Bruce feared the worst. Will I be taken off of the project? Will I be fired for coming to work high on prescription meds? He prepared to be berated as never before. He just had to get through it, collect himself, return to the meeting, and bill the hour. For Melissa, thought Bruce.

"What's going on, Bruce?" Mrs Samson asked, once she finally came to a stop near the utility closet behind the break room. In a moment of desperation, in search of whatever sympathy might reside in his boss' heart, Bruce told her everything, about his marital problems and his headache and the Ambien. He told the truth: he just wanted his wife to stay.

"Well, Bruce," his boss finally said, "what you did was perhaps the most unprofessional thing I've ever seen. You never should have come here. I have no idea what you were thinking jeopardizing the business of this client like this. I want to suspend you, I want to take you off of the project, I want to demote you to the goddamn mailroom, and above all else I want to kick you in your hollow head." Bruce contemplated the spectacular end of his career and his marriage for the one-and-a-half seconds it took his boss to continue, "but I'm not going to do any of that. My husband and I went through hard times and I know I made some decisions I'm less than proud of to make our marriage work. As much as I want to be tough on you, I get it. The end of the fiscal year is a stressful time for all of us, so just go downstairs, hand in your billable hours slip, and get out of this office." As relieved as he was not to have to go back into that hostile meeting environment, Bruce still had one question.

"Mrs. Samson," said Bruce, "should I bill the meeting time?" This would be Melissa's favorite part of the story, when he told her later--the moment that made her see all his humiliating efforts for what they were: the passionate renewal of his marriage vows.



- Grace Kauffman-Rosengarten

The Desert at Dawn

It was dawn in the Old World, and the yellow-orange was pale blue in wait of the blood red sun.

The sky, which woke first in the Atrox, opened its eyes and sighed its fresh breath of dust. The earth, which woke second, stretched its arms and munched on its fresh cache of bone. The horizon, which woke third, yawned, and, slashed across its neck, bled its fresh, veiny halo. And the ever-so-familiar thump of wasteland communes, which was always awake, craned its neck, and raised its volume:

Bongos to bass drums. Bass drums to thunder.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

The shadows woke fourth. They straightened their shoulders and arched their backs and laid their armed siege upon the rocks and the sand -- with knives, with guns, with sharp-edged swords. They, cast by sunlight rather than firelight, did not move with that scuffed fluidity of French language that other desert shadows did; they were not ballerinas, but instead they picked themselves up from their beds with a well-practiced flamenco, wearing blood soaked dresses to match the blood soaked sun; they used the movements taught to them by weather-weary gypsies: that sort of slow bend of the arms cast by the cactus branches, the sort of careful twist of the hands cast by the rock. And, as the blood rose, that sort of breakneck crane of the legs cast by the pillars which held aloft a rotting household. Their weapons smiling while their faces remained still.

They moved with the beat: bass drums to thunder.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

The rock woke fifth. The grass woke sixth. The stilted canyons woke seventh.

Eighth was the sun, only fully awake when it had fully dug itself up from the earth, when it had fully risen from its splintered grave, when it had shaken itself of the grime and stood. The ninth was the sand, its hands grabbing those of the sun and -- click -- joining. Waking like an ocean did, waking only with the glint of unfiltered light off its curves. Inky shifting to liquid grains, lapping at distant shores; it was said that rain never touched the Atrox, but at dawn, it rained fat droplets of sand-sun, with no distinction between them.

And each fat droplet made a heavy sound as it touched the earth, and each shadow gave a twist with the beat, and the earth crunched its jaws with the beat, and the sky breathed in and out with the beat, and the horizon cried out with the beat, with the bass drums and the thunder of the wasteland communes.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

The child woke last.

He woke with an inhale, and an exhale, and an inhale.

He woke as the firelight shadows fled, and the crackles set in in his ears.

He woke trembling.

He backed from his fire and he sat against his shack.

He stepped with the beat.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

- Kendra Allman



Majesty

- Anne Pizzini

Bamboo

The Smiths gave Jane a key to their house when she moved in next door 3 years ago. It was to be used in an emergency, and an emergency consisted of as a day when Mrs. Smith wouldn't be home to water her beloved plants. Though this idea seemed rather perplexing to Jane, she kept her mouth shut and the key tucked away.

Sometimes it seemed like Mrs. Smith cared more for the plants than she did her children. And Jane could understand. Jane's parents admitted to picking favorites, Jane's sister won the competition. But Jane didn't mind that her parents didn't pay her much attention, because the Smiths were there. The Smiths had always been there, Jane assumed they'd always be there, underneath the same roof, their lives simply divided by a flimsy piece of wood. The walls were so thin that during dinner Jane felt like she was beside them, eating what she assumed was a home cooked meal while Jane ate an overcooked microwavable stew. It seemed rather bleak to the outside eye, but to Jane it was as close to perfect as could be. If she pressed her ear close enough to the stained ivory wall, she could hear the faint laughter of the family, the easy conversation as it flowed effortlessly between the group. It never failed to make her frown a little less prominent, to make the meat a little less sour, her life a little less lonely.

The Smiths hadn't been home for three weeks, their comforting presence instead replaced by a brightly colored foreclosure sign that laughed at Jane every time she looked through her kitchen window in the hopes that the Smiths had returned. Every day the tarnished key engraved with a cursive S burned holes in Jane's back from its place in the catch all dish beside her bed.

"Use me, Jane." The key taunted. "Use me."

On that third Friday Jane held the key between her sweaty palms and made her way outside. The key felt familiar, like a recovered tie dye t-shirt from a kindergarten party or a hat sewn by a grandmother. Jane'd never watered the plants before, she worried that she'd make a mockery of Mrs. Smith's sacred ritual. But Jane did it anyway, because the plants couldn't die, good neighbors don't kill.

So Jane trudged to the Smiths' plastic gate, littered with bird poop and splashes of mud, fumbling with the key, barely managing to slide it into the lock. She struggled with the green garden hose, worrying that at any moment it would come to life and wrap around her neck, like a snake, a python or a raptor. And if the hose were to transform, at least she would die a hero, sacrificing her life for the plants and the Smiths. It was a rather silly cause and even Jane knew it, because neither the Smiths nor the plants would be able to tell the story.

She watered the plants slowly at first, but then the water began spewing out like the thoughts from Jane's mind, about the foreclosure and the bright colors and her regrets and the smell of Mrs. Smith's homemade cobbler and how the plants were abandoned and how she was abandoned and how she wished she'd returned the key, or never even accepted it all those years ago. Oh poor Jane, she'd gotten too attached and fell in love with an idea that was simply constructed between the confines of her mind. She never was and never would be a Smith.

So Jane returned the key. She turned the hose off, glanced down at the planter pots, which were cracked on the sides and overflowing with soil. She dropped the key into a pot that housed a small bamboo tree, letting it sink deeper and deeper into the brown speckled substance. For a moment Jane regretted it, throwing away an idea that had made her happy for so many years. But that sly little devil named nostalgia soon passed and she slammed the gate shut for the first and final time.

Three more weeks passed and sometimes Jane would still look out the window in the hopes of the Smiths' return, sometimes even craning her head a little to the left to take a peek at the plants. But she never watered them again, for even if she wanted to she couldn't, she'd abandoned the key. Not much later she hung up pretty, floral curtains and stopped looking outside all together. The plants died soon thereafter, the bamboo tree being the first to go, leaving Jane to wonder if it was the key that poisoned them.

- Eva Gonzalez

Keys

I found a key on the ground today.
It caught the sunlight just as I approached it;
Almost like it was intentionally trying to find me.
And now, it's my turn to find where it fits.

It's amazing how many locks, doors, safes, opportunities,
Can be opened by a single piece of metal.
How a single key is unique; like a fingerprint.
No two are the same.

The vast possibilities of what my key might open,
are endless.

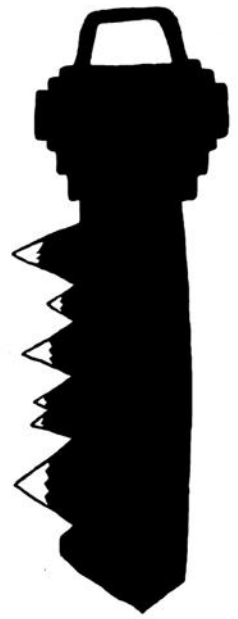
For eternity I could look for the Cinderella,
that would perfectly hold the glass slipper,
and simply not find her.

The key is like my purpose in the world.
To venture out and look for things to open.
To be a unique human unlike anyone else. And to ultimately find my perfect lock.

- Hannah Posencheg

Free Verse Poem

One, two, three, four, plain silver keys dripping from the metallic metal circle
fighting, yelling, needing to be given a chance
One fits



- Nina Saligman



- Nir Netz

Clara and Jack

SETTING: Jack's living room. Nothing special about it. There's a couch big enough for two people to make out on, an armchair, maybe a house plant or two -- the usual.

AT RISE: Clara and Jack are on the couch. They're leaning in about to kiss when..
Clara farts. Loudly.

CLARA
Oh my god.

JACK
Did you just--

CLARA
Oh my god!

JACK
It's okay! Come back here and--

CLARA
It is not okay!

JACK
What are you talking about? Of course it's okay, everyone farts. It's fine.

CLARA
I did not want to be the first one to fart in this relationship!

JACK
What? Are you kidding?

CLARA
I can't believe I was the first one to fart.

JACK
Clara, come on. This is ridiculous.

CLARA
I had a crush on you first. I texted you first. I asked you out first. I held your hand first. I kissed you first. I did everything else first! Was it too much to expect that I wouldn't be the one to fart first? God I shouldn't have eaten that burrito!

JACK
I mean I did buy it for you...

CLARA
Only after I bought you one!

JACK
uh well--

CLARA
I asked you to prom first. I met your parents before you met mine. I posted our relationship status on Facebook first. All I wanted was for you to fart first! Is that too much to ask for?!?!

JACK
Clara, please just calm down.

CLARA
I CAN'T JUST CALM DOWN. I FARTED FIRST. WHY CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND--
(She farts again. Even louder this time. Jack can't help but laugh.)
That's it. I'm leaving.

JACK
No, wait!!!
(Jack burps.)
Now I'm the first one to burp.
(burps again)
And the second
(and another burp)
and the third
(He opens his mouth to burp again but instead of burping, he throws up.)

CLARA

Oh no.

(beat)

JACK

uh, well... now I'm the first one to throw up?

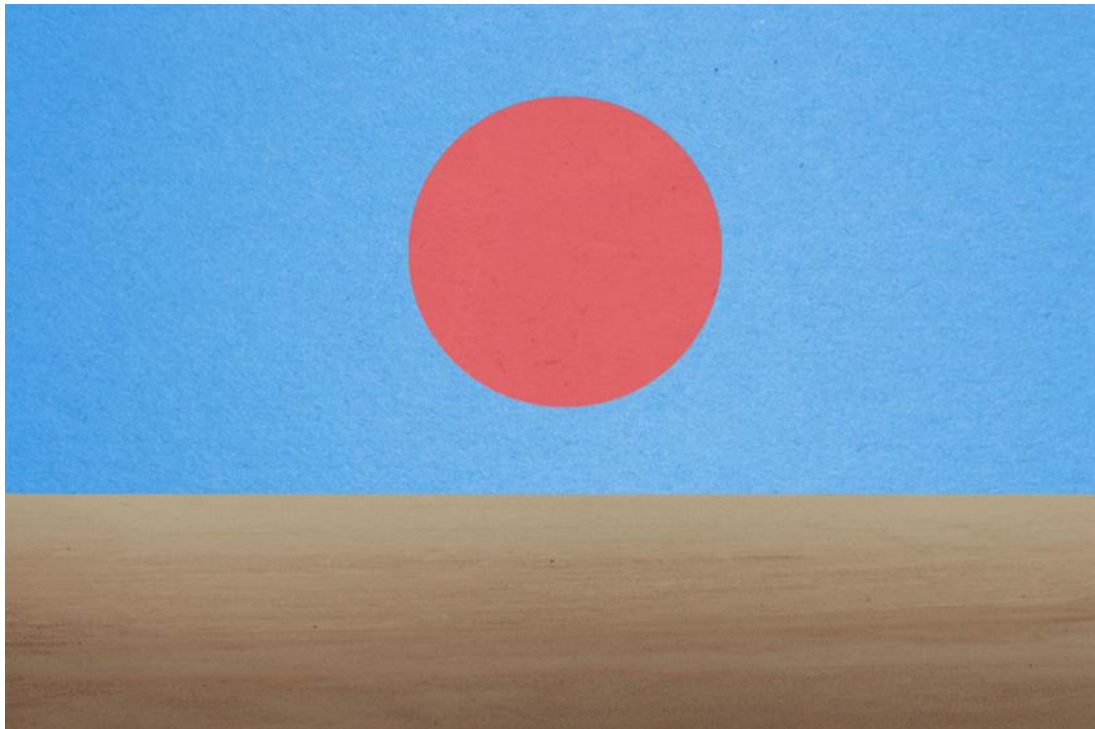
CLARA

That was the most romantic thing you've ever done.

(Clara runs to hug Jack. She thinks better of it as she reaches the puddle of puke on the ground. She decides to blow him a kiss instead.)

(END OF SCENE)

- Amelia Boscov



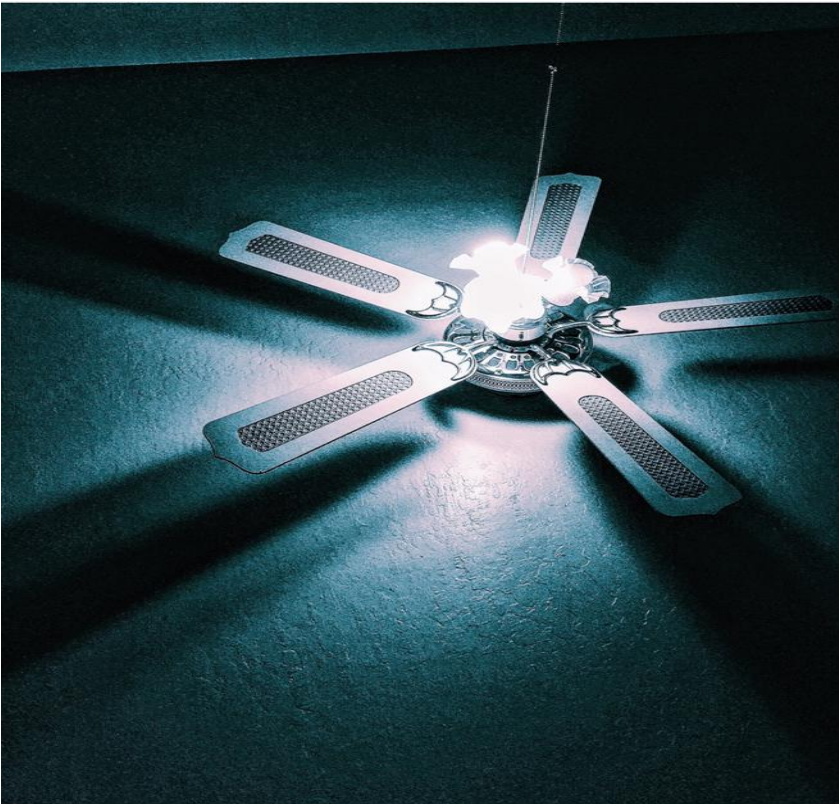
- Nina Saligman

Waking Up Naked

Waking up naked was waking up together. It was my left eye peeling open with the right mushed into the pillow, your face, neck, shoulders filling the frame, chest against the bed, back up, belly down. In your dreams, you were an eagle, so your arms were kept spread like two wings in flight, marks of wrinkled bedsheets printed in your skin like feathers. Waking up naked was me first, you second, once I'd kissed your right hand and prodded your right shoulder until you finally woke. It was your widening eyes and the upturned corners of your mouth, every time amazed at my presence, every time grateful, even on those three nights in a row. It was the no-hesitation when you pulled me against you, and the heat I found in between your arms.

After you, waking up naked was waking up with questions. It was his face right across from mine, one I knew would be there but was always shocked to see, jawline sharp even in his softest state, his body restless in motion without eyes ever opening. It was throbbing temples and desperation for water that was just out of reach. Should I crawl across him to grab it? In this moment he would wake, run a hand down my side, call me beautiful, gulp some water for himself, pass the bottle to me next. Waking up naked was the thoughts I'd never voice; does he really think that? Does he love me? Does he love her? Should I leave soon? It was blurred memories of the night before, but no memory of getting into bed, the knowledge that I'd probably do it all again tomorrow, a half-smile.

Now, waking up naked is waking up only. It is the fact that I got too warm last night, and removed my clothes in asleep automation. Waking up naked is grasping covers against my bare skin, cocooning my own body heat away from the cold of morning, keeping my eyes closed in hopes of resuscitating my dreams. When the temperature of reality unavoidably sneaks through, I fumble through my sheets to find my discarded t-shirt, re-apply it while still lying down. It is myself only, in my bed only, getting ready to start yet another day.



Coming of Age (or Community Poem)

adult eyes and child eyes are two very different things.
i want to be an independent person when i am grown.
being the norm is okay
but don't fear straying from the crowd.
my mother found me and told me
"you are
unacceptable"
wondering about waiting or waiting no more
questioning whether you are able
to stand.
nimble as the steel pipe that built
the 'house'
like a leaf whirling in the air.
she told herself it was ok to fall
from the branch
the fear never went away.
tell me i won't,
i will
ask me not to.
i won't on account of respect
it has been a struggle.
to be comfortable with myself
sometimes i feel a stress growing up that is different from
school stress
always wishing i was someone else.
then regretting it.
i never knew how lucky I was to find my
friends
powerful.
powerless.
keenly aware and so unaware
drop my bag on the way in and straight up to my room
i've learn to make choices and decide what i really want.
to spend my time doing
reading and seeing and
not knowing.
anything.



- Yutien Feng

- SisterCircle and Humanities Core Team

Snow Globe

It lay on the ground shattered, the water leaking and pooling at her feet. The face stared up at her. The small etched eyes had a lifeless quality she had not noticed before, and one ear was chipped. As she looked down, she did not feel the loss she thought she should. It was more like being pinched, a temporary pain lasting for no more than a second and then vanishing almost as if it had never happened. It had been her most prized possession, a cheap snow globe from Disney World. It seemed silly now, the way she had coveted the snow globe, kept it away from anyone who might break it, or even smudge the glass with fingerprints.

She remembered the first gift she had received from him, a postcard from Niagara Falls that had dropped from his book. It wasn't truly a gift. In reality, she had snatched it from the ground before he noticed it was missing. She figured she would appreciate it more than he and added it to the collection of worldly things she kept in her room. This continued for months. Every week for show and tell, the boy would bring in a new exotic treasure, a brass elephant, a miniature silk fan, a jaguar carved from soapstone, a chain of glass worry beads. When he spoke, he was not a typical ten-year-old boy. He seemed so knowledgeable, and when he told his stories about travel, he was transported. If she was lucky, some days she felt almost as if she was transported with him. When his tales were especially captivating, she would feel compelled to take whatever he had brought to share and keep it as her own. She never felt guilty for taking; to her it was fair. After all, the boy had the stories, stories so wonderful they left her breathless.

She took shells, a thin copper wire bracelet, and her personal favorite, a finely woven, brightly colored cloth bookmark. She was so caught up in her imaginary travels, she forgot he might discover the identity of his thief. It did take him a while, however, and for three months she got away with it. Then, abruptly he stopped bringing precious mementos for show and tell. Instead, he brought baseball cards, a rubber band ball, his collection of quarters from nearly every state, and other mundane things. It hurt. He had the stories and, to her, he had the world. For weeks, he continued bringing in ordinary items, no longer sharing his adventures, and she felt the world she had temporarily entered slipping away.

One day during recess the boy pulled her aside. With a slightly hesitant look on his face, he silently pulled a small, faintly cloudy rock crystal from his bag, handed it to her and, with shoulders hunched, walked away. She spent the entire recess admiring it, wondering where it came from. To her dismay, at the end of the day he walked back over to her with an expectant look and held out his hand, clearly waiting for his crystal to be returned. He continued to do this several times a week. He always took his temporary gifts back, unwilling to let her keep yet another thing. This unspoken agreement became incredibly important to her, necessary even. She kept their secret, spending hours wondering what he would bring next and what magical place it would be from. He didn't tell the stories he once had, but she soon discovered she was able to tell them herself.

Some of the keepsakes were harder to understand and took several days for her to figure out, but those were her favorites. Her collection at home ceased to grow, but that was immaterial. They never spoke; she thought it was better that way. She was filled with so many words, words she could not afford to waste on forced conversation. During lunch one Tuesday, he sat next to her and handed her a snow globe that he said she could keep. The following day he was absent, and the next and the next. She patiently waited for him to return so she could thank him, but mostly so she could see what he would bring next. Yet he never came. She was left with her odd collection of stolen objects, each with its own story; only the snow globe remained storyless. For days she kept it hidden away, hoping the boy would come back and the snow globe's story would become clear, but he never returned. It sat on her shelf.

To a Mouse Response

Mice have qualities much akin
to the shape of happy creations
when the children fight amongst snowmen
they reminisce of days past winter. Now grown,
they have faults when they gaze at the imperfections
and in spring they die as mice
feeding the past
sensing the approaching chaos at the season's end

- Poetry Club



- Nir Netz



She

A Flake alights upon her lashes
and turns her Whole World into
white

Swirling, prancing, twirling,
flashes
Magenta skies and
secret plight

Standing tall she eats the
Winter
without a stall or second thought

and gently climbs the
Gated Ladder to
self-assurance.
(Paradise)

- Zoe Walker

One Sixteen

chair-leg broken
dried-up glue
word not spoken
me not you

concrete thinking
undone pain
eyes not blinking
after rain

only sealing
only start
only feeling
only heart

- Grace

Untitled

ripened minds create plump ideas
praised by the teachers
who leave them to
drown in the dark
waters of
the desolate river
Styx

- Poetry Club



- Sara Thal



- Jacob Zaoutis

Our Perfume

My breath reeks oh so delightfully of laughter
of cracked and heartfelt song
of loving whispers and broken cries
as smokers' mouths let loose scorched scents of death
mine sans such stimulus encapsulates the wisps of me

Your breath is rainy sky
the cold welcoming taste of winter
with hints of sweet nectars and tears
tinged with full bodied yells and carefully placed compliments
you are the aroma of dusk and dawn
of deep purple universes

the meeting of the two is blackest night and bluest sky
of endless salty beaches of cloud
of tropical humidity and innocent lust
when we kiss
such souls do twine
a mix of self art
for what one breathes is the truest sense of self
we combine ourselves
we are so daring and so radical
we relish the vulnerability
and when we do
sparks of humanity do fly

- Julian Shapiro-Barnum



- Jingyi Hu



- Grace Kauffman-Rosengarten



Love

L-O-V-E

One, four letter word so
Vast and infinite that
Everyone uses, and no one
understands

- Sara Thal

Butterfly Landing

-Anne Pizzini



- Sam Veith

11:45 03/04

The first time I slept without you crossing my mind
I choked on tears and swallowed more air than those
falling endlessly
Into the deepest despairs of the most opaque and
obsolete ocean
I've never slept better

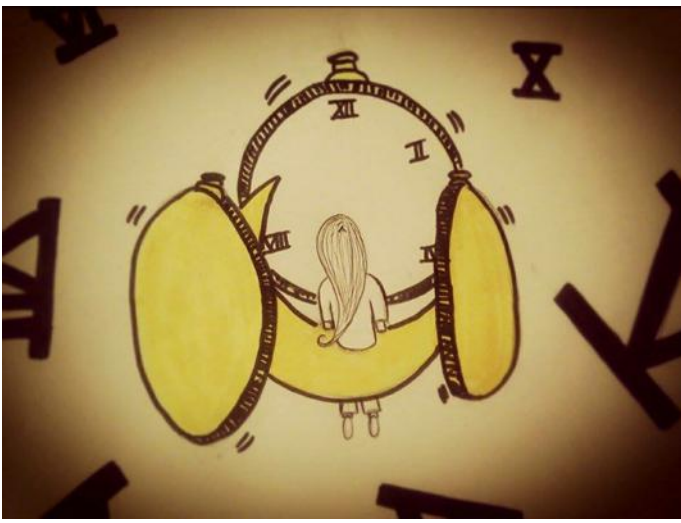
- Nora Wadsworth



- Sam Veith



- Jiwei Cheng

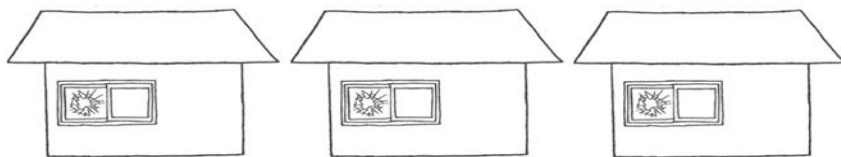


Behind me-- my Secrets--
 Before me-- my Fears--
 At this moment-- my Hope nears--
 The End-- which is but inevitable--
 To be torn-- between the Two--

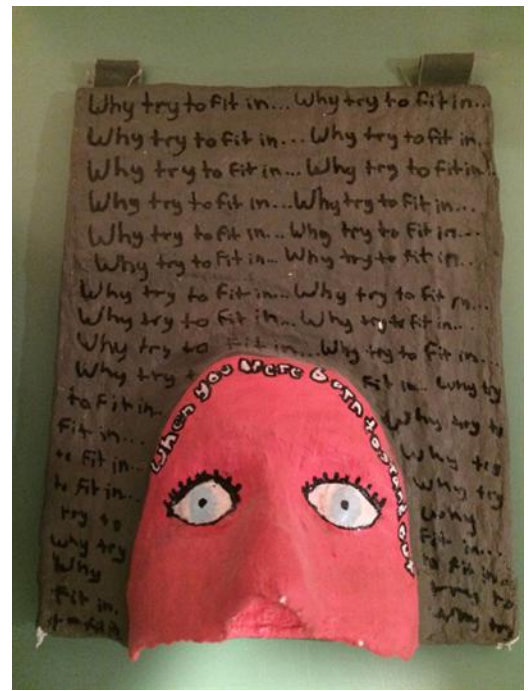
With the moon guiding me--
 With the moon following me--
 Yearning for a pause,
 Knowing it is for a hopeless cause,
 Then come the Hand-- out of the Sky--

That tells me--to reach high--
 Gives a nudge-- out of Love--So that I can rise above--

- Julianna Schickel



- Nina Saligman



Still Trying (after Emily Dickinson)

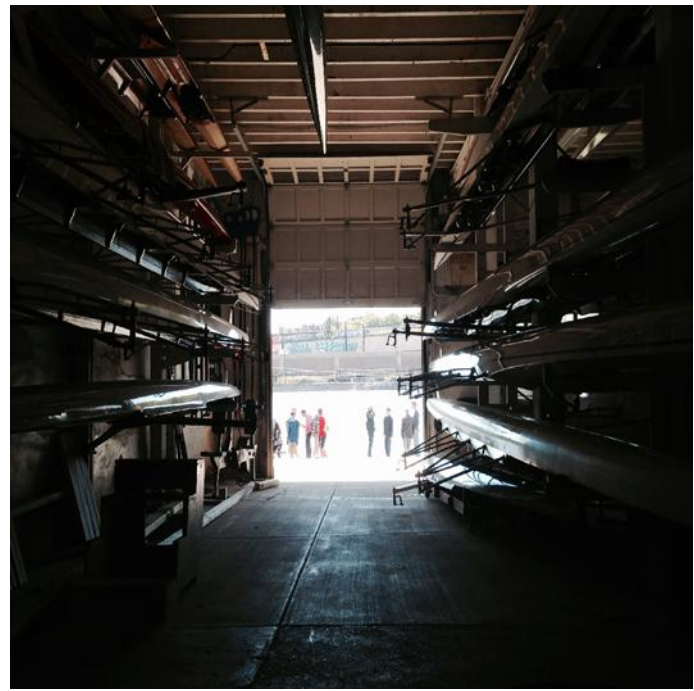
Force conceives Failure-
 Excessive Effort yields No gain,
 Perfection Blooms from the Natural-
 Yet, We wash Away this Forest in rain.

Trying, to try, to Not-try,
 Still trying all the Same.

- Talia Rosenberg



-Jiwei Cheng



-Jiwei Cheng

Meditation on Digestion

Better people leave after dinner; I baste the turkey, I piece my cloth, I undo my color. When she left I re-read our toe prints in the mud. Squish soft squealing shiners. Every mess a small notion, eating the food within, producing no novelty.

A passion is an excess. Our very existence is perfect passion pacing from parapet to parapet. It is free in the dive and rarely survives a fall. Valerie fell 33,000 feet and survived. I know a man who fell from the ground and did not. No predicting.

Eat well your body speaks. Breathe deep your lungs are bored. Close your eyes your mind hasn't time to sift through the physical world. Try not to sleep. If you must dream in feeling not color.

- Grace Kauffman-Rosengarten

Take the chance to contribute your own work to INK!

Draw, Write, Create

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue border, intended for drawing, writing, or creating. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the page area.

WISH UPON A STAR... ✨ THE GOOD KIND, THE KIND THAT MAKES TREES GREEN 🌳 AND PINEAPPLES YELLOW. THE KIND THAT MAKES ELEPHANTS GREY, AND FLASHLIGHTS BRIGHT 🔦. MAYBE YOU'LL BE LUCKY AND GET THE ONE THAT BRINGS LAUGHTER, I HEAR THOSE ARE RARE. PICK ONE THAT GIVES OUT WARM HOMES 🏠. CHOOSE ONE WITH MUSIC 🎵. I LOVE THAT KIND. GET THE KIND THAT BRINGS ADVENTURES, EXCITING ONES. I HEAR MOST CARRY LOVE ❤️ SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. MAKE SURE YOU WISH ON ONE THAT MAKES THE SKY BLUE 🌊 AND RAINBOWS RAINBOW 🌈. THE KIND THAT BRINGS COURAGE TO A CHILD WHO NEEDS IT. BUT MOST IMPORTANT, WISH ON ONE THAT BRINGS HAPPINESS TO THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE IT. 😊 THEN WE WILL ALL BE MORE HAPPY.

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